

Committee for Education

Report on the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education Volume 1

**Together with the Minutes of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence
and Written Submissions Relating to the Report**

Ordered by the Committee for Education to be printed 1 July 2015

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COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEBATE IN PLENARY**

Powers and Membership

Powers

The Committee for Education is a Statutory Departmental Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Standing Order 48 of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Committee has power to:

- Consider and advise on Departmental budgets and annual plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- Consider relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- Call for persons and papers;
- Initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- Consider and advise on any matters brought to the Committee by the Minister of Education.

Membership

The Committee has 11 members including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and a quorum of 5. The membership of the Committee is as follows:

Peter Weir (Chairperson) ^{2,6}

Sandra Overend (Deputy Chairperson) ⁷

Maeve McLaughlin

Jonathan Craig

Ross Hussey ^{1,8}

Nelson McCausland ³

Chris Hazzard

Trevor Lunn

Robin Newton

Pat Sheehan

Sean Rogers ^{4,5}

1 With effect from 04 July 2014 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson

2 With effect from 23 September 2014 Ms Michelle McIlveen replaced Mr Mervyn Storey as Chairperson

3 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr Nelson McCausland replaced Mr Stephen Moutray

4 With effect from 17 November 2014 Mr Colum Eastwood replaced Mr Seán Rogers

5 With effect from 08 December 2014 Mr Sean Rogers replaced Mr Colum Eastwood

6 With effect from 11 May 2015 Mr Peter Weir replaced Miss Michelle McIlveen as Chairperson

7 With effect from 15 June 2015 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mr Danny Kinahan as Deputy Chairperson

8 With effect from 23 June 2015 Mr Ross Hussey replaced Mrs Sandra Overend

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Executive Summary

Following consideration of a wide range of policy initiatives and proposals in respect of Shared Education and as a consequence of its review of Area Planning in which widely varying views on the demand for and treatment of Integrated Education were recorded, the Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The Committee's scrutiny was informed by: numerous written and oral submissions; school visits; informal meetings and evidence events. With Assembly Education Services and Assembly Research Services, the Committee also undertook focus group studies with school children from across Northern Ireland in order to determine attitudes to, and experience of Shared and Integrated Education.

The Committee was greatly impressed by examples of sharing and co-operation in many schools in different sectors and phases across Northern Ireland. The Committee agreed that in order to widen participation there should be a statutory obligation on the Department and its Arms Length Bodies, in line with recent legislation in respect of the Education Authority, to encourage the participation of all schools in Shared Education. The Committee felt that Shared Education was best defined as a whole school educational improvement activity which could take place across all educational phases. The Committee believed that the societal objectives, though secondary to the educational objectives, were important and should extend beyond the reconciliation of the 2 largest communities in Northern Ireland in order to incorporate all relevant Section 75 groups.

The Committee felt that in order to better support Shared Education, the Department should study and disseminate the inclusive and welcoming ethos of successful Integrated; non-Integrated and Special Schools as well pre-school settings and nursery schools across Northern Ireland. The Committee also felt that in order to boost the confident participation of all schools in Shared Education, the Department should provide a programme of support for teachers and wider school communities.

Given the anticipated substantial financial investment in Shared Education, the Committee supported the development and publication of objective impact measures based on both educational and societal progress.

The Committee also supported a flexible approach to the inclusion of single schools in Shared Education programmes where these benefit the wider community and the adoption of shared management or other innovative Shared Education arrangements in rural areas where these are cost effective.

Given the relatively limited uptake of Integrated Education and the very different views expressed by sectoral bodies in respect of its facilitation, encouragement and definition, the Committee agreed that the Department should undertake a strategic review of its approach and relevant actions to-date relating to Integrated Education.

The Committee also felt that the Department should consider the promotion of so-called natural mixing of children from different backgrounds in non-Integrated schools. In order to support further natural mixing in schools, the Committee supported consideration of a revision to the Home to School Transport policy in order to support attendance at Jointly Managed Church schools.

Recommendations

- 1. The Committee recommends that the statutory obligation to encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education – as set out in the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - should be extended to the Department and all of its relevant Arms Length Bodies. The Committee further recommends that the obligation should include the consideration of the incentivisation of participation by all schools in Shared Education.**
- 2. The Committee recommends that Shared Education be defined as curriculum-based interactions that always foreground educational improvement and involve children and young people in sustained whole school/organisation activities across all educational phases while making optimal use of existing IT infrastructure.**
- 3. Further to Recommendation #2, the Committee recommends that Shared Education should be defined as promoting attitudinal improvement and meaningful contact involving children and young people from all relevant Section 75 groups in line with the objectives of the CRED policy.**
- 4. The Committee recommends that the Department should do more to disseminate the good practice in Integrated, other mixed non-Integrated and Special Schools as well as pre-school settings and nursery schools in respect of the development of an inclusive ethos in order to promote Shared Education more widely.**
- 5. The Committee recommends that the Department should work with the Education Authority to provide consistent support for Shared Education collaborations with a tailored programme of training and guidance for teachers, parents, children and communities so as ensure the appropriate recognition and celebration of cultural differences and thus the confident participation by all schools.**
- 6. The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to a wide range of agreed, objective impact measures for Shared Education based on educational improvement in the first instance and societal reconciliation progress in the second. The Committee further recommends that information in respect of the educational and societal impact of Shared Education should be published regularly by the Department.**
- 7. The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to the inclusion of individual schools or educational providers in Shared Education programmes where this can be shown to lead to educational and societal benefit for the wider community and where the participating children and young people include significant levels of representation from different Section 75 groups.**
- 8. The Committee recommends that the Department should do more to promote and secure the support of communities for innovative cost effective approaches to sharing in education in rural areas including e.g. federative or shared management arrangements or other solutions including Jointly Managed Church schools or amalgamations, as appropriate. The Committee further recommends that in order to ensure that support is properly targeted, communities engaged in Shared Education should be required to demonstrate initial and longer term educational and societal benefits.**
- 9. The Committee recommends that the Department undertake a strategic review of its approach to Integrated Education, the terms of reference of which should include: the effectiveness of its actions in encouraging and facilitating this form of education in particular its assessment and treatment of parental perceptions and demand for Integrated Education in the Area Planning and Development Proposal processes; the roles of the sectoral bodies; and the relevance of minority community designation in the enrolment of Integrated schools.**

- 10. The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to the reasons underpinning natural mixing in non-Integrated schools and should also consider measures that it should adopt in order to promote this practice while supporting the principle of parental preference.**
- 11. The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to revising its Home to School Transport policy so as to provide support for children attending Jointly Managed Church schools in line with that currently available for children attending Integrated schools.**

Introduction

1. At its meeting on 2 July 2014, the Committee for Education agreed to undertake an inquiry focusing on Shared and Integrated Education. The Terms of Reference for the Committee's inquiry were to:
 - review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;
 - identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;
 - identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;
 - consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools; and
 - report to the Assembly on its findings and recommendations by Spring 2015.

Committee Approach

2. The Committee agreed that the inquiry would include oral evidence sessions with a wide range of stakeholders involved in Shared and Integrated Education. The Committee also particularly sought responses from school councils and wrote to all schools to this effect in July and September 2014.
3. The Committee commissioned Assembly Education Services to seek the views of a representative sample of school children on the key terms of references of the inquiry. The Committee also noted the findings of research undertaken by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People on the views of young people. The Committee also noted feedback from Parenting NI on the views of parents.
4. The Committee commissioned Assembly Research Services to produce papers on particular aspects of Shared and Integrated Education in this and other jurisdictions in order to inform its deliberations.
5. The Committee placed an advertisement in the regional press in September 2014 and wrote to stakeholders in July and again in September 2014 requesting written submissions to its inquiry. Around 100 written submissions were received from 86 stakeholders.
6. The Committee received oral evidence from: the Department of Education (2 July 2014; 14 January 2015, 21 January 2015, 29 April 2015 and again on 13 May 2015); Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle (15 October 2014); Professors Knox and Borooah from Ulster University (15 October 2014); Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (5 November 2014); Parenting NI (5 November 2014); Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (19 November 2014); Professor Roger Austin from Ulster University (26 November 2014); Centre for Shared Education at Queen's University Belfast (26 November 2014); Methodist College Belfast (10 December 2014); Community Relations Council and Equality Commission (4 February 2015); Integrated Education Fund and Professor Brandon Hamber from Ulster University (4 February 2015); Belfast, North Eastern, Western, Southern and South Eastern Education and Library Boards (11 February 2015); Ceara Special School and Tor Bank Special School (11 February 2015); Transferors' Representative Council (18 February 2015); Speedwell Trust (25 February 2015); Drumragh Integrated College (25 February 2015); National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers and the Ulster Teachers' Union (3 March 2015); the Early Years organisation (4 March 2015); Youth Council Northern Ireland (4 March 2015); Sir Robert

Salisbury (11 March 2015); Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education (18 March 2015); and Brookeborough Shared Education Partnership (18 March 2015).

7. To enhance its understanding of Shared and Integrated Education, the Committee undertook visits to the following: Methodist College Belfast (10 December 2014); St. John's Primary School, Moy and Moy Regional Primary School (14 January 2015); Drumragh Integrated College (25 February 2015); Shimna Integrated College (11 March 2015); and Limavady High School and St. Mary's School, Limavady (25 March 2015). Members of the Committee also participated in an informal briefing session organised by NICIE with children from integrated schools on 3 December 2014. The Committee met with Educate Together – an organisation involved in shared education in the Republic of Ireland and in Great Britain - in January 2015. Members also met informally with representatives of St. Columbanus' College on 26 May 2015.
8. The Minutes of Evidence of the oral evidence sessions are included at Appendix 2. Written non-departmental submissions are included at Appendix 3. The Committee's correspondence with the Department in respect of the inquiry is included at Appendix 4. A list of witnesses to the inquiry is given at Appendix 5. Research papers and the findings of the research on the views of school children, undertaken by Assembly Education Services, are included at Appendix 6.
9. The Committee agreed on 1 July 2015 that the report on its inquiry – this report – should be printed.

Acknowledgements

10. The Committee wishes to record its thanks to all those who participated in the inquiry through the provision of written and oral evidence or the facilitation of Committee visits or evidence-taking events.

Context for the Inquiry - Integrated Education

11. In 1976, ACT (All Children Together) published a paper with proposals for shared management of schools in Northern Ireland – this is described as an early model for integrating existing schools along with the development of a curriculum to promote 'a common pattern of religious and moral education, and of historical and cultural studies'. Lagan College – described as an Independent Integrated School - was established in 1981. A provision for existing schools to seek Controlled Integrated status was included in legislation in 1986.
12. In 1987, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) was formed as a charitable organisation to co-ordinate efforts to develop Integrated Education; and to support parent groups through the process of opening new schools.
13. Article 64 of the Education Reform (N.I.) Order 1989 gave the Department of Education (the Department or DE) a duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'. Following the passage of the 1989 Order, the Department began to provide support for NICIE
14. NICIE became a company in February 1989. NICIE borrowed money to buy sites and build schools from three of the main banks in Northern Ireland. The school had then to meet capital viability intake criteria set out by the Department over three consecutive years before the Department of Education would vest the school and repay the capital cost of buildings. NICIE built and opened 19 new schools using this funding mechanism. The closure of Armagh Integrated College before it was vested ended this system and left NICIE in substantial debt – around £10m. NICIE indicate that to-date, 24 of the 62 Integrated Schools have come about by changing an existing school's status to integrated status – including 5 post primaries and

- 19 primaries. In 2014-15, around 6.7% of the school population attended Integrated schools – 6,300 at Controlled Integrated schools and 15,600 at Grant Maintained Integrated schools.
15. The Integrated sector contends that growth in Integrated schools has been severely curtailed by vested interests and the failure of the Department or the ELBs (now the Education Authority (EA) to give effect to Article 64. The sector also argues that the Department unreasonably and despite parental demand categorises early years provision as non-sectoral thus arbitrarily exempting this educational phase from its Article 64 obligations.
 16. 9 Integrated schools have sought to increase their numbers in the last 5 years – about half have been successful or partially successful though some decisions are still pending. Drumragh Integrated College sought a judicial review of a decision to decline a Development Proposal to increase the school's enrolment level. Prior to the hearing the Minister agreed that the decision would be re-taken. The judicial review proceeded on wider issues. On 27 March 2015, the Department indicated that the relevant Development Proposal had again been declined.
 17. An Integrated school should demonstrate reasonable prospects of achieving, over the longer term, a minimum of 30% of its pupils from the minority community where the school is situated. Additionally, Integrated schools are required to have a board of governors with balanced representation.
 18. The Drumragh Judgement found the use of an analytical tool (the needs model) in planning educational provision on an area basis to be lawful, but that the Department must ensure that inflexible use of the model did not prevent it from meeting its Article 64 obligations. However, following the judgment, the Minister advised that "... guidance has now been provided to all senior staff within the Department via internal workshops that have presented an opportunity to make clear my expectations that the statutory duties to encourage and facilitate both integrated and Irish-medium education are discharged fully, positively and proactively and to explain the implications of both statutory duties, including in the context of the Drumragh Judgement." Additionally DE was also to provide additional guidance for "the executive non-departmental bodies which are accountable to DE". The Minister indicated that he expected to see "much greater prominence given by our non-departmental public bodies to supporting the Department in encouraging and facilitating both integrated and Irish-medium education....including the new Education Authority, as we move forward into a new business planning period."
 19. In November 2014, the Minister indicated his intention to commission a review of Integrated Education. It is understood that the Minister is currently considering the need for and the scope of a possible strategic review of Integrated Education.

Context for the Inquiry - Shared Education

20. There are a number of previous, current and planned Shared Education policies and related policies and programmes. These are summarised below.

Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy

21. Until May 2010, the Department provided around £3.6m pa of funding across five streams to provide what were described as Community Relations schemes:
 - Community Relations Core Funding Scheme (which provided core funding to external organisations involved in community relations work in schools and youth work settings);
 - Schools Community Relations Programme (which provided earmarked funding for community relations work in schools);
 - Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme (which provided earmarked funding for community relations work in youth work settings);

- Cultural Traditions Programme (which provided funding to the Arts Council for cultural programmes delivered on a cross-community basis); and
 - Community Relations Youth Service Support Scheme (which provided earmarked funding delivered through the Youth Council NI for regional voluntary organisations youth organisations).
22. A review of Community Relations work was undertaken in 2008, which included a report by the Education & Training Inspectorate that identified these schemes as being inconsistent in delivery, difficult to assess, sometimes duplicated existing provision or did not address gaps in provision. As a result these schemes were replaced in March 2011 by the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy with earmarked funding of £1.2m pa over a 4 year period ending March 2015 to support implementation of the policy. This included dedicated support staff in Education & Library Board and the Youth Council NI, practitioner training programmes, a dedicated website to ensure sharing of advice and good practice and the CRED Enhancement Scheme that provided application based earmarked funding for schools and youth work settings for interventions that enhanced delivery of community relations work.
23. The CRED policy was issued by the Department in 2011 and was designed to “improve relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions”. CRED was designed to root the skills needed by learners in respect of community relations, equality and diversity in the Revised Curriculum. There were several key actions:
- DE was to issue guidance to all schools in all phases which would help educators to make the connections between the aims of the CRED policy and the formal and informal curricula. DE was to promote CRED and encourage greater sharing and collaboration on a cross-community basis. The Education and Skills Authority (ESA) was to develop relevant indicators which were to be monitored by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). The CRED policy was to complement other DE policies providing educators with the skills and experience to deliver a curriculum which includes CRED issues.
 - DE was to develop regional plans for the delivery of the CRED policy and structures within ESA to assist in its delivery and integration with other education policies.
 - In order to deal with reported low uptake of schools community relations programme, CRED was to support education settings to integrate the policy into their ethos through guidance, indicators, capacity building in the education workforce and sharing of good practice.
 - DE was to work with FE and HE institutions and the community relations staff in the ELBs to develop CRED training modules for teachers which would be delivered in a shared environment. DE was also to support training for the non-teaching education workforce.
 - DE was to explore the potential for progression routes so as to ensure that CRED learning was age appropriate and advanced knowledge and skills for children who take part in community relations activities and encouraged the involvement of parents and the community. Although the CRED policy was to be applied in all schools, some support was to be targeted at priority areas experiencing conflict, segregation and disadvantage.
- While the Education & Skills Authority was not established, the Department has confirmed that these actions were delivered through the Education & Library Boards, over the period ending 31 March
24. DE had also suggested in correspondence to the Committee that CRED Enhancement funding could be used to support shared work in schools and youth work settings e.g. continuation

- of collaborations established as part of the Primary Integrating Enriching Education (PIEE) project.
25. Earmarked CRED funding was discontinued on 31 March 2015. DE advised that CRED was to be mainstreamed. The Committee understands this to mean that all earmarked funding will be discontinued while schools will be required to continue to implement CRED policies with no funding to do so other than that provided through the Common Funding Scheme.
 26. DE briefed the Committee on 29 April 2015 on the review of the CRED policy by ETI. ETI found that CRED provided good quality opportunities for sustained contact for children and young people to work well collaboratively and discuss issues relating to diversity and inclusion. ETI found, in the most effective settings, that children were confident and demonstrated maturity in accepting and celebrating difference and challenging others' behaviour when appropriate. ETI suggested that more opportunities were needed to accredit learning through CRED. ETI suggested that schools need to improve tracking of progress in the development of the CRED skills necessary for life and work.
 27. ETI found that teaching staff etc. made good use of external agencies and interacted with Area Learning Communities in order to enhance provision and deal with sensitive issues e.g. expressions of sexuality. ETI suggested that children and young people sought enhanced opportunities for a greater understanding of the reasons for division and inequality in Northern Ireland and that there was undue variation in the extent to which children were equipped to deal with controversial issues.
 28. ETI referred positively to school councils enhancing participation and modelling effective democratic processes. ETI suggested that more needed to be done to ensure meaningful non-tokenistic engagement by children in school decision-making.
 29. ETI indicated that the majority of lessons in schools and youth organisations were "very good" or better however between a quarter and a third of PDMU lessons were described as not effective with insufficient mapping of statutory key elements related to CRED across the school curriculum.
 30. ETI indicated that in respect of leadership and management of CRED, the Shared Education and Community Relations team in DE together with the ELB CRED Steering Group and the Youth Council Northern Ireland provided proactive leadership promoting good practice as well as training, guidance and challenge to CRED providers. ETI highlighted the positive role of the ELBs in promoting whole school CRED improvement rather than simply promoting stand-alone policies. ETI suggested that more needed to be done to help schools and youth settings to learn from each other in respect of good CRED practice.
 31. ETI found that schools and youth organisations had a clear understanding of CRED and that this was embedded in School Development Plans and service level agreements for youth organisations. However ETI also reported inconsistency in respect of embedding of CRED across schools and youth organisations. ETI indicated that schools had suggested that embedding of CRED was required within a strategic overview of all policies and that youth organisations identified the need for explicit development of CRED in Priorities for Youth. ETI reported a need for more rigorous evaluation of CRED against the quality indicators by providers.
 32. ETI found that schools and youth organisations supported the holistic development of all children and young people including those with SEN or from newcomer or Traveller backgrounds. ETI found that better practice settings worked in partnership often, through their Area Learning Community, with the local community and consulted widely with parents etc. to understand the backgrounds of children in order to improve their learning and to tackle issues relating to changing demographics, poverty and social issues etc.. ETI suggested that schools and youth organisations needed more support in order to develop and maintain more sustained contact with communities to help promote good relations etc. ETI indicated that

CRED should be more closely based on the rights of the child set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and that multi-agency support was required.

33. In addition to the above, ETI recommended:
- that the CRED policy references Shared Education in light of emerging research and practice;
 - greater targeted support and consistency of access to CRED support organisations be provided so as to enhance school staff capacity and improve community connections;
 - the development of appropriate accreditation of learning through CRED;
 - schools review the quality of PDMU lessons in order to ensure consistently high quality and improve tracking of pupil progress in respect of citizenship and personal development; and
 - voluntary organisations should do more to disseminate good CRED practice in youth settings.
34. ETI described the education system in Northern Ireland as segregated and identified widening equality issues across society. It referred to sector-leading examples of good CRED practice but also indicated that the sustainability of relationships is variable.

Programme for Government

35. The 2011-15 Programme for Government (PfG) contains 4 DE commitments relating to Shared Education:
- Commitment 70: significantly progressing work on the plan for the Lisanelly Shared Education campus as a key regeneration project;
 - Commitment 71: establishing a Ministerial Advisory Group to bring forward recommendations to the Minister to advance shared education;
 - Commitment 72: ensuring all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; and
 - Commitment 73: substantially increasing the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

Lisanelly Shared Education Campus (LSEC)

36. The Lisanelly site at Omagh is to be a shared educational campus where 6 Controlled and Maintained, Grammar and non-Grammar and Arvalee Special School will be co-located and will collaborate together, while retaining their individual ethos.
37. The agreed Outline Business Case indicates that Lisanelly will have “medium sharing”, schools will be provided with a core set of facilities within their own school building, while sharing other infrastructure and the delivery of some teaching. Work is underway to refine and further develop the education model which will consider appropriate sharing at each Key Stage. The campus is to include a Shared Education Hub centred around STEM/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) provision, where pupils from all schools may be taught together. It will further include a shared sports centre where sports and fitness courses and related facilities will be shared on a campus wide basis. There may also be sharing of common ancillary facilities, such as school meals provision, utilities and maintenance. The schools will also work together in developing a shared ICT infrastructure and shared branding and identity for the Campus. Consideration will also be given to wider sharing of the facilities with other schools and colleges within the Omagh Learning Community. The capital cost of all of this was given as around £110m.
38. 6 schools involved have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, agreeing to work together on the development and delivery of the campus

Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education

39. In April 2013, the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) published its report on Advancing Shared Education. MAG described Shared Education as the organisation and delivery of education so that it meets the needs of learners from all Section 75 groups regardless of their socio-economic status; involves schools of differing ownership, status, ethos and management type; and delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources and promotes: equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.
40. MAG describes Shared Education as: involving 2 or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.
41. MAG indicated that it did not believe that Integrated Education should be actively promoted as the preferred option in relation to plans to advance Shared Education. MAG indicated that in line with parental choice, the education system “should actively encourage the development of a range of schools with differing types of religious and/or philosophical ethos...” where strong efforts are made to require these schools to collaborate in a sustained and meaningful way.
42. MAG indicated that training, curricular materials and inspections are required to support schools involved in Shared Education. MAG recommended that the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) should in future routinely review the effectiveness of Shared Education provision MAG recommended that DE – as part of its review of teacher education – should develop a framework for the early and continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers which encourages collaboration between schools.
43. MAG recommended that schools and other educational establishments develop more meaningful relationships with parents and caregivers – ESA was to establish a network to support this and schools would be required to set out in Development Proposals how they are to engage with parents and caregivers.
44. MAG also recommended an independent review of the DE Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy including the delivery of the relevant parts of the curriculum.
45. MAG recommended that all schools be required to establish School Councils. MAG also recommended new legislation to make schools and educational institutions “public authorities” and be required to comply with statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. MAG recommended that ESA with the Equality Commission should establish an Equality Unit to help schools comply with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.
46. MAG also recommended that DE review how collaboration between mainstream schools and special schools can be enhanced so as to allow most children with SEN where possible to be educated in mainstream schools.
47. MAG recommended that DE, ELBs and CCMS play an active role in promoting Shared Education through Area Planning including the proactive identification of Shared Education options and the provision of “advice on how two or more schools can transfer their status into a ‘shared school’ whereby they maintain their respective form of ethos.” MAG also recommended that DE establish and communicate a transformation process for schools which in line with parental choice allows schools to adopt a particular (presumably new) ethos. MAG defined the different kinds of ethos as: Integrated, faith-based, secular or Irish Medium.
48. MAG also recommended that where there is oversubscription, existing schools should be allowed to expand in a phased and careful manner in line with parental demand.

49. MAG commented at length on academic selection. MAG recommended that the Executive should introduce legislation to prevent schools from selecting on the basis of academic ability (presumably at age 11). MAG recommended that Area Planning for post-primary school be based on all-ability intakes and that diversity of provision – in respect of religious, cultural ethos - be preserved. MAG also recommended a review by DE of the use of streaming and banding in all-ability schools.

Ministerial Statement – Advancing shared education

50. On 23 October 2013, the Minister made a statement endorsing the findings and many of the recommendations of the MAG. The Minister indicated that he/DE was to:
- bring forward a statutory definition of Shared Education which would complement the definition of Integrated Education. A unit within the new Education Authority is to have responsibility for the promotion of Shared Education;
 - consider including a sharing premium in the Common Funding Scheme (this was not included in the draft or final CFS for 2014 or 2015);
 - work with OFMDFM on the TBUC shared campus programme (3 shared campuses were selected before summer 2014 – a second call for proposals is underway);
 - ask ETI to include in the inspection of schools how sharing delivers educational benefit and to share associated best practice – ETI was also to undertake a survey of current practice in respect of sharing with a focus on what additional support and development teachers need. ETI is understood to be developing Shared Education indicators, protocols and materials and is to progress the identification of how sharing can enhance educational and social learning. The ETI Chief Inspector's 2012-14 report included limited reference to Shared Education delivery. Schools engaging in Shared Education will be required to include specific reference in their School Development Plans in respect of their goals to enhance sharing and engage with parents and carers. ETI undertook a review of CRED in the autumn of 2014. Personal Development and Mutual Understanding; Local and Global Citizenship and the Curricular Framework for Youth Work will be reviewed on a rolling basis during 2015-19;
 - include support for sharing in teacher CPD packages. As part of its ongoing work on Initial Teacher Education and continuing professional development, DE is also to develop opportunities for teacher training in respect of Shared Education;
 - encourage schools to adopt the Democra-school programme which facilitates pupil participation in the life of the school – a circular on School Councils was produced and issued to schools following the Committee's inquiry on this subject;
 - discuss with Executive colleagues making schools subject to statutory equality and good relations duties in section 75 –including perhaps requiring schools to set objectives to enhance equality. It is understood that the Minister wrote to OFMDFM seeking its views on the practicalities of legislation designed to designate schools as “public authorities”.
 - ensure that Special Schools are included in shared campuses or shared projects where the demand exists. DE indicated that it is to work to develop the role of Area Learning Communities so as to encourage the participation of Special Schools and pupils with disabilities in Shared Education;
 - bring forward a range of sharing options for schools and communities;
 - provide clear practical advice on how to bring forward a Development Proposal for sharing.
 - bring forward guidelines on the development of Area Plans to ensure shared education is encouraged;
 - meet parental demand for different types of school which are sustainable and feature collaboration and sharing not competition and duplication;

- allow schools to change their ethos by adopting new management schemes; and
- promote all-ability schools where academic and vocational learning is the norm through the Area Planning process.

Shared Education Baseline

51. The School Omnibus Survey is described as a multi-purpose web-based survey which is sent to all principals in grant-aided schools and is designed to collect a range of required information as determined by DE policy teams. The 2013 survey comprised 7 sections, one of which was Shared Education. A total of 569 responses were received for the Shared Education questions, giving an overall response rate of 52%. The results were as follows:

- The majority of respondents (76%) reported that they had been involved in Shared Education with another school during the last academic year (12/13). Participation in Shared Education was higher in post-primary and special schools and at 83%, WELB appeared to have the highest levels, while SEELB reported the lowest level at 70%.
- Of those respondents that have partnered with another school, 72% involved more than one class, while 15% indicated sharing at a whole school level.
- The majority of respondents (65%) shared on a cross community basis, with over a third (35%) involving sharing between post-primary and primary.
- Almost half (47%) used earmarked funding, such as CRED, Extended Schools or Entitlement Framework to finance shared activities, while 43% used their LMS budget. Over one third (36%) used external funding (e.g. IFI / Atlantic Philanthropies).
- The most common costs related to transport (80%), sub-cover (56%) and facilitators (44%).

Sharing Works: A policy for Shared Education

52. DE launched a consultation on its draft Shared Education policy and the draft Shared Education Bill on 5 January 2015. DE briefed the Committee on the feedback to the policy consultation on 13 May 2015.
53. The draft policy covered all statutory and voluntary Early Years settings; primary, post-primary and special schools; and non-formal educational setting including youth work settings. The vision for and definition of Shared Education set out in the draft policy is in line with that described by the MAG in its report i.e. cross-sectoral co-operation delivering educational benefits and promoting good relations etc.. DE gave some examples of Shared Education including – shared curriculum based classes; schools sharing resources; joint pastoral policies; shared CPD for teachers or BoGs; and shared accommodation.
54. The draft policy specifically indicated that Shared Education “involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.” However DE expects that Shared Education will be organized so as to provide these learning opportunities in such a way as to promote inclusion for children from different socio-economic or racial, family or other backgrounds.
55. The draft policy indicated that it is envisaged that Integrated schools could partner with other types of school in the provision of Shared Education. The draft policy described Integrated schools as being at the upper end of the continuum of sharing. Indeed it is suggested that by advancing Shared Education more schools may “move along the continuum to a more fully integrated model”. DE indicated that it will continue to encourage and facilitate Integrated Education in parallel with the advancement of Shared Education.
56. The draft policy indicated that Shared Education partnerships can be designed to include Irish Medium schools. DE also indicated that it will continue to encourage and facilitate IME schools in parallel with the advancement of Shared Education.

57. DE advised that the objectives/outcomes of the draft policy are to embed sharing in the ethos of all schools, improve educational including reconciliation outcomes, contribute to a more harmonious society while providing: all children with an opportunity to participate in a continued programme of high quality, progressive Shared Education; more opportunities for teachers etc. to work collaboratively in order to improve educational delivery; better access to learners to high quality teaching.
58. DE set out an action plan for Shared Education which included relevant legislation (see below) and a regional team within the Education Authority which will work with Shared Education partnerships to promote, plan and implement shared activity; and working in conjunction with officials in ETI and Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment (CCEA), develop a strategy for advancing Shared Education and commission research etc.. ETI has developed a Shared Education continuum self-assessment tool –similar to that used in the PIEE project and the Sharing in Education Programme report.
59. DE advised that it is to review funding arrangements for Shared Education after 2018 - as DSC Shared Education funding ends in 2018 and Peace IV funding ends in 2020.
60. The draft policy again referenced a requirement for schools to set out sharing goals in School Development Plans and the intention to require ETI to report on sharing in schools and sharing generally in the Chief Inspector's report. Schools are also to be required to include engagement plans for parents etc. in respect of Shared Education.
61. DE again referenced the new teacher professional development strategy indicating that from initial teacher education to CPD opportunities for teachers to learn together will be provided. DE also again mentioned ETI's planned reviews of CRED, PDMU etc. as part of an effort to align policy and appeared to indicate that CCEA will be commissioned to amend curricular support materials in support of Shared Education where deemed necessary.
62. The draft policy indicated that schools will be encouraged to find meaningful ways of giving children and young people a voice and responding to their views through the use of school councils.
63. The draft policy also indicated that with OFMDFM, DE was to consider the designation of schools as public authorities requiring some level of compliance with duties relating to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. DE subsequently clarified that there would be no attempts to change legislation in this regard until the need for change had been established and a public consultation had been held.

Draft Shared Education Bill

64. The Education Act (NI) 2014 placed a duty on the EA to encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education. That Act did not include a definition of Shared Education. The Department proposed to bring forward another bill – the Shared Education Bill – which would provide the relevant definition and place relevant obligations on the Department and some of its Arms Length Bodies. The Department briefed the Committee on 13 May 2015 on the feedback from the consultation on the draft Shared Education Bill.
65. The Department indicated that it was anticipated that the Shared Education Bill would grant DE; CCMS; Youth Council NI and CCEA the power to facilitate and encourage Shared Education. Shared Education would be defined in the Bill as education together, provided by two or more grant-aided schools or educational service providers, which is of educational benefit and involving those of different religious belief. The Bill is also expected to require Shared Education to include those experiencing different levels of socio-economic deprivation.

Jointly Managed Church Schools

66. The Department issued a circular in April 2015 on Jointly Managed Church schools. The Department briefed the Committee on 29 April 2015. DE indicated that the policy was

produced in line with Shared Education developments and in response to an interest from Controlled and Maintained schools to establish jointly managed church schools. The policy was produced following discussions with the Transferors and the representatives of the Catholic Trustees.

67. DE advised that in order to establish a school in line with the circular, a Development Proposal will be required. DE defined a jointly managed church school as a grant-aided Voluntary (or Other) Maintained school providing Shared Education with a Christian ethos with Trustee representation agreed by the Transferors and the Catholic Church and managed by a BoG with balanced representation from both main communities. The Education Authority would be the funding authority as is presently the case for Other Maintained schools e.g. most IME schools. As is also the case the BoG would be the employer of the teachers in the school whereas the EA would employ non-teaching staff.
68. DE suggested that a Trust be formed - with Trustees appointed through a deed of appointment – acting as the legal representatives of the school. DE indicated that it would require the Trustees to be representative of the Transferor and the Catholic Churches and that (foundation/ trustee) governors appointed by the Trustees would also be representative of Transferor/Catholic Churches. DE additionally indicated that it would expect the EA governors to be representative of both communities.
69. The school's ethos and arrangements for religious instruction etc. will be the subject of a formal MoA between the Transferors and the Catholic church. The BoGs will implement the agreed ethos. The premises and site of the school would be vested in the Trustees with a lease or assignment from either the Education Authority (in the case of a formerly Controlled school premises/site) or the Catholic Maintained Trust (in the case of a formerly Catholic Maintained premises/site). DE indicates that it did not expect the legal ownership of any school site to change.
70. DE advised that it was envisaged that Jointly Managed Church schools will usually be established following the amalgamation of Controlled and Maintained schools but that they can also be new schools where no existing provision is in place. In the case of an amalgamation, the jointly managed church school will not be subject to a minimum enrolment criteria for receipt of recurrent funding. For the purposes of Home to School Transport arrangements, a jointly managed church school will be considered to be within both the “Controlled and other Voluntary” AND the “Catholic Maintained” categories.
71. For the purposes of Temporary Variations to a school's enrolment, Other Maintained are currently treated separately from Controlled and Maintained schools – that is to say changes to their enrolment are not dependent on the impact they may have on Controlled and Maintained schools. DE advised that jointly managed church schools would also be treated in this way.

Together: Building a United Community

72. The Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) strategy was launched by OFMDFM in May 2013. TBUC included commitments under a number of priorities. The first of these was: “Our children and young people” – related commitments included the creation of 10 Shared Educational campuses.
73. The TBUC strategy document highlighted the obligation on statutory Early Years providers to contribute to improving relations between communities in line with the CRED policy. The strategy referred to a proposed buddy scheme which would pair a child from one section of the community with a child from a different community or ethnic background. The TBUC document indicated that consideration will be given to establishing community-led jointly run nursery and childcare facilities in interface and contested areas.
74. The TBUC document also highlighted the segregated nature of education in Northern Ireland and indicated that greater mixing in respect of traditions, identities and levels of social

deprivation can lead to greater tolerance, raised expectation and improved educational performance especially for the most deprived pupils. In line with the objective of enhancing community relations, the TBUC document also referred to the development of age appropriate anti-sectarianism resources.

75. The TBUC document indicated that the TBUC strategy will provide more opportunities for sharing within teacher training and that this may be reflected in the Department of Employment and Learning 2-stage study of teacher education infrastructure. Indeed, the study commissioned by DEL made a number of references to the importance of Shared Education and exposure to this form of education for student teachers.
76. In January 2014, the Education Minister formally launched the Shared Education Campuses Programme – designed to provide capital support for facilities at schools to be used on a shared educational basis. The T:BUC Strategy document had a target of commencing 10 new campuses within the next five years. 3 projects were selected in July 2014:
 - Shared STEM and sixth form facilities for St Mary's High School, Limavady and Limavady High School.
 - Shared Educational Campus for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.
 - Shared Educational Campus for Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle.
77. The Department briefed the Committee on 2 July 2014 on the TBUC Shared Education Campuses programme. DE advised that although the 10 Shared Educational Campuses are to share features of the Lisanelly model, this was a unique project featuring a large site with a stable long term enrolment.
78. DE stressed that all Shared Education Campuses must be endorsed by their Planning Authority to ensure the proposal meets the criteria in the Sustainable Schools Policy, or where this is not the case, provide an explanation as to how the proposal contributes to the delivery of sustainable provision in the Area going forward; must have educational benefits; must have the support of the local community and be endorsed by Managing Authorities and have the support of parents. Projects were to be favoured which include co-located or nearby schools and evidence of existing sharing was now essential.
79. DE advised in correspondence (July 2014) that projects would be evaluated and scored against a number of essential and desirable criteria. DE was asked (January 2015) if an application involving e.g. only a Catholic Maintained and a "Catholic Controlled voluntary Grammar school" or those projects with less than 15% minority participation would score poorly against the assessment criteria; DE advised that they may not meet the cross-community test, though it would depend on the actual application. A second call for projects was launched in October 2014. An announcement on the successful projects in the second call was expected to be made in June 2015.

DSC Shared Education Signature Project

80. On 17 September 2014, OFMDFM announced 3 new signature programmes – Dementia (DHSSPS in the lead), Early Intervention (DHSSPS in the lead but involving DE) and Shared Education (DE only). The programmes are to be co-funded by Atlantic Philanthropies. The Shared Education programme is designed to mainstream Shared Education and has attracted £10m of support from Atlantic Philanthropies.
81. The business case for the Shared Education Signature Project indicated that only schools at level 2 or higher of the sharing continuum - i.e. regular and sustained contact - will be eligible for support from the project. The business case suggested that this would equate to around 65% of all schools.

82. The Shared Education Signature Project is to be delivered by the Education Authority through a regional mechanism with a dedicated support team. It was argued that this has the lowest costs and risks and higher benefits in respect of improved confidence and competence for teaching staff.
83. Total resource costs were given as £24.5m – initial spending of £1.2m in Year 0 rising to £8.7m in Year 3. Transport costs were estimated at £5.5m with sub-cover, training etc. costing £14m. There were no capital costs.
84. Funding of £25m – comprising £10m from Atlantic Philanthropies; £10m from OFMDFM and £5m from DE – will be available from 2014 to 2018. The Atlantic Philanthropies funding in Year 3 is dependent on a DE commitment to mainstream Shared Education in the longer term. Outcome assessment for the project were to be based on:
 - improving levels of Key Stages 2 and 3 and GCSE achievement including maths and English for participating schools;
 - increasing provision of shared classes (other than for the Entitlement Framework) from 23% of participating schools to a level to be agreed by 2017-18;
 - increasing reconciliation outcomes including Cross Group Friendships, Positive Action Tendencies while reducing Intergroup Anxiety – based on a longitudinal study which is being undertaken by QUB;
 - increasing from 15% to 20% of participating schools those involved in whole school sharing; increasing 1-class sharing from 13% to 80% of participating schools and increasing joint delivery of PDMU and Learning for Life and Work by 2017-18;
 - provide professional development for some teachers in 95% of participating schools by 2017-18;
 - refine the QUB continuum of Shared Education by end of 2014/15 and further develop quality indicators by 2017-18 with all participating schools progressing by 1 step in the sharing continuum (compared to self-assessments made at application stage);
 - Shared Education featuring in; DE business plans, EA Resource plans, ETI inspections for all schools and school development plans.
85. ETI was to review and evaluate the level and effectiveness of sharing in participating school partnerships. Atlantic Philanthropies may also commission additional research in this regard.
86. An Expert Advisory Committee – nominated by OFMDFM, DHSSPS, DE and Atlantic Philanthropies – was to provide advice on the Shared Education project and on evaluation and performance and will report through the Shared Education Signature Project Programme Board to the Atlantic Philanthropies / DSC Programme Board. The first call for projects was scheduled to be made in November 2014. The first tranche of partnerships to be funded were announced on 30 March 2015.

Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) / Shared Education Learning Forum

87. The International Fund for Ireland (IFI) funded projects that enabled young people to participate in Shared Education activities and to provide sustainable models of good practice that are designed to inform future practice in education. The Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) was managed by the IFI liaison team in the Department of Education and supported 22 projects. The projects included: facilitated discussion of controversial topics; creative delivery of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) aspects of the curriculum; development for teachers on issues of diversity (the Classroom Re-imagined Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers – the CREDIT project); a review of the shared history of the 2 main communities in Northern Ireland; a welcoming schools project for all young people regardless of religion or race; shared learning experiences involving sport, culture,

social skills; a parenting programme for parents and school staff; a cross-border identity and friendship project; and a youth programme for NEETs.

88. IFI indicated that over 46,000 children, young people, parents and school staff were involved in the SIEP in the period 2010-13 in all Education and Library Board areas. In addition to the above, the Atlantic Philanthropies who jointly funded three of the 22 projects also funded the Shared Education Learning Forum composed of: the Centre for Shared Education (CSE) at QUB; the Fermanagh Trust Shared Education Programme; and the Primary Integrating / Enriching Education Project (PIEE) developed by the North Eastern ELB.

Centre for Shared Education (CSE) at QUB

89. The Centre for Shared Education (CSE) was established by the School of Education in Queen's University Belfast in May 2012. The CSE defines Shared Education as: *'Collaborative activity between schools from different sectors that is underpinned by a commitment to reconciliation objectives and can contribute towards school improvement, access to opportunity and more positive intergroup relations in divided societies'*.
90. Prior to the formal establishment of the CSE and subsequently, its associates undertook related research and work as part of the Sharing Education Programme in Northern Ireland:
- Sharing Education Programme 1 (2006-2010) SEP1 is described as an activity based programme encouraging the development of institutional links and trust through working together involving 65 schools and 3,500 pupils.
 - Sharing Education Programme 2 (2010-2013) SEP2 partnerships started in September 2010 involved 72 primary and post-primary schools and annually approximately 5,000 pupils. SEP2 was based on the Area Learning Communities focusing on societal, educational and economic outcomes.
 - Sharing Education Programme 3 (2011-2014) SEP3 works with partnerships from all previous programmes (43 schools making up 17 partnerships and over 4,000 pupils). SEP3 was designed to take a number of key school partnerships to a higher level of collaborative relationship that complements current Departmental policy around Area Based Planning - again focusing on educational and societal return.
 - Foyle Contested Spaces (2011-2014) This programme is described as a schools based initiative involving 3 post-primary and 5 primary schools in Derry/Londonderry with a total of 1,161 pupils. The 8 schools have developed an educational programme for pupils between the ages of 8 to 15 which utilises PDMU and Learning for Life and Work elements of the curriculum to address social issues facing young people.
91. CSE describes its mission as promoting Shared Education as a mechanism for the delivery of reconciliation and educational benefits to all children, delivered through: research, Shared Education programmes and education and training for practitioners. The research strand supports a programme of comparative national and international research that aims to enhance understanding of school-based sharing, the collaborative process, and associated outcomes.
92. CSE developed a 6 stage spectrum of sharing from "Schools in Isolation" to "Institutional Interdependence". CSE indicated that no schools in Northern Ireland are currently at the final "Institutional Interdependence" stage – though it was argued that such a situation might arise as a consequence of the T:BUC Shared Education Campus programme.

Peace IV

93. 45m Euro – 20% of the total Peace IV budget of 229m Euro – was initially allocated by the European Regional Development Fund to Shared Education – it is understood that the final figure will be 30m Euro. The specific objective being: "the creation of a more cohesive society by increasing the level of sustained contact between school children from all backgrounds

across the Programme area” (Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland border counties). A key attribute of all shared education activities will be the on-going and sustained sharing of classes; subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities.

94. The programme’s effectiveness is to be measured by: the number of children sustaining a friendship or cordial relationship with a person or persons from the other community; increased understanding and tolerance for the other community; improved educational outcomes; teachers trained in shared education across the whole curriculum; development of networks involving all members of the school community; governors and parents trained in shared education values; and joint delivery of the curriculum.
95. Activities are to be designed to incorporate a whole school approach to sharing involving the wider community. Children at all phases are to be involved. Cross-border partnerships are to be encouraged. Activities are to support children’s understanding and tolerance of difference including religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, disability or political affiliation.
96. The Special European Union Programme Board (SEUPB) consultation closed on 29 July 2014. The Committee wrote to SEUPB indicating its support for the proposed measures within Peace IV (and indeed other funding streams) for the encouragement of Shared Education across all educational phases. The Committee urged SEUPB to encourage Shared Education programmes supported under Peace IV to capitalise on the extensive learning from previous Shared Education projects including the NEELB PíEE project and the Fermanagh Trust Shared Education partnerships. The Committee also strongly indicated that the relevant Peace IV projects should support the development of guidance which helps all schools to get involved with Shared Education.
97. The Department advised that proposals for Peace IV funding will not be approved until autumn 2015 and are expected to be focused on the 24% of schools not currently involved in sharing as well as youth to school and early years settings.

Consideration of Evidence

98. All non-departmental written submissions are included in Appendix 3.
- Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle
99. Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School shared their experience of Shared Education with the Committee. They reported that around 140 pupils from each school undertake shared curricular classes each week. The Boards of Governors (BoGs) of both schools have agreed core values and a mission for the Shared Education partnership – largely based on improving educational provision. The schools have formed collaborative sub-committees and take a shared approach to School Development Planning for 14 to 19 attainment. The partnership was described as allowing the delivery of the Entitlement Framework with the involvement of Northern Regional College. The schools support a joint school council and undertake shared careers events as well as joint sporting and charity activities.
100. The schools contended that the enablers for Shared Education are:
- a strong and equal partnership between participating schools underpinned by an understanding of the purpose of the partnership and the needs of the schools;
 - commitment at DE, ELB/CCMS and Trustee level based on their acceptance of Shared Education as an economically viable option which preserves culture and identity while delivering educational improvement;
 - confidence of parents and pupils based on strong communication channels, robust protocols, Service Level Agreements and shared educational policies;
 - training and development of governors and staff; and
 - co-location of schools so as to minimise the costs and impracticalities of travel from school to school.
101. The schools also contended that their partnership is very much in keeping with the objective of the CRED policy in terms of improving relations between communities through educating children to develop respect for others and by the provision of formal and non-formal educational opportunities to build cross-community relationships. However the schools agreed that support for the partnership depends very much on the maintenance of the educational capabilities of each school. The schools maintained educational excellence by close joint monitoring and tracking of pupil progress and the development of a collegiate approach among teaching staff towards the partnership and discipline and attainment issues and extra-curricular activities. The schools also indicated that they place a high value on a shared culture of pro-active pastoral care for pupils and parents evidenced by daily exchange of information on absentees and events; regular pastoral contacts involving year heads etc.; regular departmental meetings; parents' afternoons; and a joint 6th form council etc. The schools synchronise holidays and staff development days; co-ordinate timetable development; and align staff performance objectives.
102. The schools reported meaningful engagement with external agencies in the locality which supports the partnership. The schools had received support from the Centre for Shared Education at QUB and have recently successfully secured funding from the T:BUC Shared Campus Programme. The schools highlighted concerns in respect of the rundown of support from the Curriculum Advisory Support Service (CASS) and uncertainty in respect of funding to support the delivery of the Entitlement Framework.

Professors Knox and Borooah, Ulster University

103. Knox and Borooah contended that there is a high degree of religious segregation in primary and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland. It was indicated that the level of segregation is higher in Controlled and Maintained non-Grammar post-primaries although the non-Grammar

post-primary sector also sees the highest proportion of pupils attending Integrated schools. It was contended that Catholics are far more likely to attend Controlled Grammars than Protestants are to attend Catholic Voluntary Grammars.

104. Knox and Borooah contended that the benefits of Integrated Education are generally societal rather than educational. Indeed it was argued that Grant Maintained Integrated schools perform as poorly, or nearly as poorly, at GCSE as the worst performing sector i.e. the Controlled non-Grammar sector. Knox and Borooah argued that parental choice in respect of post-primary school is largely determined by school examination performance at GCSE rather than whether the school ethos is linked to integration and societal reconciliation.
105. Knox and Borooah contrasted Integrated Education with its focus on wider societal goals with Shared Education which it was argued was centred on creating inter-dependencies which support improved school performance. It was contended that sharing and federative arrangements between better and poorer performing schools can have a significant positive impact on student outcomes. Knox and Borooah appeared to suggest that the focus of Shared Education programmes should alter from collaboration and trust-building exercises to raising educational standards, tackling inequalities and thus contributing to a more inclusive society.

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)

106. NICCY referenced Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which indicates that education should prepare a child for “responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.” NICCY suggested that the aims of Shared Education – which it recorded as promotion of equality of identity, respect of diversity and community cohesion – are in line with Article 29.
107. NICCY also made reference to the findings of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in respect of the need to facilitate the establishment of additional Integrated schools as a means of reducing segregation in education in Northern Ireland. NICCY highlighted the absence of any reference to Integrated Education in the Programme for Government.
108. In order to inform the MAG on Advancing Shared Education, NICCY undertook a consultation with children and young people between October 2012 and January 2013. The consultation had 2 strands:
 - 38 workshops involving 750 8-10 year olds and 14-17 year olds in a sample group of (21) schools representing all sectors including: 11 primaries, 10 post-primaries and 1 special school. The sample included urban and rural schools; selective and non-selective schools; and schools involved or not involved in Shared Education. The workshops were supplemented by 20 interviews with principals or other members of staff.; and
 - surveys of around 4000 children aged 10 to 11 years (Kids’ Life and Times Survey) and 1000 young people aged 16 years (Young Life and Times Survey). Surveys were completed on line, on paper or via the telephone.
109. Access Research Knowledge (ARK) devised 2 modules of questions in associated with NICCY. The consultation questions sought children’s views on Shared Education and Area Planning.
110. In respect of Shared Education, NICCY’s consultation found:
 - Primary 7 school pupils had limited understanding of the concept of Shared Education however a high percentage of respondents – over 75% - had undertaken shared trips or projects or had shared facilities with children from other schools. Just less than two thirds of primary school respondents reported that these activities involved children of a different religion. Primary pupils, where they had experience of sharing, generally reported positive views on it.;

- Post-primary pupils appeared to associate Shared Education with the delivery of the Entitlement Framework and the work of Area Learning Communities. Post-primary respondents were more likely to have taken part in shared projects than shared classes and generally recorded positive feedback in respect of both. Positive views appeared to be linked to the opportunity to make new friends and to a much lesser extent: to gain an insight into other schools or to gain access to a broader curriculum. Some students reported only limited interaction with pupils from other schools during shared classes etc.. A small number of students reported concerns related to being the minority in the classroom or to receiving adverse commentary from students from other schools. Around half of post-primary school respondents reported concerns in respect of additional travelling to school as a consequence of more shared classes.;
- The survey found that around two thirds of school children at primaries and post-primaries believed that the main drawback to Shared Education might be increased bullying.
- The majority of pupils generally indicated that Shared Education should not be limited to bringing the 2 largest communities together but should include pupils from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds.
- School staff reported generally positive views of sharing activities but highlighted the difficulty in negotiating parental consent for participation in sharing owing to: the impact “of the Northern Ireland conflict on the local community” and concerns in respect of the erosion of their own identity. School staff suggested that although the majority of parents supported sharing, a minority had voiced dissent usually in respect of cross-community issues. However parents also had concerns in respect of the transport arrangements for pupils and in terms of teaching quality in other schools
- Staff welcomed the opportunities sharing brings in respect of extending curricular provision although some concerns were expressed in respect of teaching quality in other schools. Staff commented on logistical challenges to sharing largely in respect of transport costs but also in terms of timetabling shared classes. Staff highlighted the importance of CRED funding for sharing activities – to meet transport costs and provide teacher cover. Staff also welcomed improvements in the inclusion of Special Schools with the wider educational community that sharing facilitates. Special School staff argued that exposure to children in Special Schools provided beneficial insight for mainstream school children.
- Irish Medium school staff reported difficulties in participation in Shared Education owing to the absence of dual medium learning opportunities;

111. In respect of Area Planning, NICCY’s consultation found:

- School pupils had limited understanding of Area Planning. Around 50% of pupils expressed concern in respect of the hypothetical closure of a neighbouring school and the transfer of pupils to their school.
- Some school staff expressed concerns in respect of the impact of Shared Education on Area Planning – the suggestion apparently being that shared provision could undermine the job security of teachers. Others argued that Shared Education was an attempt to avoid the government’s obligations in respect of Integrated Education.

112. NICCY suggested that consideration be given to:

- a definition of Shared Education. NICCY argued that many pupils are wrongly viewing any interaction between schools as Shared Education and that there is some variation in Shared Education content with some activities going beyond enhanced curriculum provision to promote mutual understanding and appreciation of diversity etc.;
- clarifying the aims and intentions behind all Shared Education endeavours, supporting schools, undertaking regular pupil feedback and managing parental concerns and

expectations in order to avoid unsatisfactory “shared but separate” educational experiences in schools.;

- promoting Shared Education in primary schools and across all school types through enjoyable practical activities in alternative environments;
- challenging preconceptions and stereotyping prior to Shared Education activity in order to allay pupils’ fears in respect of bullying and perceived differences in ability and religion.
- overcoming logistical barriers to inclusion in Shared Education for Special Schools;
- how Integrated Education with its existing shared learning environment fits alongside Shared Education; and
- how Shared Education can be supported in the Area Planning process.

Parenting NI

113. In response to the inquiry, Parenting NI undertook an on-line survey of parents’ views in respect of Shared and Integrated Education. The consultation was distributed to members of the Parenting Forum and was completed on-line in early October 2014. There were around 200 respondents who completed all questions. Most respondents were female, married, urban with an even split between Catholics and Protestants. Around two thirds of respondents had a child who currently goes to an Integrated school or pre-school.
114. Respondents generally commented in positive terms about Shared Education highlighting its value in sharing resources and promoting equality and inclusion. Parenting NI reported that “parents thought that Shared Education should be provided under one roof, in the same school, where there is an ethos of respecting difference and being tolerant of differences.”
115. Parenting NI indicated that respondents reported the barriers or disadvantages to Shared Education included: limited real mixing between children which does not tackle cultural differences; lack of resources; questionable and variable educational quality depending on the partner schools; bullying concerns if one community is in the minority; religious differences being highlighted as different school uniforms and religious education policies would be in use.
116. Respondents commented positively in respect of Integrated Education. Parenting NI reported that parents stated “that to be an inclusive school, the teaching of religion either needs to focus on all religions or not be taught at all”. Parenting NI report that most respondents felt that religion should be a personal choice catered for outside of school.
117. Parenting NI indicated that respondents reported the barriers or disadvantages to Integrated Education included: level of integration may vary depending on location of schools; perceived loss of identity; perceived lack of moral vision in the absence of traditional religion teaching; lack of funding and limited availability of places; lower educational standards.
118. Parenting NI reported that respondents had made the following suggestions in order to promote Shared and Integrated Education: shared teacher training (at a single campus); more funding for Shared Education programmes and Integrated schools; an agreed vision and commitment from policy makers; removal of or changes to teaching of religion in schools; Early Years cross-community or Integrated provision; changes to school policies in respect of flags and emblems in schools; mixed home to school transport provision; shared 16+ timetabling to promote sharing between schools.

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE)

119. NICIE reminded the Committee of the statutory duty to ‘encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education’. NICIE also made reference to the Drumragh judgement and the assertion that Integrated Education ‘is a stand alone concept, that is to say the education together at school of protestant and roman catholic pupils...as opposed to

integration within school of any other distinct set of pupils'. NICIE called on DE to actively implement Article 64 to encourage and facilitate Integrated Education.

120. NICIE contended that the most significant barrier to Integrated Education is the unequal approach to education planning - arguing that CCMS has a statutory duty to plan for the Maintained sector, the ELBs plan for the Controlled sector but the Integrated sector has to rely on parents to plan this provision for themselves with support from NICIE only, who have no statutory remit for planning. NICIE highlighted the absence of a central and agreed mechanism to consult with parents in respect of demand for Integrated Education. NICIE argued that it is crucial that the legislation clarifies at an operational level how Article 64 is to be implemented and that the new Education Authority has a clear responsibility to plan for Integrated Education.
121. NICIE argued that by linking pre-school provision to single identity schools children are becoming divided at the earliest age. NICIE called on DE to only fund pre-school provision that is non-denominational. NICIE indicated that it believes that the role of Special Schools in providing Integrated Education is often not recognised and that the legal barrier preventing Special Schools from becoming designated as Integrated schools should be rescinded.
122. NICIE commented on the unsustainability of current education provision referring to unjustifiable duplication and triplication of services NICIE called on the Committee to fully endorse its initiative 'Positive Partnerships for Integration' which develops simpler routes for transformation of Maintained and Controlled schools.
123. NICIE emphasised the importance of preparing teachers to support diverse and inclusive learning environments and called on DE to implement actions arising from the International Review panel on Teacher Education in Northern Ireland.
124. NICIE highlighted its support for the concept of Shared Education where it is based on building community relations through connecting children and young people however NICIE contended that Shared Education is a completely different concept to Integrated Education. NICIE supported a clear definition of Shared Education and argued that this should focus on its role as a tool for reconciliation. NICIE contended that Shared Education should be seen as a step on the journey to Integrated Education.
125. In response to CCMS / NICCE submissions, NICIE accused the Catholic church of being historically implacably opposed to Integrated Education and appeared to argue that there is "a critical difference between catholic and integrated schools where an equality of respect is evident for all." NICIE reiterated its argument in respect of the costs of division in education and again called for a "Patten style inquiry" or commission to desegregate schooling in Northern Ireland and also to consider the appetite for Integrated Education which it contended is significant and growing. NICIE also called for all publicly funded schools to be owned by the state.

Professor Roger Austin, Ulster University

126. Professor Austin gave evidence on the Dissolving Boundaries programme. This was an initiative funded jointly by the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) and the Department of Education and Skills in the Republic of Ireland – the 2 Departments provided around 1m Euro in 2000-2004; DE provided £0.5m in the period 2008-2014; initial capital costs were met by Eircom and Dell. The programme ran from 2000 until August 2014 when funding was discontinued by both Departments. The programme was managed by the Schools of Education at the University of Ulster and at the National University of Ireland (Maynooth) who worked closely in Northern Ireland with the Education and Library Boards (ELBs), c2k and Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).
127. The programme invited primary, post-primary and special schools in both jurisdictions to form partnerships and to develop a relationship based around a particular curriculum-related project. There were 3 objectives: to engage pupils in collaborative curricular projects; to

promote mutual understanding through collaborative cross-border links; and to promote sustainability of the use of technology in schools.

128. Professor Austin indicated that using ICT as the main means of communication, the programme (supported by face to face meetings with teachers and pupils) linked 50,000 young people, 570 schools and 2,600 teachers through cross-border work in special, primary and post-primary schools. It was indicated that in order to achieve best results, schools should link up for at least one school year through regular online contact - with face to face meetings ideally occurring at the beginning of the programme.
129. In 2010-11, the Department of Education in England commissioned research from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) into educational programmes across the United Kingdom that were building “resilience” amongst young people to address difficult issues to do with identity and community cohesion. Dissolving Boundaries was identified as the best example of the above in Northern Ireland. In the NFER analysis, alignment with other school policies was identified as a key ingredient in the design of the programme as was open communication and regular feedback from schools; the adoption of a young person-centred design for the programme and an emphasis on the importance of identity and self-confidence for pupils. In respect of the latter it was indicated that this was supported through social and curricular contact via mixed cross-border teams which undertook team-building exercises.
130. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) and the Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate (DESI) in the Republic of Ireland undertook a joint evaluation of the Dissolving Boundaries programme in 2010-11. The findings were very positive with quality of leadership and management; planning; teaching and learning; support; and achievement of standards being described as generally “good” or better. ETI/DESI indicated that there was strong and commendable linkage between the programme and the curricular requirements in respect of the use of ICT.
131. Professor Austin argued that the use of ICT may enable more sharing between schools and serve to overcome the logistical / transportation / cost problems highlighted by many other respondents to the inquiry. It was further argued that the focus on ICT within the programme matches the focus on the same kind of cross-curricular skills for Key Stages 1,2 and 3. It was indicated that the programme supported community cohesion by promoting face to face or ICT-based contact between peers in school.

Centre for Shared Education (CSE) at Queen’s University Belfast

132. CSE argued that the existing largely separate education system in Northern Ireland perpetuates division. CSE appeared to accept what is termed “the reality of separate education” but argued that Shared Education provides an opportunity for creating porous boundaries and bridging mechanisms between sectors while delivering a necessary model for building relationships between different socio-ethno-religious groups of pupils/schools. CSE contended that effective collaboration between schools can improve pupil performance; enhance teacher development and motivation; and increase the breadth of the curricular offer.
133. CSE contrasted Shared Education with Integrated Education arguing that the former elevates educational outcomes in respect of core curricular areas as opposed to reconciliation objectives thus enhancing its appeal among divided communities. CSE suggested that these communities may be wary of government-sponsored “community relations” initiatives which they may view as an attempt to denigrate or assimilate distinct identity groups. Integrated Education was described as being an effective mechanism for relationship building but which has only a limited appeal among parents. CSE also contrasted Shared Education with short term largely ineffective contact initiatives which are not curriculum based and which do not offer opportunities for sustained contact. CSE indicated that although educational objectives are foregrounded in its Shared Education programmes, it also provides support for teachers to tackle community relations issues.

134. CSE contended that Shared Education brings different social or ethnic or religious groups into sustained contact with each other through inter-school collaboration thus lessening anxiety and promoting empathy and better relations. The groups involved in the contact must have equal status; the contact must be in pursuit of common goals; the contact must be characterised by co-operation not competition and must have the sanction of appropriate authority figures. In order to support contact which is “intimate and sustained rather than superficial in nature” and which allows for self-disclosure and the time and space for friendship development, CSE indicated that a high degree of institutional support is required. CSE asserted that the common goal of educational improvement for schools involved in Shared Education must be superordinate to the community relations goal.
135. CSE contended that Shared Education measurably lowers anxiety among pupils towards members of other ethno-religious groups. CSE indicated that anxiety in respect of initial contact is often higher for children with expectations of negative personal consequences or for children from more socially deprived backgrounds or for children from communities with higher historical levels of tension. CSE compared the reactions of children in schools involved in Shared Education with those in the same school who were not involved. CSE concluded that the Shared Education programme was an important determinant of attitudes.
136. CSE also indicated that where children attend schools with a relatively high level of mixing of the 2 communities (i.e. over 10%, so-called supermixed schools) - regardless of whether the school has an Integrated ethos or not but provided that there was a supportive climate for inter-community contact – anxiety about the other community is lower and attitudes are more positive.
137. CSE contended that the barriers to sharing between schools – proximity, travel and timetabling – are overcome by the better Shared Education partnerships.
138. CSE argued that the lack of a co-ordinated policy or clear definition of Shared Education has created a policy vacuum which allows it to be labelled as light-touch and supporting the status quo; affects the depth of meaningful activity; and limits Shared Education’s potential to effect lasting systemic change. CSE called for legislation which will provide a consensus around the definition of Shared Education. CSE argued that further pilot schemes are not required and called for a wide-ranging review of DE policy including Area Planning and the Entitlement Framework so as to ensure that they support Shared Education in future and to establish the basis for the development of policy and strategy.
139. CSE contended that Shared Education should be characterised by: the formation of a strong collective identity; strong professional relationships; opportunities for teacher and organisational development; tangible collective commodities including shared resources; and strong strategic advocates.
140. CSE indicated that strong Shared Education partnerships will naturally evolve into a strong institutional relationship based on mutual benefit.

Methodist College Belfast

141. Representatives of Methodist College Belfast gave evidence of the school’s experience of sharing and described its ethos. It was argued that the latter had led to a high and sustained degree of mixing of pupils from the 2 main communities and other minority groups. The school was reported to be significantly involved in sharing activities with other schools.
142. Founded by the Methodist Church in 1865, Methodist College, Belfast described itself as an inter-denominational, co-educational grammar school, where “pupils of all faiths and none are welcomed into a safe, supportive and inclusive environment”. The school gave its aims as providing: equal opportunities for all where the diverse talents of pupils are appreciated, nurtured and celebrated; the development of intellectual curiosity, critical debate, active and independent learning, and the pursuit of excellence.

143. The College is a voluntary grammar school. The membership of the Board of Governors is appointed by the Conference of the Methodist Church and the Department of Education or elected as representatives of parents and academic staff. The maximum enrolment is 1810 pupils (current enrolment 1753) between the ages of 11 and 18. Around 43% of students are Protestant; 21% are Catholic and 34% are designated as Other Religion or Religion Not Known. 3% of children are entitled to Free School Meals. 7% are recorded as having Special Educational Need. Around 82% of school leavers go on to Higher Education. 15% go on to Further Education.

Community Relations Council (CRC) and Equality Commission (the Commission)

144. Both organizations highlighted in their submissions, the importance of education both formal and informal as a critical player in supporting reconciliation, good relations etc. and in tackling inequality and promoting equality of opportunity. CRC highlighted the role of education in providing opportunities for engagement and enrichment. The Commission argued that societal mixing and social cohesion is limited by separation in educational provision. The Commission argued that the rights of parents to select faith-based schools should not be allowed to overshadow the importance of education in maximizing good relations etc..
145. In the absence of a definition of good relations, the Commission referred to the need for a high level of dignity, respect and mutual understanding as well as ensuring an absence of prejudice, hatred, hostility or harassment while also tackling prejudice and promoting understanding. CRC recommended that schools; BoGs etc. should have a statutory duty to promote good relations and that training for educational organisations should include good relations modules.
146. In respect of a definition for Shared Education, both organisations supported the MAG definition and called for clarity in respect of the relationship between Integrated and Shared Education. The Commission indicated that the definition should highlight how Shared and Integrated Education should interact in order to achieve the overarching educational and societal policy goals.
147. Both organisations generally argued that Shared Education should impact meaningfully on all learners at all phases of education from pre-school to tertiary levels and that this should be achieved by children routinely learning in shared classes via a shared curriculum. The Commission felt that sharing with Special Schools could play an important role in challenging stereotypes and promoting positive attitudes and inclusion in respect of disability. It was also suggested that the concept of sharing should be central to the system of education as a whole; should be supported by a statutory obligation and that the relevant definition should describe a continuum of sharing in schools.
148. It was suggested that the Department should utilize the existing body of research on Shared Education programmes in order to inform coherent policy development in which all educational policies are aligned in support of Shared Education and to engage schools etc. not presently involved in sharing through the production of guidance. In support of this, CRC called for an audit and evaluation of education sharing activities. CRC argued that Shared and Integrated Education were part of a family of policies designed to enhance cohesion in society. The Commission referenced the absence of guidance to schools which wish to collaborate via a federation or confederation or shared communities of learning. Reference was also made to barriers to sharing including: academic selection at 11; separate teacher training arrangements; and the exemption for teachers in respect of Fair Employment legislation. The Commission also referred to “differential patterns of enrolment to education providers” as a barrier to sharing. CRC also recommended changes to educational structures in order to promote sharing in support of better educational outcomes.
149. In respect of enablers for Shared Education, a greater role for Area Learning Communities was suggested as was increased funding via the Common Funding Scheme. It was also recommended that sharing (educational and governance) indicators are developed and

used through the Delivering Social Change programmes to mainstream sharing. CRC raised concerns in respect of the need for DE support to ensure that lessons learned from Shared Education programmes to-date are not lost when the relevant funding comes to an end. CRC also highlighted “weakness” in Area Planning policy and local Area Plans in respect of Shared and Integrated Education. CRC recommended changes to the Area Planning process including a requirement for schools to explore options for sharing which promote normalized interaction and engagement. CRC also called for facilitative dialogue supported by DE and involving parents and children at local Area Planning level in order to encourage Shared and Integrated solutions and to also deal with ethos and identity issues using the UNCRC framework.

150. It was further recommended that maximum use be made of the CRED policy by enhancing funding support and aligning curriculum content more carefully with CRED aspirations. The Commission highlighted the need for better consultation by DE with children and young people in the development of Shared Education policy including the development of a robust recording and evaluation system for feedback. The Commission also indicated that it had commissioned QUB to undertake in-depth research into educational inequalities in Northern Ireland which it hoped will be published in 2015.

Integrated Education Fund (IEF); Professor Brandon Hamber, Professor Alan Smith, Ulster University

151. IEF described the education system in Northern Ireland as segregated and providing limited opportunities for children to interact with other communities or appreciate other perspectives and cultures. Prof Hamber indicated that it is questionable whether non-Integrated schools are able to supply the “core skills which a child need to exist, work and play alongside children from other backgrounds”. IEF referenced research which established that mixed religion schools would reduce sectarianism. Prof Hamber referenced research which suggested that religious segregation “promotes less positive attitudes of others”.
152. IEF argued that “educating all children together is an essential part of the reconciliation process and of building a society that celebrates respect, understanding and friendships across traditional divides.” IEF called for wide-ranging reform of education leading to new arrangements “where children learn and are taught together in their local area”. IEF also indicated that it respects the wishes of parents who select various types of school as long as the schools are “wholly inclusive and provide full equality of opportunity.”
153. Prof Hamber and IEF quoted a number of studies highlighting high levels of support for Integrated Education. Both argued that the barriers to Integrated Education included the Area Planning process and called for changes which would require real and very significant parental demand to be recognized by increasing Integrated school places. IEF contended that limited increases in the Integrated school population was wholly a function of limited access to school places. IEF disputed previous evidence from Knox and Borooah that attainment in Integrated schools was lower (with some exceptions) than other types of school. However IEF accepted that attainment was probably a more important consideration for parents than whether there was an Integrated or other ethos.
154. IEF argued that Shared Education unlike Integrated Education provided only limited and poor quality opportunities for collaboration between pupils of different communities. Prof Hamber described Integrated schools as having an explicit ethos to recognize and celebrate diversity whereas even so-called supermixed schools had an over-riding ideology and culture which made it difficult for children of other faiths to feel that their backgrounds had equality of position in the school. Prof Hamber also argued that Shared Education was essentially “a sticking plaster on a system that is largely not conducive to creating positive attitudes between groups.” He suggested that the context of segregated schools would inevitably undermine any achievements associated with sharing.
155. IEF indicated opposition to a statutory obligation to promote Shared Education suggesting that this was a way of “side-stepping the issue of desegregating our education system”.

Prof Hamber suggested that the major sectors exerted a stranglehold on education and had “vested interest in keeping education segregated”.

156. IEF argued that DE should enhance the curriculum to support understanding of political, cultural and religious difference and that schools should be required with the support of DE to embed these principles in their ethos. IEF argued that the promotion of Integrated Education should inform other policies for example shared housing etc.. IEF argued that all grant-aided schools should be required “to be inclusive spaces” that are open to all children, teachers etc. from all backgrounds. IEF argued that funding should be provided to schools in order to encourage greater integration and that progress in this regard should be evaluated by ETI using agreed measures. IEF also recommended: a review of the cost of segregated education; the establishment of a single authority for the administration of education; the establishment of a single teacher training system; the establishment of a single model of governance for all schools; the extension of Fair Employment legislation to all teachers; and the extension of Section 75 to all schools.
157. Prof Hamber recommended some of the above as well as: DE support for the expansion of existing Integrated schools; DE support for schools undertaking sharing in order to convert to Integrated status; realignment of Shared Education resources to support and encourage Integration; and setting a timetable for the full integration of the education system by 2024.
158. Prof Smith made many similar points to IEF and Prof Hamber. Prof Smith also argued that Shared Education initiatives are not new and that sustainability and effectiveness concerns have not been addressed. He argued that the DSC Signature Project societal measures should be compared with the impact of Integrated Education and are based on attitudinal changes which won’t allow evaluation of institutional or systemic change. He highlighted the high costs of the project and the logistical challenges of pupils moving from school to school. Prof Smith argued that an obligation to promote Shared Education would leave the Department open to legal challenge if it failed to meet its targets for Shared Education.

Prof Smith questioned the value of the Lisanelly shared campus project given the limited level of sharing at Key Stage 3. Prof Smith recommended: redirecting the Atlantic Philanthropies money to support voluntary cross-sectoral amalgamations; and introducing measures to require schools to make their workforce, governors and enrolments more diverse.

Belfast, North Eastern, Southern, Western and South Eastern Education and Library Boards (ELBs)

159. The ELBs advised the Committee of their previous and current support for Shared Education and related programmes including the Primary Integrated and Enriching Education project (NEELB); the Sharing in Education Programme (WELB); and the Shared Education Campuses Programme (SELB) etc.. ELBs indicated that there is already significant policy experience of sharing in Northern Ireland and that future sharing policies should be subject to a rigorous evaluation which establishes the level of successful mainstreaming.
160. The ELBs highlighted that there appeared to be limited awareness and understanding among some stakeholders of Shared Education owing to the absence of a clear definition and uncertainty in respect of the relationship with Integrated Education. WELB described Integrated Education as “only one facet of Shared Education”. BELB highlighted the importance of the definition setting out the primacy of educational benefits for learners while also giving some recognition to the positive societal consequences of Shared Education. BELB indicated that the latter should be assessed through longitudinal studies of young people’s attitudes, behaviours, understanding and reconciliation skills. NEELB also identified economic benefits associated with sharing and argued that the development of a teaching “staffing spine of mutuality” was key to successful sharing projects. Some ELBs referenced increasing diversity in sectors and the need for a definition of Shared Education which recognized this. BELB indicated that the definition should require schools to adopt a sustained approach to sharing which is not limited to the 2 main communities in Northern

- Ireland. ELBs referenced the need for a coherent policy framework which established a clear purpose and rationale for sharing which marries up with other policies e.g. CRED and the relevant parts of the curriculum.
161. WELB argued that sectoral definitions are no longer always accurate or helpful – citing the increasingly large number of parents who choose to designate their children as neither Protestant nor Catholic but as “Other” and a number of schools defined as being in a particular sector but with high proportions of pupils from the community which might previously have been expected to identify with a different sector. WELB suggested that the religious profile of children in many Controlled schools now matches Integrated schools and that consequently the obligation to promote and facilitate formally Integrated schools fails to recognize and disadvantages those Controlled schools in which “natural sharing” has evolved. WELB called for the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project to target support to mixed Controlled schools of this type. WELB also called for a review of school intakes in order to assess the changing pattern of enrolments.
 162. WELB recommended that DE develop a strategic plan for cross-sectoral collaboration underpinned by a statutory obligation requiring schools to share; revisions to the School Building Handbook; the development of Schemes of Management and admissions policies for Shared Schools; and the development of governance models for shared campuses which address inequalities in respect of land ownership. NEELB called for a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage Shared Education. NEELB also indicated that a fully integrated system of schooling is not achievable and that collaboration between sectors should be supported. BELB suggested that School Development Plans and Area Plans should be required to consider sharing options.
 163. The ELBs sought an audit and baselining of existing shared activity in order to better define future progress and identify good models of sharing which could be used as a re-source, along with advice and guidance, to support the mainstreaming of sharing. Some ELBs argued that the baselining exercise should be used to identify those schools not involved in sharing. These ELBs argued that contrary to the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project objectives, these schools rather than those undertaking some level of sharing should receive targeted support. SELB suggested that the Integrated sector should play a role in sharing its experience of teaching children about diversity, respect and tolerance for others.
 164. In respect of enablers for sharing, ELBs emphasized the importance of clear and committed leadership in BoGs and school leadership teams. ELBs highlighted the need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) which focuses on sharing and which would support teachers who may feel less confident in undertaking this work in some less receptive communities or who may need to tackle concerns or resistance from a minority of parents. BELB indicated that CRED is not currently embedded in ITE and that this should be addressed as DE moves forward with Shared Education. ELBs also identified the importance of local factors including supportive Area Learning Communities, parents and communities as well as close proximity of schools as enablers for sharing.
 165. BELB made reference to the importance of partner schools feeling equal and confident with the “history, ethos and value system” in each school being understood and respected. BELB indicated also that the “development of cultural awareness, dialogue and understanding is of central importance in preparing young people for adult life” and is key to widening pupil horizons and providing ways of thinking beyond local contexts.
 166. ELBs referenced the need for a significant level of sustained resources including new structures and staff in the Education Authority in order to support the mainstreaming of Shared Education and to meet core costs including transport etc. BELB highlighted the importance of maintaining CRED Enhancement funding. In respect of barriers to sharing, BELB suggested that schools with a more affluent socio-economic pupil profile may be

resistant to sharing in case it has an adverse impact on pupil attainment. WELB appeared to have identified academic selection as a barrier to sharing.

167. NEELB argued that Special Schools have much to offer in respect of peer education and that they should play a prominent role in Shared Education projects.

Ceara Special School and Tor Bank Special School

168. Much of Ceara's submission did not address the terms of reference of the inquiry. A representative of Ceara indicated that children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) should generally be educated in appropriately resourced mainstream schools which have "an inclusive orientation". Ceara recognised however that for some children with severe and complex needs, a placement in a Special School would continue to be the most appropriate option. Ceara recommended that staff from Special Schools should support mainstream schools through the Area Learning Communities in delivering education for SEN children.
169. Ceara recommended that Shared Education should include a focus on removing barriers to children with SEN including the promotion of interagency working. Ceara recognized that Shared Education encompasses a broader range of issues than disability. Ceara recommended that schools and units be established with what was termed an "integrated" approach i.e. that would allow children with SEN to attend mainstream school; that dual enrolments be permitted; that collaborative working arrangements between health and education services be encouraged to better facilitate mainstreaming of SEN children; and that Further Education colleges co-operate with schools to provide equality of opportunity for SEN students.
170. A representative of Tor Bank argued that DE policy tends to focus on more enhanced opportunities for mainstream school children to the detriment of the Special School sector. Tor Bank argued that Shared Education / Integrated Education definitions should explicitly refer to learners of all abilities in all schools and should focus on curricular entitlement and inclusion. Tor Bank argued that its values match those of Shared Education while also seeking to service an enrolment from both main communities and the newcomer communities. Tor Bank contended that Special Schools were in fact the first schools that were fully integrated and inclusive and which, despite the absence of policy support from DE, developed links with partner schools in the wider community.
171. Tor Bank argued that owing to current legislation, Special Schools are usually designated as Controlled and are unable to designate themselves as Integrated. Tor Bank sought a change to legislation to permit this and is working with NICIE in respect of a transformation process. The absence of formal Integrated status was said to inhibit the school's journey to full inclusiveness. It was also argued that Integrated status would provide access to other funding streams and allow the school to act as "a hub for community cohesion, community inclusion and peace reconciliation".
172. Tor Bank expressed support for the idea that Shared Education should raise school standards and follow a school improvement agenda which gives greater curriculum entitlement and opportunities for inclusion.

Transferors' Representative Council (TRC)

173. TRC's submission was endorsed by the Boards of Education of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland. TRC indicated its support for the concept of Shared Education citing involvement in the advisory body of the Centred for Shared Education at QUB and the Lisanelly shared campus. TRC argued that Shared Education provides educational benefits particularly at post-primary while also providing "demonstrable reconciliation benefits". TRC suggested that research supports the view that separate schooling can heighten bias and prejudicial stereotyping. TRC appeared to indicate that the curriculum must be the driver for sharing and cited the positive example of sharing in the delivery of the Entitlement Framework.

174. TRC argued that as the concept of Shared Education is not widely understood by parents etc. a statutory definition of Shared Education similar to that proposed by the MAG is required. TRC supported a spectrum of types of sharing reflecting local circumstances and including sharing of facilities, courses, pupils, staff and buildings. TRC believed that sharing should be focused mostly on Controlled and Maintained schools with Integrated schools making an important contribution and with a role for Special schools in all area sharing plans.
175. TRC indicated that it believes that Shared Education encourages co-operation rather than competition between schools. TRC argued that Shared Education requires: parental and governor support and ownership; capacity building among principals and staff; sufficient recurrent resources and often, though not necessarily, close proximity between sharing schools. TRC indicated that although it believes that a fully integrated system of schools is ideal, it is not achievable. It therefore called for Shared Education to be mainstreamed with a statutory obligation on the Department to incentivise creative sharing which recognises local need and the settings of individual schools. TRC indicated that the Controlled Schools Support Council and Education Authority should have key roles in promoting Shared Education.
176. TRC highlighted concerns in respect of the different patterns of ownership between the Controlled and Maintained sectors – in the former, land and buildings are owned by the ELBs; in the latter ownership rests with the Trustees. TRC referred to ongoing work involving DE and the 4 churches to develop a guidance paper for jointly managed church schools – all 4 main Churches would be joint trustees and managers of such a school with a jointly appointed BoG with an agreed vision and ethos based upon the Christian faith. The provision of Religious Education would be agreed by the Churches and the parents. TRC indicated that this kind of school might be proposed in some rural situations where schools from both sectors might be otherwise lost.

Speedwell Trust

177. Speedwell indicated its support for both Shared and Integrated Education. As its experience is limited to Shared Education projects, Speedwell's evidence was confined to this aspect of the inquiry.
178. Speedwell argued that there is clear demand for Shared Education - 2012 Young Life and Times survey indicated that about 25% of children and young people had no friends in the other main religious community and 45% indicated that there were no facilities for young people of different religions to meet. Speedwell contended that opportunities for sharing serve to alter attitudes positively and reduce community divisions. Speedwell also contended that the OFMDFM Good Relations Indicator Report for 2011-12 reported a significant reduction in schools undertaking community relations activities.
179. Speedwell argued that a statutory definition of Shared Education is urgently required and that it should refer to the facilitation of sustained and meaningful contact between children from the two main religious traditions. Speedwell suggested that the MAG definition, which references sharing between schools in different sectors, allows for sharing between say a Catholic Maintained and Catholic Voluntary Grammar school without a cross-community element. Speedwell also claimed that the Department's School Omnibus Review of 2013 also allowed schools to record activities as being shared even if they only included schools from the same sector. Speedwell argued that the current interim definition(s) of Shared Education and the associated absence of clarity make it impossible for the Department to robustly monitor and assess the quality of Shared Education undertakings by schools.
180. Speedwell contended that only 15% of schools involved in sharing do so on a whole school basis. Speedwell also argued that a large proportion of children have no exposure to sharing at all. Speedwell therefore indicated that it believes that every school should be under a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage Shared Education and that every class in every school should be given the opportunity to participate in meaningful Shared Education.

181. Speedwell referred to a survey of 130 schools which it had undertaken in June 2014. In respect of barriers/enablers to sharing, the survey highlighted: transport costs; the need for a neutral environment; curriculum pressures which prevent the mainstreaming of sharing and ensure its relegation to that of “add-on” rather than essential element of a pupil’s learning experience; the importance of ownership by senior school leaders and commitment of other staff; and lack of dedicated financial resources. Speedwell advised that in its experience limited parental opposition to sharing has always proved to be manageable through dialogue and engagement.
182. Speedwell referred to its own experience of good practice in sharing including the: Diversity and Drums project (which encourages pupils to appreciate cultural diversity); Connecting Communities project (which encourage pupils to think about cultural diversity) and the Schools’ Engagement Project (which involves engagement with the PSNI on diversity; symbols and flags; and safety-related work e.g. internet; stranger danger etc.).
183. Speedwell criticised DE in respect of the limited evaluation of the sharing aspects of Community Relations Equality and Diversity policy. Speedwell argued that DE should require CRED policy to include cross-community work and that DE should consider a synthesis of the CRED and Shared Education policies with cross-community sharing being at the centre of the new policy. Speedwell argued that schools should be required to report annually on CRED work and should be subject to monitoring by ETI.

Drumragh Integrated College

184. Representatives from Drumragh Integrated College indicated support for both high quality Shared and Integrated Education provision. Drumragh referred to contact theory – mentioned in the CSE submission – which contends that meaningful supported contact between children of different communities can lead to reduced community tension/division. Drumragh argued that Shared or Integrated provision can only be of good quality if learners are immersed in a learning experience that encourages the development of mutually respectful values. Drumragh called for statutory definitions for Shared and Integrated Education accompanied by obligations on all schools to facilitate and encourage one and/or the other.
185. Drumragh argued that Integrated Education requires young people to define their culture and identity; to present this confidently and to respect others. Drumragh argued that an Integrated Education environment proactively counters sectarian and divisive messages and supports mutual respect. In respect of barriers to Integrated Education, Drumragh appeared to suggest an absence of a wholehearted and active support from DE and the Assembly for Integrated Education. Drumragh called for: proactive practical support for new Integrated schools; over-subscribed Integrated schools to be allowed to grow; a statutory seat and a voice on Area Planning groups in respect of Area Planning; the promotion of the Integrated choice through the Area Planning process as well as equal emphasis, political support and resourcing for Integrated Education and quality Shared Education.

National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) and the Ulster Teachers’ Union (UTU)

186. UTU and NASUWT submissions were based largely on commentary on the MAG report on Shared Education. UTU / NASUWT appeared to endorse the MAG definition and vision and argued that there should be a statutory obligation on the Department to encourage and facilitate Shared Education as defined by the MAG. However NASUWT indicated that an agreed definition and a clear, coherent and practical implementation framework were required prior to the application of any related statutory obligations. NASUWT indicated that the framework should, among other things, focus on developing sharing capacity for those institutions with no history of partnership. NASUWT also felt that further Shared Education action should be preceded by clarity on the role of the Education Authority.

187. UTU/NASUWT indicated general support for the MAG recommendation that Section 75 be applied to all schools - requiring them to promote equality and good relations - insofar as this would not increase the bureaucratic burden on schools. NASUWT highlighted concerns and suggested caution given that the extension of the Section 75 obligations might have unforeseen consequences for schools.
188. UTU/NASUWT indicated support for the removal of academic selection at age 11. NASUWT referred to competition between schools as a barrier to sharing and indicated that selective schools involved in Shared Education should be required to take an active and direct role in the education of pupils enrolled formally in other schools. NASUWT argued that such arrangements would require new school accountability measures. NASUWT also referred to more use of Area Planning to promote all-ability post-primary schools. UTU also commented on Area Planning matters and expressed some concerns about adequate consultation associated with the MAG recommendation in respect of the transformation of schools to another ethos.
189. UTU contended that Initial Teacher Education and Continuous Professional Development should support teachers in delivering Shared Education. However UTU also argued that voluntary and community agencies should play their part in dealing with sensitive issues in schools. UTU also contended that the buy-in of parents and carers is essential if Shared Education is to be advanced. NASUWT appeared to argue that parental involvement in the education system was currently limited and linked this to ineffective/inappropriate school accountability measures.
190. NASUWT commented that it supported the MAG view that Integrated Education was a distinct sector rather than a model upon which the development of Shared Education should be based. NASUWT appeared to indicate that DE should fulfil its responsibility to facilitate and encourage Integrated Education. However NASUWT also suggested that “the privileging of integrated education in its current form can not be regarded as a cohesive or credible approach to the development of shared education.” NASUWT highlighted concerns that it believes parents would have “about their children’s education being wholly undertaken in institutions founded on a multi-denominational Christian ethos”.
191. UTU commented that CRED funding is insufficient to allow all schools to participate in Shared Education. UTU argued that support for schools should include a Shared Education premium in the Common Funding Scheme underpinned by reviews by the Education and Training Inspectorate to confirm that funding is well spent and an independent review of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and Citizenship areas of the curriculum. NASUWT expressed some concerns about a Shared Education premium – suggesting that Shared Education might be a pretext to reducing educational investment and arguing that the associated funding might be at the expense of other areas of education.
192. NASUWT also commented on increasing demands on school staff – suggesting that the staff burden of partnership arrangements needs to be properly assessed and resourced. UTU indicated its support for the establishment of schools councils as a mechanism for children’s views to be considered. UTU also recommended further collaboration between Special Schools and the mainstream sectors in respect of Shared Education. NASUWT called for a review which would assess how Shared Education might best meet the educational needs of children in mainstream and Special schools.
193. NASUWT commented at some length about practices in other jurisdictions in which they felt that education had been commoditized to the detriment of an overarching educational strategy.

Early Years organisation

194. The Early Years organisation contended that the “shared/integrated education pathway begins in our pre-school settings, groups, day nurseries, parent and toddler groups and Sure Start programmes.” Early Years argued that Shared and Integrated Education should

embrace an ecological framework – this appears to mean that sharing and integration begin at pre-school and continue throughout primary and secondary education levels. Early Years argued strongly that sharing must be linked to children’s positive sense of their own identity with a clear perspective on children’s rights and supporting services which tackle inclusion issues. The ecological approach suggested by Early Years appears to extend to wider support networks involving parents and communities as well as education providers supported by outreach work designed to engage hard to reach families.

195. Early Years indicated that policy currently failed to recognise how limited emotional development can impair a child’s ability to learn. It was also argued that other barriers to sharing and integration include: failure to engage hard to reach communities; absence of practitioner training and support; lack of policy or agency connectedness; and tokenism in earlier projects.
196. Early Years commented at some length on the Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme. This is linked to the curriculum for children aged 2 to 7 and includes shared parent and BoG workshops where attitudes to difference are discussed and socio-emotional development is promoted. Early Years indicated that the programme was used to address invisible community divisions which can sometimes be present in rural areas. Early Years also made reference to the Toybox Project (which is described as a rights-based outreach service designed to reduce social and educational exclusion for Traveller children); the OFMDFM Faces and Spaces project and the NI Rural Development Council Rural Respecting Difference Programme – all of which promoted community learning and focused on hard to reach families.
197. Early Years contended that in order to support sharing and integration, the following was required:
 - voluntary and community capacity development including greater understanding of Section 75 obligations;
 - changes to Initial Teacher Education so as to ensure knowledge and understanding of diversity issues informs all aspects of the curriculum; and
 - participatory whole community engagement – Early Years is doing some work to establish a “robust focus on participatory evaluation pedagogy and practice.”

Youth Council Northern Ireland (YCNl)

198. YCNl welcomed “developments aimed at enhancing the shared experience of young people within formal education”. YCNl indicated its role in delivering the CRED policy across Regional Voluntary Headquarter Youth organisations. YCNl appeared to contend that reconciliation was the key objective of Shared Education and highlighted the need for long term resource support.
199. YCNl appeared to support the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education. However YCNl argued that this should not be at the expense of Integrated Education or existing CRED related work plans. YCNl appeared to accept that Integrated and Shared Education were part of a continuum of provision.
200. YCNl highlighted the valuable experience of youth work practitioners who may be able to support the roll-out of Shared Education. YCNl argued that this should be part of a wider strategy designed to enhance the shared educational experience of all. YCNl further suggested that this should be supported by a regional arms length body which would promote peace-building work.

Sir Robert Salisbury

201. Sir Robert Salisbury suggested that Northern Ireland has too many small schools and too many types of school. The consequences of this level of choice were said to be: an arbitrary and artificial separation of children from the age of 3; substantial and unsustainable

- transport and other costs; restricted curriculum offers in neighbouring, competing schools; and failure to address a long tail of underachievement. Sir Robert suggested that in future parents may have to pay – particularly for transport – in order to support the current range of school choice.
202. Sir Robert recommended that the views of children and young people be sought on education with a view to challenging the vested interests of institutions and particular faiths. Sir Robert indicated that there was previously a need to develop a separate Catholic education system in order to address restricted opportunities for that community. Sir Robert indicated however that the separate Catholic education system “is now clearly part of the problem.” Sir Robert called on all vested interests associated with all sectors to “moderate their entrenched views” and consider the benefits of bringing all children into a single education system supported by a financial incentive package to underpin school reorganisation.
203. Sir Robert recommended that rather than the Committee considering the relative merits of Shared or Integrated Education, Members should consider how education can move to a system which educates all of our children together – based on all-ability Integrated schools.
204. Sir Robert contended that the Area Planning process has permitted separate development of educational sectors leading to the effective capping of the Integrated sector and limitations on the number of new Integrated schools. He called for the facilitation of cross-sectoral amalgamations – possibly leading to transformation to Integrated status - where school closure is threatened. However Sir Robert was also critical of some Shared Education projects which he described as “clearly designed as a survival device to protect small schools which may be under the threat of closure”.
205. Sir Robert highlighted barriers to Integrated Education including the Integrated sector's concentration on: establishing new schools rather than transforming existing schools; the ethos of Integration rather than on academic attainment; and replicating academic selection rather than developing a “truly integrated ethos”. Sir Robert argued that the expansion of the Integrated sector has been hampered by a lack of strong committed political support and by the continuation of academic selection.
206. In order to enable the growth of Integrated Education, Sir Robert recommended that all pre-school and nursery provision be Integrated. He called for the urgent implementation of Integrated Teacher Training. He also recommended the development of regional 6th form provision linked to Further Education colleges – a similar recommendation was made in the review of the Common Funding Scheme.
207. In respect of Shared Education, Sir Robert indicated that it should be supported as part of the process of Integration. He commented that the educational outcomes of Shared Education schemes are usually ill-defined and difficult to quantify. He also indicated that Shared Education schemes face longer term logistical challenges in respect of joint timetabling and transport etc. which can not be addressed by short term funding support. Sir Robert was highly critical of Shared Education projects which have children from different schools sharing the same building – he described this as likely to perpetuate division.
208. Sir Robert suggested that all Shared Education projects be time bound and include an evaluation of the benefits. He also suggested that in order to support Shared Education, the structure, purpose and composition of BoGs will need to be reviewed.

Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education (NICCE)

209. NICCE argued that where a school has a Catholic ethos the school often has an educationally excellent record and always makes a positive contribution to the well-being of society. NICCE described Catholic schools in Northern Ireland as being “among the most racially, ethnically and linguistically integrated.” CCMS highlighted in its submission examples of a number of Catholic schools with a high level of religious mixing e.g. St Columbanus' College – 41%

- Catholic children; 36% Protestant children and 23% children designated as other or no religion. CCMS contended that these schools are “shining examples of integration, inclusion and diversity which has (sic) arisen naturally over a period of years.” CCMS therefore contended that the education system in Northern Ireland is not as “segregated” as others have suggested. Both CCMS and NICCE take exception to the use of the term “segregated” to describe schools upholding a religious, cultural or linguistic ethos.
210. CCMS/NICCE commented at some length in respect of Integrated Education. NICCE argued that Integrated post-primaries were not oversubscribed overall and that in some areas children from all backgrounds were selecting Catholic ethos post-primaries in preference to Integrated schools. CCMS generally contended that Integrated Education has not succeeded in educating Protestants and Catholics together – pointing out that: most Integrated school pupils are designated as having no religion or a religion which is neither Protestant nor Catholic; parental preference still follows traditional religious affiliation or is based on educational quality or a conveniently located school; and when schools transform the percentage of Protestant enrolments tend to fall.
211. NICCE challenged the assertion that Integrated schools represent the best or the most appropriate way for schools to contribute to peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. NICCE argued that Integrated schools aren’t the most practical or effective way of promoting community tolerance. NICCE suggested that more positive societal attitudes recorded in Integrated schools are not necessarily linked to the ethos of the school but may rather be a consequence of parental values. NICCE also recorded some annoyance that major political figures from overseas focus on the Integrated sector’s work on peace and reconciliation and ignore similar work in other sectors.
212. CCMS indicated that the factors preventing further growth in Integrated Education include: continuing cultural, political and social division and socio-economic differences perpetuated by grammar schooling based on academic selection.
213. CCMS argued that given the failure of Integrated Education to significantly address division in society, DE should evaluate the appetite for Integrated Education and should dispense with its obligation to facilitate and encourage Integrated Education. NICCE appeared to agree arguing that the existing obligations serve to actively promote one sector over another which it was felt would deliver neither educational nor societal benefits. CCMS/NICCE argued that focus should be transferred to other initiatives which would “support a spectrum of shared options based on educational provision and access rather than on a political or philosophical basis.” NICCE argued that Integrated schools should not be the “preferred option” in relation to plans to advance Shared Education.
214. CCMS/NICCE indicated that Shared Education should: promote a culture of tolerance and reconciliation; support a pluralist approach to education and the curriculum; and support parental choice insofar as it does not lead to excessive cost. NICCE argued that parental choice and diversity in respect of faith-based education was a fundamental human right. NICCE contended that the current diverse provision in schools in Northern Ireland is not simply “a regrettable remnant of historic ethno-political divisions in our society” but is in fact the hallmark of a diverse and pluralist society. NICCE called upon the Committee to publically recognise the rights of parents to faith-based educational choice. NICCE also challenged the view that extensive school choice leads to excessive costs – arguing that Northern Ireland’s education system has roughly the same level of costs as Wales.
215. CCMS contended that respect for diversity in education required the maintenance of “respect for each individual education sector or provider”. CCMS argued that this has been delivered in Northern Ireland through the CRED policy; CREDIT initiative and through collaboration between the teacher training colleges and in the USA and Scotland etc. through Shared Education campuses. CCMS indicated that it envisages the latter including the sharing of “instructional practices... students working inside each other’s classrooms learning from

and understanding each other, developing relationships and respecting the existence of each other's school".

216. CCMS recommended that in order to encourage sharing, the Department should:
- use the Area Learning Communities to promote sharing at all educational phases;
 - make CRED a key part of the curriculum;
 - encourage joint school curriculum development days;
 - explore options to employ staff working in a number of sharing schools;
 - encourage joint school extra-curricular activities; and
 - encourage joint school parental workshops.
217. CCMS/NICCE also contended that in order to promote Shared Education, the Department should promote a social balance in schools by ending academic selection and enforcing equality of access based on agreed criteria and thus creating a stable multi-sectoral equal system which can allow further sharing to be explored on a bottom-up basis. CCMS appeared to suggest that the responsibility to promote Shared Education should lie with schools and with the Department.

Brookeborough Shared Education Partnership

218. The two primary schools in Brookeborough (St Mary's Primary School and Brookeborough Primary School) briefed the Committee on their experience of Shared Education. The schools indicated that they have been developing cross-community linkages for over 40 years. Following a request at a joint parents' meeting of the two school communities, on 27th February 2014, a survey was undertaken to ascertain the support for a shared campus in Brookeborough. The survey was reported as finding overwhelming support for a Shared Campus, from parents, prospective parents, governors, staff and members of the local community.
219. A proposal was submitted to DE under the Shared Education Campuses Programme however this proposal was not successful. The schools applied again under the second call and await the Department's decision. The Fermanagh Trust facilitated a further community survey in regard to this application in March 2014, distributed to parents, staff, churches and the wider community. The outcome was that 93% of the community supported a shared campus. The schools indicated that the campus has the support of all the political parties in Fermanagh District Council. Representatives of the schools also indicated that there was a high level of community support for continued sharing in the locality.

Assembly Education and Research Services – Feedback from Schools

220. Assembly Education Service undertook a number of focus groups with children from schools from across Northern Ireland representing all of the main educational sectors. Assembly Research Service also reviewed the findings of the 2012 Kids' Life and Times and Young Life and Times survey data.
221. A summary paper is included at Appendix 6. The findings were as follows:
- More primary than post-primary pupils had participated in Shared Education (88% at primary compared to 55% at post-primary);
 - A majority of respondents to the survey thought that Shared Education was a 'good idea', with greater support evident at post-primary;
 - Catholic students were more likely to state that Shared Education was a good idea and less likely to say that they had not enjoyed the projects they had participated in than their Protestant counterparts;
 - A number of students questioned the value of Shared Education and suggested that it could emphasise differences;

- Potential advantages highlighted by young people included increased educational opportunities, making new friends and greater tolerance;
- Perceived disadvantages included having to mix with people perceived as being very different to them or disruptive, challenges around integrating during Shared Education and having to travel to another school; and
- There was support for Integrated Education among most participants in the focus groups, although some stated that they preferred to attend school alongside others of a similar background.

Findings and Recommendations

222. The Committee considered: 100+ written submissions; feedback from an informal evidence event; and 24 formal oral evidence sessions to the inquiry. The Committee undertook 5 visits to Integrated schools and Shared Education projects. The Committee commissioned Assembly Education Services to obtain feedback from a representative sample of school children and Assembly Research Services to review the findings of the 2012 Kids' Life and Times and Young Life and Times survey. The Committee also commissioned a number of research papers on relevant related matters.
223. The Committee reviewed a wide range of opinions, suggestions and assertions: from school children and young people; from parents; from teachers and their representative organisations; from academics; from stakeholder organisations and from the Department of Education. The Committee's findings and recommendations in respect of its inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education are set out below.

The need for sharing and integration in Education

224. The Committee was very much impressed by the extent and meaningful character of sharing and co-operation by many schools within sectors and indeed between different sectors across Northern Ireland. Members noted that sharing often includes cherished, popular activities many of which have been undertaken by some schools for decades. Members felt that these local initiatives had often been generated by communities and school leaders, largely, though not always independently of the Department and its Arms Length Bodies. Notwithstanding the above, the Committee noted with concern that a proportion of schools remained uninvolved in sharing activities. The Committee agreed that in order to address this going forward and to generally promote the clear educational benefits of sharing, a clear policy definition is essential. This is discussed further below.
225. The Committee also agreed that the Department and all of the relevant Arms Length Bodies should be statutorily obliged, in line with the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, to encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education. Members felt that this should include the consideration of the incentivisation of participation by all schools in Shared Education rather than the application of statutory obligations for schools, as is discussed further below.
226. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #1: The Committee recommends that the statutory obligation to encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education – as set out in the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 - should be extended to the Department and all of its relevant Arms Length Bodies. The Committee further recommends that the obligation should include the consideration of the incentivisation of participation by all schools in Shared Education.

227. In respect of integration, whether that be in a school, formally defined as Integrated or in a non-Integrated school in which children of different backgrounds mix together quite naturally, the Committee noted that demand for this kind of inclusive ethos education, in various parts of Northern Ireland and for various reasons, is high. The Committee noted that across the different sectors where natural integration or mixing was significant in schools, there was a clear commitment to educational improvement and an all-inclusive and welcoming ethos in which cultural differences were accepted and celebrated. The Committee therefore agreed that in order to promote greater mixing in schools and facilitate natural integration, Departmental policy should be reviewed and amended if necessary in order to support the associated parental demand. This too is discussed further below.

Shared Education

Defining Shared Education

228. As indicated above, Members were very much impressed by the attitudes and actions of school leaders and school communities involved in Shared Education activities. The Committee noted that most witnesses identified the urgent need for policy clarity in respect of Shared Education. Indeed, following the passage of the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, and the anticipated placing of a statutory obligation on the Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and promote Shared Education, a statutory definition for this policy area will also now be required.
229. It is understood that a Shared Education Bill will be introduced to the Assembly shortly. During the expected Committee Stage, the Committee will likely confirm its views in respect of the statutory definition for Shared Education. In the meantime, Members agreed to consider the current characterisations of Shared Education and the nature of a useful policy definition.
230. During the inquiry the Committee noted a number of different descriptions of Shared Education including that used by the Ministerial Advisory Group which covers inter-sectoral co-operation always involving 2 or more schools. The Committee also noted DE's draft Shared Education policy and draft Shared Education Bill which appeared to employ different definitions – e.g. the latter didn't reference educational sectors and also referred to religious affiliation as well as levels of social deprivation of children. Additionally the Committee noted a number of Shared Education programmes which appeared to employ variants on the definitions mentioned above.
231. The Committee agreed that Shared Education has become a widely used umbrella term often referring to very different, highly valued activities some of which date back decades in certain school communities. The Centre for Shared Education (CSE) observed “..the terminology of shared education has now become so ubiquitous that it has been applied to a vast range of different things.” CSE felt that this had allowed the detractors of Shared Education to characterise it as light-touch and supportive of the status quo.
232. The Committee felt that the absence of policy clarity appeared to be a consequence of Departmental strategy. When asked about what is/isn't Shared Education, officials indicated: “We look at everything on a case-by-case basis. There is no definite, ‘You can’ or ‘You cannot’....We need to look at whether it is bringing a good community balance and a good social balance together.” Additionally when Members sought clarity on the relative importance of societal reconciliation and educational objectives, DE appeared to try to square the circle by saying: “...we see reconciliation outcomes as integral to and interdependent with educational outcomes and not as something separate, irrespective of the educational context or setting.”

Defining Shared Education – the educational benefits

233. In the absence of necessary clarity from the Department, the Committee considered how Shared Education might be defined.
234. Witnesses discussed the educational context for Shared Education, CSE arguing that this should be based on pupils engaging “in sustained curriculum-based interaction” where “educational priorities are foregrounded...which means that teachers do not feel under the same pressure to engage with issues that are controversial, although many do.”
235. The Department emphasised the importance of collaboration between schools indicating that the Shared Education policy “...is based on research that shows that, when schools collaborate, they can improve educational outcomes, and, if they do it on a cross-community basis, reconciliation outcomes.” DE also indicated that a “..very good school can raise the standards of other schools and share with them how it has reached that standard.” Professors Knox and Borooah argued that “...at the core of the shared education model is this idea of

creating interdependencies between schools, and at the core of that is good collaboration.” and “...shared education is more likely to be beneficial where you have two or more schools of different management types and the end goal is to improve education outcomes.”

236. Witnesses indicated the barriers to this kind of collaboration including simple logistics including excessive pupil travel times and costs. However Professor Austin argued in respect of logistical barriers to sharing that “.. insufficient attention has been paid to the role of ICT.... every school in Northern Ireland already has all the equipment that they need to work together.” The Committee noted the achievements and popularity of the Dissolving Boundaries which used IT infrastructure in an innovative way in order to support school collaborations.
237. Some witnesses highlighted the low number of schools in DE’s figures involved in whole school sharing. It was even suggested that this was evidence that some engagement in Shared Education was tokenistic and was in some cases part of a strategy to defer the closure or rationalisation of unsustainable rural schools.
238. A number of organisations pointed out that Shared Education should not be restricted to primary and post-primary school children in school settings only. The Early Years organisation for example argued for the inclusion of pre-school settings in sharing activities referring to the proposed Together: Building a United Community buddy scheme. The Youth Council NI highlighted its long term role and long-standing obligations to promote cross-community interactions involving young people. “The core principles for the delivery of shared education, the policy aim and the objectives need to be amended to be inclusive of Youth Service and the bodies that support its work”.
239. The Committee accepted the need for policy clarity and a statutory definition for Shared Education. The Committee agreed that Shared Education should promote educational improvement through curriculum-based interactions. The Committee felt that although societal or reconciliation considerations were important, they should not outweigh educational objectives.
240. The Committee felt that the educational benefits of Shared Education should be experienced by children and young people in all phases of their education. Members agreed that the best use of existing IT infrastructure should be made in order to tackle the very real logistical challenges associated with school interactions. In order to manage the perception of tokenism, the Committee felt that Shared Education should generally be focused on whole school involvement and that the Department should promote this kind of engagement.
241. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #2: The Committee recommends that Shared Education be defined as curriculum-based interactions that always foreground educational improvement and involve children and young people in sustained whole school/organisation activities across all educational phases while making optimal use of existing IT infrastructure.

Defining Shared Education – the societal benefits

242. In addition to the educational benefits of Shared Education, the Committee considered the nature of the associated societal benefits.
243. CSE indicated: “We have had short-term contact initiatives or full immersion integrated education. The shared model, which is theory-informed, plugs the gap between the short-term contact initiatives, which are known to be largely ineffective, and integrated education, which is effective but which has had limited impact or appeal.” Professors Knox and Borooah also highlighted the differences between Integrated and Shared Education, arguing “The scope of what is referred to as ‘shared education’ is actually a lot broader than the scope of integrated education, because it refers to all section 75 categories.” Representatives from Integrated schools disputed this and argued that their inclusive ethos extended well beyond the 2 main community designations.

244. In terms of the relationship between Integrated and Shared Education, the Department clarified that it viewed Integrated Education as the apex of the continuum of sharing and that consequently "...it is not a question of either/or with regards to integrated education and shared education." Given the linkage between the 2 policy areas, the Committee therefore noted with surprise that although the draft Shared Education policy gave particular recognition for Integrated schools as exemplars of best sharing practice, the Shared Education Bill is not expected to reference Integrated Education at all.
245. In respect of the impact of Shared Education on relations between the 2 largest communities in Northern Ireland, CSE argued that "...contact between pupils from different divided groups, which, in the case of Northern Ireland, are Catholic and Protestant, reduces prejudice, increases trust and generally promotes a more positive response to the out-group, or the other."
246. The ELBs however also highlighted the changing nature of the school population – with more children designating as neither Catholic nor Protestant but "Other" and an increase in newcomer children who are generally less likely to identify primarily with the Northern Ireland community designations. Although newcomer children currently account for only a small proportion of the school population – around 8k at primary and around 2k at post-primary – in other jurisdictions e.g. the Republic of Ireland and in geographical areas of Northern Ireland they form an important part of an increasingly diverse school enrolment.
247. In its draft Shared Education policy, the Department appeared to support the view that Shared Education would involve a wide range of Section 75 groups – not just the 2 largest religious communities. However in the revised draft Bill, it is anticipated that Shared Education will be much more tightly defined and limited to "the education together of those of different religious belief and socio-economic background". The Committee understands that in the case of the latter this means participating schools must be representative of different religious belief and different socio-economic background.
248. In its evidence TRC highlighted some concerns about socio-economic levels of deprivation becoming a requirement for Shared Education projects. TRC indicated that "a major piece of work needs to be done on helping with socio-economic disadvantage in education." but that this should sit outside Shared Education in order to ensure an appropriate level of focus.
249. As part of the inquiry, the Committee also considered the overlap between Shared Education programmes and the CRED policy and scrutinised the Department's decision to discontinue earmarked funding for the latter. Although a distinction appeared to have been drawn by the Department between CRED – a curriculum-based policy - and Shared Education – a programme designed to enhance educational improvement and societal reconciliation by co-operation between schools – the Committee noted that following the discontinuation of CRED earmarked funding, DE believed that there would be a degree of substitution of CRED by Shared Education. DE indicated: "The advancement of shared education, including the provision of funding, will allow educational settings to continue to provide opportunities for meaningful interaction between young people from different community backgrounds."
250. The Committee noted the very high level of participation in schools and youth settings for CRED activities and the significantly positive impact on inter-communal attitudes. The Committee understands that the mainstreaming of the CRED policy is currently subject to review. The Committee hopes that notwithstanding budget constraints, earmarked support for some CRED projects might be resumed in future. In any event, the Committee agreed that CRED should continue to play an important role in improving attitudes in schools and relationships in respect of Section 75 groups.
251. In respect of the societal focus of Shared Education, the majority of Committee Members felt that in line with changing patterns of religious designation; increasing diversity in the school population and the impact of socio-economic deprivation on educational attainment, the key societal objective for Shared Education should not be limited to solely improving relations between Protestants and Catholics. The Committee felt that the Department should also

exploit the natural synergy between the common societal objectives of the CRED policy and Shared Education.

252. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #3: Further to Recommendation #2, the Committee recommends that Shared Education should be defined as promoting attitudinal improvement and meaningful contact involving children and young people from all relevant Section 75 groups in line with the objectives of the CRED policy.

Shared Education – widening engagement / providing support

253. As indicated above, the Committee studied the welcoming ethos of a number of Integrated and other mixed non-Integrated schools which provided evidence to the inquiry and which were involved in Shared Education partnerships. The Committee also considered evidence from 2 Special Schools in respect of Shared Education. Members visited Ceara School (as part of its consideration of the SEND Bill); noted the high level of mixing between the 2 largest communities and indeed other communities; and were greatly impressed by the inclusive nature of the school and its proactive engagement with mainstream post-primaries. Members also felt that pre-school settings and nursery schools provided positive examples of an inclusive ethos. Members felt that in order to support Shared Education, greater use should be made of the experience and practices of these schools.
254. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:
- Recommendation #4: The Committee recommends that the Department should do more to disseminate the good practice in Integrated, other mixed non-Integrated and Special Schools as well as pre-school settings and nursery schools in respect of the development of an inclusive ethos in order to promote Shared Education more widely.**
255. During the inquiry, feedback from school pupils in respect of Shared Education highlighted some concerns about engagement and interaction with children from other communities. Some witnesses referenced the importance of establishing cultural certainty among participants prior to the commencement of Shared Education programmes. Others mentioned the need for support for parents and communities as a prerequisite for successful sharing. The teaching unions highlighted the expertise in the voluntary sector and the need for relevant training for teachers both at Initial Teacher Education and through Continuous Professional Development.
256. The Department emphasised the importance of strong connections between schools and communities: “.. we expect schools to have good connections with the community; parents to be well aware of what the shared education programmes are doing; schools to be using community resources; and, when possible, bringing in people from the community with experience of different areas — for example, if history is being taught, there may be people with a recent experience.”
257. In respect of partnerships between schools and the Peace IV programme, DE indicated that building “the capacity of organisations to develop collaborative working where there is no history of partnerships between those schools will be addressed through the work that we have undertaken with the Special EU Programmes Body. The design of the shared education thematic area within Peace IV will recognise that organisations that have not yet engaged in sharing need a different type of support.”
258. In respect of teachers, DE advised that it “has a commitment to liaise with higher education institutions and other relevant education providers on aligning their approaches to professional learning for shared education practitioners” and that appropriate training will allow teachers “first and foremost to address their own bias and what they perceive to be difficult issues in interacting with children and young people in the same forum.”

259. The Committee welcomed the provision of Shared Education support for pupils, parents and communities to be provided by teachers and other (community and voluntary) facilitators. Members also welcomed the Department's assurances in respect of training for teachers in Shared Education as part of ITE and CPD for teachers. The Committee noted with disappointment that the Department appeared to be incapable of giving a clear explanation the term "equality of identity" in the draft Shared Education policy. The Committee felt that it was essential that this term be properly defined in the final version of the Shared Education policy.
260. The Committee felt that the supporting activities for Shared Education should ensure that those involved have received appropriate training in developing the cultural certainty of participating groups with a view to sustaining a lasting partnership of equals. Members believed that this would go some way to improve engagement with those schools not currently involved in Shared Education.
261. The Committee also felt that the replacement of the Education and Library Boards by the Education Authority provided an opportunity for the Department to address what was described as patchy support for Shared Education in parts of Northern Ireland. The Committee agreed that the Department should ensure a consistent level of good quality support by the Education Authority for school communities undertaking Shared Education.
262. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #5: The Committee recommends that the Department should work with the Education Authority to provide consistent support for Shared Education collaborations with a tailored programme of training and guidance for teachers, parents, children and communities so as ensure the appropriate recognition and celebration of cultural differences and thus the confident participation by all schools.

Shared Education – measuring the impact

263. Sir Robert Salisbury suggested in evidence that all Shared Education programmes should be required to demonstrate educational and societal impact within a reasonable timescale.
264. In respect of educational impact, the Committee noted Departmental confirmation that it is to use the end of Key Stage Levels of Progression (LoPs) to assess educational improvement in the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Programme. Members felt that given: the concerns previously expressed by the General Teaching Council NI in respect of the efficacy of LoPs; the very low levels of participation; and the ongoing related industrial action, it was both surprising and unwise for the Department to link participation in Shared Education with the implementation of LoPs. That said, the Committee accepted that given the important linkage between Shared Education and educational improvement, it was essential that a reasonable and acceptable educational measurement be developed.
265. The Committee noted that societal measures of improvement related to Shared Education were even more difficult to establish. DE advised in respect of the DSC project that: "... the business case has identified three measures that Queen's, which has done a lot of work around this measurement and reconciliation, has come up with. They are across good friendship, positive action tendencies and inter-group anxiety. So we have very clear measures for the Delivering Social Change signature project that we will expect to be moving, and we set out targets for those. Part of the difficulty is that we need to make sure that this work does not become a bureaucratic overhead for schools and that it is understandable to teachers." DE indicated that going forward it has... "asked the inspectorate, over the four-year period, to consider other measures that we can use." DE advised however that: "The concept of measuring reconciliation outcomes is one that we have all struggled with."
266. The Committee accepted the need for objective measures of societal progress but felt that in addition to attitudinal surveys this should include, in the medium to longer term, other macro-societal changes including some or all of the following: the level of natural mixing in schools; the development of shared campuses; the transformation or establishment of new Integrated

schools; the establishment of Jointly Managed Church schools etc. – all of which might point towards a reducing level of sectoralisation in education in Northern Ireland.

267. Given the substantial investment of resources in Shared Education through a large of number of schemes, the Committee agreed that the objective measurement of impact both educational and societal was sensible and necessary.

268. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation.

Recommendation #6: The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to a wide range of agreed, objective impact measures for Shared Education based on educational improvement in the first instance and societal reconciliation progress in the second. The Committee further recommends that information in respect of the educational and societal impact of Shared Education should be published regularly by the Department.

Shared Education – Obligations for Schools

269. The Department of Education's statistics indicate that 24% of schools are not involved in sharing. The Speedwell Trust - an organisation involved in Shared Education - contended that the level of tokenistic participation was much higher. In order to counter this, some witnesses suggested that Section 75 obligations including the promotion of good relations or participation in Shared Education should be extended to include all schools.

270. In respect of obligations on schools relating to sharing, the Department advised: "The experience that we have built up over a number of years and all the research indicate that you need community support. If we started obliging communities to go down that route, you are going against that."

271. In respect of Section 75 obligations for schools, DE indicated that: "Other jurisdictions have what is sometimes referred to as an 'equality-lite' scheme for schools. It is light on bureaucracy as opposed to light in ensuring that they meet the groups. There are other ways to move that forward, and we would want to explore this area as part of that. OF-MDFM is in the lead on that process."

272. Although the Committee agreed that it supported the extension of equality practices in respect of employment in schools, Members felt that the extension of other obligations would amount to a significant bureaucratic burden for schools with limited benefit for school children etc. and society at large.

Shared Education – including individual schools

273. The Department has generally defined Shared Education as involving 2 or more schools or educational providers in a collaboration designed to effect educational improvement while also addressing societal concerns.

274. A number of witnesses suggested that Shared Education could be undertaken in a single school where that school's ethos had led to a significant level of representation of the minority community. Methodist College, for example, argued that the "... word 'shared' does not necessarily have to mean that people who tend to be from different backgrounds meet and use the same facility. It is better...to have those same people under the same roof being educated in the same way by the same people and enjoying the same experiences, and that is really where the qualities of tolerance and equality come into play."

275. The Committee noted a number of mixed schools in different parts of Northern Ireland and in different sectors. Members were impressed by their commitment to an inclusive ethos even where there was a strong religious identity. The Committee did not accept Professor Hamber's argument that supermixed schools inevitably had an over-riding ideology and culture which made it difficult for children of other faiths to feel that their backgrounds had equality of position in the

school. The Committee also did not accept his argument that the context of so-called segregated schools would inevitably undermine any achievements associated with sharing.

276. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #7: The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to the inclusion of individual schools or educational providers in Shared Education programmes where this can be shown to lead to educational and societal benefit for the wider community and where the participating children and young people include significant levels of representation from different Section 75 groups.

Shared Education – rural sharing and sustainability

277. Sir Robert Salisbury argued that Shared Education in some rural settings has been used to maintain unsustainable school provision. He indicated that some of “...the (shared education) schemes were clearly designed to protect schools that were under threat of closure.”
278. The Committee took evidence in respect of Shared Education projects in Moy and Brookeborough and other rural school sustainability projects. The Committee noted the lack of commentary from the Equality Commission / Community Relations Council in respect of these particular projects and their general observations that there “...is research in other areas which shows that, where you have one building and that building is used in a segregated way, it actually makes the situation worse....That reinforces segregation. It re-inforces mindsets and attitudes.” The Committee also noted evidence from the Integrated Education Fund and Professor Hamber who suggested that “Shared campuses may seem like a well-intentioned, perhaps, stepping stone in some people’s eyes towards greater integration in the education system, but evidence from other contexts suggests that it might actually increase animosity.”
279. In respect of Moy, the Committee strongly felt that a positive community relations endeavour designed to promote inclusion and co-operation between the 2 main communities in an isolated rural area had been badly misrepresented by some stakeholders. Although some Members felt that another solution to the situation in Moy might have been employed – i.e. a single new Integrated school - the Committee believed nonetheless that the shared campus plans would lead to educational improvement and were also an important milestone in developing local community relations. In respect of Brookeborough, Members were also impressed by the positivity, enthusiasm and inclusive ethos of the co-operating schools. That said, the Committee noted that other collaborative solutions including federative or shared management or other arrangements could, if they garnered community support, provide more cost effective solutions.
280. As part of its review of Area Planning, the Committee accepted that a level of rationalisation of the schools’ estate in rural areas was necessary given inevitable demographic changes and that Shared Education should not be used to delay inevitable changes to school provision in rural or other areas. The Committee therefore felt that the Department should do more to counter potential misuse of Shared Education support and require participants to commit to longer term progress.
281. Overall the Committee generally supported the Shared Education campus and similar projects that it had studied but felt that the Department should ensure that these should lead to further and improved educational co-operation in the longer term.
282. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #8: The Committee recommends that the Department should do more to promote and secure the support of communities for innovative cost effective approaches to sharing in education in rural areas including e.g. federative or shared management arrangements or other solutions including Jointly Managed Church schools or amalgamations, as appropriate. The Committee further recommends that in order to ensure

that support is properly targeted, communities engaged in Shared Education should be required to demonstrate initial and longer term educational and societal benefits.

Integrated Education

283. The Committee considered evidence from a number of passionate adherents of the ethos of Integrated Education – these included school children; principals and teachers; representative organisations and academics. Members were particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and sincerity of pupils from Integrated schools and greatly enjoyed the formal and informal interactions undertaken in this regard during the inquiry.
284. The Committee also considered evidence from representative organisations and academics who expressed contrary opinions in respect of Integrated Education.
285. Although the Committee generally encourages policy debate, Members were taken aback by a number of exchanges between certain organisations and individuals with differing views, in which facts were substituted by opinion and which consequently did little (or nothing) to illuminate the matters at issue. That said, Members felt that the heated and unreasonable nature of some of the exchanges provided a very useful insight into the sectoral landscape of education in Northern Ireland.

Integrated Education – low uptake

286. Despite a long-standing Departmental legal obligation to facilitate and encourage Integrated Education, this sector accounts for only a small proportion of schools and pupils in Northern Ireland. Witnesses disputed the reasons for this.
287. The Integrated Education Fund and Professor Hamber contended that the Department had not lived up to its obligations and had failed to take proper account of parental demand through the Area Planning process: “Comprehensive research on the subject has concluded that the main reason for preferences for integrated education not being met is insufficient numbers of shared spaces to accommodate demand.”
288. NICIE argued that low uptake of Integrated Education was a consequence of none of the sectoral bodies being obliged to formally plan for Integrated Education: “Despite the Minister saying that he wants area-based planning to be for areas not sectors, individuals not institutions, and that he wants innovative solutions, the CCMS has managed and planned for the Catholic side, and the ELBs have managed and planned for the controlled side, and nobody is managing planning for the integrated side...”
289. Others offered contrary arguments. Knox and Borooah argued that academic performance drives parental choice and that as the performance of some Integrated schools was in their opinion, poor, low levels of uptake were therefore unsurprising: “...the (Integrated) sector is undersubscribed by about 9%” and “...the controlled integrated sector is a very poorly performing sector... that drives parental choice in terms of those schools.” “Ideologically, people can say that they welcome attendance at integrated schools, but the evidence tells us that their choice is informed by educational preference, rather than whether it is an integrated school.”
290. Sir Robert Salisbury and the Centre for Shared Education (CSE) at QUB agreed that surveys which consistently show very high levels of support for Integrated Education do not translate into enrolments in Integrated schools. Sir Robert said: “You get returns that say that 80% of parents want integrated education, but they do not opt for it when it comes to it.” Representatives of CSE said: “When you have 80% of respondents to a survey saying that they would send their children to an integrated school, you would expect every integrated school to be bursting, and that is not the case.”
291. CSE contended that Integrated Education was less popular than expected as it tended to foreground reconciliation objectives at the expense of educational attainment and that Integrated Education was viewed by some communities as eroding its identity.

292. This was strongly disputed by Drumagh Integrated College and other witnesses who highlighted the recognition and celebration of identity and the commitment to academic excellence as key parts of the ethos of Integrated Education.
293. The Committee struggled to determine whether limited uptake of Integrated Education is a consequence of relatively poor attainment by some Integrated schools and/or limited availability of Integrated places owing to either competition from, or unfair treatment through the Area Planning process by, other sectors and/or the failure of the Department to properly gauge and plan for parental preference in respect of Integrated Education and/or an over-estimation of the enthusiasm of parents by the sector for the current brand of Integrated Education.
294. The majority of Members of the Committee did not accept the claims made by witnesses that Integrated Education inevitably undermined community identity and that it wrongly and always foregrounded reconciliation objectives at the expense of educational attainment. Members did however feel that perception issues in respect of Integrated Education may serve as a limit to uptake in some communities.
295. In respect of parental enthusiasm, it is clear that in various parts of Northern Ireland support for integration – whether that be formal (in an Integrated school) or natural integration (sometimes in a mixed or in a so-called super-mixed school) – owing to demographic reasons or a perception of excellence or an inclusive ethos or other reasons, is high. However the majority of Members also felt that given the limited over-subscription in Integrated schools generally, the levels of parental support for Integrated Education reported by the sector do not appear to be matched by actual demand for school places.
296. In its position paper on Area Planning, the Committee had previously set out its views on the Needs Model which underpins Area Planning. The Committee noted that Needs Model projections had never been amended in order to enhance Integrated sector provision in line with parental demand. The Committee also noted the shortcomings of the Needs Model in respect of its failure to promote mixing in schools and its inability to recognise an increasingly diverse school population with a growing level of inter-sectoral transfers.
297. Also as part of its consideration of Area Planning, different treatments for the Irish Medium sector when compared to the Integrated sector were noted – e.g. different levels of support for home to school transport; the establishment of IME post-primary provision with very low initial enrolments; and a high level of surplus IME primary provision in e.g. Belfast, compared to a relatively low level of Integrated provision in the same area which was over-subscribed. This was felt to be notable given the identical statutory Departmental obligations to facilitate and encourage both types of education.
298. Some Members disputed the above analysis, labelling it as a simplistic summary which fails to appreciate the fundamental differences and the historical development of both sectors. Other Members contended that neither the IME nor the Integrated sectors should be the subject of statutory obligations to facilitation and encouragement as the development of educational sectors should be simply driven by parental preference and educational need.
299. The Committee felt that the disparity in claims and the perceived different treatments for sectors could be addressed in a Departmental review which encompasses how it meets its obligations in respect of Integrated Education. The Committee understands that a limited review may have been undertaken following the Drumagh judgement. However very little information on the outcome of this review has been published.

Integrated Education - sectoral bodies / community designation

300. All or almost all witnesses to the inquiry appeared to concede that Integrated Education was at “the upper end of the sharing continuum” or at the “apex” of sharing. Despite this, the evidence indicated a considerable level of opposition from some witnesses to an increase in the number of Integrated Education schools. These submissions were at times characterised

- by terse exchanges and unedifying disputes often played out in the press with more measured oral contributions made by some of the same protagonists at the Committee.
301. NICIE appeared to accuse the Catholic church of being historically implacably opposed to Integrated Education and appeared to argue that non-Integrated schools indirectly pro-moted division. NICIE indicated in written evidence that there is "...a critical difference between catholic and integrated schools where an equality of respect is evident for all."
 302. CCMS'/NICCE's retort was to call for the rescinding of the relevant Departmental obligation. IEF and Professor Hamber strongly opposed this indicating that "Societies that have made the transformation from highly sectorised education systems have not done it through voluntary integration. Desegregation in the United States would not have happened if it had been left to parents to integrate voluntarily."
 303. TRC indicated: "We have not really been opposed to integrated education. As Protestant Churches, our line has been that, where a community wished to develop integrated education and there was no threat to controlled school provision, we have supported it." "Our main focus has been controlled schools, and defending controlled schools has been our key purpose."
 304. CCMS/NICCE set out its difficulties with Integrated (and Controlled) Education highlighting what it saw as the absence of a guarantee of a Christian ethos while expressing support for Jointly Managed Church schools, arguing that in the latter "...the legal construct guarantees the religious ethos" whereas in Controlled schools "...there is no legal protection to a religious ethos in those schools."
 305. The Committee also noted very surprising suggestions that, following the Drumragh judgement, the Department may be about to amend the role of sectoral bodies in respect of the obligation to facilitate and encourage Integrated Education. CCMS/NICCE indicated: "... if we interpret Judge Treacy's ruling in a particular way, CCMS and, indeed, the boards have an obligation now to promote integrated schools when we do not have an obligation to promote our own schools."
 306. The Committee was nonplussed by the heated and antagonistic nature of some of the exchanges between sectoral organisations and recorded its concern in respect of the unfair, inaccurate and ill-informed claims that were made about other sectors' ethos and commitment to tolerance. The Committee agreed that it simply did not accept that non-Integrated schools directly or indirectly promote division or that they lack an ethos of tolerance and respect. The Committee felt that this was evidenced by popular mixed and super-mixed non-Integrated schools throughout Northern Ireland. The Committee also did not accept the criticism of Controlled and Integrated schools which implied that they might perhaps in some way not fully support or respect a Christian ethos. This too was evidenced by many schools in those sectors which clearly demonstrate the contrary.
 307. Given the frequency and nature of the unedifying exchanges between sectoral bodies, the Committee was forced to the conclusion that a key barrier to improved co-operation between sectors and increased mixing in schools may be the unhelpful attitude of some of the representative bodies of the educational sectors.
 308. Amid the questionable claims and counter claims, the Department usefully provided written evidence on the actual degree of mixing in Integrated schools – almost all have over 10% enrolment from the minority community. DE indicated that Integrated schools should aim to have more than 30% representation from the minority community and "...the majority of integrated schools have achieved the 30% target." However DE advised that there "... is much more to integrated status than simply the religious intake..." and referred to the work of NICIE in respect of the ethos of Integrated schools. DE also indicated that there "...are important aspects of integrated provision that are much more than just a numbers game about minority population at the school."

309. Witnesses to the Committee's recent scrutiny of Area Planning referred to a growing practice among parents of designating their children as neither Protestant nor Catholic and called into question the relevance of community designations in schools generally and in defining Integrated schools in particular.
310. The Committee noted calls from a number of witnesses for wide-ranging reviews of Integrated Education accompanied by targets and obligations to greatly improve uptake.
311. The Department advised that the Minister is considering the need for and the scope of a strategic review of Integrated Education. The Committee believes that this strategic Departmental review may provide an opportunity to consider issues in respect of the uptake of Integrated Education as well as the relationship between sectoral bodies and the meaningfulness of the current Departmental definition of an Integrated school which is linked to the community designation of the enrolment.
312. The Committee therefore made the following recommendation:

Recommendation #9: The Committee recommends that the Department under-take a strategic review of its approach to Integrated Education, the terms of reference of which should include: the effectiveness of its actions in encouraging and facilitating this form of education in particular its assessment and treatment of parental perceptions and demand for Integrated Education in the Area Planning and Development Proposal processes; the roles of the sectoral bodies; and the relevance of minority community designation in the enrolment of Integrated schools.

Integrated Education - natural mixing

313. In written evidence, the Department indicated that there were a number of non-Integrated schools in primary and post-primary sectors - roughly equal to the number of Integrated schools - with over 10% enrolment from the minority community.
314. The Committee also received evidence from the ELBs and from post-primary schools in respect of relatively high levels of natural mixing or integration i.e. where children attend schools in sectors with which their parents might not be expected to identify – this is largely confined to Catholic children attending Controlled schools or non-Catholic Voluntary Grammars etc.. The Committee noted that although the vast majority of Catholic children attend Catholic Maintained primary schools – nearly one and a half times as many Catholic children attend Controlled primary schools as attend Grant Maintained Integrated or Controlled Integrated primary schools. The Committee also noted that of the 74k Catholic children enrolled in post-primaries – around 4k are at Integrated schools; 2k are at Controlled schools and 2k are at non-Catholic Voluntary Grammars.
315. The ELBs appeared to suggest that this process is often driven by a perception of academic excellence, demographics, traditional local practices or possibly, limited supply of Catholic Maintained schools. Methodist College Belfast identified an underpinning inclusive ethos as key: “Perhaps the defining feature of natural integration is the move away from the simple Protestant and Catholic approach and into something that is socially inclusive and does not depend on a formula to produce results.”
316. Given that the numbers of Catholic children attending mixed non-Integrated schools appeared to be of a similar order to the Integrated sector, the Committee was surprised that neither the Department nor the Education and Library Boards nor CCMS could provide anything more than anecdotal evidence in respect of this important feature in schools. Although the Committee supported the continuation of the principle of parental preference in respect of school choice, the Committee also felt that what might be called natural mixing in non-Integrated mixed schools was welcome and was worthy of further study. The Committee also felt that the Department should explore policies to encourage natural mixing.
317. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #10: The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to the reasons underpinning natural mixing in non-Integrated schools and should also consider measures that it should adopt in order to promote this practice while supporting the principle of parental preference.

Integrated Education - Jointly Managed Church schools

318. During the inquiry, the Department produced a circular relating to Jointly Managed Church schools. The Committee understands that a Jointly Managed Church school is to be a grant-aided Voluntary (or Other) Maintained school providing Shared Education with a Christian ethos with Trustee representation agreed by the Transferors and the Catholic church and managed by a Board of Governors with balanced representation from both main communities. The Education Authority would be the funding authority as is presently the case for Other Maintained schools e.g. most IME schools. As is also the case for Other Maintained schools, the Board of Governors would be the employer of the teachers in the school whereas the Education Authority would employ non-teaching staff.
319. The Committee struggled to understand the material differences between a Jointly Managed Church school and a Controlled Integrated school. NICCE indicated that it believed that the former would include a legal guarantee for the Christian ethos whereas the latter would have no such guarantee. The Committee sought but did not receive absolute clarity from the Department on the nature of the legal guarantee for the Christian ethos in Jointly Managed Church schools. DE indicated: "School ethos is not prescribed in law, but it is very important. There are legal differences in the constitution of the schools, through the boards of governors, which can be perceived as an additional legal protection"
320. The Committee did not accept that Jointly Managed Church schools provided any additional guarantee in respect of the Christian ethos as compared to Integrated schools and noted little material difference between both types of school. Thus, the reasoning underpinning some sectors' enthusiasm for the latter and reticence or apparent opposition to the former remains unclear.
321. The Committee also noted with concern that the benefits in respect of home to school transportation support available to Integrated schools will not be extended to Jointly Managed Church schools.
322. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendation:

Recommendation #11: The Committee recommends that the Department should give consideration to revising its Home to School Transport policy so as to provide support for children attending Jointly Managed Church schools in line with that currently available for children attending Integrated schools.

Integrated Education - Special Schools

323. The Committee noted evidence from 2 Special Schools who were seeking to transform to Integrated status. The schools felt that they were in effect Integrated but believed that transformation would deliver access to a different governance arrangement with a higher level of delegation. They explained that it was "...a control element for us. It is about looking at how we can develop and the governance of our schools, which we feel, at the minute, is very much dictated by a board model that is quite outdated for special schools to move forward."
324. The Committee noted that the schools in question had not consulted with parents and appeared to believe that a change of status would necessarily alter their level of budget delegation. The Committee also noted written evidence from the Department indicating the current legal barrier to the transformation of Special Schools to Integrated status.
325. The Committee accepted that Special Schools enjoy a high level of mixing between the 2 largest communities and indeed other communities and that this is supported by the

inclusive ethos of those schools. The majority of Committee Members did not agree that transformation of these schools would serve any practical purpose. Members also felt that there was no evidence that transformations to Integrated status would be supported by the parents of children enrolled in Special Schools. The Committee therefore made no recommendation in this regard.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 1

Minutes of Proceedings

Minutes of Proceedings Relating to the Report

9 April 2014	Terms of Reference
28 May 2014	Terms of Reference and Written Evidence
18 June 2014	Oral Evidence – Joint briefing IEF and ETI, and Fermanagh Trust Briefing
25 June 2014	Terms of Reference
2 July 2014	Terms of Reference and Oral Evidence – Department of Education
10 September 2014	Press Release
15 October 2014	Oral Evidence – Focus group programme, Assembly Research Joint briefing from Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College and joint briefing from Professor Knox and Professor Borooah
5 November 2014	Oral Evidence – the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People and Parenting NI
19 November 2014	Oral Evidence - Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
26 November 2014	Oral Evidence - Queens Centre for Shared Education and University of Ulster Dissolving Boundaries
10 December 2014	Oral Evidence – Methodist College Belfast
14 January 2015	Oral Evidence – Department of Education - Shared Education Campuses Programme
21 January 2015	Oral Evidence – Department of Education and Education and Training Inspectorate
4 February 2015	Oral Evidence – Joint briefing from Community Relations Council and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and joint briefing from Integrated Education Fund and Professor Hamber, Ulster University and Professor Smyth, Ulster University
11 February 2015	Oral Evidence – Joint briefing from Education and Library Boards and joint briefing from Ceara Special School and Tor Bank Special School
18 February 2015	Oral Evidence – Transferors' Representative Council
25 February 2015	Oral Evidence – Speedwell Trust and Drumragh Integrated College
3 March 2015	Oral evidence – Joint briefing from NASUWT and UTU
4 March 2015	Oral Evidence – Early Years and Youth Council Northern Ireland
11 March 2015	Oral Evidence – Sir Robert Salisbury
18 March 2015	Oral Evidence – Joint briefing from Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education and a joint briefing from Brookeborough Primary School and St Mary's Primary School, Brookeborough

29 April 2015	Joint briefing from Department of Education and Education Training Inspectorate - Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy and Department of Education - Jointly Managed Schools
17 June 2015	Draft Inquiry Report
24 June 2015	Draft Inquiry Report
1 July 2015	Agreement of Report

Wednesday 9 April 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Karen Jardine (Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)
Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)
Emma Swan (Clerical Officer)

10.01am The meeting commenced in public session.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Area Planning and Shared Education

The Chairperson referred Members to information from the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education relating to the Area Planning Process, which had been noted at the previous meeting.

Members also noted in their tabled items a letter from the Integrated Education Fund regarding the possible terms of reference for the Committee's planned inquiry into Integrated and Shared Education.

Members also noted a letter from the Department responding to Committee queries in respect of the IEF Report: The Business of Education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the information received and take it into consideration when drawing up the Terms of Reference for the planned Committee inquiry into Integrated and Shared Education.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 28 May 2014

Greenmount Agricultural College

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)
Emma Swan (Clerical Officer)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Chris Hazzard MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA

10.00am The meeting commenced in private session.

10.04am The meeting entered public session.

5. Matters Arising

The Committee noted a response from the Department in relation to the Committee's proposed Inquiry into Integrated and Shared Education.

Agreed: Members agreed to defer further consideration of the Terms of Reference pending the receipt of further information from the Department on the Shared Education issues raised by the Minister in his statement of 23 October 2013

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 18Th June 2014

Corinthian Conference Room, Fermanagh House, Enniskillen

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

The meeting commenced in public session at 10:05am without a decision-making quorum. The Committee proceeded to hear evidence under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5).

The Committee agreed to alter the order of its agenda as indicated below.

1. Sharing in Education Programme – briefing by the International Fund for Ireland; Education and Training Inspectorate; University of Ulster.

10:07am The following witnesses joined the meeting:

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairperson of the Board of the International Fund for Ireland; Professor Colin Knox, University of Ulster; and John Hunter, Education and Training Inspectorate, Department of Education, briefed the Committee on the Sharing in Education Programme.

10:17am Jo-Anne Dobson joined the meeting. The Committee gained a decision-making quorum.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:08am Sean Rogers left the meeting. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum but continued to hear evidence under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5).

11:10am Sean Rogers rejoined the meeting. The Committee regained its decision-making quorum

11:37am Jo-Anne Dobson left the meeting. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum but continued to hear evidence under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5).

11:39am The witnesses left the meeting.

2. Shared Education – briefing by the Fermanagh Trust

11:40am The following witnesses joined the meeting:

Lauri McCusker, Director of the Fermanagh Trust and Catherine Ward, Shared Education Programme Manager, Fermanagh Trust, briefed the Committee on Shared Education.

The Committee noted a briefing paper from the Fermanagh Trust.

11:45am Jo-Anne Dobson rejoined the meeting. The Committee regained its decision-making quorum.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:38pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Fermanagh Trust seeking written information on the socio-economic and other benefits of Shared Education particularly in rural areas.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 25 June 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Jonathan Craig MLA

10.00am The meeting commenced in private session.

2. Committee Inquiry- Shared/Integrated Education- Terms of Reference

The Committee noted the draft Terms of Reference for its Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education.

10.46am Robin Newton joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed give further consideration to the Terms of Reference following a Departmental update on Shared Education at the Education Committee meeting of 2 July 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Inquiry should include an informal evidence event involving school councils from different sectors and from across Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed that the Inquiry should include visits / engagement with schools from different sectors and from across Northern Ireland including: Shimna Integrated College and Drumragh Integrated College.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 2 July 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
Kiera McDonald (Legal Advisor) (Item 1 only)

Apologies: Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA

9.38am The meeting commenced in private session.

10.09am The meeting entered public session.

10. Committee Inquiry – Shared / Integrated Education – Update on Shared Education – Departmental Briefing

11.39am Officials joined the meeting:

Faustina Graham, Director of Collaborative Education and Practice, Department of Education; Andrew Bell, Head of Shared Education and Community Relations Team, Department of Education; and Eve Stewart, Head of Irish Medium and Integrated Education Project Team, Department of Education.

11.48am Maeve McLaughlin rejoined the meeting.

11.48am Stephen Moutray rejoined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.13pm Stephen Moutray left the meeting.

12.26pm The meeting entered private session.

12.39pm Departmental officials left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department suggesting that it thoroughly explores all options for collaboration and synergy between the three Delivering Social Change funding streams and projects.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking a copy of the draft guidance being prepared by officials to promote Shared Education including the sharing continuum information.

- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the SEUPB as part of the consultation on Peace IV:
- indicating its support for the encouragement of Shared Education across all educational phases;
 - urging SEUPB to encourage programmes which capitalise on learning from previous Shared Education projects including the PIEE project and the Fermanagh Trust Shared Education partnerships; and
 - suggesting that the relevant Peace IV projects should support the development of guidance which helps schools to get involved with Shared Education.

11. Committee Inquiry – Shared / Integrated Education – Terms of Reference

The Committee considered the draft Terms of Reference for its Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education.

- Agreed:* The Committee agreed the amended Terms of Reference for its Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education as follows:
- Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;
 - Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;
 - Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;
 - Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools; and
 - Report to the Assembly on its findings and recommendations by Spring 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to all schools and relevant stakeholders inviting them to make a submission to the Committee's inquiry.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 10 September 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA

10.00am The meeting commenced in private session.

10.17am The meeting entered public session.

6. **Draft Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to meet informally with the Joint Department of Education / Department for Employment and Learning Careers Review Panel on Tuesday 23 September 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme as amended.

Agreed: Members agreed to endorse a press release regarding its inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Employment and Learning seeking:

- information as how the further and higher education sectors currently interact with Shared Education programmes and the Integrated Education sector; and
- details of DEL policy in respect of how these sectors should interact with Shared Education programmes and the Integrated Education sector in order to comply with relevant obligations and the Programme for Government.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 15 October 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
James Stewart (Assembly Education Service) - item 1 only

Apologies: Sandra Overend MLA

10.01am The meeting commenced in private session.

1. Draft Forward Work Programme.

10.35am Assembly Education Service joined the meeting.

James Stewart, Assembly Education Service, briefed the Committee on the pupil focus group programme to be provided by the Assembly Education Service in support of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the focus group programme but that it should include examples of so-called 'supermixed schools' i.e. single non-integrated schools which include a high degree of mixing of pupils of different faiths etc..

10.48am Assembly Education Service left the meeting.

10.48am The meeting entered public session.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Chairperson advised Members that additional submissions to the inquiry had been added to the SkyDrivePro link.

The Committee noted that as previously agreed, submissions to the inquiry were to be published on the Committee's webpage.

6. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education: Written Briefing

The Committee noted a written briefing on the Committee's Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The Committee noted that as previously agreed, a blog of the meeting's evidence to the inquiry would be published on the Committee's webpage.

10.51am Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education- briefing from Ballycastle High School and Cross & Passion College

10.52am Witnesses joined the meeting.

Mrs Barbara Ward, Principal, Cross and Passion College; and Mr Ian Williamson, Principal, Ballycastle High School briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11.01am Chris Hazzard joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11.53am Danny Kinahan left the meeting.

11.55am The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to visit Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

8. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education- briefing from Professor Knox and Professor Borooah

11.56am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Professor Colin Knox, Professor of Public Policy, University of Ulster; and Professor Vani Borooah, Emeritus Professor of Applied Economics, University of Ulster briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

12.00noon Seán Rogers left the meeting.

12.03pm Maeve McLaughlin re-joined the meeting.

12.41pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.56pm The witnesses left the meeting.

12.56pm Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education seeking further information on the Shared Education Signature Programme in particular how the Programme will facilitate Shared Education becoming a core element of strategic planning within the Department and schools.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 5 November 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Pat Sheehan MLA

10.06am The meeting commenced in private session.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

The Chairperson advised Members that additional submissions to the inquiry had been added to the SkyDrivePro link.

The Committee noted responses from the Department of Education regarding the Shared Education Signature Programme and the Shared Education Campuses Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should confirm whether Belfast Education and Library Board; Southern Education and Library Board and the South Eastern Education and Library Board are to make submissions to the inquiry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to accept responses to the inquiry received after the published deadline.

The Committee noted that, as previously agreed, submissions to the inquiry were to be published on the Committee's webpage.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education- briefing from the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

10.35am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Patricia Lewsley-Mooney, Commissioner; and Alison Montgomery, Senior Policy and Research Officer briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11.11am Trevor Lunn left the meeting.

11.26am Jonathan Craig left the meeting.

11.29am Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

11.29am The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education seeking further information on the Department's reported plans to seek feedback from pupils on a biennial basis.

8. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education- briefing from Parenting NI

11.32am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Clare-Anne Magee, Director for Parenting Forum, Parenting NI; and Nicola McKeown, Participation Worker for Parenting Forum, Parenting NI briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11.33am Chris Hazzard joined the meeting.

11.39am Jonathan Craig re-joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.10pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Parenting NI seeking information on the levels of responses from parents in respect of the establishment of a single teacher training facility.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 19 November 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Colum Eastwood MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
Pamela Dugdale (Public Finance Scrutiny Unit – Assembly Research) - item 1 only

Apologies: None

10:04am The meeting commenced in private session.

2. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - Written briefing paper inquiry submissions

The Committee noted a written briefing paper on submissions to the Committee's inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11:06am Robin Newton re-joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed a programme of oral evidence sessions including representatives from the early years, Irish Medium and youth sectors.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to commission a paper from Assembly Research on the 'Educate Together' programme in the Republic of Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to seek an informal meeting in January 2015 with the Oireachtas Select Sub-Committee on Education and Skills to discuss issues relating to Shared Education.

8. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

11:33am NICIE witnesses joined the meeting.

Noreen Campbell, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE); Helen McLaughlin, Vice Chairperson, NICIE; and Frances Donnelly, Senior Development Officer, NICIE briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11:45am Pat Sheehan re-joined the meeting.

11:48am Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:44pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

12:56pm Colum Eastwood left the meeting.

1:02pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to NICIE requesting further information on its Directors' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2014 and proposed organisational review.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 26 November 2014

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Colum Eastwood MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Chris Hazzard MLA

10:05am The meeting commenced in public session.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Committee noted correspondence from the Employment and Learning Committee regarding its Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

5. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Dissolving Boundaries Programme, University of Ulster

10:16am Witnesses joined the meeting.

Professor Roger Austin, University of Ulster; Antoin Moran, Principal, Ballyhacket Primary School and Alison McConnell, teacher, Carr's Glen Primary School briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

10:34am Danny Kinahan joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:58am Robin Newton left the meeting.

11:18am The witnesses left the meeting

11:18am Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking clarification on the discontinuation of funding for the Dissolving Boundaries programme and confirmation in respect of contacts with the University of Ulster in the development of Shared Education policy.

6. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Centre for Shared Education, Queen's University Belfast

11:20am Witnesses joined the meeting.

Professor Joanne Hughes, Director of the Centre for Shared Education, School of Education, QUB; Professor Tony Gallagher, Pro Vice Chancellor, QUB and member of the Centre for Shared Education; Dr Gavin Duffy, Research Associate, Centre for Shared Education, QUB and Professor Miles Hewstone, Director, University of Oxford Centre for the Study of Intergroup Conflict briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:51am Nelson McCausland joined the meeting.

11:51am Colum Eastwood joined the meeting.

11:59am Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

12:29pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking confirmation in respect of contacts with the QUB Centre for Shared Education in the development of Shared Education policy.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 10 December 2014

Methodist College, Belfast

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Sean Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Chris Hazzard MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

10:03am The meeting commenced in private session

10:15am The meeting entered public session.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Methodist College

11:15am Witnesses joined the meeting.

Scott Naismith, Principal, Methodist College Belfast; Neill Jackson, Chairman, Board of Governors; Michael Humphreys, Member, Board of Governors; Reverend Dr Janet Unsworth, Member, Board of Governors; and Sir Desmond Rea, Member, Board of Governors briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:01pm Danny Kinahan left the meeting.

12:17pm The witnesses left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 14 January 2015

Ryandale Inn, Moy

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Trevor Lunn MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Sean Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA

10:28am The meeting commenced in private session

6. Departmental Briefing - Together: Building a United Community – Shared Campuses Programme

10:49am Departmental officials joined the meeting.

Jacqui Durkin, Director of Area Planning and Roisin Lilley, Shared Education Campuses Manager briefed the Committee on the Department's Shared Campuses Programme – Together: Building a United Community (TBUC).

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:34am Nelson McCausland joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek the revised scoring criteria for the second call for Shared Campus projects as well as a timeline and further information on the successful projects in the first call.

11:43am Officials left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 21 January 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Sean Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

10:07am The meeting commenced in private session.

8. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Departmental briefing Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy; Draft Shared Education Policy & Draft Shared Education Bill

10:55am Departmental officials joined the meeting.

Faustina Graham, Director of Collaborative Education and Practice; Andrew Bell, Head of Shared Education and Community Relations Team; Dr Suzanne Kingon, Shared Education and Community Relations Team; and Dr John Hunter, Education and Training Inspectorate briefed the Committee on the Department's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy; draft Shared Education Policy & draft Shared Education Bill.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:11am Nelson McCausland re-joined the meeting.

11:33am Jonathan Craig joined the meeting.

12:20pm Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

12:21pm Officials left the meeting.

12:21pm Chris Hazzard left the meeting.

12:21pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to the Department for response a number of outstanding questions relating to the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking a further oral briefing at the conclusion of the Committee's Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education and sight of the Education and Training Inspectorate's report on the CRED policy, when available.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Glenveagh Special School seeking an informal meeting to discuss issues relating to Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision and the anticipated SEN and Inclusion Bill.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 4 February 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

10:08am The meeting commenced in public session.

The Chairperson, Michelle McIlveen declared an interest indicating that a member of her immediate family is a member of the Equality Commission.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in respect of the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project and an Assembly Research paper on Shared and Integrated Education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the submissions should be published on the Committee's webpage.

6. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - Community Relations Council and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

10:20am Witnesses joined the meeting.

Peter Osborne, Chairperson, Community Relations Council; Dymphna McGlade, Policy Director, Community Relations Council; Dr Michael Wardlow, Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission NI; and Darren McKinstry, Director of Policy, Equality Commission NI briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:48am Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

11:01am Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

11:21am Danny Kinahan left the meeting

11:27am Maeve McLaughlin joined the meeting.

12:14pm The witnesses left the meeting.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education- Integrated Education Fund; Professor Hamber and Professor Smith

12:16pm Witnesses joined the meeting.

Tina Merron, Chief Executive, Integrated Education Fund; Sam Fitzsimmons, Communications Director, Integrated Education Fund; Professor Brandon Hamber, INCORE, University of Ulster; and Professor Alan Smith, UNESCO Chair, University of Ulster briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:35pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

1:02pm Seán Rogers left the meeting.

1:25pm Jonathan Craig left the meeting.

1:25pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking clarification on whether the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project (or any other Shared Education programmes) will provide support or guidance to schools wishing to undertake voluntary cross-sectoral amalgamations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Equality Commission seeking sight of the research commissioned with Queen's University Belfast on Educational Inequalities and further information on the Equality Commission's position in respect of religious instruction in schools and the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to write to the Community Relations Council seeking its views on the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek further information on the BBC Spotlight programme regarding the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Integrated Education Fund seeking further information on the 'Delving Deeper Programme'.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 11 February 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
Barry McLernon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

10.08am The meeting commenced in public session.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in respect of the CRED policy; the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project and the draft Shared Education policy and Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the correspondence should be published on the Committee's webpage.

The Committee also noted correspondence from the Department on the consultation on the draft EQIA relating to the proposed removal of CRED Enhancement funding.

5. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - Education and Library Boards

10.13am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Paul Lawther, Assistant Senior Education Officer, Belfast Education and Library Board; Ray Gilbert, Senior Education Officer, North Eastern Education and Library Board; John Unsworth, Assistant Senior Education Officer, Southern Education and Library Board; June Neill, Deputy Head, Curriculum Advisory Support Services (CASS), Western Education and Library Board; and Nicky McBride, Chief Administrative Officer, South Eastern Education and Library Board briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10.30am Robin Newton left the meeting.

10.38am Seán Rogers joined the meeting.

12.00pm Danny Kinahan left the meeting.

12.00pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Western Education and Library Board seeking a fuller explanation of its reference to the non-partisan nature of Boards of Governors.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the South Eastern Education and Library Board seeking information on the SEELB's experience of shared education and inviting a response to the Terms of Reference of the Committee's inquiry.

6. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Ceara Special School and Tor Bank Special School

12.03pm The witnesses joined the meeting.

Dr Peter Cunningham, Principal, Ceara Special School and Colum Davis, Principal, Tor Bank Special School, briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.33pm Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

1.07pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking information on the budget process for Special Schools and commentary in respect of the allocation of additional support for newcomer children attending Special Schools.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 18 February 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

9.41am The meeting commenced in public session.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Committee noted further correspondence from the Department on the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project and other support for schools wishing to undertake cross-sectoral amalgamation.

The Committee also noted correspondence from the Western Education and Library Board relating to Shared Education projects in Fermanagh.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for this correspondence to be published on the Committee's webpage.

5. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - Transferors' Representative Council (TRC)

9.44am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Reverend Trevor Gribben, Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; Reverend Donald Ker, Secretary of Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland; and Reverend Dr Ian Ellis, Secretary to the Church of Ireland Board of Education and Secretary to the TRC briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

9.45am Maeve McLaughlin joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10.05am Pat Sheehan joined the meeting.

10.05am Jonathan Craig joined the meeting.

11.04am The witnesses left the meeting.

11.05am Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

11.05am Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 25 February 2015

Drumragh Integrated College, Omagh

Present:	Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson) Trevor Lunn MLA Robin Newton MLA Sandra Overend MLA
In Attendance:	Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk) Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor) Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
Apologies:	Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson) Jonathan Craig MLA Chris Hazzard MLA Nelson McCausland MLA Maeve McLaughlin MLA Seán Rogers MLA Pat Sheehan MLA

10.26am The meeting commenced in public session.

The Committee did not have a decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum, proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).

12. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Speedwell Trust

10.28am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Eamon McClean, Manager, Speedwell Trust; Eric Reaney, Trustee, Speedwell Trust; Libby Robinson, Principal, Edwards Primary School, Castlederg and Brian McGurk, Principal, St Patrick's Primary School, Castlederg briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11.25am The witnesses left the meeting.

13. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Drumragh Integrated College

11.26am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Nigel Frith, Principal, Drumragh Integrated College; Caen Fahy, Sixth Form Student, Drumragh Integrated College; Cara Monaghan; Sixth Form Student, Drumragh Integrated College and Zara Hemphill, Sixth Form Student, Drumragh Integrated College briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.10pm The witnesses left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Tuesday 3 March 2015

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

3.43pm The meeting commenced in public session.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - NASUWT and UTU

4.01pm The witnesses joined the meeting.

Teresa Graham, Northern Ireland President, National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT); Justin McCamphill, National Official, NASUWT; Gillian Dunlop, Past President, Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU); and Diane Nugent, Past President, UTU briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

4.13pm Nelson McCausland left the meeting.

4.14pm Chris Hazzard left the meeting.

4.14pm Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

4.21pm Trevor Lunn left the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

4.34pm Seán Rogers left the meeting.

4.36pm Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

5.25pm The witnesses left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 4 March 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:
None

9.33am The meeting commenced in public session.

6. **Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Early Years**

11.10am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Siobhán Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive Officer, Early Years and Pauline Walmsley, Director of Knowledge Exchange, Early Years briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11.19am Sandra Overend left the meeting.

11.27am Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

11.29am Danny Kinahan left the meeting.

The Clerk called on Mr Craig to speak. Mr Craig proposed that Mr McCausland do take the chair of the Committee. Mr Lunn seconded the proposal and, in the absence of other nominations, the Clerk asked Mr McCausland to take the chair.

11.44am The witnesses left the meeting.

7. **Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Youth Council Northern Ireland (YCNI)**

11.47am The witnesses joined the meeting.

David Guilfoyle, Chief Executive, YCNI; Norma Rea, Development Officer Equality Principles, YCNI; and Joanne Stainsby, Project Officer, YCNI briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11.49am Danny Kinahan returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.27pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

12.35pm Jonathan Craig left the meeting.

12.38pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to YCNI seeking a breakdown of its administration costs and funding.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 11 March 2015

Shimna Integrated College, Newcastle

Present:	Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson) Chris Hazzard MLA Trevor Lunn MLA Nelson McCausland MLA Robin Newton MLA Seán Rogers MLA
In Attendance:	Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk) Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor) Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
Apologies:	Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson) Jonathan Craig MLA Maeve McLaughlin MLA Sandra Overend MLA Pat Sheehan MLA

10.27am The meeting commenced in private session.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Sir Robert Salisbury

10.53am The witness joined the meeting.

Sir Robert Salisbury briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11.45am Trevor Lunn left the meeting.

12.06pm Seán Rogers left the meeting. The Committee consequently lost its decision-making quorum but, under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5), continued to hear evidence.

12.09pm Seán Rogers returned to the meeting and the Committee regained its decision-making quorum.

12.15pm Robin Newton left the meeting. The Committee consequently lost its decision-making quorum but, under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5), continued to hear evidence.

12.20pm Robin Newton returned to the meeting and the Committee regained its decision-making quorum.

12.25pm The witness left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 18 March 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Chris Hazzard MLA

2. Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry – Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education

9.56am The witnesses joined the meeting.

Jim Clarke, Chief Executive, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; Malachy Crudden, Head of Education Standards, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and Father Tim Bartlett, Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

10.00am Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

Seán Rogers declared an interest as a member of a Board of Governors of a Catholic school.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairperson passed on her condolences to Mr Gerry Lundy, Deputy Chief Executive, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on the recent death of his mother.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10.34am Maeve McLaughlin joined the meeting.

10.45am Jonathan Craig joined the meeting.

11.41am Nelson McCausland left the meeting.

11.52am Robin Newton left the meeting.

12.02pm The witnesses left the meeting.

12.02pm Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

9. Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry – Brookborough Primary School and St Mary's Primary School

12.27pm The witnesses joined the meeting.

Hazel Gardiner, Principal, Brookeborough Primary School; Dermot Finlay, Principal, St Mary's Primary School, Brookeborough; Iris Barker, Western Education and Library Board (WELB); and Mary Hampsey, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.31pm Danny Kinahan re-joined the meeting.

1.12pm Seán Rogers left the meeting.

1.14pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

1.22pm The witnesses left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 29 April 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Robin Newton MLA

10:07am The meeting commenced in public session.

10:43am The meeting moved into public session.

6. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - Review of and next steps for Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy – Department of Education / Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) oral briefing

10:44am Officials joined the meeting.

Faustina Graham, Director of Collaborative Education and Practice, Department of Education; Paul McAlister, Assistant Chief Inspector, Education and Training Inspectorate and Andrew Bell, Head of Shared Education & Community Relations Team, Department of Education briefed the Committee on the next steps for the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11:37am An official left the meeting.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – Jointly Managed Church Schools - Departmental oral briefing

11:37am An official joined the meeting.

Faustina Graham, Director of Collaborative Education and Practice, Department of Education; Andrew Bell, Head of Shared Education & Community Relations Team, Department of Education and Suzanne Kingon, Shared Education and Community Relations Team, Department of Education briefed the Committee on Jointly Managed Church Schools as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

12:13pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

12:14pm The officials left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education seeking sight of the Department's CRED policy update and details of the Young Life and Times survey results in respect of relevant pupil attitudes.

- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education seeking:
- clarity on the legal protection of the Christian ethos within Controlled, Integrated and Jointly Managed Church schools - including a definition of the Christian ethos;
 - information on the Department's considerations in respect of the withdrawal in certain circumstances of Home to School transport support for pupils whose parents do not wish them to attend a Jointly Managed Church school; and
 - clarification on the differences between a Jointly Managed Church school and an Integrated school;

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 13 May 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Peter Weir MLA (Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

10:02am The meeting commenced in public session.

9. **Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - final oral Departmental evidence session**

The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education in respect of Jointly Managed Church schools and a report on the ePartners programme from Ulster University.

11:19am Officials joined the meeting.

Faustina Graham, Director of Collaborative Education and Practice, Department of Education; Andrew Bell, Head of Shared Education and Community Relations Team, Department of Education and Suzanne Kingon, Head of Irish Medium and Integrated Education Team briefed the Committee on the Department's draft Shared Education Bill and draft Shared Education policy as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

11:20am Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

12:17pm Chris Hazzard left the meeting.

12:45pm Jonathan Craig left the meeting.

1:04pm Seán Rogers left the meeting.

A question and answer session followed the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider a response at its next meeting to the Department in respect of the draft Shared Education Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking:

- clarification on whether Shared Education funding for schools is contingent on participation in the Levels of Progression;
- clarity on the use of the phrase 'equality of identity' within the Shared Education policy;
- figures relating to non-Integrated schools that meet the criteria for Integrated status in respect of the religious breakdown of the enrolment and the membership of the Board of Governors;

- figures relating to Integrated schools in respect of the religious breakdown of the enrolment and the membership of the Board of Governors;
- figures for the number of people who attended the Department's Shared Education Bill/policy public consultation events;
- clarification on the legislative position in respect of Special Schools adopting Integrated status; and
- sight of the Shared Education continuum model produced by ETI for the Early Years and Youth sectors.

1:13pm Officials left the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 17 June 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Peter Weir MLA (Chairperson)
Sandra Overend MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Christopher Jeffries (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Nelson McCausland MLA

9.34am The meeting commenced in private session.

1. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – draft report - written briefing

The Committee considered the draft report on its Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

9.35am Chris Hazzard joined the meeting.

9.43am Seán Rogers joined the meeting.

9.47am Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to re-consider the report in greater detail on 24 June 2015.

10.10am The meeting moved into public session.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 24 June 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Peter Weir MLA (Chairperson)
Sandra Overend MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ross Hussey MLA

9.36am The meeting commenced in private session.

2. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – draft report - written briefing

9.47am Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

10.09am Maeve McLaughlin joined the meeting.

The Committee noted a further response from the Department of Education in respect of the use of the phrase ‘equality of identity’ in the DE draft Shared Education policy.

The Committee also noted that a copy of ‘The Economics of Schooling in a Divided Society – The Case for Shared Education’ by Professors Knox and Borooah was available in the Committee office.

The Committee considered the draft report on its Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

Agreed: The Committee considered a number of revisions and agreed to consider the final version of the report at its meeting on 1 July 2015.

10.35am The meeting moved into public session.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 1 July 2015

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Peter Weir MLA (Chairperson)
Sandra Overend MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance: Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Mark O'Hare (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ross Hussey MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

9:49am The meeting commenced in private session.

1. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education – agreement of Inquiry Report - written briefing

9:50am Maeve McLaughlin joined the meeting.

The Committee considered the report on its Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

Agreed: The Committee read and agreed the Introduction section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee read and agreed the Consideration of Evidence section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee read and agreed, subject to a single amendment, the Findings and Recommendations section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee read and agreed the Executive Summary and Summary of Recommendations sections of the report.

Agreed: The Committee read and agreed the summary of the contents of the Appendices of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content to order that the report be printed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for an extract from the minutes of today's meeting to be included in the appendices of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report (as amended) be the Sixth Report of the Education Committee to the Assembly for the current mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content to put down the following motion for debate in plenary:

‘That this Assembly approves the report of the Committee for Education on its Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education [NIA 194/11-16] and calls on the Minister of Education to implement the recommendations contained in the report’.

The Committee noted that the report would be embargoed until the start of the debate in plenary but that prior to that, a copy of the report would be shared with the Department of Education.

9:58am Jonathan Craig joined the meeting.

10:00am The meeting moved into public session.

[EXTRACT]



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 2

Minutes of Evidence

Contents

18 June 2014	IEF/ETI and Fermanagh Trust
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5 November 2014	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
19 November 2014	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
26 November 2014	Queens Centre for Shared Education
26 November 2014	University of Ulster Dissolving Boundaries
10 December 2014	Methodist College Belfast
14 January 2015	Department of Education - Shared Education Campuses Programme
21 January 2015	Department of Education and Education and Training Inspectorate
4 February 2015	Community Relations Council and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
4 February 2015	Integrated Education Fund and Professor Hamber, Ulster University and Professor Smyth, Ulster University
11 February 2015	Joint briefing from the 5 Education and Library Boards
11 February 2015	Ceara Special School and Tor Bank Special School
18 February 2015	Oral Evidence - Transferors' Representative Council
25 February 2015	Speedwell Trust and Drumragh Integrated College
25 February 2015	Drumragh Integrated College
3 March 2015	NASUWT and UTU
4 March 2015	Early Years Organisation
4 March 2015	Youth Council Northern Ireland
11 March 2015	Sir Robert Salisbury
18 March 2015	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education
18 March 2015	Brookeborough Primary School and St Mary's Primary School, Brookeborough
29 April 2015	Joint briefing from Department of Education and Education Training Inspectorate - Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy.
29 April 2015	Department of Education - Jointly Managed Schools
13 May 2015	Department of Education

18 June 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mervyn Storey (Chairperson)
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Trevor Lunn
Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr John Hunter	<i>Education and Training Inspectorate</i>
Dr Adrian Johnston	<i>International Fund for Ireland</i>
Professor Colin Knox	<i>University of Ulster</i>

1. **The Chairperson:** I welcome Professor Knox, Dr Adrian Johnston and John Hunter. Thank you for making the journey to Fermanagh to join us. Our journey down this morning was very pleasant. Your presentation is on the sharing in education programme (SiEP) run by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and its evaluation by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). I will hand over to you, and then we will, undoubtedly, have questions from members.
2. **Dr Adrian Johnston (International Fund for Ireland):** Committee members, thank you for giving us the opportunity to come here this morning. I am delighted to be here to share the work and some of the findings from programmes that the IFI has run over the last number of years to 2013, specifically the sharing in education programme and the shared education programme (SEP).
3. As you can see, I am joined this morning by John Hunter from the Education and Training Inspectorate, who evaluated 19 of the projects in the sharing in education programme for us, and Professor Colin Knox from the University of Ulster, who appraised three of the shared education programmes for

us. I suppose that I should clarify the difference between the two.

4. The sharing in education programme refers to the 19 projects that were core funded by the International Fund for Ireland and delivered through the Department of Education (DE). The shared education programme refers to three programmes that were co-funded by us and Atlantic Philanthropies. They involved Queen's University Belfast, the North Eastern Education and Library Board, through the primary integrating/enriching education project (PIEE), which, I know, some of you will be aware of, and, of course, the Fermanagh Trust.
5. As independent funders, the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies were able to commit a huge amount of money, effort and resources to the programmes. That helped to shape the proof of their concept and to widen the discussion on shared education.
6. The IFI has invested around £18 million in these programmes. Prior to their inception, the fund had, at its core, youth and education programmes, and, before this, we contributed up to £21 million to those. They were a precursor to the shared education programme. The IFI board believes that these two programmes are probably among the most important, meaningful and impactful programmes that we have supported over its 27-year lifetime.
7. From 2008, the fund has been involved in shared education. To promote sharing and reconciliation, we have helped in the region of 65,500 children to take advantage of shared education opportunities across 22 projects. They spanned all sectors of education from early years — I know that some of you are aware of some of the teacher training and development opportunities — and involved engagement with the whole family network.

8. Reconciliation has been core to the fund's activity over 27 years, but so, too, has the vision of a prosperous and shared society, and we felt that education was a core component of that. Through this programme, we have delivered high-quality educational experiences. We have shown how standards can be raised right across the education sector and how sharing can, therefore, contribute to a better society for everyone.
9. The programmes make a very compelling case for sharing. That is backed up by practice and by a wealth of research, which confirms the benefits of shared education: improved academic outcomes; economic advantages for schools and wider society; enhanced reconciliation outcomes; and, because of the appreciation of diversity and mutual respect, more rounded young people in the education system.
10. From these programmes, we have a rich vein of research, which, I am sure, will be talked about. That learning is free for the Department to utilise as it sees fit in its consideration of how schools can become more involved in sharing. We believe that, as we all move forward, the projects that were shared under the shared education banner have a role to play in a genuine shared future. The proven models in the sharing in education programme and the SEP can make a real, meaningful impact, not only on the Department's plans but on the Programme for Government commitments and, ultimately, the Together: Building a United Community strategy.
11. I am sure that you saw the SiEP evaluations back in December. Those were distributed to the Committee. As the evaluations show, most of the targets that were put in place for the programmes were not just met but, in some instances, very much exceeded. The young people who took part gained academically, and, for some, it was their first contact with peers from different community backgrounds.
12. I would like to pay tribute to all of the pupils, parents, teachers, schools and to the whole school network that contributed to the project's success. I would also like to pay tribute to Atlantic Philanthropies, which had the vision and helped to core fund some of our activity, and the Department of Education for its guidance and support through the International Fund for Ireland liaison team and its engagement at project level. That should be commended.
13. As I said at the outset, IFI believes that it has made a huge commitment of money and effort to shared education. We believe that the legacy of the development of the programmes and models stands to benefit all schools and learners. Thank you for the invitation, and thank you very much for your support and interest in this work. We are quite happy to take any questions that you might have for us.
14. **The Chairperson:** Thank you. Colin or John, do you want to make any comments at this stage?
15. **Professor Colin Knox (University of Ulster):** No, thank you.
16. **The Chairperson:** John, we would like some clarification on the role of ETI. There was much discussion of ETI in the Assembly yesterday, and it created a bit of interest. Can you explain ETI's role in the sharing in education programme in particular? Was it a facilitator or did it act as the inspector?
17. **Mr John Hunter (Education and Training Inspectorate):** We were commissioned to provide an evaluation of the sharing in education programme, but it was a learning curve. We had to learn to work differently and much more developmentally with the projects. That is because the programme was new and different. As mentioned, the approach was not that this was a journey that would have an end product. We were to work alongside, support and provide ongoing commentary and advice to the IFI. In fact, one of the strengths was, I think, the interim report, which served as a reminder of the need to continue to think of the aims and objectives of shared education in each of the

- projects. We were not there to police the system; we were there to work and learn alongside it, but, at the same time, to provide an objective evaluation.
18. **The Chairperson:** Did ETI write the final evaluation report?
19. **Mr Hunter:** Yes.
20. **The Chairperson:** In that final report, there is a recommendation that ETI develop further quality indicators and material on good practice for dissemination to schools. Where are we with that? Correct me if I am wrong, but has ETI ever produced material on particular aspects of educational provision? Historically, that was the remit of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA). So that we are clear in our mind, will you clarify where all this is leading to?
21. **Mr Hunter:** Coming from the special education side, I take a lead on a lot of survey work, and much of our work was based on developing indicators. Together Towards Improvement, for example, was designed to allow schools to recognise how we work but also to provide indicators so that they could benchmark the whole practice.
22. This evaluation was not, in itself, unusual. What was unusual was that we had to work towards an interim report and develop the indicators as we learned from the practice, from the project and from the aims and objectives. Quite a lot of the indicators emerged from our work with the projects and our knowledge of how they were outworking, particularly from the aims and objectives as set. We produced those for the report and have been tasked by DE to develop them and have them ready for September or October.
23. **The Chairperson:** Of this year?
24. **Mr Hunter:** Yes.
25. **The Chairperson:** That will, I assume, be for dissemination to all schools.
26. **Mr Hunter:** Yes.
27. **The Chairperson:** Professor Knox, we have always valued your input to the Committee: your reports, assessments and evaluation of a number of issues. We are here today, rightly so, in Fermanagh. To those who have joined us in the Public Gallery, I would like to say that we are delighted to be here. There have been some very good examples of work undertaken by the Fermanagh Trust, which we will hear from later. Shared education has been very much put in focus as a result of the Treacy judgement, and, yesterday, we had a debate in the Assembly that we will no doubt regurgitate at some stage during this Committee meeting. In light of that judgement, we all recognise that, as far as one eminent member of the legal profession is concerned, there is a distinction between integrated education and shared education. Colin, from your experience and professional viewpoint, what do you believe could be the long-term implications of that in light of what has been going on with the sharing in education programme, the proposals from the Executive on how we roll this out and how it all plays out with the integrated sector and shared education?
28. **Professor Knox:** Start with an easy question, Chairman. *[Laughter.]* First, thank you very much for inviting us along to share our views with you. You asked a question about the links between shared and integrated education. We have always — when I say “we”, I am talking about the shared education programme within the wider SiEP family — seen shared education as part of a graduated journey towards greater interdependence between schools. The starting point is acknowledging that greater interdependence promotes the kinds of things that Adrian mentioned, such as better education outcomes, better reconciliation outcomes and better economic benefits for the school sector. In fact, we have developed a graduated system. It is like a benchmarking system and can place any school on a scale of “no sharing” right through to “integrated”. So we do not see this as a case of either/or; we think that schools are on a journey.

29. I will use a bus metaphor. The end point of the journey might be integrated schools, but many schools will choose not to buy a ticket for the full journey. They will choose, because they want to protect their identity, to get off the bus sooner, at, for example, collaboration. They will, perhaps, as collaboration enhances the performance of both schools, choose to take that journey a bit further. It is unfortunate that people tend to say “shared education versus integrated education”. In fact, in Fermanagh, the other projects at Queen’s and the PíEE, integrated schools were part of the programmes. They were not in any way excluded, and many played a constructive part in them. We in shared education were not saying that we were a sector apart.
30. I want to link to a point that John made. One of the roles that ETI will play in the outworking of this through the new £25 million Delivering Social Change shared education programme will be to work to develop the kind of graduated system in which schools can see where they are on the scale and how they can, if they want to, scale up. If they want to become more interdependent and feel that there are educational, reconciliation or economic benefits from doing so, there will be funding available to them to make that enhanced journey.
31. I do not want to paint this as either/or. There are opportunities for schools here depending on where they are now, where they want to take this and the extent to which they want to broker interdependencies with other schools. There is not a one-size-fits-all model. A good case in point is Fermanagh, where a number of rural schools have decided that their fate lies in much greater interdependency. Lauri and Catherine from the Fermanagh Trust will be able to give you good examples of where that works well.
32. We are not saying that the only route for schools will be a shared future, an integrated sector or single-identity schools. There are options. We have demonstrated that this range of model can work. It will depend on circumstances therein. Our research found that the area-planning process was, in our view, a crude instrument and one that has created the spectre of this being about closing schools down.
33. We did some costings. If you closed all the schools that are unviable in DE terms, you would save about 3% of the education budget. Is that worth it for all the angst that will come to your doorstep when the primary school plans are issued and constituents are knocking on your door, asking, “Why are you closing our school”? There are options to broker relationships that could create much more sustainable schools and interdependencies; make the boundaries between controlled and maintained schools much more porous; and, in some cases, save rural communities. I am stealing Lauri’s thunder here, but that is, essentially, a model that has worked well in this county.
34. **The Chairperson:** We will pick up on the economic benefit with Lauri and his colleagues. Let us look at what are set out as being the overall economic, reconciliation and educational benefits. Often, we look first at the educational benefit. If there is none, the other elements seem to become secondary. That is a common flaw when we start to look at programmes like this.
35. John, how does ETI give qualitative expression to the educational programme in a way that gives it an evaluation? In many respects, you are not comparing like with like because there are nuances: for example, a rural as opposed to an urban setting, and, particularly here in County Fermanagh, you have very isolated communities. How do you get a sense of that equilibrium of quality outcome?
36. **Mr Hunter:** First, if shared education is about anything, it is about respect for difference. So we have to begin by accepting the realities that come with a system that is separate and divided. People like me come from the viewpoint that, whatever the sector, it should be a part of, not apart from. Shared education has the potential to remind

- us that we should not live in silos and that by sharing, learning and working together, there are dividends for others.
37. In that sense, one of the themes to arise from the evaluations, from Colin and from our side, was that, to promote shared education, we must look at localised contacts because schools must work within their locality. The issues that come into play in an interface area will be different from those in a very wide rural area. In the old inspectorate terms — I have been long in the game — we have to look at, not look for. At the beginning, we decided that we would move towards writing about the shared education that we find on inspection. We decided to start by identifying good practice for schools and learners and, in so doing, identify and celebrate that through the inspection process as a benchmark for others, but not as a structure in which they cannot think in and reflect their local context.
38. **The Chairperson:** Finally, before I go to members, your paper has an example of the education benefits, which you link to economic benefits. The example is of the four selected primary and post-primary schools involved in the shared education programme. You translate the investment of £2 million across the four projects into increased lifetime earnings of £25 million for participants in the study. Will you expand on that a wee bit, because the Minister is telling us that we will not have a big lot of money? However, on Monday, he will announce considerable capital investment. We get caught in this difference between capital and resource. The overall Northern Ireland education budget — £2.1 billion or £2.2 billion — is not a paltry sum, but money is spent on a variety of other things, and sometimes the Committee has seriously questioned whether we ever get any value for money from them. Here is a project that involved a partnership between Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland, with some money put in by the Department. Could any better economic model be presented? Would any other model be as much of an incentive? I do not in any way want to take away from reconciliation and the value of communities and schools that are different coming together, but is that economic model being sold in such a way that we all understand its ultimate benefits?
39. **Professor Knox:** That is a very good question. I do not think that it has been sufficiently well sold, Mr Chairman. The references here are academic. We have sold it to peer colleagues throughout other parts of the UK and beyond. I think that we have done a bad job at, if you like, putting that into a language that is comprehensible for policymakers and learners.
40. I will go back one step: one of the reasons why we are passionate about shared education is that we see significant educational benefits here. How do you demonstrate and provide evidence to ensure that that is the case? The example that you referred to was a relatively small-scale study, with four selected primary and post-primary schools. They were selected because they were part of the shared education programme administered through Queen's University, PíEE and the Fermanagh Trust. We went into those schools and did an in-depth analysis with all the information, data, usage and number of kids participating. We talked to principals about how shared education had enhanced the curriculum offer for those kids and how they had been able to share resources and expertise. In other words, we tried to quantify how interdependency between those schools had translated into educational benefits.
41. In crude terms, it was a cost-benefit analysis. Working alongside principals, teachers, parents and students, we asked what they saw as the educational benefits flowing from working together, the costs of doing that and what contributions were IFI and Atlantic making. We had to operationalise that in some way. Principals said that, as a consequence of working with those

- schools, children were more likely to get better GCSEs.
42. In one case, there was a partnership between primary and post-primary schools, where the post-primary teachers came into the primary schools to teach a foreign language. We asked principals to what extent they thought that those children were more likely to go to university as a consequence of working collaboratively, and we put costs on those.
43. The study has been published, so economists have to make certain assumptions about these things. Some of those assumptions can be challenged, and we are up for that. The outworking showed that, for an investment of £2 million from IFI and Atlantic, the net educational benefits of getting better GCSEs, language skills and the prospect of kids going to university, worked through the lifetime of the programme, were £23 million.
44. There is great potential in the Delivering Social Change shared education programme to expand that research beyond a small-scale study. We are also aware of research in England that went much further on collaborative models of stronger and weaker schools — to put it crudely — coming together to enhance the overall performance of those two types of school.
45. We are convinced that there are quantifiable educational benefits as a result of collaboration. With the new programme, we hope to be able to demonstrate that in a wider landscape since the new Delivering Social Change programme is aimed at all schools in Northern Ireland, including those that have had no shared opportunities so far. I am sorry that that was such a long-winded answer.
46. **The Chairperson:** Members made some interesting comments in the House yesterday on their views of integrated education. There is a huge challenge for us. On the way here, I passed schools that are in splendid isolation, and you wonder how they relate to other schools, even in their own sector. I went past one very isolated rural post-primary school, and, further down the road, there were other smaller schools. You wonder whether they have any real connection with one another, other than being feeder schools for the post-primary school. You wonder how much of that there is, because that is where we take shared education to a completely different level.
47. I have said repeatedly that we have got ourselves into a very narrow trench where shared education is solely about getting Catholics and Prods together, and that is the only issue that we are interested in. That narrow view does a disservice to shared education. It is part of it, but there is a wider context and issue, which has much wider implications and benefits.
48. Thanks for that, Colin.
49. **Dr Johnston:** The fund's position was never that, when the shared education programme was developed, integrated education was part of it. The integrated education sector could partake in the choice that was available to all pupils, students and families if they wished to have that choice. At that time, it was still the norm that 93% of our students were being taught in what you might term a single identity schools, but at least with an element of segregation amongst them in the schools. From a reconciliation perspective, the fund thought that that norm had to be challenged — there was a desire for that, even in society — and for an element that brought students together in facilities. That is why the fund initially became engaged. However, there is common factor about isolation. We have talked about the issue before at the fund, and we keep talking about Fermanagh, but Fermanagh is a great example of how isolated communities and schools can come together in a shared way. At the core of that, the common factor in all programmes is educational outcomes for the students and the schools identifying their potential weaknesses and other schools' strengths and collaborating across topics and facilities to be able

to raise academic achievement for all pupils. In the integrated sector, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) delivered projects for us throughout the shared education programme. So, the fund has never seen this as a shared versus integrated argument whatsoever. In fact, integrated education was very much part of our thinking and the choice that will be available for families and pupils.

50. **Mr Hunter:** I want to widen that slightly. I looked at the 19 projects, and one of the major and important outcomes is not simply academic — we debated long and hard about aspects that showed that there were improvements in learning outcomes — but it made pupils better learners, in our view, because of the social dividends. The fact that they were able to work and learn alongside pupils in other schools meant that they had to have a sense of who they were and where they were coming from and articulate that across various lessons. The social aspect is vital, as is the fact that it helped to raise their language understanding of shared education, reconciliation and prejudice. Getting youngsters into discussions and debate allowed them to begin to challenge, and all this is beginning to show that the curriculum itself is a major vehicle for shared education. Lots of it was hidden in the history programme, and we did a short scoping study of Key Stage 4 history because we were concerned that there was diversion and diversity there. Critical thinking skills were also beginning to show an effect. Academically, that will improve outcomes, but it will take some time.
51. We must not forget the impact of staff and schools coming together physically, which throws up major themes. We need to get in strongly at initial teacher education level and at early school development level, and we need to be innovative and different, expect the unexpected of all the outcomes and maybe not be too hung up on this leading to improved GCSE results. One of the words that comes across strongly to me in all the projects is

“engagement”. I am also responsible for pupils who fall out of the school system and into alternative provision. Those numbers are rising, and there is potential for interest, because one striking feature is that the quality of teaching is the route to improvement and that it was more innovative and different, and used people other than teachers. That brought something new, different and more creative that helped engagement. So, the outcomes will take time, but they are engaging pupils. You could swear on it, where I am coming from, that it led to special and mainstream schools working much more closely together rather than their being siloed and isolated. The dividends were quite sizeable, and it will take time to embed them and for standards to rise. That is the wider view.

52. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation. I will keep to the World Cup theme. In the run-up to Bosnia's game last week, there was an interview with Edin Dzeko in one of the Sunday papers in which he talked about his experiences at school in Sarajevo. The parallels were frightening; he talked about kids in different uniforms being sandwiched together in classrooms, but the divisions always remained. They knew that they were different because they were wearing different uniforms in the same classroom. I could not help but think of Moy and our own situation here and draw parallels straight away. He said that he felt that it was a superficial reconciliation project.
53. It started me thinking about playing devil's advocate and looking critically at what we are talking about today. The IFI has spent nearly €1 billion on projects, yet we have more peace walls now than ever. I know that one of the IFI's targets is to encourage economic and social advancement. The gap between the wealthy and the poor in our society is probably worse now than ever. Again, to play devil's advocate, are we in danger, looking back 20 years, of saying that it was a superficial project, that it did not go far enough and that, for whatever reason, it has not done what it said

- on the tin? Do we need to take a new route? Do we need to intensify what we are doing? It was the parallel that I saw that caused me to think about that. The subject was frighteningly provocative for me, anyway. I want to throw that out there and hear your thoughts on it.
54. **Professor Knox:** I will jump in. That is a very fair and rational observation, and drawing on the World Cup is probably apt in that sense, with the example you have given. We have attempted to learn from previous experiments — if I can call them that — with reconciliation, community relations and good relations work, which could be distilled into things such as the education for mutual understanding (EMU) programme. There has been a significant step change beyond those types of well-meaning but broadly superficial programmes, when we put two sets of kids on a bus to the Giant's Causeway, they had a good day, came back and forgot about it.
55. **The Chairperson:** It is a good place to go.
56. **Professor Knox:** It is a good place to go, but they forgot about the substantive reconciliation benefits. There has been a substantive step change in what shared education is doing. I take John's point entirely about this being more than just education benefits, but one of the significant selling points of shared education is education benefits for parents. They are much more willing to let their kids be part of a shared education experience if they think that it will enhance education outcomes. I am not for one moment devaluing the wider, rounded experience that those children will get, but the fact that it is embedded in potential improved education outcomes means that parents are much more willing to let their kids participate in it and support it as a means of improving their kids' education. What parent does not want their child to have a better education experience?
57. The experiences across SiEP and SEP are that that model, which is built on a wide body of research by colleagues from Queen's University on sustained contact, not one-off experiences, not only improves education outcomes but produces much better reconciliation outcomes. At one stage, one might have been able to say that they could end up with the kind of superficial reconciliation experience that you described, but I think that we have moved on significantly from that. We have much greater hopes and aspirations for shared education, not least because the role of the inspectorate will now be very helpful in embedding that in an inspection system in which schools will expect to be looked at for their shared experiences.
58. **Mr Hunter:** I will make a small point. The most important thing about your World Cup example is that everyone is playing, and there is a set of rules that they all live by.
59. **The Chairperson:** For those who qualified. *[Laughter.]*
60. **Mr Hunter:** What is nice about it is that it allows for different styles of playing and so on, so there is commonality. The Welcoming Schools project did something because it raised the importance not only of schools and pupils but of schools opening doors to welcome the parental body, the environment and the community. If shared education is to be significant, it cannot work in isolation from the parental aspect or a local community. The report points out that there are different starting points, and we have to recognise that there are schools out there that have not participated or did not wish to participate. Colin is quite right; if it is shown that, by learning across and alongside others that we can improve the quality of learning, it will sell itself over time. Who is to say? Maybe we will get to the World Cup in due course.
61. **Dr Johnston:** I will respond from the fund's perspective. You are quite right: we have contributed €1 billion to projects over 27 years, and I can clearly see how some projects could be deemed superficial. Projects can look superficial if there is no means to an end, or if change is not implemented at the end of a project. The very distinct difference in the shared education

- programme — this is where the fund sees it as having the most impact — is that it has paved the way for the legislative change that is required to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to take part in shared classes and facilities.
62. Key to that — Colin touched on it — is that families have also embraced that ethos. A real societal change has been implemented through the shared education programme, and we have seen that with parents or communities who may not have engaged in peace and reconciliation activities historically but who are doing so because they see that there is an opportunity or advantage for their son, daughter or family. That is the real difference in the shared education programme, which is why I understand where you are coming from in that some projects in the past could have looked very superficial, but a distinct change has been made at legislative level as well as at community level.
63. We have to be mindful that some young people have excluded themselves from the education system, and, from the fund's perspective, one of the key elements of shared education is how to engage with those young people as well. There are young people who are excluded from formal education — maybe they have excluded themselves or have just dropped out — and that is a key focus of the fund at the moment. At the end of the shared education programme, we do not just say, "This is where it ends": It is about the young people who are not getting those opportunities, how we can engage with them, maybe get them back into formal education and looking at other opportunities for them.
64. **Mr Hazzard:** I agree that we are seeing an intensification, which is good. I think that NICIE is looking to a Macedonian example of integration through language, crossing language barriers and so on, which is a very good sign. I wanted to put that point out there to play devil's advocate for a minute.
65. **Mr Rogers:** I do not want to hit too hard those of us who were involved in EMU many years ago by talking about its superficiality, but one of my first experiences of shared education was when Limavady High School and my school in Kilkeel met and were in each other's classrooms for a couple of days. If you look at that from the outside, it seems crazy — two schools from opposite ends of the Province — but, when I reflect on it, the important thing is that we had to start somewhere. My good friend in Limavady High School, David Dunlop, was pushing for this, and I have seen how that school has come on in sharing education and how it is working and learning together with St Mary's. I also saw that in my own school.
66. Many years ago, our cross-community activity was a biannual soccer match — that was it — but that has come on as well, and now there is work and learning together. We all have to start the journey in different places, but it is important that we take it on. John, you say that about 70% of schools are involved in sharing. Is that all cross-sectoral sharing? Will you put a bit more meat on the bones about the quality of sharing?
67. **Mr Hunter:** If you see it as layers of sharing, some people simply had meetings, and the approach was almost tokenistic, but that has changed over time. Fundamentally, when relationships develop and good relationships work, it moves to strategies. Through the IFI programme, we are beginning to see, more and more, the term "shared education" fighting its way into school development planning. Unless there is a whole-school approach, and school leaders are willing and committed to driving it, it will remain as token sharing.
68. I can give an example. I sat in a classroom in which youngsters from two schools were being led by a teacher who was talking about the words of reconciliation. What was interesting, being the magpie in the system, was that they sat apart from one another and spoke through the teacher. After having a conversation with the teacher and going back to it, the dynamics had

- changed. In addition, the teacher almost allowed the youngsters to control the setting. They moved towards talking, but not about the words of reconciliation. I sat in on a simple lesson in which the youngsters talked about what they did at the weekend. They suddenly found that, while living in different places, there is a commonality between where we go, what we do, whether we have a drink and whom we support. People began to make friendships. To me, that was much more significant than their learning the language of the formalised side. It takes time, and schools do it differently.
69. Schools have linked up for drama and developed relations because of smaller pupil numbers for particular subjects, so that has widened. It enhances the early learning communities. Strangely enough, it is more difficult in schools that are closer together. It is easy to link up with a school that is far away because it is not a rival. However, the closer the schools are, the more local superstitions there are. They have to do it in a nice, simple, straightforward way. That usually happens because two teachers have become friends at work. It then becomes bigger and stronger and moves out to the broader population. For it to really work, however, it has to have commitment at leadership and whole-school level.
70. When the interim report was published, it was significant that the projects that were not doing well had taken their eye off the ball. I am thinking of one project in which the youngsters linked together on a football scheme, with Celtic and Rangers being the two teams. The footballing skills were developing really well at the beginning, but their knowledge of reconciliation and working together was not. So, rebalancing, building, monitoring and evaluation, preferably by the organisers themselves rather than by external people like me, is the way I think that it will move forward. In that sense, the numbers are growing.
71. In one programme, the two university colleges got together. The programme has now finished, but they have sustained it. They still maintain the links and the development, so sustainability is developing. Welcoming Schools also made links. In another couple of programmes, people gained accreditation and are using that as leaders in their organisations. There are lots of dividends that prove that it will develop more and more over time. As someone who went through the EMU programme, I always thought that it had wonderful potential and wondered why the goalposts had moved. This has helped to kick-start the concepts that were in that, as has the CRED programme.
72. **Mr Rogers:** Is that good practice being disseminated to all schools?
73. **Mr Hunter:** It has been available through the report. One of our core targets for the next couple of years is that we should produce resource material. If we put another hat on, we produced resource material for special educational needs, which has been highly valued by schools. We think that we now need resource material of best practice for shared education so that it would provide a stimulus and a benchmark and something that shows how others have gone on this journey and how people can develop it. That is part of our thinking with the next round of shared education — that it should end up with physical material.
74. A lot of the projects have produced some wonderful material, and they are living within the projects. There was a conference to disseminate that, but I will take the comment that it needs to be much wider and shared much further through better networking than we currently have.
75. **Mr Rogers:** The report talks about the production of a shared education continuum tool. Was that produced?
76. **Mr Hunter:** There is a diagram, which was our attempt to show the beginnings of it. Putting some meat on the continuum is the task that has been handed to me and my team to produce for the Department for the end of September. Therefore, there would be something against which new

- projects could be benchmarked. The desire of that is to allow schools to see shared education not as an event but as a process. They can see where they currently are and move themselves through school development and targets along that, away from being isolated, being siloed or being single identity towards having a shared and wider identity working across the continuum. It is not just running one way. It is a continuum that will go in different directions. It is still a process.
77. **Mr Rogers:** I think that it would be a useful tool for schools, particularly for their self-evaluation, to see where they are and what they need to embed in their school development plan as they go ahead.
78. **Professor Knox:** I will just add a quick point to that to update the information about the ETI's work. As part of the business plan for the Delivering Social Change shared education programme — the £25 million programme — colleagues at Queen's, based on their experience of the shared education programme in the three projects, have developed a graduated scheme to allow schools to position themselves in that in terms of applications for funding. Point 1 is where schools have not had any prior contact at all, and it goes up to, I think, point 4, where you have the Limavadys of this world, who are essentially interdependent.
79. **Mr Lunn:** I do not want you to think that I am in any way hostile to what you are doing. I had better say that at the start. It might sound as if I am, but I am not, honestly. Your programmes are terrific, and I have no doubt that there are educational benefits and some societal benefits. Frankly, there is a vast difference between those two benefits. That is what worries me.
80. Sharing has been around for years, long before the IFI came along. My daughter participated in the shared language scheme between Friends' School and Rathmore. I hate to say how many years ago that was, but it was probably 25. The big push is on now for shared education. I think that, to some people, it is a convenient alternative to pushing for the real thing, which is integrated. I have no expectation that our whole system will somehow become integrated in my time or my children's time. It is not going to happen.
81. Take as your starting point the word "reconciliation", which has been used quite a bit: I do not believe that children at age four or five need reconciliation. They just need to enter a school situation where working together, living together and playing together are the norm. To me, if Together: Building a United Community is to mean anything, that has to be a very valid part of the structure. You can move on to housing and all the rest of it, but, as far as possible, they should be brought through school together.
82. I know that you have done a fair bit of inspection work on this, John. I understand how you can evaluate the educational benefits, though I think that trying to isolate the educational benefit of the sharing programme, as opposed to what might have happened if the schools had not been sharing, must be difficult, given the way in which she looked at that. How do you evaluate the societal and community benefits?
83. **Mr Hunter:** There are a couple of things. I am looking at one project, which, as part of its outworking, employed a researcher who did a questionnaire. Out of that, they looked at the attitudinal change in those who participated and in the wider community. I think that we have to evaluate the impact through the eyes and the presentation of the participants in this.
84. I am a big believer in schools producing their own evidence of the importance of what they do on behalf of youngsters in the community. Our job should be to quality-assure that externally to ensure that they are doing it in the correct way. I take the point that it is difficult, but I think that, when schools continually work together, it becomes — I think that we used these words in the report — "The way we do things around here".

- When we get to that stage, we know that we have actually done something significant.
85. **Mr Lunn:** This is the way that we do things around here, but we have no intention of coming together. We will continue to use separate uniforms and premises and to come together for educational benefit. As each group of children goes through each school, it is the same procedure over again on a seven-year cycle.
86. **Mr Hunter:** I think that we have to take a longer-term strategy. When you move into the FE sector, the training side and the university side, the issues that were apparent in a segregated system are no longer there. So, I think that we have to prepare folk at that younger stage. I think that the curriculum is a major vehicle for that. The PD&MU and Learning for Life and Work are routes to give youngsters the skills that they need, which they have to take out and beyond the school classroom.
87. In my day, you got into the classroom and you taught. That was it; nobody bothered you. Now you are measured as a whole school, and we are moving towards being measured as a school community. We are also moving towards area learning communities. Therefore, the dividend for an area learning community must be seen through the improvements in wider society. How we will measure it is not that easy, and how we will write about it is even tougher. However, I still think that it is important to have that goal.
88. **Mr Lunn:** You say that, by the time they get to FE and university level, the issues are no longer there. You want to go to Queen's University. I think that you will find that the issues are still there, and they are partly there because of what has gone before.
89. **Mr Hunter:** Yes, what has gone before.
90. **Dr Johnston:** Integrated and shared education are tools to get to a specific point, and they are both trying to get to the same outcome. For me, the change in shared education is a very complex one because of the sectoral choice that exists here. You have to manage that change across all those sectors as well as in society. That is what makes it more difficult.
91. On Mr Roger's earlier point about Kilkeel and Limavady, they started at two very different places, and that is very important. That is part of that change that has to be managed as well. It is at the point now where Limavady High School and St Mary's in Limavady have put in an application for a shared campus, which St Mary's would not have done had it not been for the engagements with Limavady High School.
92. **Mr Lunn:** They are two separate schools.
93. **Dr Johnston:** They are two separate schools, but they have brought each other along in shared education.
94. While I take your point that children at four and five do not need to be taught about reconciliation, studies by Early Years and other organisations have shown that, at that age, prejudice can be very much ingrained in young people. The problem that we have in our society is that, by the time the young people get to the point where reconciliation is required, sectarianism has potentially been ingrained in them from an early age because of the way in which they have been taught. I think that it is very important that, at the age of four or five, they are taught not necessarily about reconciliation but about mutual respect and diversity.
95. **Mr Lunn:** Would that not be easier under the one roof?
96. **Dr Johnston:** Ultimately, it might be better under the one roof. The starting point that shared education is at, at this moment in time, is doing some elements of that under the one roof. My point, earlier, was that the complex change has to be managed across all sectors and across society, and we have to realise that that is a real challenge. I think that that is the challenge for shared education. That has been the challenge for integrated education since its inception. What

- we have now is a tool. The shared education and methodologies that have been developed have been accepted across sectors and across society as a potential movement. What we have here now is movement — cross-sectoral, cross-society movement on getting to shared, integrated or, ultimately, the outcome that we all want.
97. **Mr Lunn:** I hope that you are right about that. You say that integrated and shared education are on the same journey in wanting to see the same outcomes. I keep saying this, but, beneficial as shared education can be, some of us think that it is prolonging the situation. There is no incentive for schools, except maybe the very enlightened schools, to contemplate coming together or to have a much greater element of sharing. It is a convenience. It is certainly a convenience in educational terms, because you can develop the full curriculum much more easily; in fact, I think that that was the original reason for it. It is also a convenience in that things can stay the way they are. There is no end product here.
98. **Professor Knox:** With respect, I disagree with that. We cannot force the pace of parental choice. The Drumragh judgement will, hopefully, help to address the situation in some schools.
99. **Mr Lunn:** I am coming to that.
100. **Professor Knox:** Some schools, not many, in the integrated movement are oversubscribed. I think that shared education will demonstrate to parents the educational benefits of working collaboratively across sectors and that reconciliation benefits will flow from that. I think that parental choice will become more informed by the experience of shared education and, therefore, will open up opportunities, for those who wish to take them, to move to fully integrated schools. At the moment, my judgement is that parents are making choices based on educational outcomes. Unfortunately, the integrated sector schools do not perform that well in educational outcomes. I think that that is a greater factor for parental choice than reconciliation is.
101. **Mr Lunn:** I would challenge that, for a start.
102. **Professor Knox:** I will show you the statistics.
103. **Mr Lunn:** We will compare statistics some time. Integrated schools have a reasonable performance level. We have been doing a bit of research on this. It is an interesting fact, Chairman, that the much-maligned Protestant working-class boys perform just as well in the integrated setting as the working-class Catholic boys. I will show you that some time when we get it developed.
104. We could talk around this all day. I do not run down, in any way, what you are doing. It has to be beneficial. The amount of money that is coming in is terrific, and I hope that it continues. But I wonder where it is leading. I cannot see the end of the journey. In addressing our societal problems, various building blocks are referred to, such as Together: Building a United Community, in particular. The most basic building block is to try to stop this generational transfer of prejudice. The way to do that is by letting the kids get to know each other. Are they getting to know each other? Are they getting enough information that might help them to remove their prejudices and preconceptions about the other side in a shared education system? I am not sure about that. Is there a proper reconciliation programme that is specifically devoted to that? I think that you mentioned one in particular.
105. **Mr Hunter:** There is ample evidence, through the projects, that it is moving all of the participants to think critically and to gain a sense of understanding and a respect of the other side.
106. It was interesting to find, sitting together in a classroom, youngsters who had never met before and never expected to meet. Communication has to start somewhere. So, we have to start with, as you said, bringing these youngsters together. We have to be real: this society

- will not say tomorrow that all kids will go to the local school. I wish that it were, but that is not the situation. Therefore, we have to work to break down barriers that could drive us further apart and to show that there is a journey towards respect, understanding and being able to articulate your own feelings, concerns and beliefs. The development of our well-being in our education system has to be vital to that.
107. As I looked at these projects, one of the things that I enjoyed was that the teaching was different. It was less formal and more innovative. There was greater use of different people and facilitators, and the youngsters began to engage and enjoy it. In that, as they learn, friendships develop. Education has to maintain those friendships and the social integration. I take the point that that may be easily facilitated if they were all to go to the same school tomorrow, but they are not. This is —
108. **Mr Lunn:** Yes. Sorry, Chairman. I am almost done. The friendship aspect is interesting. There have been programmes galore down the years, not necessarily involving schools. Kids have been to the Giant's Causeway, Corrymeela, Glendalough — you name it. They have been to America. They go and mix, and they come home and do not mix. What happens to 10-year-olds who have formed some kind of a friendship in a shared programme and then go off to different schools? Is there any evidence that those friendships are maintained?
109. **Professor Knox:** I can give you verbatim the results of a study carried out by social psychologist colleagues at Queen's, specifically on the reconciliation outcomes of the shared education programme. Professor Joanne Hughes and Danielle Blaylock completed the study and the findings state:
- "Researchers have also considered the impact of pupils' participation in the Shared Education Programme on cross-group friendships and intergroup anxiety. The study confirms the value of contact as a mechanism for promoting more harmonious relationships that can help promote social cohesion in a society that remains deeply divided."*
110. If that is not conclusive evidence of the reconciliation benefits of shared education, and I am sure that those colleagues would share the empirical analysis behind those findings, I am not sure what is.
111. **Mr Lunn:** I would love to see the evidence that sits behind those findings. I do not doubt the finding at all, but it is not quantified.
112. **Professor Knox:** Well, they have quantified it.
113. **Mr Lunn:** But the point is, as I said at the start, that there has to be some benefit from what you are doing. I do not mean to sound critical here, but —
114. **The Chairperson:** I think that we have to face up to the fact — this point was made before — that we are placing a huge expectation on our schools to answer and to solve all the problems in our society. They play a very important role, but let us include ourselves in this. Politicians by our actions, words and deeds, churches by their actions, words and deeds, and organisations by their actions, words and deeds contribute immensely to perpetuating the division in our society. While I accept the points that are being made about getting the outcome, I think that it is unfair. Society will never be perfect. We live in a fool's paradise if we believe that, if only we all went to one school, somehow when we come home at 3.30 pm, all the problems that we face in our communities would disappear. That will not happen. It would make a huge benefit and maybe a huge contribution, but a balance needs to be struck in these things.
115. There is one thing before we go to Jo-Anne, and then Chris wants to come back in to bring this to an end. We have talked about the huge amount of money that has been spent. You can see that this is a political point; it is not the Chair's point. You can see the Department, at the minute, using money to change the outlay of schools, as in whether they are grammar schools or

- non-selective grammar schools. If you want a newbuild, you will get a pound or two if you move away to this new world of a non-selective grammar. That is an attempt to use money to change the dynamic. Given the fact that, with the exception of independent schools, every one of our schools is funded 100% by the state, does the state not now have a duty to say, "Well, hold on; we are not continuing to perpetuate segregation"? Is there not a contradiction in policy terms? On one hand, the state/Northern Ireland plc/the Executive are saying that they want shared communities. They want us to live together and do all these things. Equally, they will still give you millions and millions of pounds £2.2 billion to continue to live apart in terms of education as one element of that overall society. Is there not an argument for the Executive to look at the issue in a more holistic way and not to continue to fund unless you can actually deliver? They have done it in other areas. Why can they not do it in this one? I am playing devil's advocate on that one.
116. **Mr Hunter:** In some ways, yes. It would be the brave politician who would declare the end product and say that this is where we should be and that is that. You may be a politician today, but maybe not tomorrow. *[Laughter.]* However, there is something important in rewarding schools that achieve. I had an opportunity — not paid for by the Department, I have to add — to look at schools in Germany. I am on the European special educational commission. An interesting aspect of schools that I saw in Germany was that those that get to a high standard are rewarded. Our system rewards schools that fail. They found it extremely difficult to understand why our benchmarks were such. While I could explain until I was blue in the face that we are terribly nice and want to help those that are failing to improve, they were of the view that it is down to you to improve and if you do not improve, you do not get those benefits. So, it was a nice contrast. I was thinking that it actually said something of Northern Ireland. We have no foreign policy. We do not look out enough. We tend to look in. If shared education is doing something in your classroom, in your school and in society, we need to look out more to see how others do it.
117. We had an example yesterday of the Assembly looking outwards with regard to ETI and saying what we should be like and how we should change. I think that that is equally to be welcomed. We are always in the process of change. It is one step at a time for some. For others, it is a leap of faith. Some are already halfway there. We cannot say that this one is right and that one is wrong; we simply have to evaluate them against the dividends for that school, that community and the process in its longer term. Another day without returning to violence is an important day. That, to me, is society's measure of our improvement. To me, education is the route to goal for all improvement. Why should I not say that? But I think that is how we change attitudes.
118. There is something about the earlier conversation and getting too focused on outcomes. You were saying that the youngsters have gone away, done something and come back to their separate parts. However, they do not forget. Their experience must be such that it is a quality experience that they do not forget. Each of them may take forward that experience into their life cycle and work. There may be outcomes that are more difficult to measure. There may be case study outcomes that we could look at. Certainly, I think that the outcomes are there. They may be staring us in the face. We need to be quite clear about what we are moving from as well as what we are moving towards.
119. **The Chairperson:** You make a valid point, John, that every peaceful day is progress. There is no doubt about that. That is not to say that, in bringing two or many different traditions together, somehow, those traditions are inherently wrong. It is a misconception that, somehow, you have to try to dilute or change. It is about how we can accept that there are differences and live together.

120. Eighteen years ago, I had an experience — I will not bore you all with it — when I went to Corrymeela in my constituency. It was a place that I was never much in, traditionally or historically. It changed my perception. I made a friend whom I have to this very day. He was a former Minister in the Irish Government. He and I have had a long friendship that all started in Corrymeela. It did not change me into an Irish republican — I think that I can say that reasonably conclusively *[Laughter.]* — nor did it change him, who happens to be de Valera's grandson, Éamon Ó Cuív, into an Ulster Prod. I can tell you that we are very close friends. He respects me; I respect him. I know that he would never do anything to cause me harm, and he knows that I would never do anything to cause him harm. That is a lasting, beneficial outcome. If we can translate that into our schools, we will not see it played out on our streets.
121. **Mr Lunn:** I assume that you were not a seven-year-old when that happened?
122. **The Chairperson:** No, I was not; I was 10-ish. *[Laughter.]*
123. **Mr Hunter:** We moved that out from the group of inspectors who were taking the lead on it to the wider inspectorate. It is interesting that we have just completed a one-day staff development in Corrymeela. We did that to make a point and show that there was a history in one place where they had been working on this long before us and also to say that we were not meeting in a formal educational setting. We are asking the inspectorate to widen its view and its approaches. Yesterday will ask it to do that even further. That was a significant aspect for us.
124. **Mrs Dobson:** How do you follow that conversation? I apologise for missing the start of your briefing. It is further from Waringstown than I anticipated. I know that a couple of my questions have already been touched upon. Forgive me if they have.
125. The International Fund, as we know, defined shared education as follows:
- "young people from diverse backgrounds learning together, enabling them to recognise and value diversity and develop higher levels of mutual understanding."*
126. That is certainly to be admired. Trevor touched on the issue earlier. Does it recognise the integration that has been best practice and promoted in state-controlled schools in Northern Ireland for decades? There are many wonderful best-practice examples of sharing across the education system in Northern Ireland. I commend what you are trying to achieve and what has been achieved already. Were any local examples taken into consideration when planning the 19 projects or were examples from overseas used?
127. **Mr Hunter:** This is the wrong thing to say, but the widest link was between schools in Northern Ireland and schools in the Republic. That was the width of it; it did not go further in that sense. It also looked across ability and disability and gender. So, there were lots of variables in it that the projects were free to suggest, but the aims that they set for themselves were those that we measured them against. In many ways, those folk came up with aims that were extremely difficult to achieve — as you do when you apply for funding for anything. The core aim of impacting on all the participants remained the same. They did not go out and beyond in that sense.
128. They used a variety of media, such as film makers, Cinemagic, ICT, youth workers alongside teachers/facilitators and parental involvement. In fact, some lessons were for parents and pupils. There was variety and change; in fact, the multi-aspect of it made it. You have only to look at the titles of projects to see the major impact that they made. They were looking at Classrooms Re-imagined, Facing Our History and Welcoming Schools. I think that all those are ingredients that shared education does not have a right to own; however, it certainly facilitated those key aspects being brought into that setting. It did not look out and beyond, although participants would have had a

- knowledge and brought expertise from that perspective.
129. **Professor Knox:** Let me just add to that. You were looking at experiences in Northern Ireland, John, and some of the work from the shared education programme has been disseminated internationally, so that colleagues at Queen's University are working in Macedonia, Bosnia, Israel/Palestine and in Los Angeles with some of the Charter Schools. So, dissemination is going outwards. From my limited knowledge of their work abroad, some of that stuff is now quite advanced in Macedonia.
130. **Dr Johnston:** That is the point that I was going to make, Colin. The evidence and the practice developed through this programme are being disseminated internationally, because of the best practice that came from it. A key point is that, we, the fund, as an organisation, looked at the project proposals to make sure that they did not come just from education and library boards and that they were not just the historical types of education projects that would come forward. We looked at projects from organisations outside the formal education setting that linked into the education setting and took some of the best-practice lessons that they had learned through their own projects that had international dimensions and brought them into the formal education setting. It was not localised; we were looking at their overseas experience, the international dimensions of their projects and bringing them into an education setting.
131. **Mrs Dobson:** It is obvious, from reading through the pack that we were given, that the 19 projects cover some very varied and wide topics to do with sharing; it has been very interesting to read. If you were to single out for us two examples of what worked best and an example of what did not work that well, what would you focus on?
132. **Mr Hunter:** It would be unfair to pick because, between them, there was variety, the audiences were different, and their aims and objectives were slightly different. However, I will answer your question by saying that what made success was that there was a very clear idea that remained throughout the project. Leadership was vital; support was important; support that became ongoing support was significant; and a willingness to adapt and change. So, in that sense, there were certain ingredients — leadership, ownership and so on — that were important.
133. If projects are to be successful, they have to be based on a clear understanding of where you wish to go and how you wish to get there. One of the criticisms that we would make is that the projects had too short a lead-in time. You need a wee bit longer to consolidate pupils' thinking, planning and getting to know one another and identify their roles and responsibilities. That, to me, was something that could have been developed further, but that is in hindsight. The other thing is that, if a project is to be successful, it needs to reward itself continuously, see its own celebration, celebrate those who are participating; and the end product really has to measure the journey that all have made, including that of those who planned it. It has to find a sustainable way, out and beyond.
134. If, for example, in schools, a project is driven through the curriculum, it is cost-effective. One of the things that comes out of this is that schools need to work together. Apart from shared education, it is important that they network. I am thinking of a teacher of one subject in one school needing to link with another. That link across is important. We have a link across history teachers, and, just this week, we have international history teachers here looking at the teaching of history. We need to promote that because, historically, teachers have gone to different training colleges, have not met and have not shared. That, to me, in the Classrooms Reimagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers (CREDIT) programme between St Mary's and Stranmillis, was a vital dividend, because it equipped

- the teacher and, if the teacher is not equipped with it, it will not develop.
135. **Professor Knox:** I want to add something about the three shared education projects. It was a very good question, and I was trying to get my thoughts together to answer it specifically. For the three projects that we were involved in — these are not necessarily in order of importance — sustained high-quality contact was a key prerequisite for them to work. As John said, leadership in the school was significant; if we got leadership from the principals, it was more likely to work. The relationship between teachers, often finding some commonality on an individual level, was hugely important. A focus on the curriculum was a key prerequisite, since our projects had a very specific education focus. The sharing of resources between teachers was also hugely important in helping each school to develop.
136. The other thing that struck us was teachers' pragmatism. Teachers are hugely pragmatic individuals who have to make things work within the very tight confines of their school day. The last point — perhaps this should have been the first — is that there needs to be a willingness to fail and not to be blamed for it. In some cases, trying to be innovative and creative led to things not working. One of the premises that underpin the shared education programme was that it was OK to fail, although not continuously, because you can learn from that.
137. **Mrs Dobson:** It is very difficult for them to take the chance and put their head above the parapet.
138. **Professor Knox:** Indeed, particularly in risky areas like that.
139. **Dr Johnston:** The fund looked at this as a proof of concept; it was work that had not been done in the past, and so it was OK to fail. I do not think that there were any failures in any of the projects that came through either of the programmes. Some projects were done exceptionally well.
140. I will touch on teacher development. From our experience of talking to teachers individually at events, the journey that teachers have gone on has been exceptional. Some have identified that, through their own teaching methods, they may have been developing prejudice in pupils. Sustainable relationships are built up between teachers and schools.
141. There is potentially a lack of resources for the teacher support element of curriculum development. Today, we talked about pupils and schools and reconciliation. However, we hardly touched on ensuring that our teachers have enough curriculum resources and having the skills and resources to deal with contentious issues in the classroom. That could be improved in future, certainly as an outworking of this work.
142. **Mrs Dobson:** I have a couple of final quick points. I was pleased that the final evaluation report recommended that ETI should develop further quality indicators and good practice that can be distributed to schools undertaking shared education. Can you let us know whether those have been developed and how widely they are being circulated? Can you let us know whether you plan to share any of the results of the pilots with schools to encourage sharing and all the aspects of sharing that can be considered with the neighbouring schools, for example? I am thinking that a legacy for the projects has begun already.
143. **Mr Hunter:** The process ahead is to take the indicators that we used for the project and develop them further for use by all schools. That work is sitting on my shoulders. It will be developed in consultation with other people who have a hell of a lot to contribute, including the work in Queen's and the people who are part of the project. Whatever is produced will be the result of a lot of ingredients. Our aim is to have it ready in draft form by September. Our second aim is that it should be disseminated to all schools; therefore, it will be open and transparent. It will be there as a benchmark or pilot that can be adapted and changed over time in light of experience. However, it is a work in progress at this stage.

144. We should never forget that an important ingredient is fun; it has to be pupil-, children-, parent- and community-centred, and there has to be fun and enjoyment in it. That is how they get the true value out of it and how they remember it. That fun element was there in an awful lot of the practices that I have gone to see, and I think that that breaks down barriers more quickly than anything else.
145. Professor Knox: I am not speaking as a funder, but I guess that, from the perspective of IFI and Atlantic, the ultimate legacy of projects such as this is that they become embedded in the system. Through the Delivering Social Change project, we are seeing the Department putting its own resources into something like this for the first time, which is hugely welcome. If an implementation plan comes out of the National Administration Guidelines (NAG) report, there is potential for legislation to come into place behind it. Developments on teacher training and teacher development, which I guess IFI and others will continue to support, will ultimately lead to the embedding of shared education as a concept in the mainstream education system. As I say, I am not talking as a funder, but I suspect that that will be one of the ultimate legacies.
146. Dr Johnston: I suppose that you want me to say yes or no then; do you? *[Laughter.]*
147. The Chairperson: Have you any money with you today? *[Laughter.]*
148. Dr Johnston: Success for us is the fact that this was a proven concept. It is about developing models and ensuring that they are there for dissemination. For us, this is success. It is success for us that we are sitting here today talking about shared education at a legislative level. As Colin rightly says, for us, implementation is the ultimate goal. We would like to see that moving along. There are complexities around area planning, the ESA and everything else, and those will be developed. Ultimately, however, we would like to see the implementation of a shared education ethos as integral to how education is delivered to all our students.
149. Mr Hazzard: I have one final point that is timely following the incident yesterday. Where do racism and the increasing number of people from other parts of the world who are making Ireland their home fit in to shared education?
150. Dr Johnston: That goes back to the point that I raised earlier about early years, four- and five-year-olds and prejudice. A personal belief of mine is that, if you remove sectarianism, something else may fill the void. Over a long period we have been focusing on sectarianism rather than prejudice. All prejudice, whether sectarianism or racism, comes from the same place. It is extremely important for the future that we teach our young people, at a very early age, about mutual respect and diversity. Shared education plays a role in that not just across racist divides but all section 75 divides.
151. Mr Hunter: One of my team is responsible for newcomers. Having visited schools and spoken to key players, she recently produced a short report. It is pleasant to report that newcomer youngsters do not face many difficulties in school. They do well, and schools do a great deal to ensure that they are assimilated and respected. Schools are an oasis, despite what communities are doing. I think that schools are taking a lead on this one.
152. **The Chairperson:** Thank you very much for a very useful and informative presentation. Adrian, I thank you and ask you to convey to the IFI our appreciation and thanks for the past provision of financial support. We look forward to continued financial support. Colin, thank you for the work that you do and the reports that we have received. The Committee appreciates the value of those. John, in case you are feeling left out and thinking that, after yesterday, we are beating the inspectorate up, that is not the case. We are glad that you were listening. We thank you for the work that you do and ask you to convey that to your colleagues. You are welcome to stay to hear the next presentation.

18 June 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mervyn Storey (Chairperson)
 Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr Lauri McCusker *Fermanagh Trust*
 Ms Catherine Ward

153. **The Chairperson:** I welcome to the Committee this morning — I am welcoming them to their own building — Lauri McCusker, the director of the Fermanagh Trust, and Catherine Ward, the shared education programme manager of the Fermanagh Trust. I want to say a word of appreciation and thanks for allowing us the opportunity to come here today, for facilitating us and for your hospitality. It is much appreciated, Lauri, and thank you for the information that you have provided. I want to say a word of appreciation to you, on behalf of all those who have been involved in the work of the trust, for the journey that you have commenced in Fermanagh. It has been exemplary, and you are to be commended on your work. We are glad to be here. I ask you to speak to the paper if you wish, and then we will have some questions.

154. **Mr Lauri McCusker (Fermanagh Trust):** Thank you. It is a delight to have you here this morning. Hopefully, being in our own house will not make me let my guard down too much. *[Laughter.]* We would like to take you quickly through the briefing paper and highlight the challenges that we face and our thoughts on them.

155. The Fermanagh Trust is not an education body; we are a community development trust. Like all good organisations, we look to see how we can make a difference and a positive contribution. In

2007 and 2008, when we were looking at what the big issues were externally and what the potential big issues were for County Fermanagh in the coming five or six years, education came onto our landscape. We looked at what was happening in education and what that could mean for County Fermanagh.

156. I will make particular reference to two pieces of work that were being done at the time. One was a document produced by the Western Education and Library Board, which was a post-primary review of controlled schools in Fermanagh. At the same time, a review of the Catholic sector was produced by the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education. Those two documents looked at the future of post-primary schools in the controlled and maintained sectors, but were operating in a parallel world. The future of post-primary schools in this county was being looked at to determine the future for the next 30 or 40 years. The two documents were produced as if the other world did not exist.

157. That got us thinking: what does that mean? When we discussed it further, we recognised that it potentially meant that an area-planning process would be initiated at post-primary level and subsequently at primary level and that we would be living in a parallel world. It was from there that we came to the concept of shared education in Fermanagh. Alongside that was our experience of working with cross-community playgroups, which provide the preschool education in large parts of the county.

158. What could we do in that big picture? How could we make a positive contribution? What was the potential impact of those policies? What was the potential impact of an area-based planning process in parts of rural Fermanagh where you have majority and minority communities and, in some cases, very large majority and very small

- minority communities? What were the implications for rural Fermanagh? What were the implications for our young people? What were the implications for society in 10, 15 or 20 years' time of decisions that mean that education will not exist in those areas for that particular sector? That is where we came at shared education from.
159. In 2008, we did significant research. We talked to 400 parents directly and asked them whether the concept of working more closely with their nearest neighbours would be attractive and of value. We talked to the wider community and to the school communities, by which I mean boards of governors, principals, teachers and wider staff, etc. The feedback was that they were up for working more closely together. We then secured support from the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and the Atlantic Philanthropies. We got significant support of £2.1 million for a four-year programme. That is around £500,000 per annum to go on developing and building relationships between more than 50 schools in Fermanagh. When you break that down on a county-wide basis, you can do the sums.
160. At the start of 2009, we went into what is termed in some government Departments as a design-and-build phase. In 2009, we went out and talked to the schools. We said that we had these resources and that we wanted to give them to the schools to build on the thoughts that they had shared with us earlier. We said that we would do it in such a way as to develop strong collaborative linkages to develop schools and school communities in neighbouring areas. In summary, the model consisted of joint curriculum planning; regular shared classes; joint staff development; sharing of facilities and resources; shared teachers and teacher exchanges; joint events and training; and workshops for parents. Substantial numbers took up that opportunity. In fact, we were very surprised — pleasantly surprised — that the appetite and willingness was there.
161. We do not have to explain to you politicians about community relationships and challenges in border and other areas. Fermanagh, like many other places, has gone through its tragic and difficult times. So, we were delighted that the uptake was there. Ultimately, there were not a lot of resources for schools. When you look at the number of schools and the amount of resources, you will see that it was not as if they were getting hundreds of thousands of pounds. We were delighted that the appetite was there for schools to work with, to reach out to and to join their nearest neighbour or neighbours and work in partnership. The widespread support was very important. We had political support locally, and we had the support of the Churches and the wider community. The framework was there that meant that there was willingness, and people were not taking big risks, because that support environment was developed and explained.
162. What were the benefits? Following on from the previous presentation to the Committee, I can say that substantial research and evaluations have been done of different elements of the programme, including the teacher exchange scheme. Those documents are available. The key strength of the Fermanagh shared education model since it started in 2009 is that it involved partnering with your nearest school, regardless of size. In other words, you work with your neighbours. In most cases, people had neighbours to work with. In some cases, they did not necessarily have a natural partner because of the geography of Fermanagh. It was very important that that was directly related to the curriculum. The easy thing is to go for after-school programmes, but we wanted it to be curriculum-based. It was about regular activity and regular classes. We called it a premium, and we wanted to make sure that everyone could get some of the resources. We looked at the resources that we had and said, "If schools apply, this is what they can access". So, there was fairness, and we built a formula around that. There is a geographical focus. Anyone who

- understands community development will know that you often look to see what your neighbours do. If your neighbour has successfully developed a credit union, why can we not do that? It is the same with shared education. Schools see that other schools are doing that and say that they can do it. As I said, there was a geographical focus, and people were able to share their experiences across that.
163. In the partnerships that were developed, we were constantly learning from one another, so we used the opportunities to bring together principals, teachers and others to learn from one another and to share good practice. It increasingly became the norm for shared education to take place. It became quite natural, because it was going on at such a level and to such an extent. Very importantly, we trusted the schools and the principals. Principals came together and teachers came together to decide what their needs were, and that was very important. We said, “You tell us how your working together can add value to and meet the needs of your schools and your school communities”.
164. I will now deal with some of the key successful features of the programme. We felt that teacher exchange was invaluable, and there are real lessons there that can be shared and picked up across Northern Ireland. We have no doubt about that. Why have people working in splendid isolation in schools when you have neighbouring schools from which you can access that skill set and that learning? We think that that can make a real added benefit to education. The respecting difference programme was very important. It was being delivered on a cross-community basis, for not only the children and the teachers who were being trained up on it but parents. Parents were learning together about respecting difference. That was important because it started to build links and friendships among parents. That is very important in rural areas, where those links may not have existed.
165. From learning in the first year, we built another element into the programme in the second year, and that was partnership-building. That was around giving resources towards joint staff development on common needs in partnered schools, and joint training, events and meetings for governors and parents. It is fascinating to see boards of governors come together for the first time when they have been operating in a village for 20 or 30 years yet have never been in the same room together. They are doing the same jobs but have never talked about the needs of children and how they can work together for the betterment of all the children in the community. There was the development of joint school policies and strategies and the development of shared education policies and agreements, as well as the wider sharing of resources, facilities and expertise.
166. We then came to area planning. I remember going out to schools and talking about the area-planning process that is being kick-started. There was quite an interesting reaction. Quite a number of schools said, “Lauri, these things come and go. Do not worry about it”. They told me to see what happened in three or four years’ time. They said, “That is education, Lauri. That is the way of the world”. I said that it is very important, and I was told by the schools that it is not really that important. I think that the schools have been proved right, but we will come to that. For us, area planning was very important in getting the schools to think about their future. Shared education was about the here and now, about this year, and about the school development plan this year and next year, but area planning is about schools looking to five years’ time and 10 years’ time.
167. Very importantly, the area-planning guidelines that the Minister issued included the need to look at shared education, but, when the initial papers came out at a primary-school level from the Western Education and Library Board, they excluded the need to look at shared education. Following some toing and froing, we were delighted when the Western Board reissued its guidelines for area planning to the primary schools in the county to include

- shared education. That is addressed in our paper. Interestingly, 14 partnerships in Fermanagh produced substantial submissions to the area plans. Those were submitted last June, and schools are still waiting to hear back. Those things were not considered to be just pieces of paper but as boards of governors coming together: what is our plan for the future together? They were considered by principals, staff and the wider community. There were community consultation meetings around joint working in the area-planning process. Those substantial submissions by schools jointly — 14 submissions, involving approximately 37 schools — have been sitting on a shelf for a year. Imagination, thought and the building of relationships for the future have gone into that process. For those 37 schools that have thought about this, it is a journey. In last week's paper, I saw that one of the learning communities created between four rural schools had launched its plan to say, "This is our future together in this area". That is where shared education has taken those schools. We just hope that the system allows them, and their imagination and their creativity on joint working in the future, to be caught up with.
168. Those plans include things such as joint governors of committees; joint curriculum planning; mainstream and shared teacher exchanges between schools in the long term; and joint staff development. Although two schools still exist, they become extremely fluid in their relationships. Who knows what that will look like in 10 years? Six or seven years ago, when the authorities were producing documents, it was a parallel world. For me, the difference is an integrated, shared education. The schools are not in a parallel world now, and that is what the schools in Fermanagh have achieved with a bottom-up approach.
169. There are very strong strengths in the cross-sectoral proposals presented, and we feel that those really match governmental and societal aims — a point that was brought up during the previous presentation. We think that those proposals really tie in with the Programme for Government commitments; the ministerial advisory group (MAG) report; the Together: Building a United Community strategy; the rural White Paper from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; and, more recently, the announcement of the consultation process for the Peace IV programme.
170. Finally, what do we see as the challenges going forward? Shared education cannot be seen as a programme. If it is seen as a programme, these guys may as well go back to where they were six years ago and get back into area planning in the parallel world that they were in. We should not allow that to happen. When the Minister made his address on the issue on 13 October, he said that sharing must be in the "DNA of our education system". If it is in the DNA of our education system, the projects and proposals will flourish, as will sharing, closer cooperation and joint working. However, it needs to relate to all areas of education, not only area planning. For every decision that the Department makes, it needs to think of its impact on the community at large. For example, if a capital build announcement comes out next week, what will be the implications of that for the community and for society?
171. We firmly believe that there needs to be a joined-up approach across the various elements of education policy development, but there is a gap. Communities are up for this. There is no doubt about that. It is clear that the Executive, in their Programme for Government, are up for it. I know that there are challenges with relationships, etc, but the direction of travel that you have set is that you are up for this, but where does the support come from? As I said at the beginning, the Fermanagh Trust is not an education body. How do we get the support mechanism in place to ensure that schools get the support to guide and facilitate them along the path of sharing? In this room in February 2013, four schools sat down with representatives from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

- Those schools were on a journey and wanted guidance. They were promised guidance, but they still have not got it. Those schools took risks, and in their communities there might be one or two knockers. It is hard for schools to go on a journey unless guidance and support is there from the powers that be.
172. The way in which schools are funded should encourage sharing, not competition. That can be built into the common funding formula. In addition, and this is really important if you are interested in mainstream and shared education, there needs to be a joint budget between schools that are working together. Every school has its code — school 115, for example — and its goal within the board. We need to help to facilitate shared education so that schools can pool resources; for example, how school 115 and school 222 are going to spend their resources together this year. That is a mechanism, but it is an important mechanism.
173. On area planning, where education authorities are going down the road of closing schools, they need to consider the impact and potential of working with their neighbours. That needs to be explored, and options considered. That may be happening in one other area, but it should be the rule rather than the exception. What does this mean for us as a community and what are the opportunities for the broader community? I know from recent work that we were asked to support in other parts of Northern Ireland that those are real challenges that communities are facing.
174. Do the managing authorities have the time, resource, expertise or commitment to help school communities explore options and develop shared models? We may see how the Delivering Social Change programme works out, but, to date, with some exceptions, that is not inbuilt in how the managing authorities do their work. Even though the direction of travel from the Programme for Government and the area-planning guidelines has been quite clear for some time, we have not seen that commitment carried through.
175. Recommendation 15 from the MAG report states that the Department, education and library boards and the CCMS should provide:
- “advice on how two or more schools can transfer their status into a ‘shared school’ whereby they maintain their respective forms of ethos.”*
176. Those things are very important. We need to see an action plan around those.
177. Finally, there needs to be a clear process and support mechanism for schools wishing to bring forward cross-sectoral models in the area-planning process. Schools are up for it. I am convinced about that from all the evidence, but the mechanism and the system need to support them.
178. That is a quick sharing of where we are at and how we see the world through the eyes of shared education in the county. Hopefully, it has been helpful.
179. **The Chairperson:** Thank you, Lauri, and thank you for the paper that you gave us, because it is useful. We may not be in a parallel world, as you said, but do you think that you are still being held as a hostage to fortune because of the unwillingness, inability or whatever of the managing authorities to deal in a serious, meaningful way with the issue, for have we not seen in that county some of the worse examples of protectionism in sectors at the expense of what happens in any other school or sector?
180. **Mr McCusker:** Going back to 2007 and those documents, we had long discussions in this building on how we best use the resources from the IFI and the Atlantic Philanthropies and whether resources should be used to support sharing at post-primary-school level. The direction of travel that the managing authorities have taken is quite clear. It has been outlined. I think that, in the Assembly yesterday, we possibly saw the outworkings of that in one instance.
181. There was also a challenge for us, because the Western Board and the Department were saying that shared education should not get involved

- in the entitlement framework of the learning communities, as that was being resourced by government. So, the situation was complex.
182. Look at how post-primary schools in Enniskillen work together under the leadership and direction of Devenish College, which took the lead and brought schools together. On Fridays, 400 post-16 pupils share a range of subjects in a range of venues and schools across Enniskillen. People chose what they wanted and could show the benefits of sharing, but the managing authorities have their own world. We hoped that the area-planning process would change the direction of travel or help persuade people to think about shared options, but that was not the case in the post-primary schools, and we have seen the outworkings of that with Lisnaskea High School and other things. We worked tremendously well with Lisnaskea High School in the Lisnaskea, Derrylin and Rosslea area. Wonderful sharing was taking place, but that was not considered by the managing authorities.
183. **The Chairperson:** That all happened prior to the Western Board changing the terms of reference for area planning. You referred to changes that it made and has now reissued.
184. How much of an impact do you think the reissuing of that element of the process will have on the initial area plan, particularly in the primary sector? There was such a hiatus with the areas plans, and this Committee — it is not often that someone thinks that this Committee does anything of value or worth — issued a very clear warning to the Minister and the Department not to issue primary school area plans, because you will set the education world afire. They did not listen and went ahead, and we now have a document across the country that means that nobody knows what their worth or value is or where they are going, yet we are sitting in a county today in which one education and library board has reissued guidance about a plan that we do not even know will go anywhere.
185. **Ms Catherine Ward (Fermanagh Trust):** The pro forma was issued in May 2012, and the school communities completed that. They had only a two-week time span to get it completed. They got an extension and that is the revised pro forma, which included the shared options. School communities brought together governors, and they thought about whether to put in shared options. They consulted parents and held meetings and then filled in the pro forma, and a number of the partnerships at that stage said, “We would like a shared model explored or developed for our partnership”. That was before the draft plan was issued. When the draft plan came out, only one of the partnerships was mentioned as a shared model. So, the rest were not in even the draft plan. That was very unfortunate, and a major opportunity was missed, because, when they were consulting on the draft plan, schools would have been consulting on a shared option. We talked to the sectors and the managing authorities about that. Although the pro forma was issued on behalf of the area working group in the Western Board, which makes up all the sectors, the other sectors did not see the pro forma submitted by the schools.
186. **The Chairperson:** That is the point that I want to get to: it was a document, but it was not a document that everyone had been involved in and agreed that it should go out on behalf of everybody; that is, the managing authorities. The Western Board produced it —
187. **Ms Ward:** It said in the covering letters —
188. **The Chairperson:** Yes, it did, but — correct me if I am wrong — is it not the case that there were elements of the managing authorities who then said, “We did not see that in the way in which it is now being presented”?
189. **Ms Ward:** I do not know what took place subsequently other than that, when the draft plan came out, it did not reflect what people had asked for.

190. **The Chairperson:** Yes, and that was based on the partnerships, and there was only one mentioned.
191. **Mr McCusker:** By doing that, you are sending a strong signal to the schools that have put forward submissions before the draft plan.
192. **The Chairperson:** They are just going to ignore you.
193. **Mr McCusker:** Yes, so all this stuff is of no value.
194. **Ms Ward:** All that took place after the post-primary plan had been issued.
195. **The Chairperson:** Yes, and there has been nothing since. It has all gone underground and quiet. I am disappointed.
196. **Ms Ward:** The schools had hoped that the final plan would come out in autumn, because there was going to be a consultation period, and they were getting ready for that. Then, they thought it might come out in April. So, a whole academic year has gone. They certainly have not lost momentum, but parents are asking what is happening, because they were consulted and put in their responses to the consultation process. They are wondering what is happening and where this is going.
197. **The Chairperson:** One of the downsides of all this is that it will further compound the scepticism and suspicion that parents have about any proposal that is brought to the table ultimately being implemented. We are sitting in a county and a town where an element of the education provision was promised. I will name the college, because it is the reality. It is Devenish College, and it is a scandal that we have never seen the implementation of a proposal that is almost 11 years old. That is a stand-alone issue that has been in this county for all those years, and parents are very sceptical as to whether anything happens within the system and view it as a continual perpetuation of stagnation. The view is that, if we do not do anything, something will happen, because the system will eventually go in a particular direction. That is not the area planning, that is throwing —
198. **Mr McCusker:** Schools and school communities have embraced shared education in a context of flux and uncertainty. They may have been ignored when putting forward proposals etc, but they have embraced shared education. That shows that there is a real appetite for sharing, collaboration, joint working and closer working together when all this other stuff is out there and is impacting on people.
199. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks, Lauri, for your very detailed and thorough presentation, which summed up some of the fantastic work that you have been doing. You talked about local communities wanting to steal from their neighbours being a good idea, and the Fermanagh Trust is a great platform for change.
200. I looked at your document and the part of it that covers the partnerships. How can we make sure that the partnerships are sustainable and future-proofed? How can we best put into practice elsewhere the knowledge and experience that the Fermanagh Trust has garnered over the years?
201. **Ms Ward:** I will answer the first question. When the programme was being designed, one of the core elements was that it would be designed for sustainability. We have seen too many excellent projects that are now “have-been projects” and people talk about them in the past tense. We were determined to avoid that when we designed this. Therefore, it was not something done unto the schools; the schools delivered the shared education themselves.
202. On occasion, they may have brought in a specialist, but, by and large, they were delivering the shared classes in one another's schools themselves. That developed the links and the capacity and built the relationships between the school communities. They had the autonomy to do that, which empowered them because they had ownership of what they were doing. That is the most

- sustainable thing, because, whilst we get frustrated about area planning, I am not overly concerned because, as Lauri said, that learning community is four partnerships that are officially launching their partnership and are saying, "This is how we are going to conduct our education from here on in, as a partnership". So, the partnerships are still driving forward. The area planning process might be slightly left behind, but they are moving on.
203. You asked about sustainability. These partnerships plan to continue and hope to have an opportunity to submit bids when the mainstream funding from the Department of Education opens, because they need some funding for transport and for substitute teacher cover so that staff can meet to do planning and so on.
204. We would really like it if, when the area plan is published, it gives official recognition to these partnerships. Sometimes, we see area planning as being purely about infrastructure, capital and the schools estate, but it is also about how schools deliver the curriculum and about how they do their business, so it could also include partnerships, federations and confederations.
205. We also talked about wanting guidance from the Department. There are shared faith models and shared managed schools. There is a range of things, and these partnerships need that at the moment in order to plan their path forward.
206. **Mr McCusker:** In moving forward, we have many other areas of work outside shared education. The trustees have a strategy in place. When the trustees met recently to discuss our continued involvement in shared education, they made a commitment to continue to work with these partnerships until 2016 to try to offer support and guidance to them where needed.
207. We have a challenge in that some schools from outside Fermanagh are looking for support and guidance and are also looking at shared education, so we are trying to work on that at the minute, and I will do my best to utilise that. We are a very small team. We have two and a half members of staff working in shared education. It was always about the schools. It is not about the Fermanagh Trust; it is about the schools and how we utilise those staff resources. The critical thing for us is mainstreaming Delivering Social Change and the roll-out of the Peace IV shared education programme resources. Delivering Social Change is where it is at, and the implementation of the ministerial advisory group's report is important. Hopefully, schools can continue on their journey. That is where we see things.
208. **Mr Hazzard:** You mentioned Delivering Social Change, T:BUC, Peace IV and whatever else it may be. How do we ensure that those are complementary?
209. **Mr McCusker:** That is very important. This really needs to be joined up. I was at a school last night that was having its fiftieth anniversary celebrations. It is looking for news on a shared campus proposal, and that is what everybody was asking me about. Another question I heard was this: "It is great news about Peace IV. When do we get the money?". We need joined-up thinking around Delivering Social Change, the Peace IV programme and T:BUC. That needs to be done at the most senior level of government.
210. **Ms Ward:** The last thing that we want is to have schools applying for a cocktail of funding from a range of sources and trying to meet the demands of every programme. Schools do not have the time to do that; they want to deliver the curriculum. The point that you are making is very important: there is a strategic plan in how this is all rolled out.
211. **Mr Hazzard:** Lauri, you touched on senior levels of government, and we talked about the enthusiasm on the ground. You alluded to a gap in the middle. From my experience in and around the east Down area, I think it is fair to say that there is increasing if not massive demand for, if not a

- shared education campus, certainly a new integrated school between, for example, Lagan College in Belfast and Shimna Integrated College in south Down; something in the middle. There is increasing demand there. We see that in Ballynahinch especially, where the popularity of an integrated primary school is clear. However, from senior levels of government, everything just seems to slow down and stop in that middle gap. How do we overcome that, or what needs to be done to empower the people at the bottom and meet their demands? There is no use in having parental choice if that choice does not mean anything.
212. **Mr McCusker:** The shared education programme was supported by Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland. They empowered Queen's University Belfast, the North Eastern Education and Library Board and the Fermanagh Trust. It would be interesting to find out why the funders chose the three. One was an organisation in Queen's University, one was a local community foundation and one was a statutory organisation.
213. The people in Queen's and the North Eastern Education and Library Board all did the job well. The model could be either/or. I am not talking about organisations but about types of organisations. If it is to be mainstreamed, I think the lead player needs to be the managing authority or authorities. There should definitely be some support and resources for the facilitation of school communities. It is a different mindset. It is not top-down but bottom-up. To do that work, you have to allow those grass roots and empower the school communities to develop and move forward. Again, going back to the previous discussion, if that is just left to the managing authorities, as it currently is, we are going to continue in a parallel world.
214. **Mr Hazzard:** I cannot help but move beyond the idea that managing authorities and sectors are always going to look after their own strategic interests. Look at the South and the pluralism and patronage forum, which went out to the very basic level of citizenship-type forms that were filled in and a questionnaire. Is that something that —
215. **Ms Ward:** Part of the strength of this programme was our independence in that we did not belong to one or other sector, but how do you roll that out on a large-scale basis? That independence was crucial. The localised support — knowing those school communities and where they have come from — was also a big factor.
216. **Mrs Dobson:** Thank you for your presentation. Lauri, you are obviously very passionate about sharing education and what you do, and I commend you for that. You have engaged in shared education since 2009, and obviously you can see the benefits for the pupils involved who have passed through primary and post-primary schools. It is good to see that, by the fourth year, pupil numbers had more than doubled. Why do you feel that demand increased so rapidly between year 1 and year 4? Do you think the parents were central to that crucial rise in demand? Obviously, the community and the parents see the benefits. Will you take us through the reasons why you feel that demand increased in those years?
217. **Mr McCusker:** Maybe first of all people were putting their toe in the water. It is OK to go in? Is it too cold or am I going to get a shock? I think maybe school communities were trying it. Then, schools saw the benefits when relationships were being built. If you have a P6 teacher sharing with another P6 teacher from another school, no longer operating in isolation but sharing and learning, and they go back to their staffroom and talk about that experience, it can rub off on other colleagues. I think it is organic. Parents' involvement —
218. **Mrs Dobson:** It is crucial.
219. **Mr McCusker:** Absolutely crucial. When we started on the journey, we went to parents first and asked 400 of them across Fermanagh what they were up for

- and what they were not up for. We asked what was possible. We have always thought that parents are the backbone. I think there were a number of things. It was people putting their foot in the water in the first year to see whether it was OK. Would they get their heads knocked off? Would somebody come round and say, "Actually, you shouldn't be going up to that other school. What are you doing?". But it was acceptable and there were benefits from it. The education benefits and kids simply coming home and sharing their stories — I think all that rubs off and helps to build momentum.
220. **Mrs Dobson:** As you said, the views of the parents and the community are crucial in building an education programme.
221. **Mr McCusker:** Absolutely.
222. **Mrs Dobson:** I want to touch on area planning again, which we have spoken about quite a lot. In your brief, you called for the shared models to be explored in the area planning process. I know that the Chair spoke about this at length. I have been extremely critical in my constituency of the Southern Board for its relentless attack on the Dickson plan, which has been supported by the community it has served for over 40 years. What is your view on the link between the boards and the schools, and how reflective are they of the community opinion in the area planning process?
223. **Mr McCusker:** I could take you to about 10 schools whose views would be highly negative. Sometimes, I still find it challenging to understand the relationship between the managing authorities and individual schools. Is that relationship about managing, facilitating or being supportive? We just have to look to this week to see where a school community feels extremely hard done by because of a decision taken by its managing authority. Managing authorities undoubtedly have a very difficult job given the current level of uncertainty regarding their future, but, in some schools, they can seem quite aloof from the school itself. Some people in those school communities keep them quite aloof purposely; it is better having them 30 miles or 90 miles or 100 miles away so that they can get on and do their bit. For some others, it is about personalities and relationships. I do not know anything about the Dickson plan.
224. **Mrs Dobson:** How long have you got?
225. You spoke passionately about the impact of decisions if they are inflicted on the community, and you talked about looking at the bigger picture five to 10 years down the line. I commend you for what you are doing; it has been great to listen to. Things need to improve. If a system loses the support of the community, our children will be the worse for it, and that is the reality.
226. **Mr Rogers:** Thanks to Lauri and Catherine for a very worthwhile and passionate presentation. You summed it up when you said that shared education is not a programme but is in the DNA of the future of rural Fermanagh and many rural areas throughout the North. Do you believe that area planning is inhibiting the ability to develop shared education and our ability to keep our rural communities intact?
227. **Mr McCusker:** That is a very good question. In one way, area planning can provide the impetus for sharing and closer working. In another way, it can scare the — out of communities because it puts people out there as having no future. It is interesting that, when the draft area primary school plan was produced, in many instances, it used the term local area solution. So, village A has two schools, both of which do not have the magic number of pupils. To Catherine and me, the local area solution means that there are two schools working closely together. The local area solution to managing authority A means closing that school and the pupils going to the school in the village down the road. The local area solution to managing authority B means closing their school and moving their pupils to another village down the road. That is all that local area solution means. If the

- draft plan says that we are interested in options A, B and C, and we want to do a community consultation on options A, B and C, that is area planning. If area planning is done correctly, it can be beneficial for closer cooperation, sustainable communities, which fits into the rural development agenda, and good relations, which fits into the OFMDFM agenda, T:BUC and all that type of stuff. However, if area planning is done badly, it can be detrimental to good relations, rural development and community development in that area. The schools are saying that they want to do it for the benefit of good relations, community development and rural development, but what is the process saying? For the benefit of what? For our young people? It does not make sense as it is currently planned and implemented.
228. **Mr Rogers:** I think that you have answered my question, Lauri. It really is a travesty that the good work here and the bottom-up approach that could feed into a really good area plan is not even getting out of the cupboard. That is just a comment.
229. **Ms Ward:** Area planning is a very valuable tool, but it depends on how it is used.
230. **Mr Lunn:** I like your assessment of local area solutions. I think that you just about got it in one. That is a warning, is it not?
231. I greatly admire what you are doing with the programme. You have gone further in Fermanagh with the direction of travel that I would like to see this going in than perhaps has happened in other places. I do not need to elaborate on that.
232. In your paper, you refer to the evaluation regarding learning for change consultancy in 2010. Have you done any assessment since 2010 in terms of the development of relationships, friendships and all that sort of stuff?
233. **Mr McCusker:** Absolutely. We worked with the North Eastern Education and Library Board and Queen's University, and together we commissioned consultants to look at the impact of shared education from the outset of the programme to the end of last academic year. We have that information, and I will make it accessible — I will share the links with the Committee Clerk. There is a lot of reading in it and a lot about the social and educational benefits and the economic elements.
234. **Ms Ward:** You talked about the impact, and I was glad to hear some of the input from the inspectorate this morning. We had very frustrating initial meetings with the inspectorate and the Department about impact. They clearly wanted to look at the impact on the pupil, and we kept trying to explain the community impact and the impact on the parents.
235. With the programme, a great number of parents are involved in the partnership, and they come together regularly for training, workshops and all that. They use community venues such as Orange halls and church halls — all their local facilities. Those venues may once have been single identity, but they are now being used by all sections of the community. I was trying to explain to the inspectorate that we need to look at the whole community impact, and that it is not just about the impact on individual pupils. Even when you take that whole community impact into consideration, you see that it gives pupils a sense of place, identity and who all belongs to our community. I was always fearful of an ETI inspection evaluating a very small impact and not that wider ripple impact.
236. **Mr Lunn:** Lauri, you talked about the way that the schools have developed and how they work together, to the point that you distinctly said that you have four schools here that are taking risks and really cooperating in a meaningful way. You also talked about the various models that are potentially out there for shared management and all the rest of it. If you look at that and what eventually will happen with area planning — God knows when it is going to happen — you will see that there are inevitably going to be situations in which schools will have to close. It does not make any sense. We have 1,200 schools; we do not need that number. I am with the Minister:

- just because a school's numbers are low does not mean that it has to close. I completely agree with him. There are other factors in play there such as sharing, community involvement and all the rest of it. You know the criteria. Is it possible that the working relationships will become so close and that the barriers will have been broken down so much in this county, which is leading the way in some ways, that an amalgamation might be seen as the preferred outcome? I mean across the sectors.
237. **Mr McCusker:** Yes, absolutely, but six years ago it was not a possibility. Six years ago, some people were challenging shared education as a concept. If we had gone to many parts of this county where there are two schools in the same village and said that it was a possibility, they would have laughed at us. They are not laughing now. It is a possibility; of course it is. For some schools, it might be a possibility in 20 years.
238. When you see forced mergers or attempted forced mergers of schools and the resistance, court cases and whatever might be the case — I am not just talking about this county but other areas — you learn that, if you work from the bottom up and build relationships, links, connections etc, when people talk about maybe taking the next step, it is much easier. Whereas, the top-down approach that forces people together does not do that. I think that shared education offers people the potential; no, it is more than that — it offers them the space to have those conversations about the next steps, ie area planning and producing plans.
239. **Mr Lunn:** Finally, you talked about the use of community facilities and mentioned Orange halls. I recently read a report by the Orange Order in Fermanagh. It was a good report and quite a hopeful document. That tallied with what you said. You are getting a movement from all directions in Fermanagh that maybe the rest of the country should be listening to and watching. I wish you well with it. I think that you have done great work.
240. **The Chairperson:** Members, thank you very much. Catherine and Lauri, thank you. I think that it has been very useful. Your paper has been exceptionally helpful and useful.
241. Earlier, we had a telling comment from the representative of the ETI, who talked about rewarding success and what he had seen during his experience in Germany. Unfortunately, it would seem that, given the plans that are prevailing in Fermanagh and the particular issues with the Collegiate, there is a desire to punish success rather than expanding successful schools.
242. It is timely that we are here and that we have had the discussion. As we have done in the past, we will continue to work with you and others in promoting and trying to advance some of these things in a very challenging climate. Thank you. We wish you well for the remainder of your work and look forward to it being embedded more and more in what goes on across Northern Ireland plc.

2 July 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mervyn Storey (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Stephen Moutray
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr Andrew Bell	<i>Department of</i>
Mrs Faustina Graham	<i>Education</i>
Ms Eve Stewart	

243. **The Chairperson:** Faustina, you are welcome back. Andrew, it is good to see you again and, Eve, thank you for being with us. Faustina, I take it that you will give the first part of the briefing.
244. **Mrs Faustina Graham (Department of Education):** Thank you very much, Chair. We welcome the opportunity to brief the Committee on the Department's work to advance shared education in line with the Programme for Government (PFG) commitments and the related actions identified in the Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) strategy.
245. Shared education has been defined as education that will provide opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together. Additional detail of the definition, which was agreed by the ministerial advisory group, includes education that meets the needs of and provides for the education together of learners from all section 75 categories and every socio-economic status. It involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements.
246. Ultimately, it is a form of education that will deliver educational benefits to learners in the context of efficient and effective use of resources, promotion of equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. That is a lot of detail on what shared education covers, but, at the same time, it is hugely important that the detail is there to ensure that all elements of the work are encompassed in the definition.
247. The Department has been involved in education on a collaborative and shared basis for a number of years through its various policy initiatives, such as community relations; extended schools provision and the entitlement framework. Latterly, the Department has been involved as managing agent for the 22 International Fund for Ireland (IFI) shared education projects. Shared education forms an important pillar of the Minister's policy for community relations, equality and diversity. It is important to see it under that umbrella term when one looks at the definition that we have just provided.
248. A ministerial advisory group was established in July 2012 to inform the Minister's decision on how best to advance shared education. Its report, which drew on the experience of existing shared education projects, was published in March 2013 and contained 20 separate recommendations. In accepting the report, the Minister encouraged a public debate on how best to advance shared education. Then, after a period of reflection, the Minister accepted the recommendations of the report in his 22 October statement to the Assembly. Work to take forward the recommendations has been ongoing across various teams in the Department. Our directorate is coordinating that work as well as delivering on some of the specific recommendations.
249. You will have received a paper in advance of this morning's briefing that outlines the current position against

- each of the 20 recommendations, so I do not intend to address each of those, but it may be useful to provide a summary of some of the key actions in which members will have an interest, given your planned inquiry into shared and integrated education.
250. A number of the ministerial advisory group's recommendations were made in the expectation that the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) would be in place. That would have ensured a central focus on shared education. In the absence of ESA, the recommendations will be addressed in light of the Minister's proposal to replace the current five education and library boards with a single board from April 2015. In the interim, the Minister has made it clear that he expects education and library boards to take a consistent regional approach to encourage and facilitate shared education.
251. The first recommendation is for funding for shared education. In accepting the ministerial advisory group's recommendation that provision needs to be made to address the additional cost to schools engaging in shared education — that is recommendation 3 — the Minister has indicated his intention to mainstream funding in the longer term. While the ministerial advisory group recommended a shared education premium within the common funding formula, the Minister has reserved his position on whether that is the most appropriate way to fund shared education. The Minister previously indicated that discussions were ongoing with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and Atlantic Philanthropies to establish a shared education programme that would provide funding for schools to embed shared education. The Minister has indicated that he will use the shared education programme to determine how best to mainstream shared education funding for schools. Work on that programme is at an advanced stage, and it is expected that an announcement will be made over the coming weeks. That would allow funding to commence early in the 2014-15 academic year. I will brief the Committee later on the detail of the programme.
252. The programme, which will be delivered through the education and library boards, has been designed to address a number of the ministerial advisory group recommendations. They include encouraging and facilitating shared education, which is the ministerial advisory group's recommendation 2; developing a framework supporting the early and continuing professional development of teachers that encourages its delivery through shared education, which relates to recommendations 6 and 7; evaluation by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), which will facilitate the sharing and dissemination of good practice, as referred to in recommendations 4 and 5; and looking at how best to engage with and meet the needs of parents, care givers and pupils, as referred to in recommendations 9, 11 and 14.
253. The programme will provide an opportunity to trial practices and approaches that will facilitate the longer-term direction of work to advance shared education in other relevant bodies. As with schools, opportunities will be taken to see how this pilot work can influence the work of the education and library boards and the Education and Training Inspectorate.
254. Members will be aware that proposals for Peace IV include a significant investment in shared education. Discussions are ongoing with the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) on how Peace IV funding for advancing shared education can be best used. That remains subject to the outcomes of their public consultation. I will provide the Committee with more information on that later.
255. Three of the recommendations, numbers 1, 12 and 13, related to legislation for shared education and to designating schools as public authorities. It was intended that they, too, would be taken forward via the draft Education Bill, but, in the absence of the Bill, the Minister

- is considering alternatives, including the possibility of a stand-alone Bill to define shared education. The Education Committee will, of course, be briefed on that at the appropriate juncture.
256. The legislation to designate schools and other educational institutions as public authorities is, in the first instance, for OFMDFM. The Minister will write to the First Minister and deputy First Minister to communicate the detail of the recommendations and to seek their views on the practicalities of designating schools for section 75 purposes. To assist in that process, the Department is undertaking a review of approaches to equality legislation for education settings in other jurisdictions. That work is ongoing.
257. Three of the ministerial advisory group recommendations, 6, 7 and 8, related to teacher education. As part of the work to finalise a new teacher development strategy, the Department will ensure that it includes provision for teachers to learn together and preparation for teaching in a shared education setting. Account will also be taken of the outworking of the independent review of the teacher education infrastructure, which was commissioned by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and published yesterday.
258. I turn now to area planning and its role in delivering shared education solutions. Committee members will wish to note that area planning terms of reference and subsequent guidance already encourage shared education options to be put forward. A prerequisite for any shared model is that a proposal must have the support of its community, be sustainable and be capable of delivering high-quality education. This morning, you have already received a separate briefing on the shared education campuses programme. Consequently, I do not plan to say anything additional, other than that it will complement the work on advancing shared education by targeting those infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating sharing initiatives in local schools. In addition, the Minister has indicated his intention to produce guidance on sharing options for schools and communities. This will be in the form of practical advice on implementing types of shared education models. A number of schools have expressed interest in a jointly managed model, one that would provide shared education within a Christian ethos in a school managed by a joint board of governors representative of the two main communities. Positive discussions have been ongoing with the Transferors Representatives' Council and Catholic trustees on the potential for this model. It is anticipated that the guidance will be published during the period of your inquiry.
259. Given that the Committee's inquiry will address both shared and integrated education, it may be helpful for me to say a few words about integrated education and how it aligns with shared education. Shared education, by definition, involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangement. That, in short, is what I explained in more detail at the beginning of the briefing. Sharing across schools is at different levels along a continuum, and integrated education should be at the upper end of that continuum. As with schools of any other management type, integrated schools will be expected to partner with a school of differing management type to meet the Programme for Government commitment. This will provide opportunities for sharing the good practice developed in the integrated sector and collaborative opportunities that can equally benefit pupils attending integrated schools.
260. I trust that this provides members with an overview of our work to progress shared education, and we are very happy to take any questions.
261. **The Chairperson:** Thanks, Faustina. I have a couple of points for clarification. When the Department talks about management type, does that include FE? I worry that, with this very defined view of shared education, there is a risk that it is all about getting two

- religious traditions together, namely Roman Catholic and Protestant. Shared education, for me, is more about the type of school because we have all-ability schools, grammar schools, integrated schools, single-sex schools and further and higher education.
262. Area planning is a shambles. There is an area plan for post-primary provision, but, in some areas, FE is outside the loop and is doing its own thing. FE is going ahead and deciding to spend money and, by pulling out of areas, leaving a deficit in the entitlement framework. Is there an expansion of the remit of shared education to include FE?
263. **Mr Andrew Bell (Department of Education):** The ministerial advisory group report specifically mentioned the FE sector, and, as you know, that is not the responsibility of the Department. We will engage with colleagues in DEL. In fact, we have had some preliminary engagement, but we need to have further engagement on how we make sure that there is some alignment. How this rolls out is for the Department for Employment and Learning rather than us, but it is included in the ministerial advisory group recommendations.
264. **The Chairperson:** The two Ministers have discussed the issue, and I welcome the fact, Faustina, that you referred to the announcement by the Minister for Employment and Learning yesterday on initial teacher training. Clearly, if shared education is to mean anything, it has to commence in the facilities that currently train our teachers. There is the community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) programme and work on collaboration, but it is clear from the comments in the House on Monday that there are some who believe that we should still have segregated teacher training provision in Northern Ireland. They support that, yet they want to talk about shared education and how we can collaborate.
265. Recommendations 18, 19 and 20 of the ministerial report were not accepted by me or my party, nor will they be. That is not a Committee view but a personal view, and others can make their own decision. If the Minister is introducing proposals in relation to those recommendations and has accepted the recommendations in their entirety, what work is being done on those three recommendations that we should be made aware of?
266. **Mrs Graham:** You have the paper that we sent to you, which explains the Minister's position on that. Andrew, do you want to share that with the Committee? I have it here, but I would have to —
267. **Mr A Bell:** The Minister, in his statement to the Assembly in October, made his position clear. He accepted the recommendations and, as members will know, he also welcomed and endorsed them. He said that, until the Assembly ends academic selection, he will continue to promote all-ability schools in which academic and vocational learning is the norm. That is the Minister's position on the recommendations.
268. **The Chairperson:** Andrew, I hope that that is not code for discriminating against selective schools.
269. **Mr A Bell:** That is certainly not the policy intention. Shared education has to be about sharing with all schools.
270. **The Chairperson:** One of the challenges in how we square that circle comes in recommendation 16, which deals with area-based planning in the school estate. These things are always heavily caveated depending on who the author of a report is, but it states:
- "Where there is sufficient, viable and consistent parental demand, the Department of Education should actively support the establishment of schools and other educational institutions with a particular religious, philosophical or cultural ethos."*
271. If that happens to be a grammar school, what will the Minister do? He said that he accepts three recommendations in the report that we end academic selection. That is code for saying that grammar schools will not be allowed, but, if it suits you to have "grammar" in

- the title of your school so that you get funding, we will be quite happy to allow you to have that. There clearly is:
- “sufficient, viable and consistent parental demand”*
272. for grammar schools, which I use as an example. There are other examples in our educational provision. So how does the Minister square recommendation 16 with his position of supporting and promoting only non-selective schools?
273. **Mr A Bell:** As you know, the ministerial advisory group addressed that in its considerations, as it felt it was key to part of the whole sharing picture. However, it made it clear that, while it recognised that those recommendations were controversial, the other recommendations could be taken forward in their absence. We are working on the other recommendations, and I do not envisage any impact on those schools. In fact, when we ran the IFI programme, schools from across all sectors, including the grammar sector, were involved. Our experience is that, in some cases, it can be easier to get Catholic and Protestant schools to share than grammar and secondary schools.
274. **The Chairperson:** Andrew, you are making an assumption that grammar schools do not educate pupils from both traditions. I would nearly go so far as to say that some grammar schools are better examples of integrated schools than some integrated schools with “integrated” above their door. Let us play the numbers game in which the threshold is 30%: over 30% of pupils in the one voluntary grammar school in my town come from the Roman Catholic community. It is more integrated than an “integrated school” six miles down the road.
275. **Mr A Bell:** It is not about the intricacies within schools. The policy is very clear that it is about schools across different sectors sharing. From that point of view, I agree. We have the statistics and know that a number of grammar and other schools have very representative pupil communities, but they are not integrated schools.
276. **The Chairperson:** Yes, controlled schools.
277. **Mrs Dobson:** Thank you for your second briefing today, Faustina. You have had a busy morning. I understand that DE will work to develop the role of area learning communities so that they can encourage the participation of special schools and pupils with disabilities in shared education. Area learning communities do a fantastic job. How do you envisage the development of that role?
278. **Mrs Graham:** For special schools, in particular?
279. **Mrs Dobson:** Yes.
280. **Mrs Graham:** One of the pieces of work referred to in the recommendations is the work that has been ongoing over a number of years between special schools and mainstream schools. Dr John Hunter, who spoke to the Committee two weeks ago, led work on developing the projects that allow the mainstream and special schools to work together and, subsequently, guidance on how best those partnerships can be developed. We have a copy of that here if you are interested. The interesting thing with regard to mainstream and special school partnerships is that it is probably good practice for all partnering arrangements. So, very interesting work has been done, and there is recognition from the last piece of work, which involved 24 partnerships of special and mainstream schools and recognition of the learning benefits for all the pupils who were involved in those examples. Really solid work has already happened. Other schools will be able to build on that as this work develops.
281. **Mrs Dobson:** There are such rewards for both schools. They gain so much from that collaboration.
282. **Mrs Graham:** Absolutely.
283. **Mrs Dobson:** The withdrawal of entitlement framework funding from schools has, however, hit the ability of special schools in my constituency to engage in sharing. What specific measures can area learning

- communities bring forward? Do you plan to provide additional funding to help special schools? It would be so detrimental to lose that ability to work together, and I know, as I said, from speaking to principals and teachers in special schools in my constituency that they have gained so much. Losing it is a very real fear.
284. **Mrs Graham:** We recognise very clearly that in all of this work at present there is that need for additional financial support and, in some instances, where people have not started their journey, for incentives also but with the longer-term aim of all this becoming part of the fabric and ethos of all schools. So, it is important to look at additional financial resources as something that allows those partnerships to develop in the first instance. What you have described there is that, where there is a withdrawal of funding, it can almost make people feel like that will come to a stop. I would like to think that, in the schools that you are referring to, that will is now engendered to find a way to continue that.
285. In the programmes that we are talking about this morning — we referred to them briefly but will talk about them in more detail subsequently — there will be clear opportunities for schools that have demonstrated very clear learning outcomes and benefits for all their pupils to access that money, whether it is on a school-to-school partnership basis or, indeed, on an area learning community basis. My one caveat is that it needs to be about sharing in the broadest sense and in the sense of the definitions that we have provided you with this morning, because it cannot just be a replacement for entitlement framework funding; it needs to further those learning outcomes that you described and the benefits that you have seen for all the children involved.
286. **Mrs Dobson:** There certainly is that willingness to continue; it is just about the issues and the funding. Do you plan to provide additional funding to help special schools?
287. **Mrs Graham:** I said in the briefing that, if the announcements that we anticipate take place, we hope to have that money available to schools early in the autumn term, and, from our perspective, it is about ensuring that the actions by other people now happen with the speed that they need to happen to allow the schools to progress. So, we are ready to go with that.
288. **Mrs Dobson:** Great. Thank you.
289. **Mr Kinahan:** I am fascinated at seeing it all being pushed and working forward. The question I asked previously, Faustina, was this: how will we push forward so that every school is looking at it all? You mentioned that you will produce sharing options at some stage in the future. Will that then go to every school to show them all the different ways of doing things?
290. **Mrs Graham:** To progress this, the really important thing from an education perspective is, first and foremost, how we build on the successes of the work that has already happened. You had a briefing on the work of the 22 International Fund for Ireland projects. In my former role, I led that work for the Education and Training Inspectorate. At that time, we set out to try — and we were successful — to work at empowering schools with regard to that work rather than it being something that, in the longer term, would continue to be an add-on and a separate piece of work for the schools. Historically, that is what happened. We have seen some good pieces of work begin, but once the funding is withdrawn, they become something that was almost a luxury as opposed to an integral part of what the school does.
291. In that work, we tried to work with all of the project leaders and the schools to create a common language of evaluation that all of the participants could share, so that we would build capacity in the system with regard to identifying what was good about the work they were doing and where they still needed to travel on that journey towards full sharing, if you want to look at the longer-

- term goal, particularly that of jointly managed schools, as we are beginning to see.
292. Our schools are a microcosm of our society broadly, so all of our schools are at different starting points. It really is about trying to see where the school or the partnership that we are looking at is at and trying to encourage those schools to move along what we have described as a continuum to help them identify where they are. I would like to think that that is something that we can encourage the schools to do as opposed to being something that is in some way prescriptive.
293. The Northern Ireland curriculum has all of the elements that are required for shared education, and if we can continue to ensure that people are really clear about how shared education can contribute to the realisation of the Northern Ireland curriculum, we will win hearts and minds.
294. **Mr Kinahan:** That is excellent.
295. When it comes to the funding of this, one school has asked whether the Delivering Social Change budget will still be a part of it as we move forward in each of the library board areas.
296. **Mrs Graham:** I said in the briefing that the Minister has reserved judgement on the whole mainstreaming of the funding, because the ministerial advisory group advised a premium that would go towards that. However, again, whatever the issues are around the common funding formula, the intention was to try to streamline the process. Certainly from my experience of working with schools, sometimes the money that was going into schools for separate pockets of work was either not always utilised in that way or people were not always clear about the multiple funding streams that were coming into schools.
297. So, in reserving judgement, the intention is try and see how this work develops over the next three to four years and use that as a basis to do something that is practical and sensible from the school's perspective and ensures that the money is getting to the schools.
298. **Mr Kinahan:** The Chair mentioned including FE colleges. We had a very interesting document from Professors Borooah and Knox about six months ago, which indicated that there is more sharing between the voluntary schools than others. Is that within the scope of what you are doing?
299. **Mrs Graham:** Between who?
300. **Mr Kinahan:** I am trying to think about how to put it. I am talking about your grammar schools, where you have suitable people, and secondary schools nearby, and creating more sharing between those schools.
301. **Mrs Graham:** Absolutely. That is key to both of the programmes that we referred to this morning: Delivering Social Change and Peace IV. It is fundamental to the programme that there is sharing at the level that a school or the partner schools can accommodate. So, the expectation is, in any of these funding arrangements, that schools will be able to demonstrate clear outcomes on improvement over the time that they will be involved. But, again, there should be realistic expectations about the starting point for each of the schools.
302. With reference to FE, we can still do better. There is still work to be done there. The FE sector has done some very good work in community relations, and we need to move towards clearer partnership arrangements between FE and schools in that area.
303. **Mr Kinahan:** Thanks for the hard work. Thank you.
304. **Mr Newton:** I thank the witnesses for coming today. I have two questions, if that is OK.
305. I go back to the issue of the previous panel. Mrs Dobson asked a probing question about encouraging a geographical spread of campuses and so on. I sought clarification on that and got an assurance that we are not going for geographical spread and instead are

- going for a grass-roots initiative, where the schools and community can support such an initiative. I am glad that you are reinforcing that that is the position. In the Minister's 22 October statement on advancing shared education, he indicated that his Department would:
- "bring forward ... guidelines on the development of area plans to ensure that shared education is encouraged".—[Official Report, Vol 88, No 8, p4, col 1].*
306. Is there not a contradiction in terms there, in that the area plan is being constructed in such a way to encourage shared education, yet we are looking for an ethos of it coming from grass-roots initiatives?
307. **Mrs Graham:** You have to approach any type of work like this both ways. As I said earlier, it is important to try and avoid prescription for schools on the one hand, but, equally, area planning has to take into account the efficient and effective use of our resources. So, there is the grass-roots work that, as you say, will inform the area plan, but area planning, in its entirety, should include all of the options and opportunities that are there. I do not see encouraging sharing as contradictory; to be honest, I think that that can be facilitated in the area-planning process.
308. **Mr Newton:** Would I be cynical in describing the dividing line between being encouraging and prescriptive as a huge chasm?
309. **Mr A Bell:** Having run projects with the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) over the past six years, we know from experience that that is extremely difficult to do unless you have the support of the communities. When the Minister made his announcement about shared education, he called for communities to bring forward their proposals and ideas, and some communities have done so. So, it is that bottom-up approach. It also reflects the fact that area plans need to take into account proposals from communities. Again, like Faustina, I do not see any contradiction between the two.
310. **Mr Newton:** I am glad that you have reassured me on that. Thank you. May I refer to the management arrangements for the shared campus, once the model is agreed? Will you consider it to be a single campus, even though its parts may be on separate sides of the road? Will you consider that to be "a campus"? You used the expression "jointly managed". What would that look like?
311. **Mr A Bell:** Shared education is not just —
312. **Mr Newton:** Will it be "campuses" or "campus"?
313. **Mr A Bell:** Shared education is not just about schools coming together on a shared education campus; it is about all schools sharing with another school. Those on a single campus are easier to do because they are located next to one another. From that point of view, there should not be any difference between the two in relation to the campus.
314. **Mrs Graham:** I referred to one particular model, which was that of jointly-managed schools. That work is ongoing. We have met various representatives of the transferors' council and the Catholic trustees, where they have instigated those discussions. As I said, we are hopeful that that guidance may come to fruition in the duration of the inquiry. The truth is that we are trying to work through that whole process, because it is a process and not something to which we would automatically have answers. Otherwise, we would have been in that space before now. We have found those discussions helpful in throwing up issues that will be difficult or complicated, but, most importantly, how we have worked together has given a sense that there is a will to overcome any obstacles. That always makes for a process that you think can come to useful fruition.
315. **Mr Newton:** If you end up with 10, do you envisage having 10 different management models?
316. **Mrs Graham:** I was talking about a particular approach. Under the educational campuses that Diarmuid

- talked about this morning, how that would move forward would come down to the bid that comes in for a project. Obviously, at the moment, we have Lisanelly under development. Again, in that situation, we will have a number of schools that are, at the moment, independent of each other but there will be the basics of how a huge campus will be managed where there will be elements of sharing. Sharing, in that sense, is something that is defined differently in the sense that it is how you manage a process. How far you go along the continuum that we talked about would be down to the individual schools concerned in conjunction with their employing authorities.
317. We are keen to push that sharing as far as we can in the interests of children and young people, but we have to look practically at what can work for people. It is not the case that there would be 10 different management types; there may be lessons that each group, as it is established, can learn from the others. Technically there could be, but I do not envisage that being the case; I would think that we should be able to accommodate ways of learning from one another, but it is a developing process, and we all have to learn from it.
318. **Mr A Bell:** The key thing for us in this particular programme is that where they are on shared campuses, the schools do not wait until they arrive on the shared campuses before they start doing the necessary work ahead of that. This programme will give those schools that will be moving to shared campuses the opportunity to be sharing before they arrive on the campus and to resolve some of the issues that might otherwise occur.
319. **Mr Newton:** Whose responsibility is it to arrive at that management issue? Is it the Department or the schools?
320. **Mr A Bell:** Are you talking about the jointly-managed schools? It would be where two or more schools would want to come together. They would discuss that model with the boards and bring forward development proposals on that basis. The concept that we are talking about is in relation to a school that would have representation of both communities on the board of governors. You would be talking, potentially, about two schools of different management types coming together to form a jointly-managed whole.
321. **Mr Newton:** Is that concept written down somewhere?
322. **Mr A Bell:** That is what we are working on with the transferors and the Catholic trustees, who have been very supportive of the whole concept. We are quite clear that they can work together on that model. It came about because when the Minister invited schools and communities to bring forward proposals, some schools came forward to the Department saying that they would like to explore the idea, and we have been working with those schools. However, it has proved to be more complex than originally thought, because it touches on such a wide range of different issues from admission policy to transport. For schools that wish to look at that model, our guidance will be around the practical aspects that they need to consider so that schools and communities are fully informed of the issues ahead of their decision.
323. **Mr Newton:** Are you able to share that work with the Committee even though it is not complete at the moment?
324. **Mr A Bell:** I am sure we could do that.
325. **Mrs Graham:** As long as it is on the understanding that we are still working on it with the groups concerned.
326. **Mr Rogers:** Most of my points have been addressed, but I have just one or two more to make. What special help or consideration is being given to rural schools, isolated rural schools in particular, that are keen to promote shared education?
327. **Mrs Graham:** Again, that would form part of their proposal in the sense that isolated rural schools in particular, in forming a partnership with another school, would articulate what their issues are and how those can be met

- through the project. That is where we are trying to look at customising any of those partnerships to what the schools need in that particular situation. If there is a will to work with another school, and there are justifiable reasons, such as the obvious one of transport, for schools working together, that will be facilitated through the programmes that we are talking about. Obviously, we can talk in a little bit more detail about that shortly.
328. **Mr Rogers:** You mentioned Peace IV funding. What consideration has been given to cross-border sharing?
329. **Mr A Bell:** As you know, Peace IV will involve cross-border sharing. We have already had preliminary discussions with the Department in the South about those and, indeed, as of this week, we are planning to have further meetings to take that forward. This is obviously in light of the fact that Peace IV is still under public consultation. Therefore, we need to have those conversations, because their proposals could change as result of the public consultation. Certainly, we are working with our colleagues in the South on some examples of that. When we had the shared education programmes funded by the IFI, we had a number of schools in border areas that were working on a cross-border basis because it made sense geographically. We had maintained schools in Fermanagh that were working with schools across the border and in a number of different areas. There are some examples of how that can operate.
330. **The Chairperson:** In conclusion, with regard to the recommendations from the ministerial advisory group, recommendation 12 said:
- "The necessary legislation should be brought forward for schools and other educational institutions to be designated as 'public authorities' under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998".*
331. According to the briefing,
- "The Minister has accepted the ... recommendations and agrees that schools have an important role in promoting equality of opportunity ..."*
- The matter of legislation to designate schools as 'public authorities' is one for OFMDFM in the first instance and the Minister is writing to FM and dFM to communicate the detail of these recommendations and to seek their views on the practicalities of designating schools for Section 75 purposes."*
332. Has there been approval from the bishops and the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) on this? If you take the current position that the trustees have in relation to the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO), they believe that the element that allows them to use the certificate in religious education falls under that remit. Ironically, the current Minister of Education is the only Minister who oversees an organisation that has an exemption from equality legislation. Given all the cries that we hear about having equality, treating everybody the same and so on, how is all that practically? I get the sense that this is shifting this over to OFMDFM and saying, "Well really, equality is your responsibility, we do not want to get involved in all this". Is there buy-in to that idea? What discussions have there been with the managing authorities around the whole concept of designating schools as public bodies in this way? That would be a monumental shift in the way in which schools are governed or designated under legislation.
333. **Mrs Graham:** I will hand over to Andrew for the detail on that, because it is quite complex. First and foremost, I think that it would be hugely important to ensure that we look at the practicalities of this and that we look at what schools are already required to do. In particular, from our perspective, it is about looking at the administrative burden and what that means for schools. Those are the areas that are key in all of this. With regard to OFMDFM, observing the protocols of that is the first port of call that the Minister needs to go to. I do not think that that is in any way absolving ourselves of responsibility, because we have to look at what this will actually

mean for schools and how it fits with the curriculum and the curriculum requirements that are already there. Most importantly with the administrative burden, we are trying to meet the responsibilities that we have. Andrew will talk about the detail of the work that has been done.

334. **Mr A Bell:** As Faustina said, this will be a complex area. We have been focusing on trying to understand and reduce the administrative burden on schools because that was one of the specifics that the ministerial advisory group looked at. It talked about a light version of the equality scheme. We have been looking at other jurisdictions. We have looked at the position in England, Scotland, Wales and the South of Ireland. We have looked further afield to the Asian economies, Canada and Finland, all of which have issues. Understandably, the most common systems are those that are closest to us. However, there have been issues with those individual systems, some of which we have already addressed through the likes of the community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) policy. In the South, there are issues around educating pupils to have self-respect and respect for others, which is what our CRED policy already does. There are versions of the scheme — England is one model that we have been looking at, and schools there are required to publish equality objectives under the equality duty placed on schools. We are looking at those models to see what is key.
335. The other factor in all of this, which also involves the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, is the fact that the Equality Commission has around 200 public authorities listed on its database. If we add 1,200 schools to that, it would have a significant impact on the Equality Commission as well. Therefore, all of those factors need to be taken into account.
336. **The Chairperson:** It would certainly be an administrative burden for the Equality Commission if that were placed in its responsibility. Thank you for that.

15 October 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Ian Williamson	<i>Ballycastle High School</i>
Mrs Barbara Ward	<i>Cross and Passion College</i>

337. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome Mrs Barbara Ward, who is the principal of Cross and Passion College, and Mr Ian Williamson, who is the principal of Ballycastle High School. You are both very welcome to the Committee. Thank you for making the journey from Ballycastle. I ask you to make an opening statement, and members will follow up with questions.

338. **Mrs Barbara Ward (Cross and Passion College):** Thank you. I will open proceedings. My name is Barbara Ward, and I am the principal of Cross and Passion College in Ballycastle, which is a non-selective school. There is a long history of no 11-plus in the area. The school is the product of the amalgamation of the old Cross and Passion Convent Grammar School with the Star of the Sea Secondary School in 1976. It is an all-ability, non-selective context. The school has 756 pupils. I have been principal there for 15 years; I am in my fifteenth year.

339. **Mr Ian Williamson (Ballycastle High School):** I am Ian Williamson, the principal of Ballycastle High School, which is also a non-selective and all-

ability school that has an enrolment of 417 pupils. I was vice-principal at the school for two years and have been principal for four.

340. Our collaborative partnership in Ballycastle caters for a potential combined enrolment of 1,173 pupils. The purpose of the partnership is to provide a curriculum at Key Stages 4 and 5 that meets the educational needs, interests, abilities and aspirations of all pupils, supports the local economy and provides pathways into further and higher education. The partnership has grown organically over a significant number of years, primarily to meet an educational need in the Ballycastle area. There have been significant social benefits from it to our local community.

341. **Mrs Ward:** Our schools are set in a rural context. The hinterlands or contributing area to the schools is the town of Ballycastle and a range of rural communities in all directions from it. Interestingly, Ballycastle High School has a smaller, although significant, number of pupils who live in the town, and its rural hinterland is to the west of the town. For Cross and Passion College, the catchment area is the town and the communities to the south and east. The town is the north Antrim focus for post-primary schooling.

342. The current situation is a maintained Catholic post-primary school and a controlled post-primary school, namely Ballycastle High School. The arrangement, which we will describe to you in more detail in a moment, enjoys the support of the wider community. The business community is very proud of the partnership and is keen to work with us to enhance it. It definitely has the support of pupils, parents, employers and the general public. We have two schools, each with its own identity and ethos. We teach the core curriculum: all the Key Stage 3 teaching and learning

- is done in the core school. At Key Stage 4, the children study languages, science and learning for life and work. All the core subjects that all pupils from both schools do are taught in the core schools. At Key Stage 4, they share some of the option blocks, which gives more choice, and post-16 there is much wider sharing. Ian will describe that in a bit more detail. The key issue is that the shared learning kicks in at Key Stage 4, but each school has its own identity and ethos. That offers parents a choice of their child receiving a faith-based education or not
343. **Mr Williamson:** As we pointed out, the initial desire to build on meeting an educational need has grown and developed over decades into a symbiotic relationship, which has resulted in the success story that the arrangement in Ballycastle has become.
344. The enrolment in both schools, barring occasional variations, is holding its own, with a significant increase in post-16 enrolment. We have retained the confidence of our own community, and we attract significant interest from young people and parents in neighbouring communities. Large numbers of children are sharing and are happy to do so. Over 25% of the combined whole school enrolments are in collaborative classes. At Key Stages 4 and 5, 43% of all pupils in both schools participate in collaborative lessons, which works out at 66% of Ballycastle High School pupils and 31% of Cross and Passion College pupils.
345. Parents and pupils are confident about the arrangement, which is backed up by comments and anecdotes as well as by more formal self-evaluation. We have developed something in Ballycastle that works for us.
346. **Mrs Ward:** Ian talked about meeting an educational need, which is one of the big drivers for the partnership. Between our two schools, we have been able to meet the requirements of the entitlement framework and exceed them where it has been appropriate to do so.
347. We are meeting the needs of a huge range of learners: children of all abilities, aptitudes, interests, social and economic backgrounds and so on. Therefore, the partnership allows us, through sharing, to expand choice for all children. We deal with every type of learner, from the young person who could have 4 As with 3*s at A level and 11 As, including 10 A*s at GCSE, right through to children with special educational needs. The sharing allows us to provide for that full range of young people in the community.
348. One of the things that we have been able to do is meet the needs of the local economy. An important part of post-primary education is meeting the needs of those who go into further and higher education, but every community, particularly rural communities, needs people with the skills and qualifications who will thrive and provide employment to survive. The partnership has allowed us to make that a key consideration. With our local business community, we have looked at the additionality and asked what additional courses our young people will engage in.
349. We have been able to look at qualifications in hospitality, agriculture, science, creative media production and enterprise. For example, for the subject of business studies, there is a general A level but there is also an applied A level. So, again, you are meeting the needs of a great range of young people as well as the needs of the local economy.
350. **Mr Williamson:** The substantial improvements, particularly in the last two years, in the results in both schools at Key Stage 4 coincide with the extension of our collaboration and shared education into Key Stage 4. This year, 93% of pupils in both schools achieved five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C. When we look at the percentages achieving five GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C, including English and Mathematics, the figures are 77% and 63%.
351. Both schools are significantly above the Northern Ireland average, and we

- genuinely believe that the significant improvement in our outcomes has been down to the quality of teaching and learning in both schools, the dedication of staff, the support of pupils and parents and, importantly, the impact of the increased curriculum provision that we have been able to offer, which has been massive.
352. **Mrs Ward:** To conclude on why our outcomes improved — and were they not improving there would be no point in doing this — it has really enhanced the engagement of young people. They now have a choice that they did not have before, and, in having that, we are meeting their educational and aspirational needs. As a result, there is choice, their interests are provided for, and there are alternative qualifications. They are being taught by subject specialists, because, sometimes, to offer a subject in a small school you have to ask somebody to come on board who may not be experienced and qualified. However, through the sharing, we have been able to share subject specialists and so on. It has also brought about a sharing of good practice, a strong sense of collegiality between the staff of both schools and so on. Ian will tell you how we hope to take it into the future.
353. **Mr Williamson:** Finally, you may be aware that, in July, we featured in a Department of Education announcement on shared campuses. We are delighted and grateful to be one of three in Northern Ireland. Our proposals are for two core schools and two shared centres — one concentrating on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-related subjects and the other around performance and creativity-related aspects of the curriculum. We also believe that there is a capacity in the shared centres to allow for additional facilities that we could share, for example a library, meeting areas, supporting special educational needs, careers etc.
354. We look forward with anticipation to moving forward and securing investment to support what we do in Ballycastle. We
- believe that investment will underline what has been good practice over a significant number of years and will, in essence, be seen as a reward for what we are doing. We feel that, in many respects, it is what the pupils and the people of Moyle demand. You are all invited to visit us in Ballycastle at any time.
355. **Mrs Ward:** We hand over to you now.
356. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much and thank you for the invitation. It would be useful to see the work that you have done. The previous Chairman spoke very highly of the partnership. I was always a bit dubious, thinking that there was perhaps a north Antrim bias there. However, having read your paper and heard from you, I can see the enthusiasm. I am very impressed by the level of collaboration throughout the schools, including from your governors and school councils. The fact is that it has developed naturally to meet an educational need with regards to the curriculum. I am impressed by the fact that you have seen an improvement in your results, which is primarily what this is about. However, does the model work for you because of your geographical location, proximity to each other and the relative isolation of Ballycastle?
357. **Mrs Ward:** Undoubtedly, geographical proximity is what you might call an enabler, because it allows children to move to and from schools in a short time. So, yes, that is an enabler, and it certainly makes sharing much more doable and practical. In a sense, our rural isolation is a factor, but not necessarily the case. I suppose that I am saying that I do not believe that that is the only context in which it can work. There is a lot of potential for sharing to meet an educational need, to expand the curriculum either in our type of context or in other circumstances. Long distances and travel times are expensive economically and in lost learning time.
358. **Mr Williamson:** We are not unique in our geographical circumstances, I

- have been informed. For example, and Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) said that there are examples of other schools in similar proximity that may not necessarily have reached the point that we are at. So, while it may not be a one-size-fits-all, I believe that the model that we have in Ballycastle would be sustainable in other communities.
359. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There is a difference in your enrolment numbers.
360. **Mrs Ward:** Yes.
361. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** How do you ensure that it is a partnership of equals?
362. **Mrs Ward:** That is not easy to do. The whole thing comes from governance and the fact that there is a strong commitment to the concept of sharing. Yes, there is a larger partner and a smaller partner, but both of us would lose if the partnership did not exist. We are codependent. Together, we can deliver the curriculum and the entitlement framework and meet all the other needs; we would not be able to meet all those needs if we were apart. It is in neither of our interests for the other school not to be there. So, from the purely pragmatic perspective, both schools need to be thriving. In a partnership, both schools need to be confident of their own identity and success and proud of their school as well as the partnership. I think that that is what we have managed to do.
363. **Mr Williamson:** I agree. There is a sense of pride in what we do. I believe that there is a genuine empathy and sense of respect for each other and for each other's differences, which includes numerical differences and the demographic of the community. Being good neighbours and engendering a sense of respect ensures that we are mindful of the need to be equal in reality and of the perception of equality.
364. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** OK; that is interesting.
365. Finally from me, you have said that it works for you. We are looking at shared education and at integration in the broadest terms. Do you believe that there is a need for a formal, statutory definition of shared education?
366. **Mrs Ward:** If it is to be a part of the system in the wider sense, that will probably become important at some point in future for policy and funding. In our partnership, we are looking forward with great anticipation to the shared education buildings. If you think about it in respect of law, policy and all of that, there is a gap that needs to be thought about and looked at. If it is to be part of the system, it needs a policy and legislative framework of some kind. In time, out of this could come shared appointments, shared administrative staff etc. We want to avoid duplication but, at the same time, allow for different identities to share and work together.
367. **Mr Williamson:** From a system point of view, there is no doubt that there is potential to benefit from economies of scale. I have not read it to any great extent, but, given what we know shared education to be and our experience in Ballycastle, we both believe that the definitions of shared education offered by the ministerial advisory group hit the nail on the head and are adequate.
368. **Mr Craig:** Ian and Barbara, I am going to keep my contribution to two questions because I got told off last week for asking far too many. I listened to you saying that the threat of mutual destruction was really the driver that brought you together. However, I am interested to hear from you what has kept you together. Mutual destruction is a negative. What are the positives that keep you together?
369. **Mr Williamson:** In the context of my tenure at Ballycastle High School, which is four years as principal and two years as a vice-principal, the policy imperative of the entitlement framework was a factor in moving into collaboration at Key Stage 4. Historically, post-16 collaboration goes back decades. The big positive is the genuine collaboration

- in building relationships and sharing staff and professional development. That adds value to what we are doing. We have mentioned the potential for economies of scale and efficiencies. It is a genuine sharing of good practice. As principal of a controlled sector school, I believe that we have benefited from our involvement with a maintained sector school. We have benefited from an awareness of the differences in ethos of educational outcome, which I believe to be a driven ethos. We, as a school, have gleaned benefit from that ethos. We have shared, and I believe that Cross and Passion has benefited from us also.
370. **Mrs Ward:** Yes, it has been about survival, but that is probably the lowest common denominator. Outcomes and seeing that, together, we can provide more opportunities for young people to succeed is probably the biggest driver for us. The cohort of young people who just got their results in August were the first to come through with this enhanced choice. To be honest, I wish that you had been there to share in it. For the very first time, children from the lower quartile of the ability range were coming in proud to have achieved results, instead of coming in, getting results and running away or the results having to be posted out to them because they were so afraid of what they would see. These children had an opportunity to succeed. We were surrounded by young people who were so delighted with their success that they did not want to go home. They were hanging around talking for hours. It is an absolutely amazing motivator and driver for me personally that, together, we can see young people really gaining from this on the educational front.
371. I will give you another anecdote from the summer that illustrates it very clearly. Two young women came to me on A-level results day and talked to me as if they knew me. I kept saying to myself, "They cannot be my students. Surely I am not losing my head; I don't recognise them." They were two students from Ian's school who were over to say, "Thank you. We had a great time here. We really loved it. We now have friends for when we go to uni. Your teachers were so nice to us." They felt that it was important to come over and say that to me.
372. It is about the friendships that have developed between the young people, the better educational outcomes, and the fact that I have come to know the Protestant and unionist community much better through my engagement in the process; that is equally the case the other way round, and it is there for the young people too. Our parents are confident in the choice that they are making about the type of school, yet there is meaningful and authentic sharing going on.
373. **Mr Williamson:** I agree. That is a big thing that we have seen. Yes, we have indicated that educational need was the priority in driving this, but I have to say that, from my perspective, the icing on the cake is what I believe to have been a very obvious societal and community benefit from our engagement, namely the rapport and relationships that exist between pupils. We are always mindful of the differences, and we take it from one day to the next. However, I think that there is a genuine feeling among all our stakeholders that what we do is making a difference and that we are playing our wee part.
374. **Mr Craig:** I know from talking to Mervyn, our previous Chair, that there is a lot more positive in this than there ever was negative. I am glad that you have drawn that out.
375. Touching on that goes to the heart of my second question, which we were thinking about earlier. The children are drawn from different cultural backgrounds: one school is predominantly nationalist/republican, and the other is predominantly unionist/loyalist. How do you explore explaining the cultural differences to each so that there is a mutual understanding of their backgrounds? How do you deal with that issue?
376. **Mr Williamson:** We talked earlier about things growing organically in the school.

- Systems and networks have developed over the years. There were curriculum developments such as Learning for Life and Work and around citizenship. Work has been done in that area over the years. Although we are not involved in pupils sitting in collaborative classes at Key Stage 3, a lot of work is done through workshop activities and joint events. We have been involved, for example, in the North Eastern Board PIRCH (partnership, inclusion, reconciliation, citizenship and history) programme and PEACE III programmes. A lot of foundations have been laid at Key Stage 3 through programmes like that. We also do in-house programmes to develop those relationships at Key Stage 3.
377. We have worked, historically at sixth form and more recently also at Key Stage 4, on developing induction programmes. We put a lot of work and effort into making sure that those things are explored in the early stages of a new term and pupils are made aware that we are different and that you do not have to hide that. It is about being respectful and having an awareness that we are different but moving forward together. Having used the expertise of organisations such as the former Spirit of Enniskillen Trust, we have gleaned our own expertise and increased our capacity to work through that with young folk. I believe that that is nurtured through the ongoing development of relationships. However, you cannot take it for granted. The danger is in thinking that you are sorted. You are not. You have to work hard at it and be mindful of what is going on in a community. Something that happens can have repercussions, so you keep an ear to the ground, your finger on the pulse — all of the clichés — and you react quickly to any circumstances that come to the fore.
378. **Mrs Ward:** We are very mindful that most of the children's attitudes and values, particularly as they relate to our particular political context here, are nurtured at home. We cannot take for granted the values and beliefs of any child. So, the induction programmes in year 11 and at post-16 put some of that on the table, and there are some quite open discussions. Our experience is that these young people are able to have discussions that their parents, the previous generation, could not, and that includes me. We were of a generation who did not speak about such things in polite company. That is changing, so these young people are helped, enabled and prepared to go into a cultural context that is quite different from their own and to see that as non-threatening in any way, shape or form.
379. **Mr Craig:** I promised that I would ask no more questions. I wish you all the best in your efforts. I think that you are doing a fantastic job.
380. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks very much for your presentation. Straight off, I want to say that I am really impressed by what you do. I already knew a fair bit about your work — you could not be friendly with Mervyn Storey and not know about it.
381. Both schools are strong to start with, although I know that, numerically, you are slightly different. You each have a good record, a good financial position and plenty of confidence in your school. There is no threat to either school or from either school, which must have played a big part in this being readily accepted. You say that the partnership has grown organically and grown out of the necessities of the curriculum. For me, that is a genuine starting point for sharing, and I thoroughly approve. Frankly, the way that it seems to have developed in your case reduces my slight scepticism of sharing as a concept because, clearly, it works. What interests me is the pupil engagement: if it does not lead to societal benefits, I slightly query it. Beyond curricular activities, do you have activities outside school hours that both sets of pupils join in? If so, what are they?
382. **Mr Williamson:** One of the most recent, which we started through our involvement with the shared education programme with Atlantic Philanthropies and Queen's University, was the

- development of a joint rugby team in junior school, at Key Stage 3. Ballycastle High School is traditionally a hockey school, and we wanted to develop rugby, so the two schools are working together on that. There is a range of extra-curricular activities, not all of them related to sport. There is drama sometimes and a whole range of joint music activities. There are also more informal arrangements and anecdotal examples: for instance, the sixth form formals have a good attendance from pupils from both schools now, so that relationship has developed as well.
383. **Mrs Ward:** Friendships.
384. **Mr Williamson:** Yes, friendships have developed, too. I am conscious that the formalised relationships around sport etc are positive. Music is very strong, with a joint choir and so on, and we have a joint student council. There is a range, and not all are sustained from year to year. Some go on from year to year; others crop up from time to time. If something happens, we will promote it and push it on.
385. **Mrs Ward:** You mentioned rugby. We had a great event last year, the very first rugby match on Cross and Passion soil. That was a great day for us. Pupils see the hockey team or the hurling team go out, and they realise that this is sport. For this generation and these particular young people, that is all there is to it. They share classes with boys who play rugby or hockey. Equally, boys and girls from your school share classes with our pupils and know people in their outside life who play other sports. All those sorts of things are slowly breaking down. We tell pupils that they can express their cultural identity and can be who they are. It is about really getting to know each other and accepting the richness, as opposed to the threat, that that brings.
386. **Mr Lunn:** That is very impressive, particularly the school formal because that is a voluntary activity. If your pupils are managing to mix at that level, I suppose the natural question is this: have you had any marriages yet?
387. **Mrs Ward:** No, but we have had to manage some fallings-out. A small thing that the local business community noticed was that, for many years, the high school children did not circulate in Ballycastle town. Now, with the growth of the sixth form, the sixth formers are comfortable with each other and real friendships have developed. At lunchtime, the sixth formers from both schools are allowed to go into town, and they go together. That happened because the high school students went to Ian and said, "The Cross and Passion students are allowed to go downtown at lunchtime, and we want to go with them". That was the first time that a couple of hundred young people from both traditions were together in our local cafes, shops and so on, which was great to see.
388. **Mr Lunn:** I think so, too. When the Committee went to Limavady a couple of years ago, it was noticeable there as well. A number of schools there are quite close together, and you could literally see the kids mixing in the street. How far apart are your schools?
389. **Mrs Ward:** The width of a road, whatever that is.
390. **Mr Lunn:** I wish you well. It is a terrific example of what can be achieved. I would love to come up and see it.
391. **Mrs Ward:** You are very welcome to do that.
392. **Mr Kinahan:** You are an example to us of how to do things. I get the feeling that it is the energy of you two and, presumably, of all the teachers that really makes it work. I am intrigued. You talked about economies of scale, but, presumably, there has been quite a cost. The briefing paper states that one of you has a small deficit, the other a small surplus. Did it cost a lot to get you to where you are, or did you manage to get there within fairly tight budgets?
393. **Mrs Ward:** The entitlement framework funding has been crucial in allowing us to add to the curriculum and, equally, in allowing and facilitating the coordination that is needed to share. That is the

- same for any school trying to deliver the entitlement framework in partnership. Other funding through shared education has allowed us to be innovative and, in a sense, to trail-blaze a bit. It has allowed us to unpick collaborative leadership and examine what that means; to think about what quality looks like in a shared education setting; to develop our senior leaders wearing their collaborative hats; and to look at school structures, school policies and school development planning.
394. In a sense, the school development plans for both schools, certainly as they pertain to attainment, teaching and learning and improving outcomes, have to be one and the same, or broadly similar. It has taken a lot of additional effort on our part and on the part of our teachers — heads of department, pastoral leaders, senior management and principals. All had to take a step outside their comfort zone to develop the structures, protocols and policies and to look at accountability and so on, all of which are needed to make the partnership work.
395. **Mr Williamson:** In earlier generations, the extent of collaboration was such that funding was not as critical. It was more of an exchange, and people were happy just to do it. However, it is imperative for us to sustain our current level of funding into the future. In particular, entitlement framework funding has been an absolute imperative for us. We believe that the question of whether something comes out of the common funding formula to support shared education needs to be given a lot of thought. It is a valuable resource.
396. **Mr Kinahan:** That is why I raised it. I think that we should look into the common funding formula in detail. You mentioned how well things are working with businesses and universities. Ballycastle is slightly off the main road, but that is about to get better. How far afield were your business links? Do many students go on to university, not necessarily only in Belfast or Coleraine but across the water? Are you getting all the help that you need from businesses? What can the Committee do to encourage the business and university link?
397. **Mrs Ward:** Young people are going to local universities and to Liverpool, Glasgow, London and Manchester etc. More and more young people want to engage in post-16 education formally in school, so the number taking HNDs and foundation degrees through the further education route is increasing. Local employers are very concerned that the young people are able to go further afield to university and feel that our two schools really need to look at and provide the skills needed in the local economy and provide well-educated, confident young people who will stay in the area. We are the biggest employers in the town. After us, you need to look to Coleraine and Ballymena, so there is a fair exodus of cars from the area every day. However, we have the local rural community, local farms and so on.
398. **Mr Williamson:** Our experience, as with any school, of engaging with local businesses for a range of educational visits etc has been very strong. A lot of the bigger employers in the broader hinterland beyond Ballycastle have always been supportive. In my experience of working with folks in the private sector and business world, you have only to ask, and they genuinely will come up to the mark and support you. Hot air and a lot of chat do not always go down too well with them, but, if we have a request, they will meet us. That has been our positive experience locally and slightly beyond the Moyle area.
399. **Mr Sheehan:** Thanks, Ian and Barbara, for your presentation. Like everyone else here, I am very impressed by what you have done. I do not want to rain on your parade — what you are doing is excellent — but I know Ballycastle well, and it was not a hot bed during the conflict. In Ballycastle, there were not the same fault lines in society as there were in other places, so I wonder whether what is happening in Ballycastle is transferable to other areas where the conflict and fault lines were deeper.

400. You talked about a partnership of equals. All good partnerships are based on the ability of the partners to compromise at times. You have not discussed any area on which either school had to compromise. Has that happened? Has there been a need at any stage to compromise?
401. **Mrs Ward:** At a purely practical level, we have had to compromise on the independence of the two schools to run their timetable and their school day exactly the way they want to. We had to agree, and both schools had to move on very practical arrangements such as the timetable, the beginning and end of the school day and holidays. Previously, both schools did that independently. For Ballycastle High School, for example, Lammas Fair was a school day, but our school was always off. Those compromises are on organisational and, in a sense, fairly mundane things, although they are very precious to people, too. In a sense, both schools have had to be mindful of the greater good when having to change holiday arrangements and so on.
402. There has been no compromise on the quality of education. We work to a common purpose, and there is no necessity for educational compromise of any description. We cannot operate as two completely independent entities, but there is nothing of real significance that we have had to compromise culturally, educationally or in any other way.
403. **Mr Williamson:** At a micro level, in the context of departments working so closely together on an educational basis, there has been compromise on deciding which examination board to work with.
404. **Mrs Ward:** Day-to-day things.
405. **Mr Williamson:** Compromise happens at the level of deciding what is the best way forward and agreeing a strategy for that. There will be more such compromise at that level.
406. As to whether what we do is transportable to areas where conflict has been a bigger issue, I cannot speak beyond my experience in Ballycastle, but the majority of our pupils do not come from Ballycastle; they come from a surrounding hinterland that has, perhaps, a different political outlook from that of the local demography. We deliver a quality product, and we believe that that is overarching. Parents want their children to go to a good school, and I think that, if what we are doing ticks that box, it gets over any such hurdles. That is our experience.
407. **Mrs Ward:** We have talked a lot about guiding principles and what we believe: the core values of our partnership, our mission and what we are really trying to achieve. However, our guiding principle is that when it comes to compromising or making a change, it is not about your school or my school or who did what first; it is about what is best for these young people. If you never deviate from that, you will never go far wrong. It is completely pupil-centred, and any compromises or changes are considered on that basis. That is how we do it.
408. **Mr Williamson:** It is need-driven.
409. **Mr Sheehan:** I agree with that sentiment. I was interested in Trevor's question about extracurricular activity. I know that Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle in general have a strong tradition of producing good hurling teams. Is there a facility, for example, for a student from Ballycastle High School to play in a hurling team for Cross and Passion College or a student from Cross and Passion to play for the hockey team at Ballycastle High?
410. **Mr Williamson:** Interestingly, last week, three of our sixth form pupils were playing with hurling sticks at lunchtime on the green. I became a little apprehensive about the health and safety aspect rather than any political aspect. I said, "Look, fellas, you are not wearing any facial protection, and we need to deal with that".
411. **Mrs Ward:** That is slowly happening.
412. **Mr Williamson:** It is just nurturing. We have had pupils who played in hurling teams because it was their personal

- choice. One of my first memories of coming to work in Ballycastle High School was walking into a sixth form study and seeing a hurling stick and a hockey stick side by side in a corner. I thought that that was very symbolic of what we are doing. It is not forced. Nothing is forced.
413. **Mrs Ward:** It is not forced at all. There is a lovely, quiet, under-the-radar acceptance of each other's traditions, which is what we really want. Nothing is forced. Very often, young people are more ready to make moves than their parents, grandparents or teachers were.
414. **Mr Williamson:** They look at the sporting skills. A good hockey player will have good hurling skills and GAA skills are transferable to rugby. It is on that level that they are experiencing other avenues that are opening up to them.
415. **Mr Sheehan:** You talked about the improved educational outcomes over the past couple of years. Any experience I have gained from this Committee tells me that, usually, when schools perform well, it is as a result of good leadership. I get the impression, although perhaps both of you are being modest, that the reason for the improved educational outcomes is your sharing experiment. Has any research been done, or is there any evidence to point to improved educational outcomes being a result of sharing or the result of good leadership on your part?
416. **Mr Williamson:** I think that I mentioned that I believe that the increased sharing in meeting the entitlement framework has been a significant part of that, along with teaching and learning and a focus on robust self-evaluation in both schools. The focus and agenda driven by Every School a Good School have also been an imperative for us.
417. **Mrs Ward:** The leadership dimension is crucial. When I was preparing the paper that I sent you and looked at enablers, that was the very first thing I thought of. It is about the partnership being strong and all the mutual respect and trust etc.
418. The leadership side is crucial. People have to believe in it, be prepared to take risks and be confident enough to make mistakes and learn from them. It is challenging and we have both developed. In the overall professional challenge to me, it is the biggest aspect of my leadership role. I still learn every day, and it has certainly brought my level of thinking to a higher level. I now have to think much more widely and deeply.
419. A combination of leadership and the increased opportunities has brought about the outcomes. You have to be willing to give this a go and see the benefit of it.
420. **Mr Williamson:** Leadership at all levels in the schools — at teacher and middle-manager level — is critical. That has to be initiated with open relationships that are based on trust and mutual respect at a professional level, never mind at a religious or system level. It is about giving people the space to develop those relationships. That is critical in developing trust.
421. **Mr Rogers:** Barbara and Ian, you are very welcome. This has been so refreshing. You have talked about leadership at every level, but the enthusiasm, drive and passion that you have shown tells me that leadership at the top is key. Well done for that.
422. One line of your report that jumped out at me was that sharing goes beyond the classroom. Will you tell us a wee bit about your journey and how you brought parents along with you? That is a key factor.
423. **Mrs Ward:** Anecdotally, I met a person at a conference on sharing — I think that it was an ETI conference. He came up to me at the end of the meeting and told me that he had been a pupil at Ballycastle High School in 1966 and studied A-level Latin in Cross and Passion. That is how far back this goes. From that perspective, there was always a tacit acceptance that this was part and parcel of life in Ballycastle.
424. Curriculum 2000 was the next big step. Do you remember when applied

- and general subjects had parity? The entitlement framework was the big driver after that.
425. By and large, parents want their young people to do well, want good educational outcomes and want their children to engage in, love and be happy at school. When it comes to subject options, it is made very clear to parents that we are very proud of the sharing and that it can really enhance their children's educational experience. We present it as an opportunity and something that will enhance the experience, rather than making excuses for it or worrying about it.
426. We know that some parents could have an issue with it. Parents from both schools freely come and go. I have seen a Ballycastle High School parent meeting a teacher in my school. For parent-teacher meetings, my teachers go over to Ballycastle High School and, on other occasions, parents come and meet teachers in my school.
427. Parents have a choice. With the system we have, children from Ballycastle High School do not have to go to Cross and Passion, and my children do not have to go to Ballycastle High School. They can choose from a menu of subjects in their own school, if that is what they wish to do. Parents are very comfortable with it, but we have not taken that for granted either. That has to be managed, and there have to be people meeting and greeting. Ian comes across and makes sure that his parents are OK, and I know that, when parents from the high school are in my school, I need to make sure that they are OK and so on. When you give young people a good experience, almost all parents are happy to go along with that. We have not presented people with a new big thing and told them why we want them to buy into it. It has just happened.
428. We have done evaluations with parents. They have done questionnaires, surveys and focus group discussions with us. We get very good feedback, and, although some of it asks whether we could have done some things better, nobody has said that it should not happen.
429. **Mr Williamson:** The context of the history of the schools is also important. Barbara mentioned that it goes back a significant period. I had a strong sense of the stewardship of continuing on a process that has been developed over many years by predecessors at a senior management level, and I hold that dearly. Parents have respected the groundwork that has been done over many decades, and the Ballycastle community has benefited from that.
430. A key part of it for parents is that it is not forced and that there is a choice. It has not been my experience that parents do not want to engage —
431. **Mrs Ward:** I have never experienced it.
432. **Mr Williamson:** — but, if they did not want to engage, nobody would force them into doing so. That is critical.
433. I go back to the point that I made earlier. Parents are confident that it works and that it will lead to their children achieving whatever it is that they want to go on to do.
434. **Mr Rogers:** I am impressed by another statement that you made in your report, which is that your curriculum meets the needs of the local economy. How does it meet the needs of the farming community, for example?
435. **Mrs Ward:** We offer BTEC agriculture at GCSE and A level. On top of that, we are very mindful of the agrifood business having huge potential in the local area. We are in the midst of planning an educational visit to Harper Adams University, which will be done jointly. The local young farmers are also involved with the agricultural teachers, and so on, and that is also cross-community.
436. We are very mindful of our home economics, our food technology, our farming course and the BTEC science courses. There is a plethora of courses that those young people could do. There is agricultural mechanics, agricultural technology, agricultural marketing and all of that. We hope to open the minds of young people from the rural community to looking at the range of different

- courses and employment opportunities in farming, the allied food industries, agricultural mechanisation and all the environmental-type activity on farms.
437. **Mr Williamson:** We also offer a BTEC countryside environment course collaboratively. That has been developed over the past number of years and supports the wider context of the environment and tourism in that part of the world. We believe that that also feeds into the agricultural side of things.
438. **Mr Rogers:** My final question is about major challenges. I think that you may have mentioned it already, but is entitlement framework (EF) funding one of your major challenges?
439. **Mrs Ward:** If EF funding goes, it will be a challenge for all schools to continue partnerships and the entitlement framework. It will be extremely difficult to maintain the choice and all the work that needs to be done to provide a quality curriculum and a quality experience for young people.
440. There are hidden things. For example, the year heads of all the year groups meet to talk about children's problems, absenteeism, who has fallen out with whom and who is sick. Those things need to happen. Another layer needs to happen to allow the partnership to work and thrive.
441. **Mr Williamson:** We have mentioned our hope to see investment in shared buildings. That is critical in practical terms, for symbolism and for investing in what we do up there.
442. I suppose that the other potential challenge at all levels of the school that we are managing and are mindful of is succession planning for staff and changes in relationships that have been nurtured and developed. You would have to start that off again, because that is a key part of the success. In my mind, it would have an impact on buildings, relationship-building and succession planning.
443. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you. Keep up the good work.
444. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Three more members have indicated that they want to ask a question. I ask for brevity. I apologise for that, but I am conscious of the time.
445. **Mr Newton:** I only want to say that I do not believe that this would have happened were it not for the enthusiasm that both of you have demonstrated today. This can only be good for Northern Ireland, for the pupils and for all our futures.
446. All my questions have been answered, Chair. I suppose that you will really have cracked it if you get to having one school formal as opposed to having two school formals.
447. **Mrs Ward:** It would mean that we did not have to go to two. *[Laughter.]*
448. **Mr Newton:** Indeed, with all the problems that they present, I imagine. Like others, I congratulate you and encourage you to keep up the good work.
449. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I know that I said to be brief, but I did not expect you to be just as brief.
450. **Mr Hazzard:** Welcome, folks. Apologies that I missed the start of your presentation. I want to ask a wee bit about the theory behind the concept of sharing. There are those who suggest that sharing in itself is a just reward and that the process of sharing is an end in itself. There are those who say that it is a staging post on the way to one school in Ballycastle, for example. How do you see it? How do you think your community sees it?
451. **Mrs Ward:** At this time, our community is ready for what we do. Were you to move faster or more deeply than your community can cope with, you could end up with one or other school or one or other community feeling very alienated, and so on. The strength of our partnership is that it offers parents the choice of a faith-based education or not. That choice seems to be very important in the community at the moment. That is out there and is working at present. We

are mindful that it could be a journey in the end. Who knows what will happen? However, to intervene and make it something else at present, you would need to neutralise the environments and all of that. When my children walk over into the high school, there is symbolism such as the roll of honour of the dead from the wars, etc. My children just accept that. There are religious symbols in my school. People just accept it. There is a real richness in that, and it would be a great pity to do anything that could damage that or end the lovely community cohesion that is growing out of it.

452. **Mr Williamson:** This is about good neighbours working together. We are educationalists and leaders of schools. We are not involved in some social engineering exercise. That is important to state. We believe that our communities, through our governors and from everything else that we hear, believe that both schools want to retain their own ethos, identity and definitely the mutual respect for each other and each other's community.
453. **Mr Hazzard:** You mentioned symbols and the problems of having to neutralise or assimilate anything. Have specific incidents come up from different classrooms or different people?
454. **Mrs Ward:** No. We are hypersensitive about it, and I continually question myself on not only how I feel about something but how others will see it and how my school community will see it if I say something. It is really challenging, and I have learnt an awful lot about myself and about working in a much wider context. With young people, I have never had an instance of any hares being raised or worries about anything that they have seen or experienced. Have you?
455. **Mr Williamson:** Obviously, we are mindful of it, and our care and consideration around it permeates what we do, and I think that pupils sense that and can see it. Pupils will know what is important to you, no matter what aspect of school life that is. Therefore, they

know, you hope, not to step over a line or action will be taken. In my experience over six years, it has not been an issue. The greater issue potentially has been, if there have been any issues at all, more around the quality of teaching and the results. Are pupils getting what they need to get on elsewhere? Those are the real issues. We have moved beyond symbolism issues. They are there. Both schools have their history and traditions and their community involvement. We are good neighbours, and we respect that, but nobody is rubbing anybody's nose in anything.

456. **Mrs Ward:** Our guiding principle — again, we have talked about these things — is always that it is OK to express who you are as long as that is not done in any way that is offensive to anybody else. We and our young people have had to think about that and make decisions based on it. Those are not always easy decisions to come to in the end — you do a lot of soul-searching. However, the bottom line is what is good for children, how we can express our difference, and how we can show outward symbols of our identity that are in no way a threat or show any form of disrespect to our partners.
457. **Mr Williamson:** We have engaged previously with workshop activities and things like that as part of the Peace III funding and the North Eastern Board's partnership, inclusion, reconciliation, citizenship and history (PIRCH) project funding. Work was done around that. They came up with some very creative ideas combining school emblems and symbols to create something very energetic. It is not a real issue. We cannot ignore it, and we are mindful of it, but it is not a huge issue.
458. **Mr Hazzard:** I have one quick final question. I am always keen to stress that we need to look beyond just religion and that sharing should be about socio-economic backgrounds and especially ethnicity, where appropriate. Does your example touch on different socio-economic backgrounds in the community?

459. **Mr Williamson:** Absolutely.
460. **Mrs Ward:** Absolutely.
461. **Mr Williamson:** Both schools —
462. **Mrs Ward:** The joy of working in our context is the experience across the community divide and, probably as important, the social inclusion. We have everybody from the exceptionally advantaged to the extremely disadvantaged in both our schools. That is the joy of the job.
463. **Mr Williamson:** Increasingly, we have pupils of different nationalities coming in as well.
464. **Mr McCausland:** Thanks for your presentation. I endorse the view that we should be incremental and appropriate. A particular way that works very well in one place may not be exactly right in another. You end up with a messy situation where it is not exactly the same. It does not fit into a neat little box where it is the same everywhere. However, that is probably by far the best way forward.
465. I want to pick up on one thing that is in the core values. In the paper that you provided, which is very helpful, you say that this “Embraces the richness of difference”. Can you flesh out what you mean by that a wee bit?
466. **Mrs Ward:** Embracing the richness of difference is what I have just been talking about. Take the two sports, where you celebrate and share the difference. You see it as enriching that there are different ideas and activities, people with different views and beliefs, and a different sense of their history, their future or whatever. When I talk about embracing that, I mean that you should allow it to happen. Facilitate that and educate young people to see it as a positive as opposed to a threat. What I mean by “embracing it” is “accepting it”. View it as your life having been enriched by the fact that you engaged in something that you did not know about before as opposed to us saying that it could cause problems, and, as a result, not allow them to do this, that and the other. That is what I mean by embracing that richness.
467. **Mr Williamson:** It is exactly that. We are not trying to morph our pupils into something that they are not. Every individual is different. We are allowing for that and embracing it, and that is a key factor in what we do. It is not being diluted, but it is all done in the context of a genuinely developed relationship in which you do not go out and wilfully annoy, upset or antagonise your neighbour.
468. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you once again for your time this morning. I think that all members found it very interesting. We applaud you, and we look forward to our visit to Ballycastle.
469. **Mr Williamson:** Thank you.
470. **Mrs Ward:** You will get the most insight into it when you meet the young people and talk to them. That will be a very useful exercise.
471. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much.
472. **Mrs Ward:** Thank you very much for the opportunity.

15 October 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Professor Vani Borooah *University of Ulster*
 Professor Colin Knox

473. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
 Gentlemen, I welcome you to our Committee this morning. You have had the benefit of hearing our previous witnesses. I ask you to make your opening statement, and then Committee members will ask some questions.

474. **Professor Colin Knox (University of Ulster):** Chair, thank you very much for the invitation to share some of our research on shared education and integrated education. We are going to keep this fairly brief, in the sense that we are just going to walk you through the key points in our paper, which is, we apologise, slightly longer than a briefing. I will talk a little bit about definitions, the extent of segregation or parallel systems and the demand for integrated education.

475. My colleague Vani is going to look at school performance in the integrated sector. I will then talk a little bit about the shared education model. Vani will talk a little bit about the quantification of the shared education experiment, if you will. I will finish by talking a little bit about where shared education is going. That probably sounds lengthy, but we will keep it very brief.

476. Linked to your terms of reference, particularly on definitions, it is now very clear in legislation what integrated education is. It is defined in the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 as the:

“education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils.”

477. On the back of that, there have been various attempts to define what “shared education” is. The definition that is most often quoted is the one in the ministerial advisory group context. One of the MLAs referred to that earlier. The scope of what is referred to as “shared education” is actually a lot broader than the scope of integrated education, because it refers to all section 75 categories. It talks about shared education being aimed at improving educational benefits, promoting efficiency and effectiveness of resources, promoting equality of opportunity — my colleague Vani will return to that in a moment — and promoting good relations and equality of diversity. Therefore, shared education has been given a very broad scope, and we are going to try to unpack that a little bit.

478. It is fair to say that shared education is not radically new, in that the Bain report in 2006 referred to iterations of shared education, such as federations, confederations, shared campuses and shared faith schools. However, I think that the impetus for shared education has been given a huge boost by the shared education programme run by the Fermanagh Trust, Queen’s University Belfast (QUB) and the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB). One crucial point that we want to make about a definition of “shared education” — this has been picked up by the Minister — is that it involves two or more schools. That is a central principle that we might want to return to later.

479. In the most recent judgement on integrated education, Justice Treacy is

- very clear — it has been picked up in the debate in the Assembly and has some ramifications for how we define it — that integrated education cannot be delivered by schools within a:
- “predominantly Catholic or predominantly Protestant ethos”.*
480. In other words, it is seen as a stand-alone concept. That has created greater clarity around what integrated education is seen as by the system, and by the Department and stakeholders therein.
481. “Segregated” is a pejorative word, because it could suggest that there is statutory segregation: there is not. I will give you a few brief statistics to remind you of the extent to which we have parallel systems of education here. In our primary sector, 6·2% of Catholics attend controlled primary schools, 1% of Protestants attend maintained primary schools and 5·7% of primary-school children attend integrated schools. The same is true as you go through the system, where 2·8% of Catholics attend controlled secondary schools, 1% of Protestants attend maintained secondary schools, and 14·9% of secondary non-grammar-school children attend integrated schools. Overall, you can see that we essentially have two parallel systems of education, although it is true to say that Catholics are much more likely to attend schools in the controlled sector than Protestants are to attend maintained schools. The greatest movement by Catholics is into the controlled grammar schools.
482. I will move on quickly to integrated education. We will look at shared education a little bit later. It is true to say that the impact of integrated education tends to focus primarily on reconciliation and societal benefits. Much of the research that has been done into the impact of integrated education is about the meaningful contact that takes place between children in that one-school environment and the fact that that creates much more accommodation between those children. The sustained contact is very much at the core of integrated education as a product, if you will.
483. I will look quickly at the demand for integrated education. The detail is in the paper. The Education Minister said that one measure of the demand for integrated education is the extent to which parents express first preference on the application transfer form for schools in that sector. It is true to say — I echo some of the words the Minister said in response to a question on this — that, in the integrated movement overall, the number of places available in the primary and post-primary sectors slightly exceeds demand, although there is pressure in particular areas owing to parental preference. Our table shows that, overall, we have about 2,000 unfilled places in the integrated sector. In and around 21,000 pupils attend schools in the sector. To put that more specifically, in 2013-14, 3,230 parents expressed a preference for integrated schools. The actual approved numbers available in integrated schools is over 3,500 students. In the round, the sector is undersubscribed by about 9%. We have given some examples of the top three and bottom three primary and post-primary schools based on supply and demand.
484. I will hand over to my colleague, who will talk a little more widely about some of the education outcomes from the integrated sector.
485. **Professor Vani Borooah (University of Ulster):** Thank you, Chairman. I am a professor of economics at the University of Ulster. My colleague and I are honoured and privileged to be speaking to you today. Thank you very much for inviting us.
486. I will start off by talking about school achievement and performance, because that is the thing that Colin and I have been very concerned with. Our measure of school performance is five good GCSEs, including English and maths. If you look at Northern Ireland’s measure of performance, you will see that there is a hierarchy of performance that is defined essentially by three parameters:

- deprivation, gender and religion. At the top of the heap are Catholic girls from non-deprived backgrounds — 77% of whom get good GCSEs — and at the bottom of the heap are Protestant males from deprived backgrounds or free school meal children, about 20% of whom get good GCSEs. There is a gap of almost 57% between these two groups. The interesting question is this: how much is due to gender, how much is due to religion and how much is due to deprivation? We have performed that calculation. On our calculation, 10% is due to religion, 22% is due to gender and 68% is due to deprivation. Understanding why free-school-meal pupils do not do well in school is a very important aspect of our research.
487. Until now, this was all we knew. We knew results at a Northern Ireland level, but recently DENI has released data to us showing the performance of free-school-meal children in GCSEs on a school-by-school basis. I believe that this data is not widely available. We are among the first to have analysed it, and we have analysed it for different schools. If you look at figure 2 in the briefing paper, you will see some results. Free-school-meal children in the non-selective sector do best in Catholic maintained schools: 23% get good GCSEs. They do worst in controlled and controlled integrated schools, where around 12% get good GCSEs. They do slightly better in grant-maintained integrated schools, with 16%. So, generally, there is something about Catholic maintained schools that allows free-school-meal children to do well.
488. If you look at the intake of free-school-meal children, again, you will see that the Catholic sector takes the largest proportion. In the secondary non-selective sector, it is nearly 32%, whereas the other sectors weigh in with 23%, 24% or 25%, so there is a big gap in the intake of free-school-meal children between Catholic schools and other schools. Similarly, if you look at the grammar school sector, you will see a big gap between the performance of free-school-meal children in Catholic ethos grammar schools and Protestant ethos grammar schools — 88% and 80% — and also in the intake of free-school-meal children between Catholic ethos grammar schools and Protestant ethos grammar schools. Nearly 10% of pupils in Catholic grammar schools are free-school-meal children; but only around 5% in Protestant grammar schools. There is something that we need to investigate and understand there.
489. We have also done this analysis on a school-by-school basis. Contrary to popular belief, free-school-meal children do not always do worse than non-free-school-meal children. There are 22 schools in Northern Ireland in which the performance of free-school-meal children is at least as good as that of non-free-school-meal children. We list these schools in table 6. It is not necessarily the case that, simply because you come from a deprived background, you will do worse than someone from a non-deprived background. There are also 23 schools in which the gap between free-school-meal children and non-free-school-meal children is within 10%, so a gap exists but is very small. Again, we list these schools in table 7.
490. At the other end of the scale, there are 68 schools in which not a single free-school-meal pupil got good GCSEs including English and maths. There are 68 such schools. These schools cannot even report a single pupil getting this particular qualification. We do not list these schools, but let me say that 30 of them were controlled, 25 were maintained, 10 were integrated and three were Protestant grammars. This is the sort of information that we are now able to provide to the Committee, which previously was not available. It is thanks largely to DENI, which provided us with the data.
491. We have also investigated first preferences of pupils. We asked what determines first preference. Why do people put down a particular school as being their first preference? Seventy-seven per cent of the variation in first preferences is due

- to school performance. This is the thing that parents look at, and it echoes something that the people from Ballycastle were talking about at a school level. We find this also at a Northern Ireland economy level. What really motivates parents is school performance. Schools which perform well have greater demand than places, and schools which do not perform well have unfilled places. If we want to improve upon the imbalance between schools, we need to improve the performance of schools which, at the moment, are underperforming.
492. This is my first pass at these quantitative figures, and I want to make to you the point that it is very important to understand why free-school-meal-entitled children underperform, why they perform better in Catholic maintained and Catholic grammar schools than in other types; and why Catholic schools are prepared to take more free-school-meal-entitled children than schools in other sectors.
493. **Professor Knox:** Again, very quickly to allow time for questions, I suppose that our central thesis is that performance is the key imperative in the selection of schools by children, and in that sense we think that the integrated sector could do better. Look at some of the statistics: the controlled integrated sector is a very poorly performing sector, and I think that that drives parental choice in terms of those schools. We think that, whilst the reconciliation societal imperative is at the core of the integrated movement's *raison d'être*, and that is clearly a very important issue, it is not what drives parental demand in the first instance. And you heard, I think, very eloquently from the school principals that at the heart of their schools is the desire to achieve the best performance that they can for their children. Those other issues around identity are safeguarded; there is respect; and so on. And in that way, almost by osmosis, there is a softening at the edges of some of those relations.
494. That is where, very quickly, we move into shared education, which is really an attempt to do that. We could not articulate that nearly as well as the two school principals that you have just heard. However, at the core of the shared education model is this idea of creating interdependencies between schools, and at the core of that is good collaboration. All the MLAs asked good questions about what makes for a strong collaboration. Is it good leadership? Is it good direction? Do you have parental support? All those things are key to it. The research evidence in other parts of the UK, particularly in England, says that you have schools where there is a potential for mutual benefit, particularly on the education side — and I stress “mutual benefit”; the schools are benefiting from each other. By dint of the geographies of our schools here, and the fact that competition tends to happen within sectors, shared education is more likely to be beneficial where you have two or more schools of different management types and the end goal is to improve education outcomes.
495. **Professor Borooah:** If I were to highlight one characteristic of shared education, Chairman, it would be that it is nimble and agile. Muhammad Ali, the boxer, had this famous phrase:
- “float like a butterfly, sting like a bee”.*
496. I think that that is shared education for you. To make my point, we studied four partnerships which were set up through Atlantic Philanthropies. The first was at the highest level of intellectual ability: astronomy, led by Lumen Christi College and involving Foyle College. There were not enough pupils in either school to do astronomy, so they grouped together, employed somebody and did astronomy. Again, there was the same partnership for engineering. There were not enough people in Foyle to do engineering, so they came over to Lumen Christi.
497. At a slightly lower level, there was a partnership between Belfast High School and Hazelwood College for remedial teaching of mathematics. At a different level, there was a partnership between Shimna Integrated College and

- primary schools for teaching foreign languages. Belfast Model School had a different partnership. In some ways, this illustrates the fact that there is no formulaic method of sharing. You can share depending on contingency and need, ranging from astronomy to civics, foreign languages etc.
498. We evaluated the kind of benefits that might result from shared education. The essential point that I want to make is that, at the margin, it lifts the performance of certain students. Pupils who would not have got good GCSEs get good GCSEs, people who would have got good GCSEs go on to do A-levels, and people who would have done A-levels then go on to university, so it is like a rising tide. It lifts boats and, at the margin, pupils do better with shared education than they might have done in its absence.
499. What are the benefits of this? From studies, we can tell that there are rates of return to education. How does it benefit you if you get five good GCSEs compared to only four GCSEs: what additional impact does that make to your lifetime income? We used these results over a 40-year lifetime, and we figured that, with these four very modest programmes, if you netted out the cost, you would get a total benefit of nearly £24 million for four very small programmes that lifted the performance of these pupils. If that was magnified on a larger scale with the same agility and nimbleness, the results could be enormous.
500. **Professor Knox:** Finally, Chair — I am sorry that we are taking a bit longer than I anticipated — I wanted to talk about where shared education is going conceptually. I do not think that it is a particularly useful conceptual method to set shared education alongside integrated education. We do not see them as competing. It is really about where communities are at. There are two principles that we are talking about. It is not a one-size-fits-all model. You have to be highly sensitive to the needs of communities.
501. As to your question about interface areas, perhaps there are communities that are very different places to rural schools in Ballycastle, and that is what makes it messy, to use Nelson McCausland's phrase. Having said that, I think that there is a real opportunity to take this forward now with the shared education signature project that has just been recently agreed between OFMDFM, the Department of Education and Atlantic Philanthropies. They are setting education goals at the heart of that programme. There is a great acceptance within that programme that schools are starting off at very different stages and that their incremental development will be very different.
502. At Queen's University, Dr Gavin Duffy and his colleagues have developed a very useful continuum that really says, let us see where schools are at in this continuum of sharing, if you like, from working in complete isolation right through to great interdependence between these schools. I think that it is that journey that the shared education signature project is trying to develop in an incremental way. Perhaps one of the dangers of it is that because, as the two principals said, this is hard work, we revert to type and see it as no more than a community relations programme. I do not mean that in a derogatory way, but to get the buy-in for parents — to get that huge incremental change that we want — education outcomes will hopefully be at the heart of that programme.
503. Thank you very much.
504. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. I find your paper very interesting; the analysis, along with the very clear tables. I know that you are saying that shared education and the integrated sector are not in competition, but there are very clearly defined boundaries between the two, and we have got very clear camps as well. I am not sure whether you could say that there is hostility there, but there is certainly an uneasiness there. Perhaps one would perceive that the other is

- trying to steal its clothes, but there may be an issue around definition.
505. I look at the information that you have provided, and — I know this from my own experience of school life, too — parents choose schools because of their educational outcomes and, as a result of that, an unintended consequence of that is mixing. Look at schools such as Belfast Royal Academy (BRA), Methody and so on: there is a very clearly mixed community within those schools, probably more so than some of the schools that would consider themselves to be integrated. Are we at a stage that we may perhaps need to look at redefining integration, rather than looking at a clear definition of shared education?
506. **Professor Knox:** I see on your schedule colleagues from Queen's, including Professor Joanne Hughes. She has done a very interesting piece of work. I will not pre-empt it or claim to know about it in the detail that Joanne does, but she refers to "super-mixed schools", which is the type that you just referred to. Indeed, in our paper, right at the back, we give examples of schools where there is a broad mix of pupils, but which would not necessarily call themselves shared schools or integrated schools.
507. At the moment, integrated schools define themselves very much as Catholics, Protestants, no faith and other faith all educated in one building. Shared education is quite different to that in the sense that it is not about structural changes and having a separate integrated school. Rather, shared education can take place in existing schools, and it is about those two schools trying to learn from each other, as the two principals described earlier.
508. As the debate evolves, we may need to revisit what we mean by shared education. However, at the moment, that definition is quite clear and it is about two or more schools coming together for the purposes of improved educational, economic and reconciliation outcomes.
509. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I want to go back to the comments that you made about integrated education. You said that, in the mix, there is an overall undersubscription of around 9%. However, the IEF LucidTalk poll showed that somewhere in the region of 79% of parents would back a move to transform their children's school and 66% believe that integrated schools should be the normal model. Is that a misunderstanding of integration? Should the definition be more inclusive of the other models you have outlined?
510. **Professor Knox:** I certainly think that polls sometimes mix the terminology and, therefore, the people who are answering those questions get confused. It goes back to the point that we made earlier about what informs parental choice. Ideologically, people can say that they welcome attendance at integrated schools, but the evidence tells us that their choice is informed by educational preference, rather than whether it is an integrated school. If it is an integrated school and it is an integrated high-performing school, parents will send their children to it based on that.
511. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The point is about the type of question that is being asked. If you are asking someone on the street whether they would they would prefer their children to be in a mixed community and whether they should perhaps all be educated together, of course they will say yes. Does that necessarily mean the integrated model?
512. **Professor Borooah:** Yes, we would like our children to be educated together, conditional on good results. That is the critical point. If we are to enunciate any rule it is that if you can deliver good results, people's hearts and minds will follow. The examples that you took, BRA and Methody, are de facto integrated or mixed — call them what you will. Parents do not hesitate to send their children to those schools, simply because they get good results, and that is what they put first.

513. Good results are the horse and reconciliation and putting children together in the same classroom is the cart. It is very important to put the horse before the cart in this particular respect. If we want any sector to flourish, whether it is the integrated sector, the controlled sector etc, we have to give primacy to educational results. Once we give primacy to educational results, a lot of things will follow. However, if we ignore education and look for anything else, I think that we will miss the basic purpose of schooling, which is to deliver good education.
514. **Professor Knox:** The Ballycastle example illustrated that perfectly. In combination, those two schools have achieved educationally more than they could have done individually. That is what makes that experiment or, if you like, opportunity very important for children and parents in that area.
515. **Mr Craig:** I am not at all surprised at your outcomes. I am a parent, and we are all guilty of this. You look around and find the highest-achieving school or the one that seems to get the most out of their pupils and that is where you send your children. There is no rocket science in that.
516. The other thing that I was not at all surprised about in your report is that the maintained sector seems to be the least integrated. I am not at all surprised. It is a faith-based education system and, therefore, is singularly focused on one faith — integration is not really a big factor for it. Looking through the statistics in Northern Ireland, I was not at all surprised to find that practically no other faiths or dominations go to that sector. Does that not lead to the point that the argument should be about a more shared focus around this? The maintained sector is one of the biggest sectors in Northern Ireland. I have to be honest and say that it is probably one of the best-performing sectors as well. Lessons need to be learned from that. If that is the case, should we not focus more on the shared aspect of that than on the integrated sector? Let us face it: if the largest sector of all is a single faith-based thing, we will not get to integrated overnight.
517. **Professor Borooah:** No. We can point to several instances in which there has been sharing with the Catholic sector. There has been sharing between Lumen Christi College and Foyle College, and between Belfast High School and an integrated college in that partnership. So, in several instances, without surrendering identity, people are prepared to share if they feel that they will be a concomitant improvement in educational performance.
518. **Professor Knox:** To illustrate that, Queen's, again under Dr Duffy, has provided a very good example in Derry/Londonderry between St Mary's College, St Cecilia's College and Lisneal College. The whole basis of that partnership was mutual benefits for all three schools. Lisneal College had not performed well in some school inspections. St Mary's and St Cecilia's came into help with that, and they improved their educational outcomes. In turn, St Mary's and St Cecilia's benefited a lot from some of the pastoral work that was going on in Lisneal. That is an example of mutual respect and reciprocity in benefits.
519. I also think that it is about maintaining their own identities, and the two principals from Ballycastle made that point very clearly. There are lots of parents in our society who are still not at the point that they want to send their children to integrated schools, and you have to respect that. I do not think that there is any argument against saying that we want to share if it will provide our children with better education outcomes and, as a consequence, we can promote better reconciliation and societal benefits.
520. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks again for your presentation, both written and verbal.
521. This is the first meeting in this programme, and it is deliberately titled "shared and integrated" rather than "shared versus integrated". A lot of people keep saying "versus", but we will educate them. I will not spend the next

- six months advocating for one sector or another. You heard what I said about the Ballycastle experience — that is good stuff.
522. You seem to be saying — Colin, I think that it was you in particular — that integrated schools perhaps do not perform quite as well because they spend too much time emphasising societal benefits. That is the way that it came across. Surely that is nonsense.
523. **Professor Knox:** That is nonsense, and, of course, I did not say that. I said that they do not perform as well as other schools but not because they concentrate on reconciliation benefits. If the integrated sector is to raise its game, it has to become attractive to parents on the grounds of educational outcomes.
524. **Professor Borooah:** This is definitely not an ideological war of this versus that. We have a common interest, which is that we want Northern Ireland to have good schools and we want children to turn out with better qualifications than they currently have. The question is how best to achieve that. We can go only by the facts, which are that some schools underperform and some schools perform better than others. Without detailed analysis, we do not know why some schools underperform. We have undertaken some analysis, but we do not know in detail. We know, however, that we could learn from the experiences of others. Can we learn something from people who do well, and do we have anything to offer? That is the heart of shared education. It is a learning process, which has a single objective: to deliver a better future for our children.
525. **Professor Knox:** Maybe we tend to describe it in a trite way, but a rising tide floats all boats. If the maintained sector is doing things well — we know that because of their results profile — why should we not share that common interest to ensure that all our children do well? The mechanism for doing that is shared education.
526. **Mr Lunn:** I will stay on the theme of poor performance. You made the point — we have crossed swords on this before in Enniskillen, I think — that integrated schools perform poorly at GCSE level; in fact, they perform as badly as the worst-performing sector, which is controlled and non-grammar schools. Figure 1 of your briefing seems to indicate that grant-maintained integrated schools perform at GCSE at the same level as Catholic maintained schools, so they outperform controlled and non-grammar schools. In every sector, there is a variation.
527. **Professor Borooah:** Two integrated schools are very popular — Slemish and Lagan College — and they operate a selection policy. There are 15 such grant-maintained integrated schools. If you take out those two and Drumragh, 12 schools certainly perform below par. It is a highly skewed performance, with three highly performing schools and 12 schools not performing so well.
528. **Professor Knox:** The results are skewed because of the integrated schools that stream their children. That is not particularly the principles to which the integrated movement espouse. They do not support selection.
529. **Mr Lunn:** It is true to say that most of them, by a wide margin, do not operate a selection policy. In fact, there is no reason why they should not. Not exercising a selection policy is not a condition of becoming an integrated school.
530. I have just one more question, Chair — there are 100 questions in here, but time does not permit —
531. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The Chair would not permit.
532. **Mr Lunn:** You effectively said that there is limited demand for integrated education and that there are unfilled spaces. How do you contrast that with poll after poll that seem to indicate something completely different? The biggest problem is that parents who would like to send their children to an

- integrated school cannot find one that is available.
533. **Professor Knox:** That is geographically patchy. I do not think that that is the case across all the Province, otherwise we would not have 9% unfilled places in the integrated sector. So I do not think that that is a general point.
534. **Mr Lunn:** What is the percentage of unfilled places in the other sectors?
535. **Professor Knox:** I do not have those figures available.
536. **Professor Borooah:** There are unfilled places in all the sectors. We are not singling out the integrated sector.
537. **Mr Lunn:** I speculate that it is a lot higher than the other sectors.
538. **Professor Borooah:** I think that it varies a great deal on a school-by-school basis. It is 8.5% in the integrated sector, but if you take out the top three integrated schools, you will find a much larger proportion of unfilled places in the remaining 12, certainly in the controlled integrated sector. Similarly with the controlled and maintained sector, you will find schools for which there is a high demand depending on high performance, and schools for which there is a low demand depending on low performance. If there is a single conclusion, it is the fact that, if you lift performance, you will lift demand.
539. **Mr Lunn:** You made an interesting comment about the first preference situation. Is it true to say that a lot of parents put down as their first preference a school that they have no intention of sending their children to? It comes into the area of bus passes and the distance from a school. If you do not put down the nearest schools, you will not get a bus pass. Does that have any influence on your 79%?
540. **Professor Borooah:** Our data is on the number of first preferences on a school-by-school basis, so it is not detailed and is not micro data; it is at a fairly broad level. Even that very broad level suggests that school performance has a very big impact on first preferences, but it is not the only factor. We do not say that it is the only factor, but we think that it is a significant and important factor.
541. **Mr Lunn:** You have given us a good grounding and context for the inquiry, so I am sure that we will come back to it again. Thank you very much.
542. **Mr Hazzard:** Thank you; it is very thought-provoking work. As I go through it and listen here today, I cannot help but think that social mix is important in a school. I do not accept the phrase “super-mixed schools”. I think their level of intake of free school meal pupils spurns that. What would be the educational benefit of putting a Protestant boy from a deprived background in a classroom beside a Catholic girl from a non-deprived background?
543. **Professor Borooah:** Let me start by saying that it is not necessarily the case that free school meal children do worse than non-free school meal children.
544. **Mr Hazzard:** I accept that.
545. **Professor Borooah:** There are 22 schools. What are those 22 schools doing that enables them to deliver these qualifications to free school meal children that 68 schools are not able to do? What are they doing right? What are 22 schools doing right and 68 schools doing wrong? There is an element of what we can learn from each other. There are also peer group effects. You and I may come from culturally different backgrounds, but when I see that you can solve a differential equation better than I can, I acquire a certain respect for you. When I acquire respect for you as a person, I acquire respect for your background. Similarly, if you see that I do something better than you do, and you respect me for that, you think, “Maybe his background is not that bad after all”. My view is that the key to respect is not to respect a person in the abstract but to respect the person and, through that, to respect his or her origins. By putting people together in

- shared education you learn that, if this person is good at that, and I am good at that, maybe we are alike in some ways.
546. **Mr Hazzard:** You could take a certain angle from the report, as you could with any report, but the statistics suggest that the social mix in the Catholic sector is better than the social mix in the controlled sector. Is that a determinant factor? Does that play a role in why there are better results for deprived pupils in the maintained sector?
547. **Professor Borooah:** Catholic schools do something that makes free school meal children in maintained schools, grammar and secondary, perform better than those in other sectors. We do not know what it is. When you investigate further, you find that absenteeism in maintained schools is lower than in other sectors. Absenteeism has a major role to play in school performance. Without going into anecdotal sociology or psychology, there is something there, and I have been meaning to find out what that is.
548. **Mr Hazzard:** I have one final question. Were you able to find out what measurements parents use when they are deciding on a school, based on the outcomes? Is it A levels, GCSEs or the fact that you need a transfer test to get into that school? Is it because there is a culture of a school being a good school? You often hear parents say that a particular school is a good school, but you think, actually, it is not a good school. It may have been a good school, but it is no longer a good school and vice versa: there may be schools out there that are good schools now but are not perceived to be so.
549. **Professor Borooah:** Those parents will be looking at first preferences and at the previous year's performance. It is contemporaneous and not based on the past. It is not reputational but is based on hard evidence. We are not saying that other factors do not matter, but performance matters.
550. **Professor Knox:** Performance matters significantly. It is a very good question about what constitutes educational performance. We tend to use the standard measures that DE uses, because we have quantification of those, but parents may take a more rounded view. It might be that there are also very good sporting activities, that it is a very good place to go, that it is local, that the parents went there etc.
551. **Mr Newton:** I thank Professor Knox and Professor Borooah. You indicated that you are moving forward on the OFMDFM shared education signature project. The Assembly is moving forward on the Education Bill. I am not alone in being critical of how we conducted area planning in the past, which was not done as effectively as it could have been. Does your work have any relevance to the area planning that will be undertaken by the Education Authority? Have you been involved in or asked about that work?
552. **Professor Knox:** We presented to the Committee previously on area planning. At that stage, the area plans for the primary sector had not come out; the final plans came out only recently. When we examined the plans, we put it, simply or perhaps crudely, that the area planning was not composite. Essentially, CCMS and the boards did their own thing, consulting with the integrated sector and the Irish-medium sector, and they then cut and pasted the plans into something that they called a composite plan for an area. I looked at the area plans for the primary sector recently, and I do not see a significant change in that philosophy. Indeed, it has been criminal — maybe that is too strong a word — and there has been a very negative perception from those who engaged in that process as parents and as part of a community. A lot of the suggestions that came forward were, essentially, ignored by CCMS or the boards. How does that help us with shared education? The Minister advised the boards and CCMS to be creative and imaginative with area plans, and they have been neither. If they are to embrace shared education as part of the way forward, they need to be highly cognisant of that when they develop area plans. Developing area

- plans on a sectoral basis will not do that.
553. **Mr Newton:** Am I right in saying that your work will inform the strategic planning of DE and the education and library boards or the new authority?
554. **Professor Knox:** It would be too presumptuous to think that our work would inform anything, but we will certainly make our evidence available to the Department and appear before whomever it wants us to and try to disseminate our work as best we can.
555. **Professor Borooah:** In the earlier presentation, a point was made that geographical proximity is very important for partnerships. De facto, the way in which geographical proximity works out in Northern Ireland is that it is inter-sectoral. In the area where I live, within half a mile of one another, there is Aquinas, which is the top-performing grammar school in Northern Ireland, Wellington College, which has medium-level performance, and St Joseph's, which is the worst-performing secondary school in Northern Ireland. There is enormous potential for partnerships that are waiting to be uncovered. We have simply scratched the surface: we have uncovered four partnerships from our work. You heard about Ballycastle. Hundreds of partnerships are waiting to be uncovered, but spirit and energy are needed to do that. I think that the enthusiasm is there, but it needs to be harnessed and channelled.
556. **Professor Knox:** Perhaps the signature project will provide the mechanism to do that. Support must be provided to those schools, because this is a new journey for them. As the two principals from Ballycastle will tell you — you have been to Limavady — this is a long journey. It does not happen overnight, and it is risky. They have to take decisions that they may not always like in the interests of that common good. That is a journey that the Departments are now embarking on, and it is good to see that, for the first time, the Department of Education is putting money behind it. Equally, OFMDFM is convinced that this has the potential to improve the performance of education and to reduce the performance gap between children who are entitled to free school meals and others.
557. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr Lunn wanted to come in on that. Can I ask you to be brief?
558. **Mr Lunn:** You mentioned Aquinas and St Joseph's. What was the third school?
559. **Professor Borooah:** Wellington College.
560. **Mr Lunn:** Imagine me forgetting that. You say that St Joseph's is the worst-performing secondary school in Northern Ireland.
561. **Professor Borooah:** I think that it is.
562. **Mr Lunn:** Is the solution to that a sharing arrangement, or does the school need a good shake-up, which would have happened in the past? Surely it is down to the leadership.
563. **Professor Knox:** We do not say that sharing is the panacea for improving educational outcomes. We say that it is one factor therein. You heard the two principals talk this morning about good leadership, teaching and curriculum development. This is not a one-shot option, but we think that it is an important component in improving education outcomes.
564. **Mr Sheehan:** Trevor has stolen my thunder. I keep banging on about good leadership in schools, because you hear educationalists talking about it all the time. I am sure that everyone on the Committee knows of schools that have had a change of leadership, and performance has improved. It is not rocket science. The evidence shows that, in some schools, kids on free school meals can perform as well as those who are not, and, in other schools, they are not performing as well as them. As a start, I would look at the issue of leadership. Is there good leadership in the school? Is there quality teaching in the school? Is there good monitoring of teaching staff? I know of some terrible schools that

- have been on the point of intervention, if not in intervention. Anecdotally, we hear about poor teachers, lazy teachers and teachers out on sick leave, but, when a new principal comes in, all that can change. I know of one case in my constituency when, after a new leader came in, GCSE results improved year-on-year. When we talk about the 60-odd schools in which the kids on free school meals are underperforming —
565. **Professor Borooah:** Not a single school got disqualification.
566. **Mr Sheehan:** Is leadership not the first port of call? I understand and believe, from the example that we were given this morning, that sharing can certainly enhance educational outcomes, but if we are going to list priorities, leadership has to be at the top.
567. **Professor Borooah:** Yes, but if I were a departmental policymaker, I would find that leadership involves many problems: individuals, schools and micro issues. At a departmental level, I would look for easy answers, which include school numbers and financial difficulties. In fact, those things make not the blindest bit of difference to school performance, but, from a policy point of view, it is easy to find those quantifiable, macro factors, on which you can pin policy, whereas I absolutely agree that to pin policy on leadership is the right way to go. However, it requires much more effort on the part of policymakers to investigate leadership in individual schools.
568. **Professor Knox:** Anecdotally, we hear that one of the suggestions as to why Catholic or maintained schools outperform controlled schools is that CCMS has a much stronger grip on leadership in its schools. The boards are perhaps a little semi-detached in dealing with schools that are underperforming.
569. Clearly, leadership is hugely important, and, as the principals said this morning, that goes for leadership at all levels. Perhaps it takes a leader to create or cascade that downwards, but it is about leadership at middle management level, good teaching, shared education —
- there is a plethora of issues that are about raising educational performance.
570. **Mr McCausland:** I apologise for not being here for part of the presentation. I have a quick point. Your briefing has a graph that shows the figures for performance in the different sectors. You may have already answered this question when I was out of the room. We might guess that the better performance of grant-maintained integrated schools over controlled integrated schools is to do with schools that were controlled schools and then transformed into —
571. **Professor Borooah:** Controlled integrated schools?
572. **Mr McCausland:** Yes. Is that because they were not doing particularly well previously?
573. **Professor Borooah:** I do not know.
574. **Professor Knox:** I do not know either, but there is a very derogatory term that one could use. I do not wish to label those schools, but sometimes, when schools are at the edge of viability, they have what is sometimes referred to as a “deathbed conversion”. I have said it, and it is on record; I am sorry. That option becomes a possibility for them, and I can see why schools would choose it, so that may have implications for their performance.
575. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you. I have not heard the phrase used in that context before. That is good.
576. My second point is about the reason why the Catholic maintained sector seems to do somewhat better. There is the issue of leadership, and there are anecdotal stories and comments about that. Is any research being done on that? You said that it should be done.
577. **Professor Knox:** I am not aware of any specific, in-depth research on what is commonly referred to as the “Catholic ethos”. When you ask principals about that, they tend to say that Catholic schools do well because there is a Catholic ethos. So you then ask, “What is the Catholic ethos? What is the

- package that makes that performance, in the case of grammar schools, marginally better than in the controlled sector?”. It is more difficult for them to answer that question.
578. **Professor Borooah:** We are among the first to have drawn attention to this fact in a systematic way, in the sense of maintained schools versus controlled schools, Catholic grammar versus Protestant grammar, and intake of FSM students in the secondary school sector and the grammar school sector. This systematic exposure of inequality in performance has been our modest contribution.
579. **Professor Knox:** The next step is maybe of greater interest. We have exposed the problem, but how do we interrogate its nature? It probably requires a lot more qualitative research than we have been able to do.
580. **Mr McCausland:** I certainly agree. I know that the role of CCMS is only a suggestion. If schools are underperforming, there is probably more support and pressure from the Church to intervene than with a controlled school. I agree with that, and I hope that research is done.
581. My final brief point is about free school meals entitlement and the correlation with educational disadvantage. Does that suggest that free school meals entitlement might not be the best possible or most accurate way to assess the need to target additional support? We put in additional financial resources on the basis of free school meals entitlement, but does this not question that?
582. **Professor Borooah:** Free school meals entitlement may not be the perfect measure of deprivation, but, even if you had an idealised measure of deprivation, there would be a strong correlation between the free school meals entitlement and that idealised measure. One might spend an excessive amount of time defining what deprivation really is rather than trying to investigate, even on this crude measure, why children do not do so well.
583. **Professor Knox:** We know, from talking to school principals — again, this is anecdotal, and we have not researched it — that kids in one sector are perhaps a little more reluctant to classify themselves as being entitled to free school meals than kids in another sector, and that has implications for resources both into the schools and in how they are assessed for their performance band.
584. **Professor Borooah:** I will give you one example. In London, there is hardly any gap between children who are entitled to free school meals and those who are not. The people who undertook this study found that one reason for this is that many children in London who are entitled to free school meals have immigrant parents, and, in the first generation, there is a lot of parental pressure to do well at school. That is an important aspect. It is not just about deprivation or poverty but about what is happening in a house.
585. **Mr McCausland:** It would suggest that there may be an overemphasis on financial disadvantage.
586. **Professor Borooah:** Yes.
587. **Mr McCausland:** That is another issue that needs to be researched or looked into.
588. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much for your presentation and your paper. As members mentioned, it will be a very useful tool for us as we move through our inquiry.

5 November 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mrs Patricia Lewsley-Mooney	<i>Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People</i>
Dr Alison Montgomery	<i>Office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People</i>

589. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Good morning. You are both very welcome. I ask you to make your opening statement, and then members will follow up with some questions.

590. **Mrs Patricia Lewsley-Mooney (Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People):**

I thank the Committee for inviting us here today to give evidence to its inquiry into shared education and integrated education. I welcome the Committee's decision to initiate an inquiry into these two important aspects of education in Northern Ireland and to garner the views of the stakeholders.

591. As many of you will be aware, the principal aim of my office is to ensure the safeguarding and promotion of the rights and best interests of children and young people. As part of my remit, I have a mandate to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law, practice and services relating to the rights and best interests of children and young people. Furthermore, my office

bases all its work on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child or UNCRC, as it is broadly known.

592. My presentation this morning will highlight the key findings emerging from a consultation that my office undertook with children and young people to explore their views and experiences of shared education. The inquiry's terms of reference address the nature and definition of shared education, key barriers to and enablers of shared education, and what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing. Children and young people discussed these issues during the consultation, and I will make reference to their responses throughout this presentation.

593. As you know, the Department of Education established a ministerial advisory group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister to advance shared education in Northern Ireland. In line with my remit, which I have just described, I offered to assist the Minister by consulting children and young people about shared education with the intention of ensuring that their views were incorporated into the ministerial advisory group's report. The focus of the consultation was on shared education; however, pupils and teachers from integrated schools participated, and, therefore, reference is also made to integrated education. Although the consultation was completed within a very short time frame, my office was eager to ensure that as many children and young people as possible were able to participate.

594. There were two strands. First, workshops were conducted with primary-school pupils aged between eight and 10 and post-primary pupils aged 14 to 17. Secondly, surveys were completed by children aged 10 to 11 and young people aged 16. The surveys were commissioned from Access Research

- Knowledge (ARK), a joint initiative between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster that devises the Kids' Life and Times and Young Life and Times surveys. Two modules of questions relating to pupils' attitudes and experiences of shared education were included in each of the surveys.
595. Thirty-eight workshops were conducted in 21 schools across Northern Ireland, involving more than 750 primary-, post-primary and special-school pupils. A key objective was to ensure that pupils from as many school types as possible were able to participate. Care was taken to ensure that the sample of schools recruited was as representative as possible. The workshops explored pupils' awareness, understanding and experiences of shared education and their views about how it should be taken forward.
596. I would like to give you an overview of the findings emerging from that consultation. Less than 50% of post-primary pupils indicated that the term "shared education" was familiar to them. Where they did recognise it, this was usually due to their knowledge of, or participation in, shared classes at GCSE or A level. Very few primary pupils were aware of the concept although, after it was explained, some suggested that it referred to activities, such as joint projects or trips with other schools, in which they or other pupils had been involved. This lack of awareness was not entirely unexpected, as the term may not have been widely used in schools. A significant proportion of primary pupils indicated that they had not had any experience of shared activities.
597. Post-primary pupils' experiences of shared education were, in many cases, linked to their participation in shared classes, although other shared activities were also identified, such as joint residentials, drama productions or sports events with other schools. Pupils also talked about sharing sports facilities or transport. The potential for pupils to participate in shared activities appeared to be influenced by a number of factors, including the subjects that they studied, the class or year group that they were in and their involvement in extra-curricular activities.
598. Children and young people who had taken part in shared classes or activities expressed a range of opinions with regard to their experiences. Both primary and post-primary pupils welcomed the opportunity to interact and make new friends with pupils from other schools. They also enjoyed the experience of different learning approaches and gaining insights into other schools. One post-primary pupil summarised many pupils' responses by saying:
- "I think it's a good way to mix with pupils from other schools and to make new friends with people who have a different background or religion to us."*
599. A clear benefit of shared classes for post-primary pupils was the expanded choice of subjects available at Key Stage 4 and A Level. One pupil commented that:
- "It gives people more subject options ... it's a unique opportunity."*
600. Some pupils reported having less positive experiences. These often occurred where they had limited or negative contact with pupils from other schools. They talked about feeling uncomfortable if they were in a minority or feeling "out of place" when they attended classes in another school. As one post-primary pupil said:
- "Joint classes are a bit awkward. We all sit at one table, but we don't really mix with the pupils from the other school."*
601. Another pupil said:
- "You feel like outcasts if you're going to class and walking through the school and they look at you in a different uniform."*
602. A number of logistical issues, including transport arrangements and timetabling variations between schools, also impact on pupils' experiences.
603. During the consultation, children and young people were asked to think about the kind of approaches and activities that they believe would be effective in the development of shared education. A significant majority of respondents to

- the Kids' Life and Times and Young Life and Times surveys agreed that shared projects, classes and facilities would be a good idea. Pupils in the workshops explored this question in more detail, calling for more collaborative learning approaches to be employed and for additional subjects and activities to be included. Pupils said:
- "Group work and more mixing activities — that would make it more enjoyable".*
604. They said that for subjects like:
- "Technology, Art, PE, Science and Music; You could do them with other people better".*
605. Pupils also highlighted the importance of introducing shared education at an early stage in a child's schooling, undertaking preparation in advance of shared learning activities, and providing opportunities for pupils to provide feedback on their experiences.
606. As well as highlighting opportunities for shared education, pupils were asked if they thought that there were any barriers that might dissuade young people from taking part. In response, some students, mostly at post-primary schools, acknowledged that they would be concerned about sharing their education with pupils from particular schools. Their concerns related to academic ability, cross-community issues, standards of behaviour and the increased potential for bullying. To illustrate these concerns, a grammar school pupil commenting on a non-selective school said:
- "I don't want to sound stuck-up, but they don't push you there. We get better grades".*
607. A primary-school pupil admitted:
- "I don't like the fact that if another school joins with us ... we will have bullies ... the bullies will spread when we do shared education".*
608. Logistical issues, including travel arrangements, timetabling and different school rules, were cited as significant barriers by many post-primary pupils as well as by principals and teachers.
609. A majority of pupils thought that it was important for pupils from different schools and backgrounds to have an opportunity to learn together. Indeed, in a number of the workshops, pupils contended that the aim of shared education should not be restricted to bringing pupils from the two dominant religious traditions together but, instead, involve pupils from all types of schools. However, pupils acknowledged concerns about shared education occurring between particular school types. Reservations expressed by pupils at grammar schools have been mentioned. In response, some pupils attending non-selective schools felt that grammar pupils would regard them as "less able" and, therefore, be reluctant to become learning partners.
610. Pupils attending special schools were very keen to engage with their peers in other schools, although a few did admit to being:
- "a little nervous going somewhere new".*
611. In response, pupils from mainstream schools highlighted a number of issues that they felt needed to be considered in advance of any shared activities with pupils at special schools, including the potential for bullying, accidents, logistical difficulties and the challenge for teachers to effectively teach all pupils together.
612. A special school teacher also welcomed the educational opportunities for pupils through her school's membership of an area learning community, although she noted there was also resistance on the part of some mainstream schools to engage with special schools.
613. Irish-medium school pupils reflected on the challenges they would encounter through collaborative learning with English-medium schools where there would be limited opportunities for them to speak Irish. Integrated school pupils expressed a willingness to engage with pupils from all schools, suggesting that their experiences and the modus operandi in integrated schools could support other schools to effectively participate in shared education.

614. Principals' and teachers' responses echoed some of the views expressed by pupils, particularly in the opportunities to build relationships and the logistical issues associated with arranging shared education activities. Additional challenges included funding, promoting shared education through cross-community links and, for a minority of teachers, managing staff or parents' concerns.
615. To conclude, I would like to briefly reflect on the findings. It was evident that shared education in most post-primary schools was associated with enhanced curriculum provision and the opportunity for pupils in Years 11 to 14 to participate in joint classes with other schools. In primary schools, pupils' experiences were generally through joint projects or trips with other schools. In some workshops, pupils indicated that participation in shared activities had only been available in specific year groups. Given the commitment in the Programme for Government for all children to have the opportunity to participate in shared education by 2015, significant efforts will be required to expand provision across all year groups in primary, post-primary and special schools if that is to be realised.
616. Many pupils recognised the value of shared education through the potential benefits for their learning and opportunities to develop relationships with pupils at other schools. While many recounted positive experiences, a significant minority offered less-positive feedback. Some described collaborative activities and joint classes as shared but separate, because pupils remained within their own school or friendship groups and interaction with pupils from other schools had been limited. Other young people talked about feeling uncomfortable when attending classes in another school, particularly when they were in a minority.
617. In taking shared education forward, it will be important that the objectives are very clearly communicated to all involved and that pupils are encouraged and supported by all stakeholders to be equal and effective collaborators.
- The provision of quality learning experiences must be a priority for all pupils. Appropriate mechanisms, such as school councils or buddy systems, should be put in place so that pupils' concerns can be dealt with sensitively and appropriately.
618. The attitudes of some post-primary pupils, particularly those who had less experience of shared education, were strongly influenced by their perceptions of other schools and pupils. Perceived differences in ability, social background and religion influenced their desire to engage in shared learning initiatives. In some cases, pupils' views had been influenced by their parents or teachers. If shared education is to be regarded as a positive learning opportunity, there is a need to confront and challenge such preconceptions. Evidently, one of the most effective ways to do that is to involve pupils in positive shared learning initiatives. However, it will also be important to consider other ways to address pupils' concerns prior to their participation. As one principal commented, it is:
- "important to make people comfortable and get them in a position to embrace challenges".*
619. The consultation highlighted a range of issues relating to specific school types that should be considered by the Department of Education. Pupils and principals in Irish-medium schools were keen that the Department considers how their schools could be included in shared education as it is taken forward. It will also be important to consider how mainstream schools can collaborate most effectively with special schools and be supported to address any attitudinal or practical issues that arise. As already highlighted, pupils and teachers in grammar schools also expressed reservations about the benefits of collaborative learning with pupils who attend non-selective schools.
620. The perspectives of pupils and staff in integrated schools were quite distinctive. While many welcomed opportunities to engage in collaborative learning with other schools, they pointed

out that they were already part of an effective shared learning environment. One principal reflected:

"Shared education is fine as a starting point, but it needs further work".

621. The consultation with pupils referenced the definition of shared education that was outlined in the terms of reference for the ministerial advisory group, and that is now displayed on the Department of Education's website. That definition references the need for shared education to provide for:

"learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status"

622. and to promote:

"equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion."

623. Findings from the consultation indicated that some shared education activities fulfilled those requirements more successfully than others. In some cases, the main objective appeared to be supporting the provision of the entitlement framework in the post-14 curriculum and pupils' access to a wide range of courses. In others, collaboration was occurring between schools of a similar management type or ethos. If pupils are to experience shared education as defined by the Department, clear aims and objectives, to which all stakeholders can subscribe, need to be outlined at the beginning of any shared initiative. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of activities that involves pupils should be undertaken to ensure that all objectives are met.

624. The 2002 and 2008 concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, recorded its concerns that education in Northern Ireland remained largely segregated. In 2002, it recommended that the Government take measures to establish more integrated schools. In 2008, it called on government to take steps to address segregated education.

625. I welcome all the efforts to address separation in the education system in

Northern Ireland and the introduction of measures that encourage greater collaboration and understanding and promote equality and respect for diversity. If shared education is to be implemented as envisaged by the Department, it will create both opportunities and challenges for schools. Therefore, it is vital that all those involved in the delivery of shared education are effectively supported in their efforts to provide positive and meaningful shared experiences that are educationally and socially valuable for all pupils.

626. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Thank you for the presentation. I am conscious that this may be the last time that you present in your current role. I do not mean my question to be a criticism. I am concerned about how we consult with young people. I know that you have carried out various consultations during your term in office, and I want to know whether there is a formalised way in which we can consult. I know that you have close links with the universities. Do you have any relationships with the education and library boards and their, maybe, more formal routes and structures?

627. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** We have engaged with the education and library boards and their previous chief executives. We have had conversations with them. Obviously, we have also had those conversations with the Minister of Education. One particular area of participation we are very keen on are school councils and the opportunity for children to have their voices heard there. We will engage with the Committee during its inquiry to ensure that you hear the voice of children. That may be one mechanism by which you could gain some of the information and, in particular, the views of young people. We have engaged with many bodies across the board, particularly during my eight years in post.

628. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I appreciate that you have reached out and have tried to get as broad a sample as possible. However, at the same time,

- you were restricted to 21 schools, which is quite a tiny part of the school estate. Is there an opportunity to formalise a relationship as we move into the era of the Education Authority to have a more representative view?
629. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** I am trying to get government in general to look at the issues of participation. Over the last four years, we have engaged with government in participation policy statements of intent. It has signed up to those, and we have gone back a year later and asked it what it has done. We have extended that to Departments' arm's-length bodies and have sent the same documents to the education and library boards. I recently met all but two of the new chief executives of the new councils. We wrote to 26 councils and 14 responded. We think that that is timely now, as some councils like Lisburn City Council signed up to the statement of intent but Castlereagh Borough Council did not. So, we need to ensure that, when they come together as a new super-council, they sign up from day one.
630. We are trying to engage so that we give some of that responsibility on to the duty bearers to ensure that they have a mechanism to engage with children and young people. That includes the education and library boards and the health trusts. There are 29 bodies, in addition to 11 of the 12 Departments, that have signed up to the participation policy statements of intent. That is the kind of ongoing work that we are doing to get government and its arm's-length bodies to think about engagement and the participation of children and young people.
631. **Dr Alison Montgomery (Office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People):** Sorry to interrupt, but I want to add one wee point. We have discussed with the Department of Education the questions that we used and the engagement that we had with children and young people in the surveys and the workshops. It is going to take the questions that we used in the Kids' Life and Times survey and the Young Life and Times survey and administer them every two years with pupils across schools to get some sense of their engagement with shared education and their experiences of it.
632. I agree, Chair, that the sample size was small, but that was down to the time constraints that we had in order to contribute to the ministerial advisory group's work. The 21 schools represented every type of school in Northern Ireland, taking into account sectors, ethos, location and so on. So, the number of schools was small, but there was a good number of pupils involved.
633. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I am not being critical of the fact that it was small.
634. **Dr Montgomery:** Yes, but we are aware that it was a modest sample.
635. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I understand that there is a challenge with time constraints and so on, but I was just wondering whether there is some other way —
636. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** There has to be a better mechanism; I agree with you. That is why we have been doing some work on participation to try to encourage organisations and arm's-length bodies and Government to look at the issue of participation and mainstream it so that, when the Department of Education or education and library boards are looking at their policy or legislation, they include the voices of children and young people.
637. In the last couple of weeks, before I leave office, I have been going round schools, events and venues where young people have been over the eight years. I am still hearing the same message, namely, "Our voice is not being listened to." On the issue of shared education, I spoke to young people in Enniskillen who talked about the shared campus. They said, "All we hear is the talk of the adults. Nobody asked us what we think."
638. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You will be aware that the Education Bill is likely to include the provision that requires the authority to encourage,

- facilitate and promote shared education. Taking that as it is, how can that be assessed with regards to participation among schools?
639. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** It needs to be written into the detail of the guidelines that come out of any legislation around shared education that children and young people must be included. I can only go back to the work that we are doing with the Department of the Environment around its guidelines on community planning to ensure that children and young people's voices are included and are specifically mentioned. So, if you are looking at the legislation that will flow from this work on shared education, we need to ensure that children and young people are mentioned in it, are embedded in it and that their voices are heard throughout the process and in the evaluation and monitoring of it.
640. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Would you say that that is your key recommendation?
641. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** Very much so.
642. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you very much for your presentation. We seem to be have been getting mixed messages. One thing about asking children for an opinion is that they give it to you straight: they have not acquired our diplomatic skills, so they just tell you what is on their minds, and that is brilliant. So, when I saw that a grammar school pupil said that, although they did not want to be stuck-up, collaborating with the secondary schools would hold them back, I would not like to think that that is a representative view, and it makes me worry about the size of the sample. Can I take it that that was an individual comment and not a general theme in the responses that you got from grammar schools?
643. **Dr Montgomery:** We were in four grammar schools, three of which had quite extensive shared education opportunities, mostly through GCSE and A-level courses. In three of the schools, all of the young people talked about some of the concerns they had about engaging with non-selective schools. Only one of the grammar schools was unanimously positive about the engagement with non-selective schools. The other schools had some reservations. The thing to say about the sample is that we were trying to collect a diversity of opinion from young people, so we really wanted to get a range of views. In some cases, the young people had not participated in shared learning opportunities, and, in others, those were also the grammar schools speaking. There is work to be done to reassure pupils that their learning will not necessarily be threatened in any way or that it will be disadvantageous to them to engage in learning with other schools. There is a strong perception in some grammar schools, which also came from teachers and parents, around the concern that, if their child or the pupil were taking an A-level course in a non-selective school, they would not experience the same level.
644. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** The important thing is that, if someone has a misconception or a fear of something, it needs to be addressed, and that is where shared education needs to go beyond the academic strand. It is about understanding and respecting and listening to the voice of young people, and it is about, if they have a concern, how that can be dealt with and how those concerns can be met. Again, some of that may be around influence from teachers or parents, but it could also be just something that they have heard somewhere and may not be reality. It is about how a school deals with that and ensures that all the pupils who get involved in any kind of shared education are valued.
645. **Mr Lunn:** It seems to me that if you take sharing as being a process of trying to improve educational outcomes, almost the best form of sharing is probably between a successful grammar school and a slightly less successful secondary school down the road. It does worry me, and what the children say is kind of instinctive. When you get an attitude from teachers from grammar schools

- and parents with children there that they effectively do not want to be bothered and think that it might hold their children back and cannot see the virtue of giving a helping hand in particular subjects at particular levels to a school that needs that help, that is a bit disappointing.
646. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** That is assuming that their perception is right. The children who come from the non-selective school could probably be just as capable and able when they merge and do the subject together. Again, some of this is around perception.
647. **Mr Lunn:** Yes, absolutely. Finally, the other perception is about the reaction of children in integrated schools, who seem to have made the point that they are perfectly happy to collaborate with other schools but are already actually doing it in their own school. Have you any comment about that reaction?
648. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** I think that it is about looking at all the models of good practice and sharing it across the board. If integrated schools already think that they are doing some of that, then sharing with other schools will help to enhance the other schools.
649. **Dr Montgomery:** Indeed, some of the primary pupils said that they might be able to show pupils in other schools how they get on in their school. They were seeing themselves as educators, in a sense, so it was positive.
650. **Mr Lunn:** That moves you on to the societal aspect. I am sure that an integrated school and another school in the locality could collaborate perfectly well; there is no reason why they should not. However, there may be an opportunity for the other school to learn exactly that there are no bogeymen here and this is a perfectly valid way to do your education.
651. **Mr Rogers:** Apologies for having to leave in the middle, and apologies if this question has been asked already. You have given a useful insight on the whole thing from the schools' point of view. Would it be helpful if we were to have a definition of what shared education is and had, say, a five-point scale to measure a level of sharing? There seems to be such a range. For example, we discussed St Columbanus in Bangor in last night's Adjournment debate. We have integrated schools at one end of the spectrum and then we have two schools that may have an annual visit to the pantomime. Would it be helpful for schools and everybody if we were to have a five-point scale to measure the level of sharing?
652. **Dr Montgomery:** I am not sure whether you necessarily need a five-point scale, but I think that it would be helpful to provide a more detailed definition, for a start, about what shared education is actually about and to open up on what the aims and objectives are and very clearly outline that. What are the outcomes that you are looking for? How do you measure the impact? That could involve, for example, looking to the community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) policy in the sense of how it is structured. It goes into a lot of detail about the aims and objectives and the values and principles; but it is also about what you are seeking to achieve at the end through meaningful interaction, pupils' full participation and involving pupils in the planning and evaluation of shared education. There are a lot of different shared experiences, and it could be about sharing resources.
653. There is a question about what benefit the sharing of resources has for children's learning and social development when they perhaps never meet the pupils from the school that they are sharing the resources with. We then go right through to pupils going to another school on a regular basis or meeting somewhere in a neutral location and engaging in a very effective and meaningful way.
654. I suppose that you could say that there is a continuum in what shared education is, what it is achieving and its impact on pupils. I am not sure about a five-point scale, but you could certainly seek to define different levels of sharing.

655. **Mr Rogers:** You talked about the barriers, and it was very interesting to listen to the views of pupils and so on. Do you find the geography of the whole thing, particularly in rural areas, a major barrier to sharing?
656. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** Some of it was down to the cost of transport, the distance between schools or other issues. It is not about one cap fits all, but how you can be flexible in a number of schools to be inclusive and for them to see the best way of doing that. Sometimes, part of that will be that the funding schools might need to be able to partake in some of those activities.
657. **Mr Newton:** I thank the commissioner and Dr Montgomery for coming along. I want to ask two questions. I think that you partially answered my first question when answering Mr Lunn's question. Is shared education generally perceived as a threat or an opportunity? In addressing some of Mr Lunn's remarks, you concentrated on the academic aspect of grammar schools. In a wider context, is it perceived as a threat or an opportunity?
658. I will ask both questions together. On page 70 of your report, under area-based planning, you stated that:
- "Many pupils and teachers were concerned about the potential implications of area-based planning proposals."*
659. Will you expand on that and tell us what those concerns were and how they were seen as? Presumably, they saw it as having a negative impact, but maybe they saw it as positive.
660. **Dr Montgomery:** I will respond to your second question first. As part of the consultation, we asked pupils for their views of area-based planning, what they knew about it, what they understood about it and what they saw as opportunities and possible threats. In a sense, younger pupils were concerned about getting together with pupils from other schools who they did not know and their schools becoming too big and deflecting the teaching and learning provisions in the school. Bullying came up a lot among primary school pupils, and there were concerns that they would be meeting or having to be educated with pupils from other schools who were nasty, unkind or who did not want to play with them. So, at that level, there were concerns about what that would mean in different groups of pupils. There were also concerns about having to travel if you had to go to another school and, if their school amalgamated with another, that they would have to wear a different uniform. It was issues like that.
661. Principals and teachers were also consulted during the consultation. They voiced concerns that the approach to area-based planning did not adopt an open approach, but was more about making changes within the existing network. They felt that it was not a blue sky type of thinking. The changes were occurring in sectors so that there was a potential restructuring in the maintained sector, the controlled sector and so on.
662. Pupils' concerns were about what it would mean for them and their schools if they were to amalgamate with another and how that would affect their friendship circles and their learning. They were also about bullying and the other types of issues that I mentioned. Those were the key issues.
663. Patricia, do you want to take the other question?
664. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** Which one was that?
665. **Dr Montgomery:** It was about opportunities.
666. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** OK —
667. **Dr Montgomery:** Sorry, Patricia. Overall, 60% to 65% of pupils were very positive about shared education and the opportunities, academic or social, that it creates. However, a significant minority also raised concerns. So, even pupils who said that it was great to meet pupils from other schools and that it had expanded their friendship circles said that they did not like the fact that they were in a minority when they went to another school to participate in classes. They found that a bit difficult.

668. At times, it was difficult to quantify their responses, because they often said something very positive and then reflected on it and said that a certain aspect was not so great. That is why it is difficult to say clearly that a certain percentage was wholly positive or wholly negative. Most pupils were very positive. They saw the opportunities, but they also recognised the challenges.
669. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** That is important; it is about how you manage those challenges and what needs to be put in to address the concerns of young people in particular.
670. **Dr Montgomery:** I remember one primary school's pupils saying that it was a good idea but that you had to be careful how you go about it. That is how he summarised it, and I thought that that was very wise. We almost called the report, "Be careful how you go about it".
671. **Mr Lunn:** He should be a politician.
672. **Mr Newton:** Whoever said that will go far.
673. **Mr Lunn:** He will end up up here.
674. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Thank you both. I want to go back to the issue of the definition. I have listened carefully to what you said about the almost levels and tiers of definition of shared education. Commissioner, if your organisation had a magic wand, would the priority of definition be about sharing resources or respect, tolerance and mutual understanding? What would the priority be?
675. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** There are a number of issues. After the researcher was done — Alison was obviously much more involved in that than I was, as she was speaking to the children — I saw that young people see the benefit of shared education and think that it is a positive opportunity. However, a lot of work needs to be done around the understanding, respect and diversity that come from all different types of schools. That has to underpin whatever legislation comes out of this. We must ensure that young people feel comfortable when they go to another school, that it works for them and that it makes a difference. They must also feel able to make a contribution and feel equal to all those who are involved in the shared education project.
676. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** I want to play devil's advocate. If it is ultimately about work on understanding and, I assume, good relations and tolerance, does that mean that educational outcomes are secondary?
677. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** I do not think that they are secondary; they can run alongside that. It is in an educational environment, and education and educational outcomes are obviously important.
678. We are asking for shared places and spaces. If young people are to be educated in those shared spaces and places, we need to ensure that there is a mutual understanding and respect for each other and that they feel equal when they are going into those places to be educated.
679. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** What I picked up from your presentation was that there is a variety in the definition of shared education, but that more clarity is needed for integrated education. Do you see integrated education as the logical conclusion of the shared education process?
680. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** Integrated education is part of the process and part of education in the wider sense. We support that. Whatever process comes out of this has to be embedded in equality, a strong ethos around education and very strong aims and objectives in how it will be delivered. As I have said from the very beginning, the most important thing is the voice of young people, how they see it working for them and what the barriers are.
681. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Finally, Chair, if I may. You have made a very clear call for definition, but there is a variety of views. What evidence do we have that shared education processes will provide

- or produce more socially, economically viable and religiously diverse schools?
682. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** That is why you need to start the process: to see how you can engage with the schools, the teachers and the children to get to a better place. When we start something, I am always worried about making it too rigid. There will be different flexibilities, from urban to rural to other places, that will be required. However, if you want to achieve the same outcome, it will sometimes take some areas longer to get there than others. It is important that the journey is at least begun.
683. **Mr McCausland:** Your use of the word “equality” was interesting. On page 6 of the report, a very good point is made:
- “pupils are encouraged and supported by all stakeholders to be equal and ‘effective’ collaborators.”*
684. That is stated as being hugely important. Your work is obviously based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Mention is made specifically of article 29. Article 29(c) states:
- “The development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own”.*
685. Built into that are the concepts of social cohesion and cultural diversity.
686. In that context, if you are thinking about children coming together from different school backgrounds, if shared education is going to work they will have to be able to come together on a base of equal and effective collaborators. Pierre Trudeau said of Canada’s relationship with America that it was like being in bed with an elephant. We want a situation where children come together on the basis of equality if collaboration is going to work.
687. Was there anything to suggest that, with schools in different sectors, and even those in a particular sector, having different approaches to cultural traditions, children who are coming together may not be doing so on a base of equal collaborators. Children will come with a cultural tradition from the home, but if the school does not affirm that, it is left to the home. Some schools affirm cultural tradition much more than others.
688. Article 31(2) states:
- “States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.”*
689. There is an onus on different sectors to provide equally for cultural traditions. How do you see that? Did that arise as an issue? Maybe it is something that the children are not aware of, or maybe, although they would not express it in those terms, it is something that they are conscious of. There may be a fear of “They know more than I do” or “they do more”.
690. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** I will let Alison come in on that, because, as I said, she was more involved in the process. The important part is that there is understanding, and maybe that is why single identity work needs to be done in a school before you bring two schools together. When you bring children or young people together, they must have an understanding and respect for each other’s difference, diversity, culture or whatever it is so that they are not going in with preconceptions on some of the issues that were raised in the findings.
691. If a young person feels that their voice is not being heard, that needs to be addressed. Similarly, if someone finds it difficult or uncomfortable, that needs to be addressed as well,
692. **Dr Montgomery:** In answer to your question, the issue was touched on, more in post-primary schools. First, was there an awareness on the part of some pupils that they were engaging with pupils who were from another cultural tradition? In some cases, they would say, “We got together with the school

- down the road”, but they did not seem to be aware that the children from that school were coming from a different cultural or religious background. In some cases there was not even awareness that the other children were different.
693. On the issue of concerns, some pupils identified the potential for difficulties in engaging with children from other cultural backgrounds. Sometimes, that was in advance of engaging in shared education opportunities to outline what might be an issue or a difficulty. Other pupils were very open and said:
- “We can’t tiptoe around this issue. We need to engage with pupils from different backgrounds, including those from different cultural backgrounds, and we need to talk about the issues that have been difficult for so many years.”*
694. You mentioned equality as well. That comes up when small numbers of pupils go to another school to take part in shared classes. On a number of occasions, we found that maybe only one or two pupils from one school were going to another. They found that quite difficult, because they really were in a minority.
695. **Mr McCausland:** Would it not also apply in the context of the experience, education and understanding of their cultural identity? Say you go to an Irish-medium school. There is a cultural ethos there of Irishness. That is taught and it permeates all that the school does; that is the purpose of the school. Another school may tread very lightly around cultural traditions.
696. **Dr Montgomery:** There is probably an issue around support for teachers in advance of engaging in some of the work. We did say very clearly in the report that a lot of experience, expertise and knowledge has been built up through work done through the CRED policy. We found that many teachers, particularly in primary schools, felt that they had developed a lot of understanding around that kind of work, both single-identity work and work with other schools. There is a lot of expertise out there amongst teachers; it is about sharing that and finding ways of utilising it. In integrated schools, teachers have experience of dealing with controversial issues on a daily basis. It is about harnessing some of that expertise and knowledge and sharing it as shared education goes forward. There is work to be done.
697. **Mr McCausland:** I want to make two very brief points. Under 31(2), have you, as the commission, ever looked at the equality of cultural provision in different education sectors? On reporting and monitoring the implementation of the charter, have you ever looked at that?
698. **Dr Montgomery:** I suppose that we look at it in an educational context. We certainly take it into account when considering the provision of education, whether that is looking at special educational needs or —
699. **Mr McCausland:** It is specific. It says: *“equal opportunities for cultural ... activity.”*
700. We are not talking about whether children have access to being taught maths or whatever.
701. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** It has never been raised with me, as commissioner, that a child feels that it is being denied its right to learn about its culture in school.
702. **Mr McCausland:** The child would not raise it if they do not know that they have that right. In that context, how can you report on the thing? What is the current cycle of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) reporting?
703. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** It is supposed to be every five years. The last time we reported was in 2008 and the Committee is behind in delivering some of that. It looks as if the next report will not be until 2016, although the UK Government, which are the state party that have to report, have already progressed their report, and it has been handed in to the Committee.
704. **Mr McCausland:** What consultation was there in Northern Ireland?

705. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** OFMDFM is responsible for that input.
706. **Mr McCausland:** You are not aware of that.
707. **Mrs Lewsley - Mooney:** I am aware of it, and we had conversations. However, we did not actually see it. The problem is that it goes into a UK report. Very often, it is more English-centric when it goes to the Committee. We have had that issue. The four commissioners across the UK put in their own report, and we raised specific issues with regard to our own jurisdictions in that report. We have not compiled ours yet, because we have not been given a date for when we have to have it ready. We hear that it will be around 2016, although, obviously, it should have been in 2013. We have copies and can share those with you.
708. **Mr McCausland:** That would be useful. Thank you.
709. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you for your presentation. We have had an interesting discussion about the definition of shared education and do not need to go over that again. You mentioned that some pupils of primary-school age were not even aware of the term “shared education”. I do not think that that is a bad thing, as long as they get on with it. As they get older, I suppose that they understand the academic benefits of shared education. If they have clear goals, shared education will benefit other aspects of their education.
710. Are you saying that schools should be supported in pursuing shared education? Do you think that that support should be provided via an external facilitator?
711. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** On your first point, a ministerial advisory group was set up to look at shared education. So, we were using the term “shared education” when we spoke to children. When we explained to them what it meant, we found that they felt that they had taken part in that kind of shared education experience, which was important. Whatever comes out of the debate on shared education, there is, obviously, a need for support for schools and teachers, as we are advising today. That support would be up to the Department when it decides how the shared education project should be rolled out. The Department will have to consider what kind of support teachers should have. It will have to determine whether it should be external or something that it should do through its own training units, or whatever.
712. **Mrs Overend:** I am trying to ask what your opinion is on what would be the best way of providing that support.
713. **Dr Montgomery:** There is a lot of expertise in the sector already. A lot of the schools that we worked with had already developed effective links with other schools, whether that was through area learning communities, for example, or by taking forward personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU), citizenship, the community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) programme, and so on.
714. The youth sector also has a lot of expertise and knowledge in bringing young people together and in less formal learning activities, which would, I think, be very helpful in preparing young people before they engage in shared education initiatives with other schools. Our view is that you should look to teachers because they have already developed knowledge and understanding. There could also be opportunities in initial teacher education and ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) to support teachers in taking this forward. Look to the experts: they are already carrying out their work and teaching.
715. **Mrs Overend:** I am aware that certain types of school might be more willing than others to pursue shared education. You might need an external facilitator to help those that are less willing to pursue shared education and give them further guidance or support.
716. **Dr Montgomery:** I do not think that we are ruling out the employment of

external facilitators, if that would help to give schools more confidence to engage. Our feeling is that there is a lot —

717. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** The important thing is that all schools buy into this. Some schools will need more support than others. That is why I go back to flexibility: one cap does not fit all. It is about how schools are supported in how they do this. There are models of good practice that some schools may share. Others may decide that they want to go along another avenue, and they may need support in other ways. It is important that that flexibility is there.
718. **Mrs Overend:** As has been said, it is a wide definition. Schools are at different stages of shared education, and every stage is good. Thank you very much.
719. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There are no further questions, so thank you very much for your time and the presentation. Patricia, I wish you well in whatever lies ahead.
720. **Mrs Lewsley-Mooney:** Thank you very much.

5 November 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
Mr Jonathan Craig
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Nelson McCausland
Mr Robin Newton
Mrs Sandra Overend
Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Ms Clare-Anne Magee *Parenting NI*
Ms Nicola McKeown

721. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome Clare-Anne Magee and Nicola McKeown. Thank you very much for being with us this morning. You were in the Public Gallery for the previous session, so, perhaps, you will have been able to anticipate some of the questions that will come your way. If you would like to make an opening statement, that will be followed by questions.

722. **Ms Clare-Anne Magee (Parenting NI):** Thank you for having us here today. Parenting NI is very honoured to have been working with parents for the past 35 years, and, for 15 years of that, we have been consulting parents on a wide range of issues. I am the director of the parenting forum, and, for the past 17 years, I have been working with parents, children and young people in the voluntary and community sector. My colleague Nicola McKeown is a participation worker. She is a former primary school teacher and cross-community facilitator at Corrymeela, so she has quite a lot of experience in shared and integrated education.

723. We are here to present on two consultations that we carried out with parents on shared and integrated education. The first, in 2012, was carried out with focus groups on behalf of the ministerial advisory group, as Mrs Lewsley-Mooney said in the earlier

session. It focused specifically on shared education. The second, in September/October this year, was an online consultation with a wide range of parents.

724. I will give you some background on Parenting NI and our forum work. We are the lead voluntary organisation providing support to parents across Northern Ireland on a wide range of parenting issues. Our four key areas of work are the helpline, our parenting programmes, parents' counselling service and our forum. The work of the forum is to work with parents to improve outcomes for children and young people, and it aims to influence policy and practice on parenting issues. We provide consultation with parents and have done so for the past 15 years. We have over 1,800 individual parents and family support organisations as members of our forum across Northern Ireland.

725. In October 2012, we were commissioned to carry out consultations with parents on behalf of the QUB ministerial advisory group on shared education. We worked with six focus groups, made up of about 55 parents, across Northern Ireland. They included groups of parents representing the views of primary schools, post-primary schools, early years settings and alternative education programmes. The purpose of that consultation was to provide a platform for parents to air their views on shared education and on how best to move forward, and the questions were provided by the ministerial advisory group.

726. During the consultation, most parents said that their children had had experience of shared education through, for example, extended or after-school programmes, sports teams, school twinning and joint classes for studying particular subjects. However, a lot of parents did not know what shared education was until other parents in the room started to discuss it and

- give examples. They did, however, feel that shared education was a positive experience and one that had great benefits for the children. The majority of parents to whom we spoke in the consultation were in favour of advancing shared education in any way, shape or form.
727. There is a proviso with the consultation. Some parents felt that the consultation had been disguised somewhat as a discussion on shared education; they felt that it was more of a discussion on Northern Ireland's education system, in general, and an attempt to move away from grammar schools towards a comprehensive-type system providing all-ability education in one setting. That point was raised in a lot of the focus groups. One group of parents felt that so strongly that they withdrew from the consultation process before we began, feeling that it was an attack on grammar schools. That gives you an idea that parents had a lot of viewpoints on the education system. Some focus groups went off on tangents here and there, and we had to pull them back quite a bit. However, some important feedback was gained from those who took part.
728. Based on the inquiry's terms of reference, I pulled out some points from the 2012 report. On definition, parents initially expressed confusion about "shared education", stating that it could be confused with integrated education. As I said, it became clear what it really was only when examples started to be given. In the consultation, shared education focused a lot on mixing, not only on a religious basis but on the basis of ability and gender. The consultation report highlighted the need for the definition to be a bit clearer.
729. A key barrier to advancing shared education raised by parents was the location of schools. One parent said that having a joint shared education programme with another school in the middle of a "one-sided housing estate" — as they put it — was not always a welcoming environment for children, particularly young children. They also discussed the geographical spread of schools, particularly in rural areas, and felt that this was a major barrier. They felt that the spread also made transport quite difficult, increasing the cost and travel time, which then impacted on timetabling for shared classes.
730. Parents also felt that general attitudes in Northern Irish society to cross-community work reflected a them-and-us mentality, which needed to be addressed in order to advance shared education. They felt that there was fear among some schools, some parents and some communities, and, therefore, shared education could not be reinforced outside the school environment, which is what is needed. Parents also felt that shared education would not meet the needs of all children: for example, one group had a few parents whose children have complex disabilities, and they felt that their physical and emotional needs had to supersede anything else.
731. Parents identified some alternative approaches, including good practice initiatives ranging from short-term project focus initiatives on school twinning to cluster group exercises among three or more schools in a particular area, which they felt was very beneficial. Some cluster group exercises focused particularly on working with parents, involving them in the processes of shared education and informing them about the messages and aims that shared education was trying to achieve and how they could help at home.
732. On the priorities and actions to improve sharing in education, parents identified that early intervention was needed and that it needed to start from very early years, at nursery level. Parents felt that shared education needed to have a clear definition and purpose, and they wanted more opportunities for participation, including theirs. They wanted to address the issues of symbols and religion rather than ignore them, because they felt that, if such discussions took place in a safe space with trained facilitators, they would be much more open, and people would have a better understanding of them.

733. Some parents looked at the need for changing parts of the curriculum and hoped that it could focus more on citizenship, social education, respect and difference. There was a very mixed response — my colleague will talk about our 2014 survey — to where religious education fits into in this and whether to change to a world religion or remove religious education from schools altogether. Parents also said that, in certain subjects, such as history, they should be encouraged that their children were being taught both sides of the story.
734. Another priority and action that parents identified was the need to increase funding and to monitor in order to improve accountability so that, if schools are being paid to participate in shared education initiatives, they should be quality initiatives that make a real difference. They wanted to raise awareness of shared education and promote that in schools and with teachers and parents. They encouraged parental participation at all levels in order to reinforce the key messages.
735. I will hand over to Nicola, who will talk about the 2014 report that we completed.
736. **Ms Nicola McKeown (Parenting NI):** In response to the consultation carried out in 2012, the parenting forum wanted to gain more up-to-date information and views from parents on the issues of shared education and, especially, integrated education. Our experience has been that parents welcomed having that input. We decided to go with an online survey, using a consultation tool and questions based on the Committee's terms of reference. This survey had the advantage of gaining a wider response from parents across Northern Ireland in a very short period. We had a very quick turnaround. The survey was initiated towards the end of September and closed two weeks later, in early October.
737. Publicity to promote the survey was generated by Parenting NI on social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as through our professional networks: for example, the education and library boards, our parenting forum database, which, as Clare-Anne has already mentioned, has over 1,800 individual parent and organisation members, as well as sending it out through newsletters and our parenting forum E-brief. It was distributed far and wide across Northern Ireland. In total, 1,297 parents viewed the survey, 502 parents completed some, but not all, questions, and 209 parents completed all of our questions.
738. I will highlight some of the key findings that we gleaned from the survey. In response to the Committee's question on the nature and definition of shared and integrated education, parents' responses varied again, as in 2012. Some parents had still not heard or were not familiar with the term "shared education", and a small minority commented on the fact that they did not know that there was a difference between shared and integrated education. However, the majority of parents who responded said that their understanding of shared education was about bringing pupils from Catholic and Protestant schools together to share resources, classes and facilities, with some saying that it should be about more than just sharing between Protestant and Catholic schools and that it could mean the twinning of Protestant schools. Parents seemed to have a clearer understanding that integrated education meant one school roof, under which pupils from all religious backgrounds were educated together and the words "tolerance" and "respective differences" were being promoted and taught.
739. Just out of interest, we asked parents who completed the survey how many of them had a child or children attending an integrated school or preschool, and 65% of respondents said that they had. We went on to ask whether parents would consider sending their child to an integrated school, and 61% of the parents who responded said that they would.
740. In response to the question about key barriers to shared education, parents

- identified that sharing classes did not necessarily mean that pupils were mixing or building relationships. Parents said that that needed to be nurtured by staff, although they realised that parents needed to be involved in that as well. There is an issue when parents present their views to children who are then told something else in school.
741. Some parents thought that shared education was a diversion from schools being fully integrated and that it was part of the process towards full integration, which many would prefer. They felt that practical arrangements of timetabling and transport to other schools could become problematic, as could the size of classes and appropriate facilities. Parents said that differences could be a barrier. Some wanted differences to be talked about; others thought that highlighting differences was not always a good thing, particularly if not handled or managed appropriately by staff.
742. Parents identified some key barriers to integrated education. Currently, there are a limited number of pupil places available. Existing integrated schools are not always nearby, especially for parents who live rurally. Some parents had the perception that academic standards can be or are lower in integrated schools due to their accepting pupils of all abilities, as opposed to the higher academic standards required by grammar schools. That seems to be a misconception reflected in the viewpoint of parents across Northern Ireland. However, parents felt that sharing education is a step in the right direction to living a shared future in Northern Ireland, as it encourages communities to work together. They wanted all stakeholders, including community groups, community representatives and parents, to be involved in educating children and for communities to learn to respect and learn from one another. They also liked the fact that, in shared education, the individual school ethos and identity that they had chosen for their child was retained and not merged into an integrated status in which there was one ethos.
743. Key enablers that parents identified to integrated education included children being integrated from an early age. This is how parents see Northern Ireland working its way forward, because perceived barriers are broken down much earlier, reducing the fear of the perceived “other”, as can sometimes happen. Parents mentioned that integrated schools are inclusive of children from all traditions and backgrounds, and the majority of parents highlighted the building of relationships in a shared society and learning about other cultures as very positive.
744. Sixty per cent of parents responding to the survey said that their child had taken part in cross-community programmes in their school or local community, but 19% said that they were not aware of what their children had participated in. Examples of good practice range from taking part in sporting activities to cultural events organised by local councils. Parents said that they were not always involved in these programmes but that they would like to be and that there was no consistency in the information given out by schools about what was happening.
745. Moving forward, parents considered the following as priorities and actions that would improve sharing and integration. Parental involvement is highlighted as important. Parents want to be included in some of the shared programmes, where appropriate, and want more information to be made available to them via schools. Also, parents want to be better informed to make better choices for their children, and they want to be engaged on the issues of what is happening in Northern Ireland in shared and integrated education. Again, some parents said that religious education or religious background should not be the central issue to sharing education but that providing quality education for all pupils was the key to moving forward.
746. Parents also said that the purpose and benefits of shared education need to be

defined. They thought that there should be more agreement, more teaching and more learning for pupils on cultural identity and an agreement on flags and emblems — whether these are to be removed from schools. Some parents saw that as an opportunity to open up a discussion that would help to improve relationships. They also wanted more teaching on respect and tolerance and on how they could be promoted. They mentioned more places being available in integrated schools and better use of funding, whether in shared or integrated education. Finally, parents said that they would like an agreement and commitment from the Northern Ireland Assembly to integrating or sharing schools by a certain date.

747. **Ms Magee:** The reports in 2012 and 2014 do not claim to reflect the views of all parents in Northern Ireland. They are there as a snapshot of the views that we collected. As Nicola said, there are still some grey areas around the definition, and, in both consultations, parents quite clearly outlined the importance of parents being involved in this process.

748. I found it astounding that, in the recent consultation that Nicola carried out, 19% of parents were not sure whether their children had been involved in shared education initiatives. Where is the communication with the school? Parents really wanted us to promote better communication. Parents appreciated being involved in the consultations and are keen to hear any feedback that the inquiry will be able to provide on shared and integrated education moving forward. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to come today.

749. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. You have covered the concerns that I had when I saw the limited number of respondents. The responses are strongly weighted towards integrated, but that seems to be because many have experience of that. It comes across very clearly that there is an issue with definition. When you normally carry out this type of engagement with parents, do you find that there is a barrier around certain

topics? Is it usually quite straightforward to have a conversation with parents, or is education a particularly difficult topic?

750. **Ms Magee:** We find that it is quite easy to approach parents with any subject. The difference is around the issue, how sensitive it is and whether we use a group of parents we have worked with in the past. If the parents' group is attached to a school, for example, we know that it has relationships and support. We know that once we step out of the room there will be somebody supporting it. If the issue is particularly sensitive and we open it up to parents in general, that makes it quite difficult for us to follow up with support and ensure that they are supported through the whole process.

751. We have not discovered too many issues with getting parents involved in discussions around education; they are actually really keen to do so. We are working with some voluntary and community groups at the moment, as well as representatives from the education and library boards and the Education and Training Inspectorate, to look at how parental participation in schools, and in education in general, can be moved forward. Parents want to be involved in their children's education. We know that education does not stop at the school gates. Parents want to have those messages reinforced; but there is lack of communication between schools and parents. We are trying to work with the Departments and the education and library boards on how we can push that forward.

752. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** So, there really is not a clear mechanism for you to have outreach to parents.

753. **Ms Magee:** As I said, over 1,800 members and organisations are attached to our membership forum. It depends on the issue. We can call on parents from our forum to participate in consultations. The online exercise is something that we have only recently started to explore. We have found that we are getting contact from more parents through online surveys. For example, in a recent consultation,

- we found that parents were on their laptops or smartphones at 9.00 pm filling out questionnaires, because they were interested in doing so. I would not necessarily be interested in sitting at home at 9.00 pm answering a questionnaire on my smartphone, but parents feel so passionate about education that they want to contribute to it.
754. We have a broad range of methods for encouraging parents to participate and consult, whether it be the focus group method or through an online consultation. Sometimes, we work through other community and voluntary organisations that are better placed to carry out consultations. We just bring in a facilitator, as they have a ready-made group of parents. We have connections to different community and voluntary groups that work with parents of children with disabilities, for example. We can support the consultation delivery with that group.
755. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You said that there were parents who exited the process because they felt that it was perhaps leading to the erosion of grammar schools, and so on. There were also those who participated but felt that it was a diversion from integrated education. Clearly, if we had an definition of sharing, perhaps that might break this down and dispel some of the concerns. From the work you have done, is there a recommendation you could bring to the Committee as to how we can better engage with parents?
756. **Ms McKeown:** Clare-Anne talked about schools being better engaged. We have some very good practice of schools engaging very clearly with parents and involving them. Parents are very positive, on the whole, about shared education, whether it is integrated or about sharing activities. No one said that they did not want their child to participate, although I am sure that had we asked every single parent in Northern Ireland we would maybe get a broader range of views. Information from schools is key to this. Some are very good at involving parents by building relationships with them and inviting them to showcase events or be part of shared education programmes.
757. However, some schools are still not engaging with parents and are not making that information available, and parents are saying that they want to know. No one has said that they have an objection to that, but if schools are their first port of call, then that is how they want to find out about what is going on. They may not have time to sit down, or they might not be interested in looking at the Northern Ireland Assembly website or use other ways. Certainly, schools seem to be the key to where you will get to all parents.
758. **Ms Magee:** As I said, we are trying to work on promoting parental engagement in education in a wide variety of ways. One thing we have looked into quite a lot is parent councils in schools. I know that Mrs Lewsley-Mooney talked about school councils with children from each age group, which is fantastic. However, again, it is about trying to acknowledge that parents are actually involved in their children's education. They are the primary educators of their children from when they are born; so, it is about trying to get them involved in the education system as well. We have done a lot of research on the development of parent councils for schools. We recently signed up to the European Parents Association. Its only key issue is to look at engaging parents in their children's education. So, we are just starting the process of exploring how best parents and schools can do that.
759. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** That is useful and should be explored, but there are difficulties in getting parents involved in parent-teacher associations. I know of schools that are finding it very difficult to get parent representatives on boards of governors. While this is laudable and would be useful to have, there is a challenge there. We need to look at the barriers to parents' participation.
760. **Ms McKeown:** We have looked at other models. We have been working with the Parents Council in Dublin, and it has

- had no problems getting a great number of parents on board. Again, it is about the relationships built in schools. We understand that parents are very busy people and do not always have time. However, I am a former teacher and I used to get very frustrated when I sent notes home in schoolbags and they were still there a week later. We would talk a lot about it in schools, and people would say “Oh, those hard-to-reach parents are just not interested.” It is about how schools engage with those parents and what the relationships are like. There are no parents who are hard to reach. They may be disinterested, but it is about schools seeing themselves as being part of the community and it not just being a case of them and us.
761. **Mr McCausland:** Picking up on the Chair’s point, I am trying to understand why two thirds of the parents who responded to the survey had children attending an integrated school. Obviously, that is not reflective of the wider community. Why do you think that you got such an unrepresentative response?
762. **Ms Magee:** It is interesting, because we did not target parents with children involved in integrated education. We put it through all our community and voluntary group networks and all the parents that we knew of from our database. A wide variety of schools were contacted, and they passed it on to their parents. It seems to be quite an emotive issue for parents involved in integrated or shared education initiatives. That is why they felt so passionate to get involved. It is certainly not a true reflection of the numbers in integrated education in Northern Ireland, but it is obvious that some passion has been ignited and that parents who have children involved in that sector feel very strongly about it.
763. **Mr McCausland:** There were two points that struck me. The issues they raised are perfectly legitimate and are issues that others may well raise. Their conclusions may be different, but the issues will probably be the same. I am just trying to get some understanding of
- this. How many people were reached by the survey potentially?
764. **Ms Magee:** It is hard to capture that, because we did it mainly through social media and our forum. We can guarantee that 1,800 individual parents and family organisations got it through our forum. On social media, the reach could have been anything up to 10,000. However, we do not have exact figures.
765. **Mr McCausland:** Yet the number that actually responded was hugely representative of the integrated sector.
766. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you very much for your insight. On the definition of shared education, do you believe that there should be a stronger emphasis on the whole idea of promoting good relations, tolerance, respect and mutual understanding?
767. **Ms Magee:** Yes, definitely. Parents would certainly like to see a clear definition with a purpose and set outcomes, and targets and milestones to achieve those. I suppose it comes down to the quality of shared education. What we actually mean by shared education could be a joint trip to the cinema — actually, maybe that is not the best example. We mean a high quality project. It is about building relationships and developing tolerance, respecting difference and trying to move things forward a little bit. Parents are looking for a definition that says, “This is what shared education is. These are the initiatives that your child is involved in. This is how you can help promote the message that we are trying to get across.”
768. **Ms McKeown:** Parents just want to be informed about what is going on. They have commented that, for example, a note goes home in the schoolbag saying, “Your school is joining up with a school down the road next week.” I have seen that happen, but it does not cut it for parents any more. Parents, like pupils, want to know why the school is joining with another school. Parents are not against it, largely, but they want to know what is going on, the purpose

- behind it, and the benefits of sharing in education.
769. **Mr Rogers:** You also mentioned that we need to have more schools involved in the real sharing of education. Do you believe that a shared education premium in funding would help to facilitate that?
770. **Ms Magee:** In the 2012 report, parents said that they would prefer that there were some sort of accountability and closer monitoring of schools that were receiving funding for shared education initiatives. Some schools were treating it as just a joint trip while others were doing a lot more work on it. However, parents did not comment on that specifically. They were not asked that specific question, so I cannot give an honest answer to that point.
771. **Ms McKeown:** Parents made exactly the same comments in the 2014 report.
772. **Mr Hazzard:** Apologies that I missed the very start of your presentation. I just want to know a couple of things. Did you provide a definition of shared and integrated education to the adults who were filling in the survey?
773. **Ms McKeown:** We toyed with the idea of providing that. There was a lot of discussion around whether there is a definition and whether we could find one. Once we discussed it, we decided that, for the benefit of this, we would not go with any definition. We were not clear where the definition was coming from, so we did not want to spoil it. Sometimes providing things to parents that give them ideas can spoil the results. We wanted them to come up with what they understood about those terms. That is why there was a wide variety of responses. They seemed to be clearer about integrated education. I do not know whether that is because the integrated sector has been around a lot longer and there has been more talk about it. However, they were very similar.
774. **Mr Hazzard:** You went on, though, to ask them very specific questions about the advantages and disadvantages of shared education. Do you not think that it is slightly unfair to ask a parent what the advantages and disadvantages of shared education are when they may not know what shared education is?
775. **Ms McKeown:** We wanted to see what their understanding was, first of all. As I said, we were not sure of where that shared education definition was coming from. We did not want to approach it saying, "We have pulled it from here, but it may not be correct".
776. **Ms Magee:** We have the raw data and can certainly share that with the Committee. We thought that not giving an initial definition might actually help get a definition and encourage some discussion.
777. **Mr Hazzard:** I cannot help thinking, given that you went on to ask very specific questions, that you could have even given examples of what shared education is, so that when people were asked about advantages and disadvantages they could have used those examples. That is why I am not surprised to find that there is such confusion among parents.
778. **Ms Magee:** That is one of the difficulties of doing online consultation, I have to say. In the focus groups in the 2012 work, when parents did not know what shared education was, other parents started giving examples and then the parents who had not known were saying, "Oh, yes". The benefit of having focus groups is that parents can bounce ideas off one another. The difficulty with the online consultation is that they do not have the mechanism to do that, so that is a flaw. One of the issues we had with this consultation was the number of questions allowed per consultation. It was already a detailed consultation survey. We have a bit of knowledge on the subject, and it was taking us 15 minutes to complete it. So, we are aware that a parent would take a little bit longer to read through it all.
779. **Mr Hazzard:** You mentioned that a particular parent group from the grammar sector had an issue. Can you expand on that? Was that one person

- who responded, or was it a group of parents who dropped out because they felt that shared education was about comprehensivising the education system? Again, I cannot help thinking that if a definition of shared education had been given at the outset —
780. **Ms Magee:** No, this one was in 2012, when a definition of shared education was given, based on the ministerial advisory group's definition. Even with that, they felt that we were trying to, as you say, "comprehensivise" the education system.
781. **Mr Hazzard:** OK; no problem.
782. **Ms McKeown:** In the 2014 report, there is still the perception that standards are lower in integrated schools. I think that parents just want to be informed about the benefits. In answer to the question of whether you would send your child to, say, an integrated school, some said that they would not do so because a grammar education is better.
783. **Mr Hazzard:** So, despite the fact that two thirds of the respondents were from integrated schools, there was still the perception that standards in integrated schools were not as good.
784. **Ms McKeown:** By some.
785. **Mr Hazzard:** How many?
786. **Ms McKeown:** Between 10 and 20 respondents.
787. **Mr Hazzard:** I saw the 2012 survey, which was based on 50 people. I would not read too much into that survey because of the sheer lack of numbers in it.
788. Finally, most respondents felt that religion should be catered for outside school. Again, I cannot get away from the fact that two thirds of the respondents were from integrated schools, but, again, integrated education deals with religion inside school. Not once in any of our education systems is there a voice talking about leaving religion outside schools. Where does that figure come from? How many people were surveyed?
789. **Ms Magee:** I will just pick up on that, Nicola, before you do.
790. One of the issues is whether parents are fully aware of what sending their child to an integrated school involves. I am not saying that they make that decision lightly, but do they know whether to ask that question? For some, the perception is that an integrated school is a completely neutral venue and does not do anything like that. Others have a bit more information and know a bit more about what it entails.
791. The religious education issue gained mixed responses from parents. Even some of those who sent their children to integrated schools felt that religion should not be taught in the school at all, and some felt that it should be taught. They felt that the fact that there are different religions should be addressed and should not just be ignored. I think that is where the numbers were mixed. Even though the parents sent their children to an integrated education school, their views are still different.
792. **Mr Hazzard:** For me, on the whole, the real analysis or answer out of this is the confusion around the definition of shared and integrated education. Given that the survey did not provide a definition, I do not know how much we can read into the findings other than the fact that there is no clear blue water around definitions. It is a missed opportunity.
793. **Ms Magee:** We did this just to get a bit of snapshot, to be honest with you. It was not meant to be a heavily researched social-science-type piece of work. If nothing else comes out of what we have done, it will be just to say that there needs to be a clearer definition. If that is the key finding that we can provide for you today, then that is the key finding.
794. **Ms McKeown:** Also that parents are interested.
795. **Ms Magee:** Parents want to be involved in it.

796. **Mr Hazzard:** I noticed that only six parents from the Fermanagh area responded. Perhaps that is our area of strongest shared education examples. I wonder whether we would have had different feedback from there. That is just a thought.
797. **Mr Newton:** I thank Ms McKeown and Ms Magee for coming to the Committee. Forgive me if I missed it when you were summarising the findings, but on page 4 of your 2014 report, under the area, “Ways forward to improve Shared/Integrated Education”, you refer to parents’ suggestion that all teacher training degrees should be joint. How strong was that feeling among parents?
798. **Ms McKeown:** I do not have numbers exactly, because, with a lot of the questions, it was a matter of sitting down and counting how many responses there were. However, there was a strong feeling from parents that, if we are to move forward and are encouraging children to share, that should come at all levels in society and that teachers should be modelling this as well as parents. A small grouping of parents was in favour of having a joint campus. It was not something that was specifically asked, but parents did refer to it.
799. **Ms Magee:** We can go back and have a look at that and get numbers for you if that is helpful.
800. **Ms McKeown:** We can count them and send them to you.
801. **Mr Newton:** You used the word “strong”, but the report says that it was suggested as opposed to there being any strength behind the proposal. Obviously, that is more in the area of the Department for Employment and Learning. I would be interested to know about that.
802. **Ms McKeown:** I will get back to you on that one.
803. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you for your time and for the work that you have put into this. I think it has been very useful.

19 November 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Colum Eastwood
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend

Witnesses:

Ms Noreen Campbell	<i>Northern Ireland</i>
Ms Frances Donnelly	<i>Council for Integrated</i>
Dr Helen McLaughlin	<i>Education</i>

804. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome our witnesses. We have Noreen Campbell, who is the chief executive of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE); Helen McLaughlin, the vice chairperson of NICIE; and Frances Donnelly, who is senior development officer. You are all very welcome. Thank you very much for taking the time to come this morning. I invite you to make an opening statement, and members will follow up with some questions.

805. **Ms Noreen Campbell (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education):**

Good morning, everybody. I thank the Committee for initiating this inquiry. I think that you will agree that the volume of responses and the public debate generated confirms that it is an area of utmost interest. I thank you for giving the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education the opportunity to present to you through written submissions and this morning, and hopefully we will be able to offer some solutions that you will want to question us about. I am the chief executive of NICIE and was previously principal of Hazelwood Integrated College in north Belfast. My colleagues this morning

are Helen McLaughlin, who is a management consultant, a parent of an integrated pupil and vice chairperson of NICIE; and Frances Donnelly, who is a senior development officer in NICIE and also a parent of integrated pupils. Helen will start this morning.

806. **Dr Helen McLaughlin (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education):**

I echo what Noreen says. Thank you for inviting us here this morning. We are here very much in the spirit of trying to help with the inquiry and to answer your questions as best we can in that spirit. As Noreen said, I am the vice chair of NICIE and am also the parent of a child who attends Rowandale Integrated Primary School. Just before we came in here this morning, we had some very good news, which is that the development proposal that Rowandale submitted some months ago has been approved today. So, just by chance, before we walked in here, we have had that really good news. I will talk to you today as a parent of Rowandale as well as vice chair of NICIE.

807. I want to say a bit about my own education first. I come from a Catholic background and went to a fantastic Catholic school with wonderful teachers and great lifelong friends. One day a group of Quakers came along to our school and created opportunities for us to get together with kids from local Protestant schools. It was a lot of fun. It was very contrived; it had to be made to happen. It did not have a lot of impact except to make me realise what was missing from my otherwise wonderful education, which was children from the other community and, indeed, other communities.

808. When I became a parent, I knew that I wanted my child to go to an integrated school. My parents, at that stage, being slightly older, Catholic parents, had some questions about what that actually

- meant. I know that, as a Committee, you are interested in definitions of integrated education. They were very interested in what that would mean for my grandson. My father asked a question that has really stuck with me, which I think is an excellent question. He said, "How will he be taught the difference between right and wrong if there is no faith-based ethos in the school?" I thought that was a great question. Although they never said it, I know that they also had questions about what would happen about sacramental education, preparation for first communion and those sorts of things.
809. I feel very proud of how Rowandale has answered their questions, not just in words but in actions. It is really in talking to you about how Rowandale dealt with those issues that I hope to get across to you what integrated education actually means — its definition in very practical terms.
810. In terms of the difference between right and wrong, before you get through Rowandale school gate, there is a sign that greets you and tells you what the school's value base and ethos are and what its sense of right and wrong is. The first line of the sign says:
- "We are integrated — we nurture all our children in the values of their own background. Our aim is to enrich individual identity through the understanding of other beliefs."*
811. It goes on, "We are anti-bias", "We are all-ability", "We are democratic" and so on. So, in answer to my father's question about right and wrong, my child's education is steeped in a very strong value base, based on equality, diversity, respect, and, perhaps even more importantly, parity.
812. In a faith-based school there are also strong values, of course, but alongside that there are clear messages about which faith takes precedence in the school, through the symbols, iconography and practices in the school. Even where faith schools claim to be mixed, to the children from the minority community, there can be no mistaking what the dominant tradition is. In an integrated school, your background is entirely valued, and your friend's different background is entirely valued. No background is dominant, and no background has to be silent. That is what we mean by parity in an integrated school.
813. As regards the sacraments, I think that speaks to how integrated schools deal with identity. Sometimes there is a bit of a perception that you have to leave your identity or background at the door of an integrated school, but that is really not the case. My son was prepared for his first communion in his integrated school. In fact, I would say that his communion experience was multiplied and intensified by doing it at an integrated school. What made the day amazing and unforgettable for me, and very striking for my parents, was that, once all of the wee Catholic children had made their first communion in church and had returned to the school for a party, the party was hosted by the parents and children who had not been involved in the church ceremony. In other words, the party was hosted by the Protestant mummies, daddies and children, and, indeed, mummies, daddies and children from other backgrounds. It was pretty overwhelming for me and my family. I felt that my child's background and culture were celebrated, not just by and with his own side but by the whole community. It was a totally enriched and enriching experience.
814. That said, you could ask why more children do not go to integrated schools. We were very lucky as parents. Before we had a school-age child, local parents wanted to choose an integrated education for their child, but they could not, because there was no integrated school in Moira. So, they did all of the hard work of setting the school up. Indeed, in the face of fierce opposition, it was quite a battle. It would have been very easy to miss the fact that there is a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education. How many parents who want a state education or a faith education for their children are left to go and set it up

- themselves? How many parents have the knowledge and skills to set up a school from scratch?
815. I hope that, in this brief talk, I have defined what integrated education means to me and my family. I am not here today to say that integrated schools are better than everyone else or that other schools are not good schools or that they do not want the best for their children; of course, they do. We face challenges in the integrated movement. Sometimes we get it wrong, just like other schools. However, for me, the single thing that defines integrated education and makes it different is that we deliberately strive to educate children from different community backgrounds together all day, every day. We work deliberately and consciously with those children to celebrate all identities in a spirit of parity. My son's friendships are mixed. Without any contrivance, he is with kids from the other community and other communities all day, every day. No one has to invent or pay for a special project to make it happen. That is what integrated schools do.
816. **Ms N Campbell:** I will ask Frances to talk a little bit about the intersection between integrated and shared education.
817. **Ms Frances Donnelly (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education):** Thank you, Noreen. When looking at the integrated sector's involvement in shared education in the few words that I am going to say, my reference point is the definition of shared education provided by the ministerial advisory group, which is that it involves two or more schools from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits, promoting efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. That is a slightly abbreviated version, but the three key areas are the educational, economic and societal benefits.
818. Integrated schools exist, first and foremost, to be excellent schools. Why else would any of us, as parents, send our children to a school? They also exist to have strong connections to local communities. Consequently, they immediately recognise the educational and economic benefits of sharing with, and learning from, others. This is simply a good educational approach, and it is second nature to integrated schools.
819. The societal benefits of sharing are arguably the most difficult to achieve in any shape or form. However, in an integrated school, they are realised at every level of the structure of the school itself. That does not make managing diversity any less challenging, as that is the same across all sectors. However, it does provide a platform for community relations all day, every day. Therefore, our schools are uniquely placed to promote active community cohesion.
820. The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) evaluation report of the shared education projects funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) noted that the longer-term aim for all schools is for shared education to be so integral to the ethos and fabric of each school community that it becomes the way that we do things around here. That is the starting point for integrated schools with regard to community relations; it is not a long-term goal. That is simply where we come from. It is the way that we do things in integrated schools.
821. In terms of wider shared education, we have schools that are active participants in the area learning communities. In many cases, they have taken the lead role in working with those communities. They also provide recognisable neutral venues and safe spaces for activities and events. We have had a number of schools submit proposals for the shared education campus, namely Hazelwood, Sperrin and North Coast Integrated Colleges. We have been disappointed that none of our integrated schools has made it through the first tranche. That is a great source of disappointment and surprise. We feel that they were very strong and robust proposals. Therefore, NICIE would ask for clarification about the process for the shared education

- campus and reassurance that comments from the local education and library board cannot unduly influence the outcome of that process. Integrated schools play a full role in trying to achieve the shared education targets and will continue to do so. However, we, as full partners, are entitled to full recognition in that and, indeed, special recognition, particularly in terms of societal sharing and the contribution that integrated schools make.
822. I will just pick out a couple of specific shared education projects that NICIE has been able to contribute to and make great advances with. These were projects that were supported by IFI and Atlantic Philanthropies. One of those was hosted by NICIE. That was Sharing Classrooms, Deepening Learning. That project recognised that, in terms of the entitlement framework and shared education, the context in which a lot of post-primary teachers deliver courses is changing. There are mixed classes and more diverse environments, and that can give great uncertainty to teachers. It can make them feel very vulnerable and uncomfortable. That should not come as any surprise. It is a consequence of our segregated education system and our teacher training. It is also something that we recognised with new teachers coming into the integrated sector. Our project worked on supporting those teachers with professional development. We supported bespoke training and offered accredited training for those teachers, encouraging them to go through their own journey of exploration of diversity, which they have often never had any opportunity to do before. It is only by encouraging our teachers to go through their own journey that they can fully support young people going through the equivalent.
823. That project remains really important to us. In NICIE the funding has stopped, but the work continues and has gone into other initiatives, which Noreen will speak about in a couple of minutes. It certainly raises critical issues around our teacher training and the teachers that go out into schools that are completely different from what they were a number of years before, certainly in regard to delivering the entitlement framework.
824. The second project was the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education (PIEE) project, which was hosted by the North Eastern Education and Library Board. Some of you may already be slightly familiar with that. I believe that the North Eastern Board presented on that a while ago. That focused on small, rural primary schools, controlled and maintained, developing sustainable relationships. I think that is one of the key words in all of the debate — the sustainability of sharing; not one-off projects, but something that develops an interdependency. That was my certainly my personal experience, because I was the NICIE seconded officer to PIEE. That was over four years, with 28 schools in partnerships and really important sustainable relationships.
825. The one thing that I found in PIEE and in integrated education is that parents are much more open to sharing than I think we give them credit for. Parents want sharing wholeheartedly, and they know when they are being short-changed. I think they are open to new and innovative ideas and that we should trust our parents more in the process going ahead.
826. **Ms N Campbell:** Thank you, Frances. My colleagues have outlined the key characteristics of shared education and integrated education, but both approaches are a response to our divided system. Integrated education was developed to challenge segregation in education. Shared education operates within the segregated system. It creates connections between schools of different types that are typified by being of a dominant or single identity. In integrated schools, sharing is the daily norm.
827. You will not be surprised if this morning I concentrate on integrated education and why the duty imposed on Government to encourage and facilitate it should be respected and implemented. Doing so will allow us, as a society, to move

- beyond segregation to an integrated system of education — I emphasise, integrated with a small i — one fit for purpose for the 21st century.
828. What would such an integrated system look like? First of all, it would be made up of the schools that are integrated in law, as we have 62 such schools at the moment, as well as four additional schools looking to join that group through the process of transformation. The system would also include schools that are integrated in ethos. They may be Catholic or controlled in management type, but they would, through their daily experience of their children, have moved beyond a dominant ethos to an ethos of equality that characterises an integrated school.
829. NICIE has developed a programme, which we call Positive Partnerships for Integration, to support those schools that wish to recognise the diversity of their students and to move away from a dominant ethos to one of respect and equality for all. We consulted fully with all stakeholders when we were developing that. We consulted the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Commission for Catholic Education, the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and the various political parties. We are ready to start the programme, and we have schools interested in participating in the programme, but we do not have the funding to do so.
830. Under our proposed shift from a segregated system to an integrated system, faith schools and controlled schools would continue to exist, but they would be obliged to connect their students through shared education in a meaningful way. Such a change in system would allow us to reimagine ourselves as a society that is not defined by difference.
831. Why do we need that step change, and why are we in NICIE calling for structural and systemic reform? We do so for societal reasons. If we want to move beyond division, we must address the division of our children. That division is not a result of parental choice but is a legacy of our history and divided past. That segregation replicates and perpetuates division. Until now, no one has seriously engaged with the part played by our schools in keeping children separate and normalising for our children a non-thinking acceptance of the other and of division. Our children deserve better. We can and should no longer assume that children inherit a green or orange identity at birth.
832. Moreover, we argue that the status quo is not an option. In NICIE's second submission, I included a chart that was taken from the report on monitoring the peace process. It showed the demographic shift between our two major traditions. Are we content to see Catholic schools taking an increasing share of the system as the population changes? We argue that that is not a recipe for a peaceful, inclusive society.
833. There are sound educational reasons for change. Children learn best when they feel accepted. Too many of our children are asked to leave part of their identity at the school door. I argue that there is no classroom in any school in Northern Ireland where the children are the same, whatever it says on the badge or the door. We do a disservice to our children and their emerging sense of self when we presume an identity for them.
834. There are strong economic reasons for reform. Our economic situation is dire. It has been calculated that £80 million a year could be saved by removing the duplication that characterises our system. That money would be better spent on tackling educational underachievement than on keeping children separate.
835. The underpinning principle of our system is supposed to be parental choice. In all major public opinion polls, parents tell us that they would prefer to see their children educated together. The majority of our integrated schools are oversubscribed and, in some cases, have not been allowed to grow. In a great number of areas, there is no choice of an integrated school. That situation must be rectified.

836. NICIE argues that we can no longer defer reform. The debate stimulated by this inquiry supports our conclusion. The question is; how can reform be achieved? For that reason, we have called for a Patten-style inquiry, which would be tasked with the reformation of our education system. In addition to that, there are some steps that we think could be taken immediately that would support the dismantling of the segregated system and the creation of an integrated system. The first is to do with planning. We are calling for a level playing field in planning. There is no planning authority to test and provide for parental choice in integrated education. Parents are expected to initiate transformation of their schools or to set up new schools.
837. If I am a Catholic parent and I want a Catholic school, CCMS will have provided a choice of such schools for me and similarly with the ELBs and controlled schools. If I am a parent who would like an integrated school and my local school is oversubscribed or there is no integrated school, I am expected to go to the local single-identity school. We think that that is an outrageous situation and that the time has come when the human rights of parents to have integrated education and to see their children educated together are respected. For that reason, we argue that the new ELB must accept its responsibility under the Education Order 1986 and must plan to ensure that there is sufficient integrated choice in every area. Area-based planning must be responsive to that and must test for parental demand.
838. We also think that there is an argument for looking at the issue of ownership of schools, albeit that that might be something that would be left to a Patten-style inquiry, because it would be controversial. We have a unique and complicated system of ownership, with its roots going back into the last century. Only controlled schools are owned by the state. Grammar schools, Catholic schools and grant-maintained integrated schools are owned by the trustees
- of the schools, yet all are equally in receipt of government funds. That can cause difficulties for local communities, as evidenced by the recent Clintyclay Primary School controversy. A single system of ownership would help move us to an integrated or unified system of education.
839. Equally, I think that I have counted 10 different systems of boards of governors in our schools. There is no reason for that whatsoever. If we had a uniform system of governance across our schools, it ought not to impact on the ethos of the schools, but it would at least begin the process of unifying our system of education and moving towards a cohesive system that will provide world-class education.
840. There is also the issue of teacher training. The recent international review panel on teacher training argued that maintaining the status quo of segregation at that level was not an option and proposed a range of solutions to creating an integrated system of teacher education. Unless we educate our trainee teachers together, we will not effectively deliver on shared education.
841. There is also the issue of preschool education, and that can be tackled easily. Preschool education is supposed to be non-sectoral, yet our nurseries and nursery units are often seen as denominational or single identity. DE should only fund those nursery units and schools that are genuinely and overtly open to all.
842. NICIE believes that change is necessary and possible. Nelson Mandela said:
- "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."*
843. Our schools should be places where children can learn to love, and where we can inculcate acceptance and respect of the other and cherish difference and diversity.

844. The findings of the inquiry and any recommendations are important. You have the power to remove education from the political arena. You can shift the focus on education to what is best for children and best for future society. Thank you for your attention, and we are pleased to take questions.
845. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much for your presentation. It was quite surprising for Committee members, but the submissions we have received have promoted quite heated discussion in the press. Perhaps some of that has not been particularly edifying.
846. Will you maybe explain why it has become so controversial when, for us — certainly for me — shared education is a very simple concept?
847. **Ms N Campbell:** There have been different levels of controversy in the press. In NICIE, we felt that the CCMS challenge to remove article 64 was controversial. We felt that that was unhelpful in getting the benefit of the Committee, which we see as a very positive tool for people coming together to find solutions to a better system for the future.
848. Our position is that we do not see shared education here and integrated education there. It is not an “either/or”; it is an “and”. We have a model of full immersion sharing, which is integrated, and a system of major division. Shared education recognises that there is a right and a need for young people to connect, and shared education is a mechanism for doing that. We want to work with shared education to make sure that that mechanism is meaningful and strong. Equally, we need to move away from segregation and allow schools to recognise the diversity and the change in identity of their children and to become integrated in their ethos.
849. There will always be some schools that want a dominant ethos, which is faith-based or single identity, and those are the schools that would benefit most from shared education. Many schools will say that there any number of different children in their classrooms and want to explore how they can recognise that and be recognised for the work they are doing on that without changing the ownership of the school or the management structure or type.
850. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It would appear that you have been a little dismissive of the concept of shared education. Even in your comments today, you said that shared education operates in the segregated system. Do you not recognise that sharing is as much as some communities will give at this stage, and that something is better than nothing?
851. **Ms N Campbell:** We absolutely accept that something is better than nothing. As Frances outlined, we have had quite a significant input into shared education. We work within it and encourage all our schools to work within it. Our positive partnerships initiative is also based on sharing.
852. I would not want to be dismissive of shared education, but I do think that there is a critical point. Shared education is based on, and works within, the system we have. I do not think that the system we have is fit for purpose of the 21st century. I think the system has to change.
853. Shared education is, and hopefully will develop as, a very useful mechanism for connecting young people. There are big challenges with that in how you ensure that there is long-term and meaningful connection of young people across the sectors. If those can be overcome, it will definitely be of benefit, but it is not enough in itself.
854. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Do you feel threatened by shared education?
855. **Ms N Campbell:** No. We welcome shared education. We think it has really put a focus on what is important in education and has brought that to the public’s attention. When the public were asked about their understanding of shared education and integrated

- education, as they were in a poll in the 'Belfast Telegraph' two weeks ago, they were very clear that integrated education was children being educated together on a daily basis, and 64% of them said that that was option they preferred. They also clearly understood that shared education was children or schools sharing resources across the divide and within the system.
856. There is a critical difference, but we are not saying that that is a reason not to support shared education or shared initiatives. We encourage integrated schools to be part of those.
857. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I want to look at the comments about area planning that you made in your paper. You feel that, in some way, this has limited the progress of the integrated education sector. We had representation from Professor Knox and Professor Borooah, and they claimed that there are issues with academic attainment in integrated schools when compared to non-integrated schools. You have spoken about the surveys and said that parents would like their children to be in a shared experience. Is the priority perhaps that they want their children to be at schools where they can excel and where there is a higher level of attainment?
858. **Ms N Campbell:** I think that there are two distinct issues there, but let me begin with the latter. I expect that most people around the table are parents, and, as parents, our duty is to put our children first and ensure that they have the best education possible. No integrated school would have survived for a nanosecond if it were not able to give that assurance to parents. We have 62 schools, and there is a range across those schools. I think that the focus is generally on post-primary, because you have very hard measurements to look at there, and people can see where a school is or is not.
859. Some of our schools are doing extremely well and others are not doing as well as they should. We are totally committed to supporting schools to improve their performance for their young people. We think that that is what schools are about. They are about ensuring that young people can take their place in the world and fulfil all their objectives.
860. We did a comparison. A lot of our integrated schools have just come through inspections, and we tested the inspection reports over the last three years against the chief inspector's report. For example, in our primary schools, where teaching and learning is good or better, the Northern Ireland average is 82%, but, for our integrated primary schools, it is 96%. So, for the 25 out of 26 primary schools that were inspected, teaching and learning was deemed to be good or better. None of those primary schools were deemed to have poor management, and 96% of integrated primary schools were assessed as having pastoral care that was very good or outstanding, and the chief inspector outlined that there was a clear correlation between good achievement and high-quality pastoral care.
861. In our post-primary schools, 68% were rated as good or better for overall effectiveness against the Northern Ireland average of 63%. Some 92% were rated good or better for pastoral care. That, again, was above the Northern Ireland average. Our English and maths and five good GCSEs also compare favourably. That is a figure that you will be interested in. We would like to do a bit more work on getting the statistics in.
862. If you look at the performance of integrated schools compared to other schools, that is, controlled and Catholic schools together, the number of young people who are getting five good GCSEs, including English and maths, is 38% compared to 34.5% for the others. The more interesting one is free school meals. The whole focus of the chief inspector's report was on free school meals and underachievement and, in particular, underachievement of working-class boys. There is a very striking difference because, in integrated schools, 24.5% of our boys on free school meals are achieving five good GCSEs. That is significantly better than

- boys in either Catholic or controlled schools. So, we are getting some things right, but we are always conscious of the need to get things better, and we are committed totally to doing so. I do not know if that answers your question on the academic side.
863. You connected that with area-based planning and the lack of numbers of people choosing integrated schools. There is no central planning for integrated education. Historically, 40 of our schools were set up by parents' groups. Parents had to get together across the divide, which was not necessarily easy, and had to create those schools. In the first 10 years, they had to get the funding and the money to create those schools. They had to face enormous barriers to do so. That speaks of the success of our schools because there were such deep roots embedded in those schools by parents.
864. Another 22 schools went through the process of transformation. Again, parents and, in some cases, boards of governors, said, "We want our school to change. We want our school to become integrated". That is not an easy process, as the parents in Clintyclay have discovered because there were still obstacles. If I am a parent who wants a controlled school for my child, I can go out and look, and the ELB will have said, "We need x number of schools here" and there will be a choice of schools; similarly, for Catholic schools. So, why should parents who want an integrated education, which is, after all, the norm of the type of education across the world, be the ones who have to create that for themselves. To me, that is the absolute opposite of facilitating and encouraging integrated education.
865. We think that area-based planning has made the situation worse. Despite the Minister saying that he wants area-based planning to be for areas not sectors, individuals not institutions, and that he wants innovative solutions, the CCMS has managed and planned for the Catholic side, and the ELBs have managed and planned for the controlled side, and nobody is managing planning for the integrated side. After lobbying, we now have a place at the table, but nobody will accept responsibility for planning. We think that if the new ELB accepts that responsibility, which sits under the 1986 Act, that will make a significant difference.
866. We think it is significant that, in the review of Irish-medium, the Minister accepted the recommendations and, at the same time, said that he would support a similar type of review of strategic planning for integrated education. That review puts at the heart of it who is responsible for planning for Irish-medium education, who is responsible for testing parental demand and who is responsible for removing the barriers. We want the same for integrated education. We want a level playing field.
867. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Just to link it back to the question, you mentioned oversubscription, but your oversubscription is really limited to only a small number of successful schools.
868. **Ms N Campbell:** No. Out of 62 schools, they are all oversubscribed except seven. I might be out by one or two.
869. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You have the transport advantage over the controlled and maintained sectors.
870. **Ms N Campbell:** The transport advantage works in favour of different people in different ways. My point is that there are 62 schools in 62 areas, but there are a vast number of areas where there is no integrated choice at all. That is what we should be focusing on and making sure that parents have that choice.
871. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I will return to some questions, because other members have indicated that they wish to speak, but, before I do that, I welcome the pupils from Christ the Redeemer Primary School. You are very welcome to the Committee this morning. Members of the Committee will meet you after we have completed our session here. Thank you very much for attending here today.

872. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks very much for the presentation. I will just start around language. I think that, on all sides, some of it is inflammatory. I want to focus on the words “segregation” and “segregated”. I do not think that it is applicable to the situation. The definition in front of me states that it is to actively and on a predetermined basis separate. It is the physical act of separating. However, I think that our system allows for parents to choose. Even in the document that NICIE has produced, it states that there will be an integrated college

“within a reasonable distance from your home.”

873. If that had said, “there may not be an integrated college within a reasonable distance from your home”, there may be grounds to look at it as the choice is not there. If someone sitting at home chooses to send their child to a particular school, and you actively accuse them of being a segregationist, I think that is wrong. You need to look at the use of the words “segregate” and “segregation”. I do not think that reflects the situation. If you want to talk about duplication or replication or something else, there may be grounds to do that, but I think that segregated is a loaded term.

874. **Ms N Campbell:** I am sorry if I am hogging this now, but “segregated” is a loaded term, and it really touches to the heart of the debate. We do not like the word. But, interestingly, we talk about segregated housing, and it does not seem to have the same emotive impact on us. When we talk about segregated education, we feel really unhappy because we do not want to think that we are keeping our children divided, yet 92% of our children go to schools that are a majority of one or the other. One of the definitions of segregation is the keeping of people apart. There are historical reasons for that. We just need to say that we have had a history, and it has shaped a particular type of educational system, but now we are in a different place, let us find the means. I said this morning, “Let us create an

integrated system of education with a small ‘i’.” I am more than happy to say, “Give us a different word. Let it be a unified system of education.” That is something that the Committee could really play a part in. If we do not want a segregated or duplicated, or whatever word we use, system of education, what system of education do we need? What we do call it and how do we get there? That is where the value of this Committee comes in to help us chart our way from one point to another.

875. This Committee is leading the way in having this debate, and we do not want to feel that we are playing a negative part in it. If we have done so, I have to apologise for that. We want to be part of the solution, and we want to find a means and to model our integrated values, which are about listening, learning and understanding. If we fail, we have to learn from that, but I believe that there is something about that word and the way that it touches at our core that tells us that we need to look at it more closely. We do not want it. If we do not want it, how do we make sure that it can never be used to describe us, and how can we make sure that people looking in on us from outside do not say, “They are segregated by religion in their education”, which is what they do.

876. **Mr Hazzard:** It is positive to hear that you have taken that on board. The same question will be put to others, you can rest assured of that.

877. There was racial segregation in the United States of America. However, when schools came together, results did not necessarily improve, because the schools were not socially integrated. Very often, I find that the integrated movement here focuses solely on religious and ethnic integration. I know that it does not do so in practice, but, when you read it, the definition is always about religion. It is always Catholic and Protestant or other. We never sell the advantages of social integration and having poor kids alongside kids from affluent backgrounds.

878. I know that integrated schools do that, but they do not sell it. When it comes to the big argument, it is always about the cohesiveness of our society, with Catholics and Protestants. It is not about the other divisions in society. I feel that, when we talk about integration or shared, we need to make sure that we look at socio-economic sharing and integration as well. Do you also agree with that, and is that important?
879. **Dr H McLaughlin:** I do agree with that. Something that you said touches on something that we have thought about a lot in the last couple of years. You mentioned how we sell ourselves. The social mixing and all-ability mixing is something that we very much strive for. I often use the word “strive”, because I do not think that we ever get it perfect, but we strive, and social mixing is a huge part of that. In my son’s school, you can see that. You can see the all-ability aspect.
880. You are right. When we come into the public debate, then because this had its roots in looking at the fact that we educate Catholics and Protestants separately in this country, it has remained a real core driving force for it. It may be that, when we come into public debate, we go back to talking about that. We even have to remind ourselves always to say that our divisions are very much based on Catholic and Protestant but that, now, we have to take account of the fact that there are other communities, other language groups and other ethnic groups and all of that. Yes, that is a huge part of what we do as well.
881. **Ms Donnelly:** It is also worth noting that the status of the integrated sector as such is defined in legislation. So, if our language is about Protestant and Catholic, it is also related to the fact that, by law, an integrated school is defined in such a way: reasonable numbers of Catholic and Protestant. The other factors, of course, are important. We have had an ongoing debate with the Department of Education around the fact that people now identify themselves in many ways, whether they are active churchgoers or whether they are culturally Protestant or culturally Catholic or whether they are newcomers. This whole idea of having to have numbers and balance is part of the integrated ethos, but it also can be very confining as well and does not always reflect the changing society in which we live.
882. **Mr Hazzard:** Finally, I know that there has been great work across the board in the integrated sector on cultural awareness, certainly when it comes to those who maybe had a fear before that their Irish cultural identity was never reflected in an integrated school. We have heard before of a shared situation where some schools have come together and played Gaelic football or whatever it might be. Can you give us a flavour of how the integrated sector has looked to embrace or to promote Irish culture? I am aware that in this paper, for example, there is no Irish. To my mind, looking at the pictures, there are no pictures of Gaelic football or hurling or anything in any of this. There is plenty of rugby and soccer. Again, I know that you are working on it, but I would love to know how far you still think you have to go.
883. **Dr H McLaughlin:** I will chip in with a small example and then hand over. In my son’s school, for example, they have now started to offer Irish-language teaching, and that is new thing. That is through having a member of staff who is able to offer that, which is fantastic. It sounds like a very clichéd way to do it, but there is a good awareness of things like celebrating St Patrick’s Day and looking at what that is all about and what that means for people and so on. That leads to discussions about Irishness around the world and that sort of thing. Just on a school level, I am starting to see more of that. He is in year 5, and I am starting to see more of that in the last few years. I will hand over to my colleague for the bigger picture.
884. **Ms N Campbell:** Again, our schools were established to ensure parity of esteem and ensure that everybody felt included and accepted. That meant ensuring that as far as possible. As Helen touched on, sometimes it comes down to whether you have a teacher available who can offer a

- particular subject. Post-primary schools all have their Gaelic team and their soccer team, and, if they are big enough, they may also have a rugby team. Most post-primary schools offer Irish in some shape. It may be in taster classes, or it may be done as it is in Shimna, which is a specialist language college. In fact, I was following it on Facebook, and it was having some sort of “talkathon” in Irish. I should have been able to say that in Irish, but I cannot.
885. The commitment there is to ensure that people feel accepted and have access to their culture and can bring their culture into school. It is not just about Irish culture; it is about the culture of every child in the school, so it is really important.
886. I think that the Remembrance Day assemblies at our integrated schools are particularly poignant because you have there this recognition of something that can be controversial outside and some children and some staff wearing poppies and some not. Yet, you will have them coming together to have this really meaningful assembly where people are remembering and remembering our own local past as well as the greater wars.
887. The conversations that are held among the young people when they prepare for those are important. It is about a young person being able to say, “Yes, I do belong to the Orange lodge and my family always has. This is why it is important to me and this is what we do and how we celebrate it”.
888. I will give you an example from my experience. In my school, we had what we called a Speak Your Peace day, and we developed that in response to the situation at Holy Cross, where tensions were so high in north Belfast. We felt that we had to create a space where our young people could be themselves and understand one another. It was for the year 10 group, and they were asked to bring in a symbol that was important to them. They sat around in small groups and talked about their symbol and how it was important. It was great to sit on those groups and not see paramilitary flags on the table but national flags, harps that might have been carved in Long Kesh, guitars and skateboards, because, for a lot of children, the symbols that are important to them are immediate. Listening to those young people explain what that meant to them and their family and to hear their friends’ interpretation of their symbol was the most powerful experience because it was true learning. There was total acceptance that people are different and come from different places and that we have been a divided society, yet there was also that capacity to learn from one another and show respect to one another.
889. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you very much. I am sorry to have nipped out. I have loads of questions but they all really come down to one thing, which is this: what change in legislation would you like to see from an integrated point of view?
890. I ask this from two or three different points of view. In many cases, you have a preferred position, as do other schools, which leads to problems where there is a really good controlled school that is as good as an integrated school because it has large numbers in a mixture. As you are in a preferred position, one of your schools can expand at the cost of the other school when, in fact, we may already have an integrated school there, although run in a slightly different way. One angle is the conflict in some areas, because it is not always the same. The other comes down to how you teach religion and/or politics in your schools.
891. I love the story that we just heard. That is what I want to see happening everywhere, but there are different angles in different patches. In Hazelwood, when Catholic pupils are learning about the Catholic religion, what are the others doing? Is it the same all the way through? Do we need to change legislation to make things more comparative so that everyone is learning about all religions and not just the main two?

892. **Ms N Campbell:** Frances, do you want, as a parent, to talk about the religious education?
893. **Ms Donnelly:** There is an agreed curriculum for religious education in Northern Ireland. How it is delivered in primary schools and integrated schools has been agreed by the four main Churches. Some children may require sacramental preparation, and that is carried out in whatever way the school wishes to do it, whether children are pulled out for additional teaching or whether they are all taught together. There is a variety of methods but there is an agreed curriculum.
894. My children went to an integrated primary school and they both went through preparation, but their experience in religion was very much about being with children who are different and learning about different religions. That has gone over into post-primary education as well. My colleague in NICIE has more of a religious education background. We would probably like to see more of an emphasis on the world religions. We have that Christian basis of course, but there is an argument that all children should be exposed to a greater experience of different religions.
895. **Ms N Campbell:** In the past, NICIE developed a programme called Delving Deeper, which enables children from different Christian denominations to look into the common Christianity and at what they share and to deepen understanding between them. But certainly, at post-primary level, as well as the curriculum that is taught in every school with regard to religion, our integrated schools also invest time in other faiths so that children have that broad global awareness. We see that as being very important, particularly as more different faiths come into Northern Ireland.
896. Your other question is about area planning. The problem with area planning is that it is based on sectors and sectoral thinking. As such, it channels us into ways of thinking about either/or, whereas the aim of area-based planning was to say, "This is an area.

How do we best meet the needs of all of the children in this area?" Shared education has a very valuable role to play in that in terms of collaboration. It is how you balance whether a parent might want a very specific single-identity type of education or an integrated education. Your very good controlled school might say, "In our school, we know we have 20% of children from a Catholic background. We know we have 10% newcomers. We know we're a diverse school, so let us represent that in our ethos. Let us have a look at how we have been in the past and whether that is equality for everyone. If not, how can we do it and how can we have it recognised?" Schools are not in competition with one another.

897. Regarding legislation, one of the big difficulties is the fact that schools have been, because of the way their funding has been set up, in competition with one another. If you are a principal in a school, your prime objective will be to your school, not to the other school, no matter how well you get on with them. There is a conflict there, which is a bigger issue. If you could have a different system of funding and a different system of area-based planning, and if you invited schools to open up and not be seen as one or the other, you could have a fairly rapid transition to a different, unified system of education.
898. **Mr McCausland:** Thanks for your presentations. When we talk about children coming together in a school from Protestant and Roman Catholic backgrounds etc, the terms "Protestant" and "Roman Catholic" can have a religious connotation or — you used the word "cultural" — sometimes it is another way of speaking about ethno-cultural or cultural differences. This is a question that I put to all sectors, not just yours. How do you address the right of children to learn about the culture of their community and the home from which they come, which is part of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child? You gave examples of maybe introducing Gaelic games or some Irish language. How do other cultural traditions in

- Northern Ireland get accommodated?
How is that dealt with?
899. **Ms N Campbell:** I think there is space created for all children to bring their cultural experience to the table. For example, a lot of schools use a programme called Different Drums, where children bring in the drum that represents their identity. They learn the history of it and then they drum together. That is a really powerful experience. We have remembrance assemblies where children share their experiences and the experiences of their family. Every school will take a slightly different approach to how it ensures that both of our major cultures are represented, because, after all, that is why we were established, but also our newcomer cultures. One of the fundamental principles is to find ways and means of doing that.
900. **Ms Donnelly:** I think that the integrated school provides the everyday opportunities. I am immediately thinking of the literature that is available in the library, the texts and poems that are used in English, the drama activities, art activities, music, PE, the speakers who come into the school, the charities that are supported and the community groups that are linked to the school. It is kind of within the fabric of the school, and there is almost an automatic means by which that happens. The teachers know that it is an integrated school and, as part of their process of lesson preparation and working with the young people, it is simply the way that they are, in reflecting the major cultures.
901. **Ms N Campbell:** I could maybe add something to that. NICIE received funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to mark the centenary anniversaries. We used that funding to support teachers to teach controversial issues. We created a bank of resources that is available to all schools for those contentious anniversaries. We also created some super drama pieces so that, through drama, schools can explore the issues on the signing of the covenant or the 1916 rising. As children love talking to each other about
- those issues, you also get that daily interchange.
902. **Mr McCausland:** I would just make an observation. In sport, sometimes a parallel or comparison is drawn between football and Gaelic football. The difference to me is that one has a very specific cultural heritage or identity associated with it and the other is just an international game now. Finding ways to express other cultural traditions other than Gaelic ones needs to be teased out in a range of schools, not just in a particular sector.
903. I want to ask a question about another matter, which is one that I struggle with and cannot quite get to the bottom of. One of the early integrated schools — it might have been Lagan College — had a motto that said “That they all may be one”, which is a bit of Bible text. Is there a place in the integrated system for parents to send their children to those schools if they come from what I would describe as a very conservative, evangelical Protestant background? They may not want to go with a certain interpretation, which they might view as having more of an ecumenical spirit, and they might feel more comfortable with a more secular form of integrated education in which those issues are set aside. Are there different views in the integrated sector about that? That is the sense that I have, but I am not clear on it.
904. **Ms N Campbell:** We have a lot of debate internally about how best to develop our schools and their ethos and how best to engage. All our schools are committed to parental involvement and engagement. A parent with that background who feels that their child being in an integrated school would in some way impinge on that and who wants to test it will know that they can ask those questions. I think that it is about that open dialogue. As Helen said, we are a work in progress.
905. **Dr H McLaughlin:** That question interests me a lot. The integrated movement started, for good reasons, by identifying itself as an integrated movement with a Christian tradition. I understand why

- that was necessary 30-odd years ago, but I think that there is now room in the movement to discuss the extent to which we should carry that forward.
906. Just as there is a diversity of Catholic and state schools, there is a diversity of integrated schools. That is still very much there and is, I suppose, written into the integrated movement. However, development and responsiveness to need happens very much at the coalface with the schools working with parents and with parents being able to say, for example, “I was really surprised that you did that assembly in that way. It did not really fit with what I want my children to be exposed to”. There is room for that debate. In fairness, and as is the case in any movement, I would like us in this movement to continue to debate it.
907. I suppose that that was a long way of answering your question. The door is open to addressing those questions. I do not think that we would say, “No. It has to be a certain way, and if schools do not do it that way they are not in”.
908. **Mrs Overend:** It is good to meet you. Thank you for coming.
909. Integrated education is the forced equality of the two religions. What about areas such as mid-Ulster, which are predominantly of one religion? We heard someone say on the radio this morning that you cannot turn around without meeting someone from a particular religion. If an integrated school is supposed to show equality, what about the surplus? Would it not be better for a shared area partnership to receive extra support in that area to bring everyone together to promote that shared ethos rather than having an integrated school? How do you see that?
910. **Ms N Campbell:** In areas where you have a predominance of one cultural background on paper —
911. **Mrs Overend:** One religious background.
912. **Ms N Campbell:** Or cultural or religious background. You are less likely to get shared education in those areas, because you will not have the variety of schools. Therefore —
913. **Mrs Overend:** What if you do?
914. **Ms N Campbell:** That will not be the same as a city area where there is a lot of mix. Our argument is that, in an area where there is a majority population, it is more important to have an integrated school, because that gives parity of esteem to the minority. It is not about numbers. We aspire to get the best balance we can, but we also aspire and are totally committed to the ethos of equality of esteem so that, if you are the only child in the school from a particular background, you can feel proud of that background and be accepted. We think that it is really important in Northern Ireland that areas do not become monocultural. We should keep diversity in them, and we can do that through having an integrated school.
915. I also think that through the Committee we have an opportunity to move away from the idea that, because we happen to have been born into a particular area or baptised in a particular church, that is all that we are. There are many mixed marriages, and people in those marriages call it “double belonging”. I think that is a beautiful phrase.
916. If those children go to a controlled school, they are expected to leave the Catholic part of their identity at the door. If they go to a Catholic school, they are supposed to leave the Protestant part at the door. That is not fair. There are children of parents who do not have a religion and children of parents who do not necessarily see themselves as Irish or British but as Northern Irish. There is a huge fluidity amongst young people and young parents about how they see themselves. I think that that is why they want their children to be educated together. They do not want to be pigeonholed as they were in the past. It is about how we can start to move beyond that into a much more fluid view of ourselves so that we see ourselves not as a binary, polarised society but as one that is working to become unified.

917. **Mrs Overend:** There are schools that are integrated not with a big “I” but in all but name. It is very much felt that the integrated schools threaten the future of those schools that are less forced integrated, so to speak, but —
918. **Ms N Campbell:** We recognise totally that many schools are naturally integrated. That is the phrase that is used. It is quite flattering, as it recognises the importance of young children being educated together.
919. In the recent judicial review, Judge Treacy looked at mixed schools and asked whether they were the same as integrated schools. He said, “No, they are not the same as integrated schools because they have a dominant ethos that is based on a single identity”. So, no matter how welcoming they are to all children and no matter how supportive they are of all the differences in the school, unless they engage with that dominant inherited ethos and decide that they may need to make some changes, add certain books to the library or add a subject to the curriculum, they will not be integrated. It will definitely mean that they will need to train their teachers and support their teachers’ thinking in a broader way. If those schools can do that, they will become schools that are integrated in ethos.
920. Our programme is to support schools in doing that. We recognise that there are schools out there that do great work, and we also recognise that those schools would like to be recognised and to be able to say, “We do this work. We are working towards an equality of ethos, and we want to attract children from all areas”. We have a programme that is packaged and ready to go. All we need is the funding for it. I think that it will answer a lot of your questions, because it is all school-based.
921. **Dr H McLaughlin:** Could I just jump in there? That question struck a chord with me, as it was really because of that issue that we started to develop the positive partnerships for integration programme. I think that there are real questions about what a school does if first, it is in an area with a mostly single-identity population anyway, or secondly, if it feels that it is integrated because it has a bit of a mix. We wanted to develop a programme that really took those opportunities. In either of those situations, the programme would mean that we would sit down with the school and ask what it would look like if it went through a process to move towards adopting an integrated ethos. It would ask what that would look like, how it would help them and what the challenges or blockages would be. Through the programme, we would support the whole school community — the school, governors, parents and children — through a process to move towards an integrated ethos if that is what they choose to do. We see that as very much a way of working with schools where they are.
922. You will note that we have not come today and said, “We want all schools integrated overnight tonight, so do it now.” We have suggested some means and processes to get there at some point, but this programme would be about recognising that sometimes you have to meet schools where they are at, offer them something and work with them.
923. **Ms Donnelly:** If you do not mind my jumping in, I think that the programme also acknowledges where schools are at and also potentially all the good work that they are doing that they want recognised. It is adding to it rather than taking away. I think that that is a really important element of schools that are transforming and looking at integration. It is about where you are, acknowledging the good work and some of the difficulties that perhaps may exist while adding to the question of how embracing a more integrated ethos contributes to the benefit of your young people.
924. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr Hazzard, did you want to make a very brief intervention?
925. **Mr Hazzard:** Yes. I have a very brief question about numbers. You sort of touched on it by saying that you do not need to have certain numbers.

- In a school of 30, how many of the minority have to be there for it to be an integrated school? Surely you are not suggesting that there does not have to be any.
926. **Ms N Campbell:** No. First of all, I am convinced that in your school of 30, they will not all be the same, no matter whether they are in a school with a particular name. I think that you have to create an environment where parents are happy to say who they are and where they come from. That is number one.
927. Number two is that we are committed to the best balance. Our statement of principles says that that balance is ideally 40:40. We are reviewing that because, as Helen said, people do not want to be pigeonholed and described like that any more. The better your balance, the easier it is to create that open dialogue that allows people to feel accepted and to shape a school. You may have a school that sees itself as Catholic or controlled. It may always have been that, but it maybe now wants to become something different. That does not happen overnight. Parents, governors, teachers and young people have to have a voice in shaping that. If you do not have the capacity for people to say, "Well, actually, this is who I am", whatever that might be, you cannot move towards that open and integrated ethos. So, yes, you absolutely need diversity in a school.
928. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you. I am conscious of time. We have three more questions.
929. **Mr Lunn:** It is good to have you here. For the record, I am delighted to hear about Rowandale and that the parents' wishes will be respected and dealt with there. I am actually more interested in listening to other people's questions today, because I could ask lots of questions to which I already know the answer, so I might be accused of prompting an answer. I will just ask you one. You touched on Drumragh Integrated College briefly. In fact, we were well into your presentation before it was even mentioned. Leaving aside the decision that is pending on Drumragh itself, how satisfied are you with the Minister's reaction to Judge Treacy's judgement, particularly on planning and the needs model?
930. **Ms N Campbell:** I think that the best way to put it is that we are keeping a watching brief. There is a total commitment on our part and in the integrated movement on a wider basis that we will not allow the findings of the judicial review to go unnoticed. We are actually doing a checklist on how it is being taken account of. I think that the Minister voted for an amendment that you had in the Assembly in support of —
931. **Mr Lunn:** I will talk to you about that in the morning. *[Laughter.]*
932. **Ms N Campbell:** We took that as a very positive sign. Whenever we hear good news of schools being allowed to increase, we take that as a positive sign. We look forward to seeing an inquiry or a grouping set up to see how we can strategically plan to support integrated education in the way that has been set up for Irish medium, and we would like to see that happen very soon. We have not come to an end-of-term report yet on the Minister and his response.
933. **Mr Lunn:** For clarity, the Minister and his party voted for the Alliance amendment to include the word "promote" in the obligation, but a couple of weeks later when it came to Further Consideration Stage, they decided to side with the DUP and vote against it. I can see Chris laughing. I think that it is funny too.
934. No, I will not pursue that.
935. Trying to be fair to the Minister, will you agree that there may have been a softening of the Minister's attitude in decisions that have been made since the Drumragh judgement has loomed on the horizon? I am thinking of Millennium and perhaps Rowandale and others. To give him credit, he is perhaps attempting to honour his obligation.
936. **Ms N Campbell:** I think that that is true because, where we have been disappointed, the Minister has expressly

said that he wants the overall provision of integrated education in the area to be looked at as well. So, where we have been disappointed, for example in Portadown or, indeed, in Clintyclay, we are disappointed for the moment and are hoping that we can get further progress. The Minister has not closed the door. I think that there is a recognition, and I suppose that the challenge is for that to permeate down. The judgement said that the Department had to be alive to the statutory obligation at all levels, including operational and strategic. If we are seeing that recognition at the strategic level, we have to see it at the operational level, particularly in planning. That, I think, is the big challenge.

937. **Mr Newton:** I welcome the members to the Committee today. My wife and I chose integrated education and were very keen to see that happen. We chose Methody as an integrated school, but obviously, by your definition, it does not meet the criteria to be an integrated school. I am a bit confused, which is not hard to do sometimes, I have to tell you. I am confused about part of your submission, where you say:

"We acknowledge the principle of parental choice and ... acknowledge the right of parents to seek faith-based provision ... choice should be accommodated ... rather than being used as a prop to maintain a segregated system ... would include single identity and faith schools, and schools integrated both by legal status and by being recognised as having an integrated ethos ... children in single identity schools [would be] guaranteed sustained and meaningful shared learning."

938. Is that not part of the problem, in that, where there is always going to be this choice of alternative education systems or approaches, we are never going to move to what really would be a shared education system? In moving and creating the integrated system, are you not adding to the problems in getting to a shared education system?

939. **Dr H McLaughlin:** It is an important question, and it has struck me since I joined NICIE a few years ago. People often saw integrated education as an extra sector, and, taking the long

view, our view is that we do not want integrated education to be another sector jostling amongst the sectors. Ultimately, we would like the standard to be integrated education. It is probably easy for us to talk about parental choice and the ability to still respect it, because all the indications that we have are that, ultimately, if we do the process correctly and in the ways that we described, we will be able to move to a largely integrated system with parental choice being respected. That would mean that we would not be jostling for position but that we would be helping to support the development of a different system. It may be always be that, alongside that mainstream system, there are single-faith schools and schools that have a different ethos. We do not feel that it is appropriate to say that there can never be a school that has a different ethos from ours, but we feel that, by going with parental choice and working through the correct processes, we will arrive at a system that is largely integrated anyway. We believe that that is what parents want, and all the research that we have done indicates that.

940. **Mr Newton:** Am I right to say that your ambition is to see the integrated system closed down?

941. **Dr H McLaughlin:** I do not know about Noreen, but I have often said that there should not need to be a NICIE. You talked about the idea of shared education being really simple. For me, the idea of integrated education is very simple. It is just to educate children together. Do not invent a system; just educate children together. My feeling is that, if that is where the system goes, why would we need a little body? NICIE is quite a little body that is there to support integrated schools and their development. That is what the education boards will do, and that is what the system will do. I include in that that little inkling that we have at the moment that there may well be schools, even in the Catholic sector, that are saying, "We are a small rural school, and we have a mixed community. There are cuts left, right and centre, and we are in danger of

- closure. I wonder whether the right thing for our local kids would not just be to have a shared school — an integrated school.” I am very hopeful of that and that, one day, there will not be a NICIE, because it will not be needed.
942. **Mr Newton:** We look forward, at some stage, to seeing a presentation on the strategic plan for the downturn of NICIE.
943. **Ms N Campbell:** I think that your question is very important, because it illustrates the complexity of where we are. How do we move beyond that so that we are, in fact, redundant? That is why we asked in our submission whether the time is right for a Patten-style inquiry. By that, we mean an independent-style inquiry that can get above us and all our particular interests, if you like, and ask what the best way is, taking into account where we have come from to move us on more quickly than we are moving at the moment.
944. **Mr Newton:** I will leave it there, Chair, in the interests of time.
945. **Mr Eastwood:** Thank you very much for your presentation and for answering the questions. I was glad to hear you talking about Different Drums. Like a lot of good things, they come from Derry. A lot of questions have been asked, and I know that we are short of time. You have probably answered my point already. I think that one of the fears that some people have about integrated education concerns the fact that people assume that, when kids go into the school, it is a neutral space. You said that people are changing their attitudes to things, but people are still Irish, still nationalist, still unionist or still British. I think that that is not a bad thing. You probably have given some assurances, but can you assure us that you are trying to create not a neutral but a diverse environment?
946. **Ms N Campbell:** I think that I will leave it to a parent to do that.
947. **Dr H McLaughlin:** I can speak only from my experience of my child going through school and of being a governor in an integrated school. I do not see any evidence that the children coming through the doors of the integrated schools that I am involved in somehow come in as individuals and come out as some sort of homogenous mass. I simply do not see any evidence of that. I realise that it is a fear, and we respect that it is a fear that parents have. I think that, in the integrated sector, we try very hard in our promotion and awareness raising to illustrate that, in fact, the activities and what goes on in integrated schools actually reflects the schools’ diverse nature. We acknowledge that. The intention is not to create a homogenous mass, as I said, but to allow young people to explore the identities that they have and to perhaps take on new ones. As Noreen said, we all change identity. We add to our identity as we go along, and I think that the integrated ethos and environment is really supportive of young people being able to do that.
948. **Ms N Campbell:** There has been a lot of research into integrated schools, and it shows that young people who have come through integrated education maintain a strong sense of their unique identity and very strong friendships across the divide into adulthood. They also have a more positive view of building good community relations and have the additional identity of “us”. So, they say, “I am this, but I am also us”. There is very interesting research on that.
949. **Mr Eastwood:** That is very useful. Thank you. I will not hold you up any longer.
950. **Mr Craig:** I am bit like Trevor, in that I was listening to some of the questions and replies. I want to go back to area planning, because I find it intriguing. I now understand where you are coming from, Noreen, on that one. You sort of indicated that your ambition is to replace the system that is there with your integrated model. Does that rationale mean that you do not really take on board any of the impact that the creation of a new school has on existing schools and on area plans that are already there?
951. **Ms N Campbell:** No, that is not what I am saying at all; quite the opposite. We are not saying that we want to replace

- the model with a system of integrated schools. We want to replace the model of segregation and difference with the model of schools that are all diverse and all offer an equality of ethos in the school. Those are the characteristics of an integrated school. But this is about neither a sector nor a legal status. It is about the experience of young people on a daily basis, and we think that that can be achieved through area-based planning.
952. I will give you an example. We have some fairly controversial examples of what happens at the moment. With the two “Breda” schools in the South Eastern Education and Library Board, the proposal was to close Newtownbreda and Knockbreda and open a new school. What type of new school was it opening? It was opening the same type of school. So, the parents from both were annoyed that they were losing their school, but they did not have voice in shaping what type of new school they might want. We say that parents ought to have been involved in saying, “At the moment, we have a range of types of school. What does it mean? What would those schools look like? Which would best suit new parents starting a new a school in your area to serve the needs of your area and your children?” You would then have parental involvement in the new school, not parental disapproval. Where you have parental involvement, you have better results and better outcomes, because the young people buy in and you have a school that can succeed. So, we are not looking to say, “Do this our way”. We are saying that we should put parents, children and the future needs of our society first and find a means of doing it that moves us beyond division.
953. **Mr Craig:** Noreen, I listened with interest to that, because I think that you are right. Parental choice should come first; there is no question about that. I find this intriguing, because it could be that your model is the correct model and should be used everywhere. For how many years have you been in existence now?
954. **Ms N Campbell:** About 32.
955. **Mr Craig:** In that period, how many schools have you succeeded in converting from either controlled or maintained to integrated? It strikes me that that is the way to go forward. Instead of displacing schools, we should convert them.
956. **Ms N Campbell:** Again, I could not agree with you more. To date, 22 schools have transformed, but we feel that they have transformed because the onus has been put on parents. In our model — let us take the example that we just discussed — the parents of Newtownbreda and Knockbreda might have said, “We are serving an area where there is plenty of diversity. We want an all-ability school for our children so that some are not streamed off to grammar schools, leaving the rest feeling like second-class citizens. We want a co-educational school and a school that recognises all religions”. A new school is being created, so the question is not about displaced schools but about getting the new schools right. If I am area-based planning, I might say, “Here is an area. There is no integrated choice”. Are there schools that could provide that integrated choice and, if so, what is the best path for them? Is it through transformation, which it might not be, or is it through positive partnerships, which it might be? It is about finding different ways to enable change. It sounds as though you think that we have hard-and-fast-answers. We do not think that we have; we think that we are trying to find a means of opening up our system.
957. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Do you have a supplementary to that?
958. **Mr Craig:** Well —
959. **Ms N Campbell:** I have not convinced you.
960. **Mr Craig:** It opens up an interesting debate, and it is somewhere where I believe the Minister and the rest of us are trying to go with shared education. The same question has to be asked every time under area planning. If you are going to build a school anywhere, all those questions now have to be asked.

961. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
I thank you for coming to the session.
We received a copy of your financial statements and the director's report, which raise a couple of questions about your organisation and its financial future, so, if you are content, we will write to you about that. I am conscious of time and the fact that we still have to meet the primary school. Thank you for your time this morning.
962. **Ms N Campbell:** Thank you. I just want to commend these wonderful children here. Were I their principal, I would be so proud of them.
963. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
They did not make a noise at all. They were so good. If only members were as good. *[Laughter.]*

26 November 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Colum Eastwood
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mrs Sandra Overend

Witnesses:

Dr Gavin Duffy	Centre for Shared
Professor Joanne Hughes	Education
Professor Tony Gallagher	Queen's
	University Belfast
Professor Miles Hewstone	University of
	Oxford

964. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome Professor Joanne Hughes, Professor Tony Gallagher, Dr Gavin Duffy and Professor Miles Hewstone. Thank you very much for being with us today. You may make an opening statement, and members will follow it with questions.

965. **Professor Joanne Hughes (Centre for Shared Education):** I will say a few words and then invite my colleagues to introduce themselves to say a few words. I am the director of the centre for shared education at Queen's, which was established in 2012. We are an applied and interdisciplinary centre that is committed to researching and promoting evidence-based practice in all areas of education. Many of us in the centre have been involved in exploring issues relating to education and divided societies for many years.

966. The shared education approach is based on an analysis of the existing education system in Northern Ireland and efforts to promote community relations in it. It pointed to a twofold approach to community relations in Northern Ireland

and, indeed, in other divided societies. We have had short-term contact initiatives or full immersion integrated education. The shared model, which is theory-informed, plugs the gap between the short-term contact initiatives, which are known to be largely ineffective, and integrated education, which is effective but which has had limited impact or appeal. We have defined shared education as:

"Collaborative activity between schools from different sectors that is underpinned by a commitment to reconciliation objectives and can contribute towards school improvement, access to opportunity and more positive intergroup relations in divided societies."

967. When we talk about theory-informed, we refer to two bodies of theory. First, there is contact theory, which asserts that contact between different groups, provided that it meets certain conditions, can be effective in reducing prejudice and promoting more positive social attitudes, not just towards the individuals involved in the contact situation, but the out-group as a whole. It is not about making exceptions to the rule. The conditions for effective contact are listed in our submission, but a key point to mention is that contact should allow for the development of more intimate ties usually associated with friendship. In that respect, it should be sustained over time. Identity should also, at some level, be salient in contact encounters in order to maximise its effectiveness.

968. The second body of theory relates to networks and collaboration; it highlights characteristics of effective collaboration in school improvement.

969. The work of the centre is organised around three interrelated strands of activity: we have a substantial programme of national and international research; we have delivered a shared-education programme in Northern Ireland; and we are involved in

- developing and delivering similar programmes in other divided jurisdictions. We have developed bespoke training programmes for practitioners and policy-makers involved in the delivery of shared education, and we are developing a master's pathway.
970. Our research findings are clear that increasing contact between pupils from different divided groups, which, in the case of Northern Ireland, are Catholic and Protestant, reduces prejudice, increases trust and generally promotes a more positive response to the out-group, or the other. We have shown that that happens in a range of educational settings, such as integrated schools, separate schools that have a significant proportion of pupils from the other community, and in a shared-education context where pupils can engage in sustained curriculum-based interaction. We have also shown that the effect of sustained contact is diminished for free school meal recipients, although there is still an effect for those pupils. We also know that outcomes are different for pupils in more divided communities. For them, there is sometimes a dissonance between the values promoted by the school, which are around mutual understanding, respect for difference, and so on, and the values that are valorised in the local community or in the home environment, which are sometimes to do with suspicion or a sense of threat.
971. Our research also suggests that the current grammar/secondary divide can be a hurdle to sharing. It can be difficult for secondary-school pupils to attend the local grammar, and there have been some issues around their feeling intimidated. The intersection between faith and class in Northern Ireland may exacerbate that problem.
972. There is generally a receptiveness to shared education in Northern Ireland schools, and our research has shown that that is related to the foregrounding of other educational priorities, which means that teachers do not feel under the same pressure to engage with issues that are controversial, although many do. There are educational benefits to be accrued from participation in sharing, not least with regard to the entitlement framework, and there may be additional benefits. Separate schools are a cherished representation of community and individual identity. A value of sharing, not just in Northern Ireland, as we found, but in other divided jurisdictions, is that separate schools, which many people have a strong attachment to, are perceived not be threatened.
973. Schools have been remarkably engaged and ingenious in overcoming some of the barriers that can arise in the collaborative process. Those include practical issues such as the coordination of timetables, pastoral-care policies, transport and community relations work to minimise opposition to the initiative, communicating with parents and working with local community representatives and local community elites. Schools have also worked collaboratively with local agencies to tackle issues particular to a locality.
974. Some things that might enable shared education include a policy framework that requires schools to engage in inter-sectoral sharing, reflected in inspection criteria for schools. Shared education should be a compulsory element of initial teacher education, reflected in modules or workshops on diversity in the classroom, for example, or collaboration in practice. It should also be reflected in continuing professional development. The delivery of shared education should reflect optimal conditions for effective contact and effective collaboration. Those are outlined in our longer submission.
975. Finally, there is a potential tension between foregrounding educational outcomes over reconciliation outcomes to maximise participation by schools and the need to keep salient issues of difference in order to maximise the generalise-ability of attitudinal and behavioural change among participants.
976. That is my statement. I would like to introduce my colleagues, Dr Gavin Duffy, who is a researcher in the centre,

Professor Tony Gallagher, pro-vice-chancellor of Queen's, and Professor Miles Hewstone from Oxford University, who is director of the Oxford Centre for the Study of InterGroup Conflict. Tony, do you want to say something?

977. **Professor Tony Gallagher (Queen's University Belfast):** Thanks very much, first, for the invitation. I have two quick points. One is, as Joanne said, about some of the evidence. The nature of the challenge in different parts of Northern Ireland when schools are trying to work collaboratively is very different. A very important thing in our work with school collaborations is developing bespoke models in different places, recognising the importance of context, but giving a lot of autonomy and influence to teachers to work with us in developing the best way to do that. That is a particularly important part of our approach to shared education.
978. The second point is that the terminology of shared education has now become so ubiquitous that it has been applied to a vast range of different things. We are very clear that when we talk about shared education we are talking about very robust work with serious, sustained, long-term collaboration and engagement between schools that changes the nature of the relationship between them and leads to significant positive changes for the young people, the teachers, the parents and the wider communities. We have a very particular understanding of what shared education means, even though the term is used now as a much wider umbrella and covers stuff that we do not necessarily see as falling within our understanding of it. Those are a couple of quick points to begin.
979. **Professor Miles Hewstone (University of Oxford):** I will add to the points made so far. Thank you very much for talking to us. My colleagues in England sometimes have great difficulty getting to talk to anyone about the policy implications of their work. I have always found ears in Northern Ireland much more open, so thank you for that. I would like to add to what Professor Hughes said. One of the other things

that we can share in our work is the value of contact, not just in changing attitudes to what we call primary out-groups — the most obvious out-groups that people come into contact with — but to secondary out-groups. Actually, one of the benefits of promoting positive mixing between groups such as Catholic students and Protestant students is that they also develop more tolerant attitudes towards ethnic minorities, for example.

980. Another of the things that we focused on in our work is that the benefits of contact do not just accrue from direct, face-to-face contact. I could not miss the opportunity to hear my colleague Roger Austin speak to you just before I came in. I am a great fan of the implications of what new technology can offer in the kind of work that he does. I smiled at your understanding that we have not yet got those two universities together because the links are absolutely obvious. You can see the opportunities for sequential work, where people might begin their contact in relaxed confines, with distance learning through ICT, then you organise face to-face contact, and then, as he said, the face-to-face contact is followed by a burst of online contact, so those things work together.
981. Contact is not always positive; it can be negative. One of the ironies is that, where you bring people together, you are likely to see more positive contact, but you are also likely to see more negative contact. You cannot possibly be bullied by a boy from the out-group if you do not go to school with boys from the out-group. The good news there, however, is that in our very recent work we find that, even though there may be greater evidence for negative contact in those mixed settings, positive contact has a very clear buffering effect. Prior positive contact buffers and strengthens you. It means that you do not respond to that negative contact with an increase in your own intolerance or aggression towards the other side.
982. Finally, just to show that we are optimists but not idealists, one of the things that we always have to be aware

- of is that we do not create conditions for mixing, or desegregation, only to find, as they did in schools in the United States after they desegregated in 1954, that the children themselves choose to re-segregate. You go in through the front door, and you find that the black kids are all on the basketball team and the football team, and the white kids are doing the school newspaper and the tennis club. You have to be alert to that possibility. Once you have gone through the door, you have to work to promote mixing at various levels. The work that we are doing at the centre at the moment, which is completely new, is to look in detail at people's social networks. We are looking at the intimacy of people's friendship groups to see whether we can ascertain just how close relations are between members of different communities in their friendship networks.
983. **Dr Gavin Duffy (Centre for Shared Education):** Good morning, Committee. I am Gavin Duffy; I am a research fellow at the School of Education and have been attached to the shared-education programme since 2011. My research takes a different tack, as my work is essentially qualitative. It is about trying to provide contextual data and information about what actually happens in schools and the relationships between schools. So much of my work has been underpinned by the notion of collaborative effectiveness. I am particularly interested in drawing out what makes a strong and effective partnership. I hope to talk to you about that this morning.
984. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much for your presentation and your detailed paper. We could ask quite a number of questions about this, but time is always limited. A lot of your work is about the education focus; that is very clear from the presentations that we received earlier about Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School. Members could not fail to be impressed by the work there on shared education. In your paper, you also discuss the limited reach of integrated education and also the suspicion that there exists in our communities. Do you foresee a time when shared education will be mainstreamed?
985. **Professor Gallagher:** We are probably not far off that point at the moment, in many senses. Look at the programmes that have been put in place by the Department, potentially through European peace money, and the shared campuses initiative. There is a whole range of things. I think that we are on the cusp of going into a situation where the working assumption is that schools should work with other schools, not just to promote cohesion but because it is good educationally and makes more effective use of resources. We are very close to that. One of the advantages of shared education and collaboration is that it is possible to do that across much of the system without the tensions and difficulties involved with threats to identity. It squares the circle, in a way, which is part of its attraction. If we can get into that situation, it will change the nature of relationships between people and — who knows? — that opens up all sorts of possibilities for further development and evolution in the future.
986. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You talked about bespoke models and contextualising situations and that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach capable of achieving that outcome. Are there particular examples that you find have surpassed expectations when you have looked for a solution for schools in certain areas?
987. **Professor Gallagher:** Gavin will maybe say a little bit about the work in Derry/Londonderry on the Foyle Contested Spaces Programme because there is some amazing stuff happening there. One of the incredibly inspirational things about Ballycastle is that the two schools have agreed to hook their fates together through the shared-campus initiative, and each delivers a part of the curriculum that the other depends on. That speaks of a trust between the schools that I find amazing. You see something similar in Limavady, where

- there is a high level of engagement between schools. The imagination and creativity that the teachers in the schools have shown is also impressive. There have been a few situations like that, where teachers, given the space and freedom to try things, have responded in a way that is just amazing. Part of the value of the work is that, rather than imposing a particular template or model on schools and then requiring them to do it, is giving teachers space to be a part of creating the solution. We should allow them to try things that sometimes do not work. Learning from that is a very valuable part of the experience of making the models work.
988. Apart from that, one of the main general lessons that we have taken out of working with collaborative networks over the past six or seven years is that the more points of contact between schools, the better. The more intersections there are, the tighter the interweave, as it were, between the schools and the more likely it is to be sustained into the future. The work that Miles and Joanne are doing demonstrates the positive consequences that can arise from that. It creates a situation where that becomes permanent, or the way in which things just happen. It is a new pattern of reality, if you like. So rather than have small programmes or connections on particular, tightly defined, areas of activity, we should encourage as many connections possible. Gavin, would you like to say something?
989. **Dr Duffy:** The Foyle Contested Spaces education partnership, based in Derry/Londonderry, was an alternative model of collaboration. It evolved out of the first phase of the shared-education programme between 2007 and 2010. It was funded by OFMDFM Atlantic Philanthropies and was part of their Interface/Contested Space Programme. This model is unique in Northern Ireland, in that it is made up of five primary and three post-primary schools drawn from across the sectors. What is incredible about this is that it is a combination of an educational and a social approach to addressing social need areas.
990. There were five particular social need areas that schools collectively decided were issues for them, and so conversations took place prior to the formation of the partnership in which schools tried to identify common social need areas. They identified five areas: antisocial behaviour; improving community relations in a contested space; the impact of substance misuse; looking collectively at areas such as health, sexual health and sexual resilience; and appropriate and safe use of the internet and social media.
991. As a social needs-based programme, it was important for the schools to locate it in the curriculum because that is a school's core business. It ran from Key Stage 2 through to Key Stage 3, so it was a programme for pupils from age 8 to age 15. The programme was delivered on a shared basis, and it exposed young people to different cultural and religious practices along the way. It required the collaboration of teachers, principals and senior leaders in schools. With that, a partnership infrastructure was established to support the partnership. One thousand, one hundred and sixty-one pupils were involved, and 1,000-odd pupils moved between schools on a weekly basis for three years. To support that, there was an infrastructure of eight principals, three vice-principals, 35 teachers and an external primary coordinator.
992. What emerged out of that partnership? For me, it was about being able to provide contextual evidence of the practice of shared education; it was also an opportunity for us to identify effective collaboration. From a research perspective, the partnership was able to represent quite a number of perspectives, including pupils, teachers, school leaders and parents. It was also an opportunity for the primary voice to be heard. From what I understand, the primary voice in shared education is relatively quiet, so this was an opportunity to get primary schools' perspective across. The big

- thing was that it demonstrated social and educational impact. Bear with me. In terms of the social impacts, we are talking about encouraging the movement, as I said, of over 1,000 pupils and educators across contested-space settings. Research by Rosellen Roche in Queen's suggests that there is a thing called "bounded contentment".
993. It is the idea that, over generations, there is a reluctance to move between one another's communities in a contested-space setting. We are talking about communities such as Derry/Londonderry or north Belfast, which has been described as a patchwork quilt. There is a tendency, I think, for people to locate themselves in their own communities and not move. That was an important point. We had over 1,000 pupils, roughly 40 educators and hundreds of parents, moving between those spaces. It provided an opportunity for meaningful contact between participants from different cultural and religious backgrounds. We have evidence from the research that it reduced prejudices and challenged ethnic and denominational isolation. Social relationships began to form as well. Those social relationships are friendships between young people, and there are friendships, personal and professional, between teachers and school leaders. We also found evidence of that extending beyond the classroom; social media are a great way for young people to engage with one another outside the school environment. The partnership also connects schools in the community and makes stronger links between statutory and voluntary agencies.
994. As for educational impacts, the contested-space partnership established and supported a sustainable cross-sectoral partnership of schools in what is perhaps one of the most highly contested spaces in Northern Ireland. It developed a cross-sectoral teacher network, which is really important, and from that came personal development opportunities and capacity building. It also established a collaborative school leadership network. Some of our leaders described the role of principal as being quite lonely, and connecting eight principals and bringing them together was quite phenomenal. It provided regular and sustained education between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, as well as a unique opportunity to address social needs in the curriculum, between personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) and Learning for Life and Work at Key Stage 3.
995. Finally, the collaboration has led to school improvement.
996. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Tony, you said that the term "shared education" is now being widely used. Perhaps, we need a clear definition of shared education. You have provided a definition, but does it need to be refined? Have you had any conversations with the Department in the lead-up to it developing a policy paper on shared education?
997. **Professor Gallagher:** Joanne led the centre's work on formulating the definition, which partly reflects the international work that some of us have been involved in. Joanne might say a little about that. If you think about the definition in the ministerial advisory group (MAG), we are quite comfortable with that. The key thing is that shared education involves work between schools from different sectors focused on the curriculum, is sustained and regular, and tries to create new habits.
998. The tradition EMU approach was to have one-off projects that brought people together for a while to do something before scattering again. Some very worthy work has been done in recent years that is like that but on a more enhanced level. However, unless it works to establish sustainable and collaborative networks between people, it is very difficult to see how it can change practice in schools and classrooms. Unless you change what is happening in and between schools, there is no reason to imagine why anything else will change with attitudes, school improvement and all the rest of it.

999. Joanne, do you want to say anything about the definition in international work?
1000. **Professor Hughes:** The centre is involved in some international activity. We have been working for the last three or four years in Macedonia, for example, to help them to develop a model for shared education based on the Northern Ireland model. We have been working with the ministry of education there and senior policy officials.
1001. I do not know how much you know about Macedonia, but they have separate school systems for ethnic Albanians and Macedonians. That came out of their peace agreement: they formerly had integrated schools that have become separate. The kids in the ethnic Albanian schools are educated in Albanian, and the kids in the Macedonian schools are educated in Macedonian, so there is a language issue as well. The shared education model being developed there is looking at aspects of the curriculum where there is minimal verbal instruction and where the kids can come together. Sometimes, those separate schools work in the same building and the kids attend them in shifts.
1002. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Have you had conversations with the Department on drafting policy?
1003. **Professor Gallagher:** Yes, we are talking to members of the inspectorate who are developing a framework for evaluating and assessing the impact of the Delivering Social Change programme, which is likely to be formally announced quite soon. We talk to officials from the Department all the time, and they talk to many different people. One of the things that we been impressed by has been their willingness to talk to a wide range of voices to inform and shape the initiative.
1004. We are saying to them that there is not a one-size-fits-all model here or a fixed rigid template. They need to give teachers a degree of responsibility and autonomy to allow them to help to shape things, and they have to allow the programme, the assessment frameworks and the evaluation frameworks to be adaptable so that they recognise that we are dealing with problems for which there is no easy solution. Part of the challenge for everyone involved is to work together to find new solutions. That means having a certain tolerance of failure, because you can learn from that. That is the only way that you will create innovative solutions. We have talked to them quite a lot and continue to do so, and we are very impressed by the officials and inspectors and their preparedness and willingness to take on board the evidence that Miles, Joanne and others are feeding into the system.
1005. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you very much for your presentation. It is good to see you again.
1006. I am afraid that technology has let me down once again, so I have not read the full paper because I have only had it since 10.00 am. Your shared education project is on a roll. I cannot deny that a lot of money is being thrown at it, and hopefully a lot of benefit will come out of that. I cannot quite understand the perception of hostility or a level of hostility that is developing towards the integrated sector. I see it in your presentation, Joanne:
- "Research has shown that integrated education, whilst an effective mechanism for relationship building, has only limited appeal".*
1007. That flies in the face of every poll I have seen for the last five years. You go on to say that, where integrated schools are an option, the overwhelming majority of parents are:
- "opting to send their children to separate schools."*
1008. Again, that flies in the face of the expressed desire of parents, who frequently say that if there was an integrated school available they would either send their children to it or at least consider sending their children to it. Why did you make a comment like that?
1009. **Professor Hughes:** Although the surveys have been saying for many

- years that between 60% and 80% of parents favour integrated education, that is not reflected in their behaviour. Even in cases where it is an option, there are integrated schools that are undersubscribed.
1010. **Mr Lunn:** There are undersubscribed schools right across every sector and right across Northern Ireland. It was my idea to phrase the review as being about “shared and integrated”, not “shared versus integrated”. Do not think that I am on a mission of some kind, because I am not. When there are only 62 integrated schools out of a total of 1,150, clearly there are going to be a lot of situations where there is no integrated school available. That is part of the problem. It is not that parents who would like to send their children somewhere like that choose not to, they just cannot do so geographically.
1011. **Professor Hughes:** When you have 80% of respondents to a survey saying that they would send their children to an integrated school, you would expect every integrated school to be bursting, and that is not the case. We have no hostility at all towards integrated education; in fact, a lot of our research evidence has endorsed integrated education as a way of promoting better relations between Protestants and Catholics. Maybe Miles wants to say something about that.
1012. **Professor Hewstone:** In the various presentations that we have made, both in our articles to peer-reviewed journals and our presentations to teachers, we have always emphasised that integrated education is what we are trying to match. There is so much good practice there that we are also trying to achieve. You need to make sure that if you offer anything else as an alternative, you do at least as well as the existing provision. We are also always open to the idea that, however carefully we have measured and however much research we have done, there may be some measurement that we have not used yet that might just show that there is additional effectiveness of integrated schools. That is why we are doing the work on social networks: we thought that it was possible that the integrated education would be promoting these really mixed, integrated social networks of children — in other words, getting to some deeper level of integration that other schools have not yet reached. Our eyes are very much open.
1013. **Professor Gallagher:** We have talked often about the apparent conundrum between opinion poll evidence and the reality. My sense is that when people are responding to an opinion poll they are offering a preference in an abstract sense. I have had lots of conversations with lots of parents in lots of different situations, and whenever parents are making a choice about a school for their child, it is no longer an abstract choice: they are choosing between a number of very specific schools in their very specific area, and so the reputation of local schools becomes very important. That is why, in any particular area, they might prefer, in an abstract sense, a particular type of school. However, whenever they are choosing between three or four actual schools, one of those schools has, in and of itself, a good reputation, and that is what they choose, and that is not always an integrated school.
1014. As Joanne said — just to reinforce the point, in case it needs reinforced — I have always been a strong supporter of the integrated sector and work with it. Integrated schools, by and large, are great. However, even the most optimistic target is for 10% of the school-age population, and we are concerned about the other 90% to try to ensure that everyone in the school system has the opportunity of as strong and positive an experience as possible.
1015. **Mr Lunn:** You lead me on to my next question. However, before I get to that, what do you think about NICIE’s statement last week? If you think of the shared education programme in terms of sociological benefit, its starting point is your end point. It is starting from where you would like to be.

1016. **Professor Gallagher:** Not necessarily. We may have a range of views on this, but my personal view is that we think that the collaborative model provides an opportunity to work with schools and allows them to maximise the benefit to the young people in terms of cohesion, qualifications, standard of experience and all the rest of it. Once we talk to schools about the collaborative model, many of them are very enthusiastic about it. Virtually every school that we have worked with has found it to be a very positive experience and likes to run with it and, with only a limited level of support, is prepared to do some amazing things. At some point in the future, schools may decide that it is working so well that they will want to keep it like that, or they may decide at some point in the future that it is working so well that they want to become an integrated school. However, I do not want to prescribe any future for that; that is up to schools. From my point of view, we can do something now that they find valuable, and in future they can decide what is best for them going forward, but that is a matter for the schools. I do not want to say that this is all about getting to a particular end point.
1017. **Professor Hughes:** Just to follow on from that, our position is theory-informed and evidence-based. It is the idea that we know that sustained contact works to change attitudes and behaviours, and there are a range of opportunities in our education system to promote that — shared education being one of them. We are not, as Tony said, prescriptive as to where we see this ending up.
1018. **Mr Lunn:** Just bear with me, Chairman. Tony, you said that the most optimistic rejection for integrated education would be about 10% of the school population. However, in your paper you say that:
- “officially designated integrated schools account for only around 4% of overall provision.”*
1019. That is not right.
1020. **Professor Hughes:** The schools, not the number of pupils attending them, are 4%.
1021. **Mr Lunn:** Surely the figure you should be working on is the number of pupils — the percentage of the school population.
1022. **Professor Hughes:** That figure only applies to the schools in the report, and we checked it before we provided the information.
1023. **Mr Lunn:** It am even quickly trying to work out what 62 is as a percentage of 1,150, and I think that you will find that it is more than 4%. It is getting more like 6%. Just for the record, the correct figure of the school population in officially designed integrated schools is touching 7% of the pupils. Is your 10% schools or pupils, Tony?
1024. **Professor Gallagher:** The IEF’s target is 10% of pupils.
1025. **Mr Lunn:** Pupils, yes.
1026. If it is 7% at the moment, that does not include the naturally integrated schools — we all know where they are and who they are — that are not officially designed but are effectively very much shared schools with a healthy population that could easily qualify for integrated if they cared to apply for that status, but there is no need for them to do that. If you add those in, then you come towards the figure that we often quote, which is that about 90% of our pupils are educated solely with their own co-religionists. That means that you have already got that 10% that you are —
1027. **Professor Gallagher:** It is the IEF’s target, not mine.
1028. **Mr Lunn:** Well, I know, but you quoted it. I always end up sounding hostile to what you are trying to do, and I am not, honestly. I hope you accept that.
1029. **Professor Gallagher:** Miles can talk about the schools that are mixed without necessarily being within the integrated framework.
1030. **Professor Hewstone:** I just want to make a point about the importance of studying integrated schools and comparing them with other kinds of schools. In a situation where you have choice, there is always the risk that

- you have self-selection effects, so that certain kinds of people choose to go to certain kinds of schools and they choose to avoid certain kinds of schools. There is always the risk that you start from a lower baseline in an integrated school because the kind of parents who choose to send their children to those kinds of schools may be the people whose attitudes we are less interested in changing. I am not taking anything away from the good work that is done in integrated schools. They will always suffer from a self-selection bias that other schools will not.
1031. **Professor Hughes:** We have done some analysis of mixed schools, or those schools that have between five and 10% of children from the other religious group, and super-mixed schools, which have more than 10%. Our findings for those schools are that there are very effective outcomes in terms of contact, but I am fairly confident that those schools would not want to transfer to integrated status. They are avowedly, particularly in the Catholic sector —
1032. **Mr Lunn:** I am not advocating that they do.
1033. **Professor Hughes:** OK. I thought you said —
1034. **Mr Lunn:** That is perhaps the best form of integration: natural integration based on demographics, geography and history. That is fine. But again I cannot help thinking, Chair, that if we are sitting here in 20 years' time, we will be having much the same discussion. Hopefully there will be a much greater input from the shared education movement, but we will still have Catholic maintained, controlled, integrated, Irish-medium. Hopefully all of them will have a fair degree of sharing, and the integrated sector will be twice as big as what it is now.
1035. **Professor Gallagher:** We hope that in 20 years' time we are in the situation where the taken-for-granted assumptions about the way schools work have changed and schools no longer think that they can do all the things they need for their pupils by themselves, but work with other schools. That will be better for the schools, better for the young people and, the evidence suggests, better for the local communities as well. Hopefully it will contribute to the development of a more cohesive and shared society.
1036. **Mr Lunn:** Always interesting.
1037. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you. From a personal perspective, I went to a single-sex — probably a very much traditional single-identity — school and moved to what is now a super-mixed school. I moved to Methody. It was really for educational outcomes and also because there were boys there. That was probably — *[Laughter.]* — to be perfectly honest. It did prepare me for life afterwards. When I went to Queen's it was not quite the shock that it would have been, and also when I entered the real world — whether this is the real world or not. *[Laughter.]* Certainly, there were positives for me.
1038. The whole idea of super-mixed — it is an interesting term. It is probably quite apt, but I am not sure that I would consider it to be integrated.
1039. **Mr Craig:** I welcome you all to the Committee. I made a point of welcoming my old university earlier. There again, there was a bit of strange shared education in our household, because my wife went to Queen's and I went to the University of Ulster. I do not think either university encouraged that, but it just happened naturally.
1040. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You are dissolving your own boundaries there.
1041. **Mr Craig:** Natural sharing, Trevor. When I look at education right across Northern Ireland, I see something quite interesting. The controlled sector has examples of all types of schools from all sectors under that umbrella. Should we be using that sector as a bedrock for future sharing?
1042. **Professor Gallagher:** We are in a situation where we have a range of different sectors and management types. I think that is unlikely to change

- radically in the near future. If it does not change radically, the question is what we can do to enhance and improve the experience of young people in the schools. That is where I think the collaborative model works, because you can have schools from different sectors working together.
1043. When CCMS was here it pointed to four examples of maintained schools that have mixed enrolment. There are some controlled schools — as you say, there is an Irish-medium controlled school; there are controlled integrated schools; there are controlled schools that have a mix because of circumstances. There is a variety of different types of schools, and we will not find the single type that works. If we can get schools to work together collaboratively in the way that we have done, then we can get a very quick win for everyone. If that becomes the mainstream experience for young people, as the Chair was saying, then we can look at that sort of issue in the future and see if schools want to change their structural arrangements in any way. That will be a matter for schools, parents and teachers.
1044. **Mr Craig:** Tony, there is another thing that I can see. When you look at where all Departments are going financially in the next three to four years, sharing, and not only across sectors, is really important. To be honest with you, I do not think the sectors will be that terribly important when you look at how rural and physically isolated some of our schools actually are and their inability to deliver a wide enough curriculum. Do you see huge opportunities there for sharing of education, whether it is internally within sectors or more broadly across sectors, in the survival of those smaller units, which mean an awful lot to those local communities?
1045. **Professor Gallagher:** Absolutely. We have been working with quite a number of primary schools, in particular small rural primary schools, that in and of themselves face real challenges in trying to deliver the curriculum, but when they work with their neighbours from another sector, then collectively they can often do that. In those situations the schools very often do not want to explore an integrated option at this point. Maybe they will at some time in the future. In that situation, collaboration and sharing are a way of benefiting all the kids, helping to secure that important social institution in a rural community, and helping to keep the community together. There are many places where we know that that is a viable option, and we hope that the leaders of the sectors and the Department see that.
1046. **Dr Duffy:** Somewhere like Ballycastle is a perfect example in view of the broad curriculum that they offer together. Alone, it is an entirely different picture.
1047. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you very much for your presentation this morning. I think there is so much more sharing going on than we ever realised. As my time in this job has progressed, I have come to appreciate how small rural schools are gaining from sharing expertise. Even larger primary schools in my area are sharing expertise across the divide and gaining expertise in areas. There is more integrated or shared education than previously expected. It is integrated with a small “i”, I should say.
1048. You have said in your report that there are some groups that are less inclined to be involved in sharing. What groups are these, and are they defined by socio-economic rather than ethno-religious factors?
1049. **Professor Hughes:** I am not sure that we said that there were groups less inclined to be involved in sharing. What we were saying was that the outcomes are different for different groups depending on contextual variables. For example, some of our quantitative research has shown that in areas that are very divided, like North Belfast, there are some positive outcomes from sharing, but they are maybe not as extensive as they might be for schools in Limavady or Ballycastle or other more mixed environments. It was about outcomes in relation to context.
1050. **Dr Duffy:** We have schools at different levels of sharing, and they are engaged

- with each other in entirely different ways. It is entirely contextual. In some regards, we have schools that would be described as organic or emerging partnerships: they are at the very early stages. We also have partnerships across Northern Ireland that are heading towards some sort of symbiotic or almost interdependent relationship, as in Ballycastle. There is a spectrum of ways in which schools engage with one another.
1051. **Mrs Overend:** It goes back to your original question, which was interesting, about the definition of shared education and how it needs to encompass the wide variety, and that that is not a negative but a positive. We should encourage all levels of sharing and congratulate them. It is a work in progress, which changes over time.
1052. **Mr Lunn:** I am going to move away from my normal tack here to consider the acknowledged gap between what is produced by the best of our schools and the deficit at the bottom end of results. What potential do you think there is in sharing programmes for cooperation between the best of our grammar schools and other schools half a mile down the road producing the figure of 25% not even achieving five GCSEs? I get the impression that — I am sure that I have heard it from at least one representative of the grammar sector — they are not much interested in that. What is your experience of that so far? They should surely be able to give a helping hand to improve the overall situation.
1053. **Professor Gallagher:** Joanne has mentioned that some of the survey evidence suggests that there is a bit of tension between the possibility of grammar and secondary schools working collaboratively. I suspect that that is more related to broader policy contexts and people wanting to maintain demarcation lines and clarity. That is unfortunate, but I suspect that that is the explanation.
1054. If you look at the experience in England, where federation and collaboration have been on the agenda for quite a long time, it is largely focused on school improvement and strong schools supporting weaker schools to try to improve their practice. Indeed, there has been things in the news this week about public schools working with local authority schools as part of that process.
1055. There is plenty of evidence in many different places. That is one particular context, but there is also evidence of schools working together and teachers sharing a wider repertoire of experience and expertise as a way of helping teachers to change their classroom practice. That is what you need for school improvement to happen. Collaboration does that. It gives teachers a sustained regular network of expertise that they can dip into. That will always help.
1056. I think that you are absolutely right: there is the potential in an environment where there are fewer concerns about undesirable change. In that sort of context, schools can work together, share practice, expertise and experience, and broaden the repertoire of classroom skills that teachers are working with to improve things for everyone.
1057. **Professor Hewstone:** I make the point that, through some of our other work in another context in a particular large-scale European study that involved the UK, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden, we found positive benefits of mixing for ethnic minority immigrant children who are integrated into friendship networks with majority group children. If you can get the schools to collaborate at the right level, you can use the programme as a first step towards increasing the educational aspirations of children and then their educational performance. We intend to provide that at the end of our study. Our study will be a five-year longitudinal study and, at the appropriate point, we will be able to plug in the school grades and GCSE scores of children and see some of the hard outcomes of some of the mixing that we are involved in.
1058. **Dr Duffy:** As a practical example, we have schools across Northern Ireland that are involved in partnerships. I will

give an example without identifying the schools. A school may have been struggling, and the inspectorate may have deemed that a certain department in that school is inadequate. As a result of the collaboration between a maintained school and a controlled school at a post-primary level, the maintained school, with its expertise in science, has been able to help another school pull its grade up from inadequate to outstanding.

1059. **Mr Lunn:** Was that a maintained grammar school?

1060. **Dr Duffy:** They are not grammar schools. I am leaving aside school type and am talking more about that idea of strong/weak. It is not so important that there is a sharing of expertise from one school that has the experience. When our schools come together, they often look for common and complementary need. Common needs are the types of need that both schools need, and complementary need is the idea of identifying where each school has skills. The idea of strong/weak is reasonably crude in that example, as the school that was struggling had an expertise in special needs and was able to help the other school in return. That is the type of relationship that we are essentially talking about.

1061. **Mr Lunn:** I cannot help thinking that the grammar schools could do a lot to help their image. They seem determined to cling to a system where they put children through these tests, which some of us despise, and the failures have to go to some other school. They could at least improve their image by trying to assist those schools. If they are not prepared to help the children, they could at least give them a helping hand. Anyway, that is my rant for today.

1062. **Mr Craig:** He used the F word.

1063. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Well done.

1064. **Mr McCausland:** I second that. Apologies, I had an appointment that I could not get out of this morning. I want to ask about the research and

studies you have done on sharing and on children coming together from different backgrounds and traditions. If children come together from schools in the Catholic maintained sector and the controlled sector, they will probably come from different cultural traditions. Those who come from the maintained sector, particularly at secondary level, will come from a school at which they probably play Gaelic games, have the Irish language on the curriculum and probably have an Irish traditional music group. Therefore, there is strong cultural identity that may not be the same as in the controlled school. Do you see any issues arising from that?

1065. **Professor Gallagher:** My experience of controlled schools, particularly in rural areas, is that there is often a strong tradition of music, which is particularly centred around bands, such as pipe bands. I have been in schools in which kids practice playing the bagpipes, for example.

1066. I suspect that you are right to the extent that there is a probably a clearer or more tightly defined cultural framework in maintained schools. However, in our experience, that has not been a problem. What has tended to happen is that people have used that cultural difference as an opportunity to broaden pupils' experiences. There has been situations in which there have been discussions about remembrance in November, for example. That has broadened the experience for children from Catholic schools, who traditionally may not have been as connected to that, and has addressed some of the aspects of history and citizenship.

1067. Schools choose to use the opportunity of collaboration in different ways. They focus on different areas of the curriculum, and some of the issues are more directly related than others. That is OK, because the important thing is to bring people together in as many ways as possible. As Miles said earlier and Joanne's work demonstrates, once you have created that context, it provides an opportunity for you to start to address issues around difference. You will have

- built up a level of trust and can start to deal with some of the more challenging issues. That is when you start to get the evidence and when, I suggest, you will see a significant change to and improvement in the cohesive nature of our society.
1068. **Mr McCausland:** Do you not accept that remembrance, although hugely important, is not the counterpart to the other things?
1069. **Professor Gallagher:** Sure.
1070. **Mr McCausland:** Others whom I have spoken to about their experience of controlled schools would not have as fulsome a view of the extent of the musical and other traditions. I remember some years ago someone from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCEA) saying to me that, when it was organising an event, it was very easy to go to a Catholic maintained school to get a traditional music group. I think that there was a school up around Castlederg somewhere that had a pipe band and that there used to be a pipe band at Campbell College. Apart from the recent developmental work that has been done by the Ulster-Scots Agency to put music into schools, I do not know of any other schools, bar one, that have a band.
1071. **Professor Gallagher:** The school that I was in did not have a band, but some of the pupils played in a band and were allowed to practise in the school.
1072. **Mr McCausland:** My point is that, if a culture is excluded from schools, it is denied the validity of being part of the education system.
1073. **Professor Gallagher:** That makes an assumption that there is specific exclusion. I do not know that there is. Perhaps there is, but I do not know. I am not aware that there is.
1074. **Mr McCausland:** If a thing is not there, it has either been intentionally or unintentionally excluded.
1075. **Professor Gallagher:** It may be that there are others spaces available for it.
1076. **Mr McCausland:** I will not pursue the point, but I will just make an observation. For any cultural or linguistic expression across Europe — there are examples internationally — the two key things are to be part of the education system, which gives you validity and intergenerational passing-on, and to be part of the media.
1077. **Professor Gallagher:** In our first wave of shared education schools, a rural maintained secondary school developed a lot of activity with a network of controlled and maintained primary schools in its area. One of the unexpected benefits was not just the experience of the kids but the school starting to connect with all sorts of community organisations. The maintained school started to be used as a community resource for events, meetings and other activities. On at least one occasion, the Orange Order held something in the maintained school, because it had a good hall.
1078. I am a little bit vague because we have not come across this as a particular issue. However, that is an example of where the connections created across communities because of the collaborative relationships between schools have a community impact and help to provide opportunities for people to come together in ways that previously would not have happened at all.
1079. **Mr McCausland:** I have no objection to any of those things. That is good. However, even the fact that you say that you have not come across it as an issue is relevant. It is an issue that has been left in the “too difficult” drawer or forgotten about. I make the point that children going into a school have a basic human right to learn about the culture and the cultural expressions of the community from which they come. In many cases, as you say, the children play in a band outside school but that is not brought into the school. That almost delegitimises and marginalises it. To create a shared future and better relationships, that would be a good thing.

1080. **Dr Duffy:** Nelson, I am not exactly sure whether this is the type of thing that you want information on, but I go back to the partnership in Derry/Londonderry as a practical example. You mentioned culture and the arts. The children have a shared choir that operates both inside and outside the school. The partnership has engaged in quite a large drama piece, involving 150 children and nine schools across the city. That is another expression of activity that happens both inside and outside the school. We have evidence of shared sports — rugby, Gaelic, and so on. The type of research that I do tends to be very focused on small groups of young people or on classroom observations. I am involved in observations where young people talk about their common identities, their accents, their language and their gender. Therefore, it is more than a conversation around culture. It is actually quite broad.
1081. **Mr McCausland:** What I am suggesting is that, if they are talking about their cultural identities, in some cases, one group of children may be coming forward with a cultural identity that they bring from the home into the school that is then reaffirmed and validated in the school, while the other children may be coming with a cultural identity that they have outside the school but that is almost left outside the school gates. That is the point. You are not getting a level playing field. There are two dimensions to it. There is the rights issue and then the relationship issue.
1082. **Professor Hughes:** I have written a paper on the issue, and I think that —
1083. **Mr McCausland:** Great. Give me the title and the details.
1084. **Mr Eastwood:** It disagrees with everything that you have said. *[Laughter.]*
1085. **Professor Hughes:** The maintained sector is the Catholic sector, and there is a strong attachment to cultural traditions, and so on, within it. The controlled sector is open to everyone and presented in that way, so it is difficult to attach it to particular traditions or a particular culture.
1086. **Mr McCausland:** Only if you approach it on a school basis rather than on a child-centred basis. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) contains commitments that children have the right to learn about the culture of the community and the home from which they come and that that has to be done on the basis of equity so as not to discriminate between children. Therefore, what is available to children in one education sector should be available to those in another sector. It is an important issue. It is a rights issue. You also get a better relationship if children come together. If you can give me the details of the paper, I will be delighted to read it.
1087. **Professor Hughes:** I will send it to you.
1088. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you. It was worth coming today.
1089. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Nelson is happy.
1090. Finally, I want to know whether you have done any research around the Youth Service.
1091. **Professor Hewstone:** Do you mean outside of school, with a particular focus? I am not quite sure what you are getting at.
1092. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There are opportunities for sharing with youth clubs, and so on, as well. I was just wondering whether any research had been done around the level of engagement and sharing in communities.
1093. **Professor Gallagher:** The closest that we have got to it may be the Contested Spaces programme work in Derry/Londonderry. One of the key things there was not just collaboration between schools but collaboration with statutory and non-statutory agencies. A focus on the particular use of a sector has not at this point been a focus of the work that I have been involved in.

1094. **Professor Hughes:** Other projects are looking at that. There is the investigating links in achievement and deprivation (ILIAD) project, which is investigating links between education and disadvantage. The research is ongoing. It is due to report to OFMDFM in March, I think.
1095. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Any research would be quite interesting. There is a focus on schools, but, once the young people leave school at 3.30 pm, what level of engagement is there after that? We might find that, in some areas, it is very high, and there are probably some very good models, whereas, in other areas, engagement could be encouraged.
1096. **Professor Gallagher:** There is a very long tradition of work in the youth sector. It is a different type of pedagogy. There is often evidence of a greater commitment to addressing issues around reconciliation and cohesion and to using more creative methodologies to do so. One thing that has always been identified as important is its voluntarist nature. Therefore, it can sometimes work a little bit better than similar work in schools, because the young people have the choice of going to such settings, whereas the engagement was compulsory for them in school. The University of Ulster did some interesting work on that. It trained youth workers and teachers together to try to create some synergy between them. That was successful to a degree, but, because they are from two different professions, there remained some degree of professional tension, and I guess that that is still the case.
1097. **Professor Hughes:** It goes back to the point about how difficult it is for our teachers, given the expectation that we have of them, to address some of those controversial issues in the context of the classroom. They do not receive training for it and are currently educated in separate teacher training colleges, so we need to think about whether they will have the capacity or will to do it.
1098. **Professor Hewstone:** Members of the Committee may or may not be aware of work on the national citizenship scheme in England. It is an idea that David Cameron is very keen on. I am not recommending it for that reason, but it is a great idea for bringing together people from different backgrounds, and not just from different ethnic and racial backgrounds but, deliberately, from different social and economic backgrounds. The scheme gets young people from school who volunteer to take part in activities outside school. They take part in a four-week programme that starts off with some outward-bound activities and they then get some real-world experience of, for example, how to market a product. People from business are involved, and there is something aimed at helping the young people find employment at the end. They also do some community charity work in a team of 12 and get to know one another. Depending on their team, they get to know people from a particular subset of other groups. We are in the middle of an evaluation of that work. I say that to give you faith in the idea. Nobody is recommending that the people of Northern Ireland take this brave step on their own as if there were no evidence ahead of them.
1099. There are lots of other examples. People mentioned collaborations. We have collaborations in South Africa and have done similar work in Malaysia and many other countries, and there is a huge evidence base that suggests that, if you bring people together and create the conditions for positive contact, the outcomes will be positive.
1100. **Dr Duffy:** Although this is not specifically about the Youth Service, we have some evidence of how schools can engage more broadly in the community and build stronger links to voluntary and statutory agencies. Some of the partnerships that I have worked with have made links with youth clubs, for example, whereby people will use youth clubs in each other's communities. We have evidence of city councils having become involved with schools, and there have been stronger links with the PSNI, voluntary agencies, agencies such as the Child

- Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, other education groups, community wardens, Churches and historical sites and settings. There is almost a community development element built into some partnerships.
1101. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr Lunn wishes to come back for a very short question.
1102. **Mr Lunn:** I want to go back to Nelson's point about the cultural expression in various types of school. He started off on the musical side of it. As you will know, I have a musical interest. I also go to a lot of schools. I always ask them, "What is the extent of music interest in the school?". Without exception, nowadays — it gladdens my heart — there has been a resurgence in the teaching of music and the teaching of instruments, and schools have a band, a traditional music group or whatever. It is right across the board. I cannot but think that that is an area in which there is real scope for collaboration, because music teachers are sometimes contracted in rather than permanently employed and can teach in more than one school at a time. It is really good stuff. I do not want to cross swords with Nelson —
1103. **Mr McCausland:** Oh, go on.
1104. **Mr Lunn:** — but you cannot have it both ways. You cannot say that a controlled school is for everyone and is almost the equivalent of an integrated school —
1105. **Mr Eastwood:** Not when it has British Army cadets in there.
1106. **Mr Lunn:** — and then ask why we need integrated schools, while wanting the controlled school to have a Protestant ethos to it. It may come down to the instruments. Nelson, you want them to be taught the flute and the side drum, whereas they are actually being taught orchestral instruments and proper music.
1107. **Mr McCausland:** I find that many orchestras have drums and flutes. They are musical instruments. I was not going to come back in, but I will now. *[Laughter.]*
1108. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Through the Chair, of course.
1109. **Mr McCausland:** I am grateful to Mr Lunn for opening the door. I am sure that you will be generous, Chair. One of the best examples of good sharing that I came across was when pupils were having fife and drum classes in the Boys' Model. They were able to bring their fife and drum group together with the traditional music group from Bearnageeha. They performed separately and then played certain tunes together, but they could do that only because there happened to be a group from a particular tradition in each of the schools to come together. If you have only one group, it does not work. That is the issue. Trevor raised a point about controlled schools. If it is child-focused, the cultural mix and cultural provision and accommodation in a school in one area, depending on the community that it serves, will be different from that in a controlled school in another area. It will entirely depend on the community that it serves, but the children going into the school bring the right with them. It is not something that they leave at the door. It is a human right.
1110. **Professor Gallagher:** The Boys' Model, Bearnageeha and Ashfield Boys' School were also involved in the Belfast Cuchullains and played hurling and shinty with Scottish shinty teams. It is used in interesting ways in sport as well.
1111. **Mr McCausland:** I think that the music example was a better expression of cultural sharing. I have not seen too many shinty teams around the Shankill recently.
1112. **Professor Gallagher:** There were some interesting games in Scotland with the shinty teams.
1113. **Mr McCausland:** Yes. They can stay there.
1114. **Mr Kinahan:** Sorry that I was not here for half the meeting. Have you considered having a matrix or a step-by-step continuum from no sharing to sharing to totally integrated or having sets of examples that everyone can

follow so that you are pushing sharing, all the while knowing that everyone is at different points?

1115. **Professor Gallagher:** There is a continuum, yes. The inspectors have picked up on that and are using it as part of the framework that they are organising. We are saying to the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) that a continuum is useful, because it gives you a guideline for where people might be at different stages. However, do not assume that everything moves at the same speed and do not assume that it is a simple linear model in which you cannot do the third step unless you have done the second step, because our experience is that it is much more organic than that. The inspectorate is using that as part of its framework, and that is very useful.

1116. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
I thank you for your time and for your presentation. If there is other information that you would like to send to us, we will be very willing to accept it.

26 November 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Antoin Moran	<i>Ballyhackett Primary School</i>
Mrs Alison McConnell	<i>Carr's Glen Primary School</i>
Professor Roger Austin	<i>University of Ulster</i>

1117. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome you to the Committee; thank you very much for joining us. Professor Austin, you can begin by introducing your colleagues and making an opening statement. Members will follow that with questions.

1118. **Professor Roger Austin (University of Ulster):** Good morning. Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk to you about the research that we have been doing. I thought it was important to bring with me two teachers who have been involved in our work so that you can hear, from the chalkface, exactly how this works.

1119. You have a copy of the summary document. The Dissolving Boundaries programme has been running for 15 years and is a North/South programme. It has offered us some very interesting data about the way that you can use technology to link schools together, combined with face-to-face contact. This evidence might be particularly interesting for your Committee in the context of thinking about ways that you can develop shared education so that it reaches potentially every child,

even those in the most geographically isolated schools.

1120. I started this paper by simply noting that there is a challenge. According to even the Department of Education's figures, around 20% of schools have had no involvement in any form of shared education. The presentation is saying that this is one way we might be able to reach that group while, at the same time, offering schools that are already engaged in some face-to-face contact an additional means of strengthening and deepening the partnership.

1121. When I use the term "blended learning", I am talking about the mixture of long-term online contact over a year with face-to-face contact. I stress that not all of this is online. We think that there is a real value in using both face-to-face and online connection.

1122. The Dissolving Boundaries programme was very substantial. There was a base from special schools, primary schools and post-primary schools, over 15 years, with 50,000 young people, 2,500 teachers and 570 schools. In other words, the evidence from this work is substantial. You may know this, but I will say for the record that the Dissolving Boundaries programme was funded by Belfast and Dublin's Education Departments but managed by Ulster University and our colleagues in Maynooth.

1123. When we sat for a moment and said, "After 15 years' work and all that investment, what exactly have we learned that might be of value to the system?", it seemed that there were some key lessons. I am going to invite Alison and Antoin to add their points. I stress that whatever recommendations your Committee might come up with, I know that you will be conscious of the fact that, in the end, if the teachers are not on board and not supportive, it is not going to work. It is partly for that reason that I am pleased that my

- colleagues are from different types of schools. They will tell you more about where they are teaching. Teachers are central to the delivery of any of this. We found that there was no substitute for bringing the teachers from the two schools together and allowing them to spend time learning the technology together and then saying, "How are we going to plan a programme of work that is going to engage our respective classes?".
1124. Antoin, would you like to add to what I have said on that?
1125. **Mr Antoin Moran (Ballyhackett Primary School):** I am principal of Ballyhackett Primary School in Castlerock. I have been in post for the past 11 months. My school is presently in shared education partnership with Castleroe Primary School in Coleraine. We have been sharing education with them since 2009. We were part of the original Primary Integrating/Enriching Education (PIEE) cohort, and we are now funded through Queen's University, Belfast. My previous school was the Holy Family Primary School in Magherafelt. In my role as year 5 teacher there, I was also Dissolving Boundaries coordinator. That is where I have linked in with Roger's programme. I took part in the Dissolving Boundaries programme from 2007 to 2014, when it finished. That was seven years in total.
1126. Through completing my master's degree from the University of Ulster in 2010, I produced a research paper entitled, 'Dissolving Boundaries programme: a revised curriculum perspective'. The type of blended approach that the Dissolving Boundaries programme promoted produces key benefits. I found a significant enhancement of pupils' ICT skills over and above the pupils who were not involved in the project. Through my research, I surveyed the participating teachers. I also did two case studies. I found that the Dissolving Boundaries programme complemented perfectly the revised curriculum, as it was in 2010, especially in a cross-curricular sense. It also gave the opportunity for us as teachers to meet the requirements of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). The work that we do fits in well with that and allows us to tick that box, so to speak, as regards assessment opportunities within primary education.
1127. Dissolving Boundaries also provides a strong purpose and context for the children's learning. Through my work, I have found that it improves pupils' motivation, especially that of boys and pupils who have significant barriers to their learning. ICT is of benefit in communication, specifically. For example, I taught an autistic boy who struggled to communicate verbally. His parents came to me and said that he loved videoconferencing, because he spoke into the camera rather than to a person's face. He struggled with that and could not do it. He was able to talk into the camera because he did not feel the pressure to communicate face to face. That is a simple example that shows the power of technology, if it is used correctly, in education.
1128. **Professor Austin:** Can I come back to you in a minute? Alison, on the point of the importance of teachers coming together, are you an ICT specialist?
1129. **Mrs Alison McConnell (Carr's Glen Primary School):** No, I am definitely not an ICT specialist. It pushed me and pushed my boundaries with ICT. I was so enthusiastic about the project that it made me want to come to grips with videoconferencing, and, when the children were Moodling each other, which is a bit like emailing, I tried to follow their string of thought. They were happy to go ahead with it, and it was a challenge to me at the start. Then each year, as I became comfortable, another teacher was brought in. On occasion, they would call me for advice about how to set up the videoconferencing. It required a lot of planning at the beginning with your partner or twin teacher to make sure that it went ahead.
1130. **Professor Austin:** I think that that connects to the next point, which is in paragraph 3.3. Everything that took place in Dissolving Boundaries

- was rooted in the curriculum. In other words, we did not at any time say that we expected it to be done as an extracurricular activity after school or at lunchtime. It should be enriching what people are doing already.
1131. Obviously, the curriculum in Northern Ireland is not the same as the curriculum on the other side of the border, and that presented some challenges for teachers. However, its application for shared education will be a much easier process, since we all have the same curriculum.
1132. One thing that I would like to stress about paragraph 3.3 is that, after the teachers completed their day's training, they each signed up to a learning agreement, which was, in effect, a form of contract for what they would do for the whole year. They kept a copy, their principals had a copy and the two universities had a copy. In other words, there was a process of ensuring that promises and agreements made at the time were followed through.
1133. I would also stress the huge variety of projects that schools did. For example, there were enterprise projects, with two schools running mini companies together across the border; lots of projects to do with science, with children carrying out experiments in two schools; and projects in history, geography and English. The enterprise work, of course, connects very well into numeracy. The point that I want to make is that this is not confined to citizenship or any one element of the curriculum. It is potentially any part of the curriculum that the teachers agree that they can work on that forms the core of the work that is done.
1134. Do you want to add anything to that point?
1135. **Mr Moran:** I would emphasise the point that Roger made about good planning from the start. I have experience of both sides of the perspective through participating in Dissolving Boundaries and shared education, and there is a very similar approach with both. The first critical step in shared education is good planning with your partner school or teacher. In my new school, I am using experiences that I developed in Dissolving Boundaries in my new shared education partnership and using ICT to enhance the experience. I have already done that, and we have had shared teacher training through videoconferencing and shared lessons between pupils in both schools.
1136. The benefits that I see, and that I am aiming to implement in my new partnership, will also save money. Presently, we spend approximately £2,500 transporting pupils from one side of Coleraine to the other. At the very least, I would aim to cut that by a quarter by using videoconferencing and communicating online.
1137. **Professor Austin:** We will pick up on the question of costs in a minute. Alison, unless you want to say anything about paragraph 3.3, may I go on to paragraph 3.4?
1138. **Mrs McConnell:** Yes.
1139. **Professor Austin:** You might say that it all sounds like a great plan but ask where the evidence is that it makes any difference to the children who take part. In the coloured version of the document, you will find a list of academic references, including one to a book that came out last year. The evidence is strong of the impacts on young people. Even a year after they had stopped their participation in Dissolving Boundaries, they still showed that they were more open, curious and interested in diversity than children in the same schools who had not taken part. That is an important finding for us.
1140. As Antoin said, we need to bear it in mind that, for many of these youngsters, the idea of communicating with a distant audience is enormously motivating. They are producing work not just for their teachers but that other children in another school will look at. In many instances, teachers reported that that meant that pupils took a great deal more care over what they sent and how

- much they sent. In other words, the overall quality of information improved as a result of having that connection.
1141. Alison, do you want to say anything about the impact on your children?
1142. **Mrs McConnell:** They could log on to the Dissolving Boundaries website from home, and I found that some of them wanted to do that. I found posts from 4.00 pm, 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm, so they were really motivated to keep the link going. It links so well into the ICT curriculum, in which it is difficult to create a meaningful exchange. However, this was a really meaningful exchange between children.
1143. **Professor Austin:** I am sure that you know this, but CCEA has an expectation that all schools make sure that their pupils undertake a range of assessed ICT tasks. Those are grouped under five Es — explore, exhibit, evaluate etc. One of those is E for exchange. There is an expectation that they will use ICT to exchange with somebody else. That is the one area that some schools struggled with unless they had a partnership with another school.
1144. **Mr Moran:** The beauty of this type of approach is that it relates to the key fact that ICT is now a cross-curricular skill. It is not a subject on its own, and as a teacher, you are expected to use ICT through all your other subjects. This approach is exactly how ICT is used; it is used as a vehicle to support children's learning in a cross-curricular sense.
1145. **Professor Austin:** If it is OK, Madam Chair, we will press on to what we have learned about how to manage something like this. Paragraph 3.5 deals with lessons for programme coordination.
1146. The university took the lead, but I really want to emphasise the fact that we could not have done this had it not been for a very strong partnership with C2k, which of course provides all the hardware for all the schools, and CCEA, with which we worked very closely to ensure that the work we did was appropriate for the ICT assessment tasks. We also had the real benefit of advisers in the education and library boards nominating schools to take part. We felt blessed to have such a strong partnership. That meant that we were able to have a very wide range of schools, from special schools, Irish-medium schools and primary schools. Every type of school that there is in Northern Ireland was represented in Dissolving Boundaries.
1147. I want to briefly discuss paragraph 3.6 and the practicalities from the point of view of programme management. The university employed two staff, and 15% of my time was protected to direct the programme. I want to underline the final sentence:
- “Teachers felt strongly that there was a need for ‘third party experts to train, support and encourage teachers in this specific area of education’.”*
1148. I make that point because I am aware that there has been some suggestion that money for shared education should simply go to schools and that they should be invited to do what they want to do. I think that we should reflect carefully on whether third parties should play the kind of role that the university played in supporting what happened.
1149. Paragraph 3.7 is about costs. We gave a grant of £350 to every school towards the cost of a face-to-face meeting. That was never enough to cover all the costs, and what has impressed us is the way in which the schools either covered the rest of that from their own resources or invited children and parents to contribute. Teachers who completed the agreed work programme were given a grant of £500 in the first year, which reduced to £200 for subsequent years. That was a way of ensuring that, when we had trained teachers in the first year, we kept them in play; that we sustained this, so that it was not a meteorite flashing through the sky briefly and then fizzling out. It was a way of ensuring that the expertise that was being built up in the schools was sustained. The key thing is that the average cost of taking part was £75 per annum per pupil. I am not sure what other figures you have,

- but, for us, that looked like exceptionally good value for money.
1150. The final section from us is this: what are the possible implications for shared education? We have reviewed all the research and policy work that has been done up to now, and it is fair to say that most of the energy has gone into bussing children from one site to another. Of course, there is a place for that. In our view, insufficient attention has been paid to the role of ICT. I underline the point that every school in Northern Ireland already has all the equipment that they need to work together. It is there and provided through C2k. Broadband is there, videoconferencing is there, and so is the virtual learning environment. All that it needs is a good purpose to use it. This kind of approach uses the existing ICT infrastructure in a cost-effective way, and the skills that the children are learning in working with others who are a little bit different are not just good for shared education but are very important in the context of developing the kind of skills that employers want. I think that there is a real connection to the broader employability agenda. Antoin, I think that you wanted to say something on those two points.
1151. **Mr Moran:** I agree with Roger about the employability skills that employers are looking for. Another key point about the programme is that it was specifically done in group tasks. The children were divided into groups in both schools, and a key benefit that I saw was the interaction between the groups from school to school but also in the group in the classroom situation.
1152. **Professor Austin:** Thanks, Antoin. Every school in Northern Ireland has been sent a copy of the document. This year, the University of Ulster is running a prototype of what could be developed. It is called ePartners. It will include Alison's school. It includes students from the university going into the schools to act as a mentor, and the model is using technology to connect schools, with a face-to-face encounter. I have to say that our capacity in ePartners is limited in the sense that the funding comes through widening access, and that means that we can work only with schools that meet particular criteria in terms of economic and social need. I make the point that Antoin's school would not be allowed in but Alison's would. We would very much like to be in a situation where we had the funds to broaden this approach to recruit a much larger number of schools.
1153. Colleagues, thank you very much for listening to that opening presentation from us. We are very happy to take questions.
1154. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much for your presentation and also for the paper that you supplied to the Committee. The reports that we have seen are all very positive about Dissolving Boundaries. Why did the funding essentially end in 2014?
1155. **Professor Austin:** You probably need to ask the Department of Education that question. We were not really given a clear answer. They were working in partnership with Dublin. If one can believe the rumours, civil servants in Dublin decided that 15 years was quite long enough, thank you, and that it was time to review not only Dissolving Boundaries but the European Studies programme, which had been running for an even longer time. I think that they wanted to take stock — to stop these programmes and have an opportunity to stand back and reflect on and review the best way forward.
1156. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You have talked about the new prototype programme that you are looking at. But has that left a vacuum where you were once able to bring schools together, particularly through the ICT project —
1157. **Professor Austin:** Yes, it has.
1158. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** — and have those schools continued any relationship since then?
1159. **Professor Austin:** To a very limited extent. We know this because we encouraged them to continue. I think that this was an instance where the

- absence of a coordinating third party made it very difficult for schools.
1160. **Mrs McConnell:** Yes, I contacted my partner school when we heard that the funding was ending, but I have not heard back. I would have been keen to continue this, but what if something goes wrong with the videoconferencing? There would not have been a safe site for the children to communicate through. That would have been the first thing. We could have done the videoconferencing with the help of C2k, and they would have supported us in any problems with that. It is so important for teachers to get together at the beginning of the academic year, plan for the project and agree, as Roger said, a contract to go forward.
1161. **Mr Moran:** From a shared education standpoint, I know that my current school was getting money from the PIEE project, which then ran out. The whole point of the project was that it would be sustainable with or without funding, but when it comes down to it, the funding helps to make that partnership strong. I made a point previously about transport to and from schools. If we did not have that significant amount of funding, which we are very lucky to have at present through Queen's University, yes, we could continue the partnership, but it would be a shadow of what it possibly could be. I return to my previous point on the role of ICT. It can help to limit the amount of money that you need to spend.
1162. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Were this approach to be mainstream in a shared education programme, which elements of what you have done through Dissolving Boundaries do you believe are successful enough to be included in that type of programme?
1163. **Professor Austin:** The key things are to bring the teachers together to plan — obviously, there is a cost to that — and to ensure that the technology is available for them to use. There is a new videoconferencing piece of software called Collaborate. That is what we are going to use in ePartners, and the virtual learning environment (VLE) is Fronter. In ePartners, we will bring the teachers together in January. They will be trained in how to use Collaborate and Fronter. Those are the two crucial tools for the children to work together. That is the absolute minimum core that you need. You have to have time to bring the teachers together; the technology has to be in place; and, thirdly, all the evidence we have suggests that even a short face-to-face meeting, if it is seen as being connected to the work and to the online work, has a real, substantial benefit.
1164. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You have very clear evidence of a project that worked. Has the Department approached you in preparation for policy development for the shared education Bill?
1165. **Professor Austin:** Indirectly. The inspector responsible for shared education has been to see us and attended a symposium that we ran to launch our Dissolving Boundaries pamphlet. I understand that she is offering advice to the Department of Education on future policy development. I think that she took the point that, of all the different approaches, a blended approach that includes ICT is really essential. How else would you reach all those outlying rural primary schools that would otherwise find it exceptionally difficult or very costly to meet up with other schools?
1166. **Mr Moran:** My present school is an example of the schools that Roger is talking about. In our most recent inspection report from September 2014, the inspectors reported that our shared education partnership was an exemplar of best practice. They also noted that not only was it beneficial for a school of our size but it was essential because of our rural and isolated location. We have a beautiful school in Castlerock that overlooks the sea from the top of a mountain. We are rural and isolated, but we have this link-up with Castleroe Castle Primary School, which has been backed up by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).
1167. **Mr Craig:** As far as I am concerned, Professor Austin, you are very welcome

to the Committee, because you are from my old university.

1168. **Professor Austin:** Thank you.

1169. **Mr Craig:** I am fascinated by this topic. I am a technical person who loves this kind of thing. However, I can already see clear implications. There are area learning communities for A levels, and a big conundrum is how to provide a wide enough range of choices for pupils. The big issue for all the schools has always been transport for the children between the secondary schools. Do you agree that this has implications for circumventing that entirely? What would the additional costs be for a school? What technology do schools need, and what are the cost implications of bringing them up to that standard? Such costs could be offset against transport costs.

1170. **Professor Austin:** Thank you very much for that question. Everything in my paper, and everything that my colleagues have spoken about, concerns Key Stages 2 and 3. You are absolutely right. It is about building up a set of ICT skills among teachers and young people, which will really come into their own when we get to the 14–16 and 16–18 age groups in the form of better access to a wider range of examination courses. That is common practice in parts of Newfoundland because of the geographical situation. Research from Newfoundland indicates that there is no diminution in the overall performance of candidates who take courses online when they are still at school, and the big advantage is that, when they go to university, they are prepared to be much more autonomous and to fit better into the kind of learning experience that they encounter at university.

1171. In answer to your specific question about area learning communities — I hope that this is not heresy — you have to look at the whole of Northern Ireland and see where there is a need for an academic or vocational subject that cannot be met easily because only one or two pupils in many schools want to take that subject. If you were to follow the Newfoundland model, the

answer is to create exemplary online resources first, which can be done in Fronter. You then need local support and backup, which, in my view, would be provided by the staff in the area learning communities. So it is a combination of having excellent online materials and local support in the area learning community. The costs would be relatively small. You would probably have to second teachers or experts to create the online content and then make it available for all the schools that wish to sign up for it.

1172. **Mr Craig:** I have no disagreement with what you are saying. Is there any resistance from teachers? I am thinking of teachers who have been in education for a lot longer than others. I think that, more than anything, it is a fear of new technology. In your experience of implementing this, did you come up against that?

1173. **Professor Austin:** It was an issue when we started. I began to do this kind of work in 1986. At that time, a number of teachers were fearful of technology. That is less and less the case, partly, of course, because every student who goes through teacher training at the moment, whether in Northern Ireland or elsewhere, gets substantial online and ICT experience. There is probably still some caution when it comes to public examinations. You probably know this, but an A level in moving image arts is being partly provided online, and it is very popular. Provided there is adequate support, I cannot see any reason why other subjects should not be treated in the same way.

1174. **Mr Craig:** This obviously brings a completely new concept to the whole principle of teaching, right across the board. It strikes me that younger teachers will accept it much more quickly than those who have been used to doing things in a different way. That is what I am trying to get at.

1175. **Professor Austin:** Interestingly, in Canada, they had to create a new type of teacher called an m-teacher — a mediating teacher. These teachers might

- not necessarily be subject specialists, but their job is to ensure that the pupils who are taking online courses get to the right place at the right time if there is a videoconference and log on. There was local support for pupils to be able to do this even if the teacher was not necessarily a subject specialist.
1176. **Mr Newton:** I apologise to Professor Austin because I have to go at 11.30 am. I thank you and your colleagues because you have made the paper report come alive. Your enthusiasm is spilling over into the Committee.
1177. There are certainly factors that need to be taken into account in the very positive work that you have done on shared education. I have two points. The first is about the limited face-to-face contact, because my concept of shared education means a lot of face-to-face contact between pupils. Secondly, if the work that you have done — I think that the Chair touched on this — were to be mainstreamed, what would the implications be?
1178. **Professor Austin:** As Antoin and Alison will tell you, the face-to-face contact in Dissolving Boundaries was often no more than pupils meeting for a day. I am still astonished that even such a small amount of face-to-face contact appeared to bring about a big surge in online activity immediately afterwards, not to mention the increase in the exchange of messages before the face-to-face contact. Our evidence suggests that even limited face-to-face contact seems to be hugely motivating when it is part of this extended year-long online working together.
1179. **Mrs McConnell:** There was definitely a build-up of relationships during the videoconferencing. To begin with, it was just their names, their favourite sports or something like that. However, pupils then saw that they had so many things in common. One year group decided to start playing their musical instruments. I just left them alone, and the children were saying, “Oh, I can do this”, and, on the other side, they were doing it back. They built up a relationship themselves through videoconferencing, which was almost like a real face-to-face relationship. It was great.
1180. **Mr Moran:** A key decision that we had to make at the start of each year when we were planning what we were going to do was when we would have a face-to-face meeting. Partnerships normally left it until the end of the year. One year, I decided to try it at the start of the year, and I found that that worked just as well. When my pupils met pupils from the other school, they knew their names. They were able to talk through their likes and dislikes and get a feel for one another. They then went online and were able to talk more to each other about what they were learning.
1181. **Professor Austin:** The key thing is to try to make sure that the face-to-face meeting does not happen at the very end when there is no opportunity to follow through. I hope that that answers your question.
1182. **Mr Newton:** What if it were to be mainstreamed?
1183. **Professor Austin:** It could be mainstreamed in a relatively manageable way in terms of cost. It does need a third party, and the University of Ulster would be very interested in continuing to play the role that it has played in this area of work. I do not foresee any reason why this approach could not connect every single school.
1184. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Thank you for your presentation. I agree about the insufficient focus on ICT across a number of sectors. That goes without saying.
1185. Reviews were conducted on Dissolving Boundaries. Solid reviews have been done, from which there has been positive feedback. One of the issues from the ETI/Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate (DESI) joint review in 2010-11 was to do with the programme being further linked with community relations through a greater use of online tools. Has there been any thinking on that? Has the programme

- adapted, or does it have a view on community relations?
1186. **Professor Austin:** Maeve, I want to make sure that I understand your question. Most of the work was on curriculum subjects, and you are saying that this did not always lead to the development of community relations.
1187. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** To be clear: the review stated that the work of the programme should be more closely linked with community relations.
1188. **Professor Austin:** Yes. As a result of that report, I made all the research data available to those responsible for community relations in all five boards. However, of course, we had to leave it up to them to decide how best to implement it. It is probably true to say that not everybody shared my enthusiasm for the way in which ICT and face-to-face work could be done together. So there is a great opportunity now, if I can put it that way.
1189. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** This question is probably slightly linked. In your presentation, you touched on the definition of shared education. Should shared education be defined simply as educational outcomes, or should societal benefits be included?
1190. **Professor Austin:** I think that it should be both. I am saying that, when we think about shared education, there is a real benefit in children from different communities coming together. So there should be benefits in the use of technology, benefits in the curriculum work and benefits for society, with a greater acceptance, respect and tolerance for difference.
1191. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** You said that it was a cross-border project, with schools engaging with schools that are further away. In my case, a school might be 10 minutes down the road. I am thinking specifically about obstacles that you may have encountered in the development of that all-Ireland cross-border project.
1192. **Professor Austin:** It is not a secret to say that some controlled schools were apprehensive about taking part, particularly at the beginning. They feared that parents might dislike what they were doing, even though they themselves could see lots of educational benefits. However, those anxieties often turned out to be groundless, and teachers and principals became very adept at drawing parents in and involving them, even to the extent of ensuring that parents came with the children if there was a face-to-face meeting on the other side of the border. I cannot say that everybody was instantly enthusiastic; some people had reservations. However, once they began to see the benefits, particularly the added motivation that they could see in their children when they came home, even sceptical parents turned out to be persuaded that this was a good thing.
1193. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** I am thinking about education as an area of cooperation and how this work can identify some of those all-Ireland cross-border working relationships with ICT, and how that can be flushed out in your work.
1194. **Professor Austin:** We have not been asked by the North/South Ministerial Council to reflect on what we have learned from Dissolving Boundaries. If we were asked, we would be very happy to go along, and we would probably take a copy of our pamphlet with us. The ending of the funding is a pity, and it has certainly left a gap in cross-border educational links. However, I am a pragmatist, and I see an immediate and pressing need to try to draw lessons from this experience that can help us all with shared education in Northern Ireland.
1195. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Has the external agency that you talked about — the third-party influence — been costed?
1196. **Professor Austin:** It is costed in the figure of £75 for each pupil. In other words, the budget has a certain amount of money to employ staff by the

- university and to provide grants to the pupils.
1197. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you very much for your presentation. It was very interesting. In your answer to Robin Newton's question about the level of contact, you perhaps pointed a way for us. For those of us who think that the jury is still out on the whole shared education project, the main objection would be the lack of potential societal benefit in that you transport your kids to another school for half a day, a couple of periods or whatever at quite a cost, and that is all the contact there is; it does not develop from there. The idea, therefore, that the kids get to know one another, even at a long distance in this case, and start to exchange and so on, is reassuring for me and the potential for the shared education programme. I do not want to start to advocate for integrated education, but they would say that their starting point is where the shared education programme is trying to get to in societal terms. That is at least a good pointer for us.
1198. **Professor Austin:** Thank you very much for that. This is a new model. When we put this book — 'Online Learning and Community Cohesion' — together last year, it was the first time that anybody had produced research globally on how to use the Internet in a way that builds community cohesion. The book has examples from Northern Ireland, the island of Ireland and the Middle East. It is a robust model. If it has something really going for it, it is the capacity to reach out to everybody. I would hate to think that shared education was available only for a few children who happen to be in geographical proximity to a certain school.
1199. **Mr Lunn:** Has there been more emphasis on primary rather than secondary level?
1200. **Professor Austin:** In Dissolving Boundaries, it was roughly 50:50, and, of course, there were also appreciable numbers of children in special schools. We ran ePartners last year, and it was also a mixture of primary and secondary.
- In some respects, it is a little easier — I hope that you do not mind me saying so — in primary schools, simply because a teacher has a class all day long. It is a little easier to fit in videoconferencing. If you are in secondary school and have only 40 minutes for history or maths and then have to go somewhere else for a videoconference, it is a bit more complicated. So there are some logistical difficulties in the post-primary sector. They are not insuperable, but it is more of a challenge.
1201. **Mr Lunn:** There is probably more concentration on a particular subject.
1202. **Professor Austin:** Yes, and the timetable is structured into short blocks of time.
1203. **Mr Lunn:** How much time do you spend each week in your two schools formally linking with another school?
1204. **Mrs McConnell:** It is hard to break it down in the course of a week. Some weeks, a lot of work might be done on it. We videoconference at least once a month — sometimes once a fortnight — and the children will have been Moodling —
1205. **Professor Austin:** That is, using the VLE.
1206. **Mrs McConnell:** It is a bit like texting or emailing each other.
1207. **Mr Lunn:** Sorry, what is a VLE?
1208. **Professor Austin:** Virtual learning environment. It is a safe area inside the Internet.
1209. **Mr Lunn:** OK, I've got it.
1210. **Mrs McConnell:** They will probably have been doing that every week, and some of them will have been doing it at home. Our projects were about an hour a week over the year.
1211. **Mr Moran:** My experience is very similar to Alison's. It was a cross-border project, and I emphasise again Roger's point that the curriculum in the South is structured differently to ours, and there are peaks and troughs in getting the two to match at the same time. So there may have been a surge of activity one month and then less activity, because

something else was happening in the school down South. My experience of shared education is that, because it is the same curriculum in both schools, we do the same World Around Us topics, the teachers plan together, do the same lessons and evaluate together. It is much easier.

1212. **Mr Lunn:** I guess that, at primary level, it might be a case of trying to get the kids to stop doing it by time-limiting it. It sounds like fun.
1213. **Mr Moran:** Keeping the pupils focused is a difficulty, as is keeping it focused on the learning as such, but you cannot take away from the interactive element and building that friendship and relationship online.
1214. **Mr Lunn:** You have certainly given us a lot of food for thought.
1215. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Before we move to Mr Kinahan, I welcome the A-level politics students from Lurgan College to this morning's Committee. I hope that you enjoy your short time with us.
1216. **Mr Kinahan:** Apologies for not being here at the beginning of your presentation. I found your evidence quite fascinating. I am sceptical but may be coming over to your point of view. I have heard a lot of complaints about our C2k system not working. This is not so much aimed at you, Professor Austin, but at others. Are our computer systems up to this or, when we do the next contract, do we need to get computers that are much better and more able?
1217. **Professor Austin:** No systems are perfect, but what C2k does really well is ensure that children are completely safe online. That is a real consideration for parents. If they are doing any online work, they need to know that there is no risk whatsoever of predators getting into any of the online work.
1218. In terms of reliability, what has impressed me about C2k is that they listen. We made some complaints about the quality of sound in the videoconferencing system that we

were using before, which was called Elluminate. They listened and are in the process of introducing new software called Collaborate. That is an improved videoconferencing system with much better sound quality.

1219. With the virtual learning environment, I have heard different views about Fronter, which is in place in many schools. Some teachers love it, and some are not so keen on it. We should not get hung up on any particular product. It is about the process. If it is not Fronter, it is Moodle. The point is that systems are there that enable children to do two crucial things. The first is to have a forum where they can exchange fairly informal information and, secondly, a work area, which is where they create content on the topic that they are working on. We have seen some fabulous examples where one school has put its work up in one colour, and the children in the other school have come along and said, "We have got a bit to add here", and their stuff goes in in a different colour. So they are contributing to the construction of knowledge in a way that still recognises the contributions that both sides have made. We have to keep the pressure on C2k to keep delivering what we have, but, when I compare what we have here even with that in the rest of the UK, you could not do what we are proposing here in England simply because they do not have a common platform. We are in a uniquely advantaged position to take advantage of this opportunity.
1220. **Mr Kinahan:** The other angle is the teachers. The Department throws so much at teachers, who are not necessarily getting enough support from the boards. Is much time needed in your busy schedule? Will one of our biggest problems be teachers having time to do the preparation and training, given everything else that is thrown at you?
1221. **Professor Austin:** I have one quick word on that, and then I will bring in Alison and Antoin. A third party is needed to coordinate the training and to lay down the parameters of what is to be done. We have tried as hard as we can to say to teachers, "This should not be

- on top of what you already have to do. This is an enriched way to deliver the curriculum". Is that right, Alison?
1222. **Mrs McConnell:** Yes, definitely. You need training in the technology. As Roger says, it is changing again, so we will need training in the new Collaborate when we are used to Elluminate. Although Elluminate let us down on occasions, C2k was usually there to help to solve the problems. So training in collaboration with your time with your partner school is very important.
1223. **Mr Moran:** In my experience, C2k is extremely good with technical issues and the software and hardware, but I strongly support Roger's point that it is good to have a third party, which we did through Dissolving Boundaries, so that you can lift the phone to discuss training and upskilling of staff, and to motivate and inspire you to think of more creative ways to use the technology. The technology is there. Its reliability, as with any technology, can be up or down, but it is there to be used if a teacher wants to use it.
1224. **Professor Austin:** I will make one point, Danny. The two members of staff who were employed under Dissolving Boundaries had a really important role in monitoring the flow of information between the schools. Given that it was all happening in C2k, we could see all the messages that were being exchanged. It was not as though we wanted to be like Big Brother. If we noticed that one school was not contributing, somebody picked up the phone and said, "Is there a difficulty? Can we come in and help?". Sometimes, a teacher had gone off sick or their system had crashed, but we felt an obligation to make sure that the other school was aware of the difficulty. We smoothed things over. I would not underestimate the importance of that. Bringing schools together is not easy. These guys are already doing a full-time job, and the challenge of working with another school should not be underestimated. It is probably necessary to have someone there to assist. Sometimes, I think about the fact that, since 1945, the French and the Germans
- are still putting money into Franco-German youth exchanges, because they see that there is a long-term issue that needs to be addressed, namely the relations between the two countries.
1225. **Mr Kinahan:** We see a bit of that with the British Council. Thank you. I learned a great deal today.
1226. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Our next presentation is from the centre for shared education at Queen's. What links are there between the work that you are doing and the work that it is doing? Have you had any discussions?
1227. **Professor Austin:** Not directly. You will understand that in the world that we live in, there are, naturally, areas where we can collaborate and others where we are competitors.
1228. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** So, we have not quite dissolved the boundaries between the two universities.
1229. **Professor Austin:** The spirit is willing on our part. There is benefit to be gained from a greater understanding on the part of both universities of what each of us is doing. It is fair to say that the work that Queen's is doing is very good, but, as far as I know, Queen's has not included ICT as a significant element of that work. That is an accident of a particular trajectory. We got involved in technology very early on, and it was a natural development for us to look to technology as part of the way that we address these things.
1230. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Perhaps, the Committee might be the facilitator of that.
1231. **Professor Austin:** With pleasure.
1232. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome the presentation and the work that you have given to us. I look forward to it being in some of our recommendations. If you would like to give further information to the Committee after today, we would be very willing to receive it. Thank you very much for your time.

10 December 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr Mark Humphreys	<i>Methodist</i>
Mr Neill Jackson	<i>College</i>
Mr Scott Naismith	
Professor Sir Desmond Rea	
Rev Dr Janet Unsworth	

1233. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Thank you for hosting us today. It is a pleasure for me to be back, and I will declare an interest as a former pupil. I ask you to make your opening statement, and members will follow up with questions. Thank you.

1234. **Mr Scott Naismith (Methodist College):**

Thank you very much indeed. I will begin by introducing the members of the board of governors who are here with me today. On my right is Rev Dr Janet Unsworth; to my left is the chair of the board of governors, Mr Neill Jackson; beside him is Sir Desmond Rea; and, at the end, is Mr Michael Humphreys QC. I thank the Education Committee for giving us the opportunity to host its meeting and for the chance to present on the ethos of the college and the level of mixing that there is here in the school.

1235. I will start by saying a wee bit about the ethos of the college. We have a very clear statement of values and aims that we adhere to in everything that we do in and out of the classroom. In those aims and values, inclusion and diversity feature in a very significant manner. We talk about appreciating, nurturing and celebrating the diverse talents of the pupils. We talk about preparing pupils to

be responsible citizens and leaders who respect and value cultural diversity and a common humanity. We also talk about promoting social justice and countering prejudice and intolerance by encouraging mutual respect and understanding.

That is at the heart of the values-based educational experience that the pupils, staff and families who engage with the college get while they are. It is based on tolerance, respect, integrity and equality. We want and encourage our pupils to develop compassion, self-awareness, independence of thought and independence of spirit.

1236. Because that is who we are and what we are about, we attract a diverse mix of pupils into the college. At present, we have 23 religious groupings represented. We have a very diverse ethnic mix. Almost 88% of our pupil population is white, but the remaining 12% come from a range of backgrounds: European, Caribbean, African, Middle Eastern and Far Eastern. There is a fantastic cultural diversity here in the college. As well as that, there is a diverse geographical mix in Methody, with 43 postcodes represented. The majority of our pupils come from the Belfast area, but half of our pupils come from greater Belfast and beyond. We provide that mix of pupils from town and country and different social backgrounds and give them an opportunity to live with each other and learn from each other.

1237. As I have said, our aims and values are lived out on a daily basis. We talked to the student council about this when the governors were working on their inclusion and diversity report. We asked the pupils how they felt about inclusion and diversity in the school. One of the pupils said:

"Although issues of respect and tolerance are covered in the curriculum, pupils treat each other with respect because it is just seen as the right thing to do. It is a natural thing."

1238. Certainly, there are opportunities in the classroom to share experiences and ideas. There is study focused on the factors that influence individual and group identity and how identity is expressed, and pupils get the chance to investigate how and why conflicts may arise, how it is managed, and how community relations and reconciliation can be promoted. That is across not just the Learning for Life and Work programme but all areas of the curriculum.
1239. We are also committed to making a difference out of the classroom through our local and global community involvement. That is all about raising pupils' understanding of different cultures, religions and backgrounds. An example of that is the Salters Sterling Outreach Project, which we have been involved with for three years now with Royal Belfast Academical Institution (RBAI), Victoria College and Blythefield, Donegall Road and Fane Street primary schools.
1240. This year, over 80 pupils from Methody are going out to those three primary schools to assist with literacy and numeracy support to help the schools in raising educational aspiration. Pupils from those primary schools visit the three post-primary schools to engage in a range of technology-, moving-image-arts- and sports-based activities to give them an understanding and experience of what education is like beyond the primary school. We are also working hard to engage with the parents in those schools to get them to encourage their children to think about coming to schools like Methody, Inst and Victoria.
1241. We have also been running the Belfast inter-schools creative writing forum for a number of years. It was set up by one of our teachers and very successful children's novelist, Sheena Wilkinson. It is a cross-community creative writing forum that promotes the creative and personal development of youngsters from across the city. It meets monthly in the college, and there is a residential in England once a year. We have pupils from St Dominic's, Sullivan, St Mary's Christian Brothers and RBAI coming here and talking about their experiences. This year, with support from the Integrated Education Fund, they have been able to publish a book of poetry, short stories and photographs about how they feel about their identity and development in emerging post-conflict Belfast.
1242. We are also the hub school for the University of Cambridge Higher Education Plus programme. This involves us working with Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, to project aims to improve the chances of sixth-form pupils in each of the participating schools to receive offers from Cambridge, Oxford and other top research-intensive UK universities. This goes beyond the curriculum. We have invited schools from across Belfast — north, south, east and west — to come along and participate with our staff, their staff and academics from Corpus Christi to push their understanding beyond the curriculum. Last year, we had pupils from St Dominic's, St Malachy's, St Mary's and Wellington College here with our pupils to learn about drama, English, chemistry, maths and physics and focus on pushing their learning to the limits together.
1243. We, as a college, also have an input into the Community Relations Council, the sharing education programme and the work of OFMDFM on developing the United Youth policy. We have also contributed to the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life. We do a lot of community work. Our sixth-formers are engaged in work in Glenveagh and Fleming Fulton special schools. Again, the idea is about learning from each other. Our pupils get as much out of those experiences as the pupils of Glenveagh and Fleming Fulton do. If you are interested, on both Glenveagh's school website and our college website, there is a video that the pupils made together that encapsulates how they have benefited from that experience.
1244. For 24 years — it is coming up to the 25th anniversary — the college has been involved in School Aid Romania. Every year, a group of students and staff from Methody, St Patrick's College, Maghera and Ballyclare High School raise money together and then go out

to Romania to work in orphanages, an old people's home, a TB hospital and a school for the deaf. They not only provide money but learn about the experiences of those people, young and old, the challenges that they face, how they are addressing them, and they then share the experiences with each other and with the pupils back in their own schools. They raise a significant sum of money, and the whole of the school community is engaged in that work.

1245. The same can be said for our India Society, which, for a number of years, has been raising funds to provide opportunities for girls from the slums of Kalkaji to access second- and third-level education. Again, there is a direct benefit there. However, our pupils also benefit from the experience of finding out about what life is like in a slum and the different religious and cultural beliefs and social pressures on children their age in different communities. That learning then comes back and is shared with the community here in the college.
1246. In the curriculum and beyond the curriculum, we encourage an understanding of different cultures through language study. French, German, Spanish and Russian are offered on the curriculum, and we have now extended that to include Mandarin and Arabic. We have worked with the open learning department at Queen's University to provide an after-school course in Irish language and literature, which ran in summer term of 2013 for junior pupils. Through engagement with the Confucius Institute at the University of Ulster, we are now in our second year of running a Chinese language and cultural enrichment course. This year, we have introduced an enrichment course in Arabic. We have linked up with the Ulster Museum for third-form classes to explore Arabian art and culture. A number of senior pupils will attend an Invest NI Arabian day to hear from those who have established or are involved in businesses in the Middle East. That Arabic project is also running in collaboration with Belfast Royal Academy (BRA), Antrim Grammar School and

St Malachy's College, so, again, it is working collaboratively across the city to promote the understanding of different cultures beyond Northern Ireland.

1247. I am delighted to see representatives of the parent-teacher association (PTA) here this morning. Our PTA organised a multicultural evening, which John O'Dowd very kindly attended. It was titled 'Our World, the Methodist College'. It was a celebration that showcased the talents and cultures of a range of the ethnic groups that are represented in the college. We do a lot to expose pupils to it, but the pupils themselves bring a rich cultural heritage when they attend the school. It was best summed up a couple of open evenings previously by the head girl, Lalana, who said that, to her and her family, the school's main selling point was its open ethos and diverse student population. It was important to her and her brother, as they came from a mixed-race background. She said that her family considered Methody to be very forward-thinking indeed in this area.
1248. The governors also take it very seriously. It is something that we cherish and value. Because of that, we set up a working party on inclusion, diversity and equality to look at these issues across a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities in the school. Methody has always been diverse. It is part of the historic legacy of the college. Because we used to have a boarding department, we always had pupils coming from across Northern Ireland and beyond to the college. That is why we have such a diverse and valued religious and ethnic mix. This has been maintained.
1249. In closing, I will refer to the speech that pupil Hannah Nelson made when she introduced President Obama and the First Lady at the Waterfront Hall. She talked about how to achieve enduring peace in Northern Ireland. What she said reflected the values and experience of the college. She talked about the need to have true respect for others, to express and celebrate our diverse cultures and to have an obligation to value each other as individuals. She hit

- the nail right on the head when she said that:
- "It is not my religion that is important, but my value as a person which is significant. It is important that we all have a unique identity."*
1250. Never a truer word was spoken. That is what Methodist College is about. We seek to and succeed in providing a naturally integrated, cosmopolitan environment where pupils from all backgrounds and faiths learn together, play together and grow together and where we, most importantly, value each other.
1251. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. As you will be aware, this is part of our inquiry into shared and integrated education. Methody seems to falls into the mix of being called a "super-mixed school". You mentioned the fact that is has always been diverse and that it has very much become naturally mixed. I suppose that what I really want to know is what it is specifically about the ethos that has allowed it to be that?
1252. **Mr Naismith:** Again, from talking to pupils and families, I think that fundamentally it is because we value them as individuals. As the pupil on the student council said, it does not matter what your religion or background is, you are accepted at Methodist College for what you bring to the college, what you put in and what you get out of it. That is because — again, using the words of the student — we do not make a fuss about that particular aspect. It is just a naturally integrated community. Therefore, people are not seen as Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu or whatever, but as who they are and what they can bring.
1253. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Is the primary focus of parents the educational outcomes of their children as opposed to societal outcomes?
1254. **Mr Naismith:** Both are important to them. We carried out a significant survey of parents during the last academic year in order to prepare for the next school development plan. Over 1,000 families responded, and two of the top-scoring reasons for sending their children to the college were the diverse mix of pupils and families, and the output, or what they gain from the academic and extra-curricular experience.
1255. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You refer to Methody as an integrated school. How do you differ from the integrated model we are very familiar with?
1256. **Mr Naismith:** There is a formula for the integrated sector, which is based initially on bringing together Protestant and Catholic children. The mix is 40% Protestant and 40% Catholic and the same for staff. There is that statistic and that formula. Methody does not apply that formula. We are not looking to achieve targets in a particular background. Neither are we focused simply on two major religious groups. We are looking at the whole range of ethnic and religious backgrounds represented by our pupils.
1257. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You have achieved natural integration without the formula.
1258. **Mr Naismith:** Correct.
1259. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You have talked about different sharing models with primary schools. You mentioned Fane Street and Blythefield. What work do you do with non-grammar schools?
1260. **Mr Naismith:** We work together through the south Belfast area learning community. We are involved in delivering the entitlement framework with a range of both grammar and non-grammar schools. The south Belfast area learning community does a lot of work sharing good practice and bringing together middle managers, SEN coordinators and careers teachers so that they can learn from one another. We reach out and offer opportunities to pupils from grammar and non-grammar schools through the Cambridge HE project and the creative writing project. We wrote out to every post-primary school in Belfast

- inviting them to the creative writing project.
1261. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You went outside south Belfast?
1262. **Mr Naismith:** Right across the city. The same thing happens every year with the major careers convention run by the college. Over 100 universities, colleges and businesses are in the college for two days, and we invite schools from across Northern Ireland, and even as far away as Donegal, to come to the college and access workshops, talks, presentations and information seminars. Throughout the year we run careers seminars as well, and, again, we invite schools from across the whole of Belfast and beyond to share. That is the work that we do.
1263. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Have you and other schools seen a benefit from that experience?
1264. **Mr Naismith:** They are accessing information about opportunities that are available to them, about tertiary level education in and beyond Northern Ireland and about the changing business and economic landscape. All these events include workshops and discussion sessions, where pupils from the different schools that attend have the opportunity to discuss. Sitting behind me is my head of politics, John Foster. Last year he organised a politics conference. The school is very much into the Model United Nations. Schools were invited from across Belfast to engage in discussion about contemporary political issues. That is where you get pupils from different backgrounds coming together. There are different ideas, different experiences, and there is sharing and learning from each other.
1265. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you for a fantastically impressive résumé of the school. I want to follow up on what the Chair asked about the socio-economic mix. When you invite other schools, do they all respond, or are there schools that feel that you are maybe too elite or too difficult? Do you really get a good response from everybody?
1266. **Mr Naismith:** That is a very good question. It depends on the nature of the activity. We get a very wide-ranging response to the careers conventions and talks. We estimated that, for the careers convention this year, somewhere in the region of 3,000 families were through the school over the two days, plus our Methodist community. To be honest, it is hard to get schools to come to some of the other activities, whether it is because of transport issues or because they are concerned about coming to Methodist. We offered, as well, to move the creative writing project around the city to make it more accessible for others and to get our pupils out. However, the response was that it is actually easier, once it has been set up, just to come to the same place once a month.
1267. We also continue with the outreach project to the three primary schools in the Village. For the most recent activity we invited parents to come across and visit the three post-primary schools one morning. We are conscious that it is intimidating to walk up the driveway to a building that you have never been into before. There is the fear of the architecture and of the reputation. We have to get people over that hurdle, get them in and get them engaged.
1268. **Mr Kinahan:** As a Committee, when we explore shared education most people look at it through religious differences. The Borooah and Knox report encouraged us to look at it from a socio-economic angle. Do you think that this is the right way of sharing education across the divide?
1269. **Mr Naismith:** It is important to look at all aspects when sharing education if you are to be truly inclusive. You need to tackle all aspects simultaneously, not just the religious aspect, but the ethnic and socio-economic aspects too.
1270. **Mr Michael Humphreys (Methodist College):** It is interesting that shared and integrated education, taken together, are often resolved into a simple sectarian headcount. That is completely against the ethos at

- Methody. The statutory definition of integrated education speaks only to Protestants and Roman Catholics. Talking of natural integration, perhaps the most striking statistic is that 35% of our current enrolment falls into the category of neither Protestant nor Catholic. They profess to have no religion, or they profess to have up to 15 or 20 other world religions. Perhaps the defining feature of natural integration is the move away from the simple Protestant and Catholic approach and into something that is socially inclusive and does not depend on a formula to produce results.
1271. Social inclusion is the most important driver for us as a board. It is sometimes difficult for us to reach out to other areas of Belfast and encourage pupils to come here because of our status and where we are. We try hard with those three primary schools in particular, but we often meet family and social resistance. It is difficult for a child whose family have all gone to the same local school or lived in the same area for three or four generations to make that break and move to a school like this. However, it is imperative that we continue to foster those links. It may take time. We may be sitting here in 10 years' time still making very slow progress, but it is imperative that we continue to try to so.
1272. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you for having us. It is lovely to be here. It is my first time in Methodist College. That is partly the fault of your predecessors, because they would not accept me in 1958 even though I just lived up the road. *[Laughter.]* I had to go to another equally mixed grammar school, Belfast Royal Academy (BRA), which was not a problem.
1273. Before I ask you questions, I would like to mention the young lady who spoke at the Obama event. Having been there, I have to say that hers was the speech of the day. She made a better speech than the president or his wife. It was absolutely marvellous. I imagine that she has moved on now.
1274. **Mr Naismith:** She is in upper sixth.
1275. **Mr Lunn:** It was terrific. You have really answered all my questions in what was a spectacular presentation, Scott. The mix of your school would do credit to any formally integrated school. To what extent are you able to draw pupils from what I would call socially deprived backgrounds? You are located on the edge of a very affluent area on one side, and you only have to walk through the City Hospital grounds to enter a completely different circumstance. Do you have any success in drawing pupils from — let us be frank — Sandy Row and Donegall Road?
1276. **Mr Naismith:** That is part of the reasoning behind the Salters Sterling Outreach Project, which is about raising aspiration. Over the past three years, we have been working with those schools and are seeing more pupils applying to the three post-primary schools involved. It is about overcoming their — to a certain extent — fear of education and their parents' fear of education, engaging with them and getting them into the buildings to realise the opportunities that are available to their children. It is about overcoming — I am sorry to say — the, "It's not for the likes of us" attitude, which we sometimes come up against.
1277. In reaching out, not just to those particular schools, we have been working hard in our contacts with other primary schools, and at their open evenings, to say, "We want you to come here. We want you to apply here. We want you to avail of these opportunities, regardless of your background." We are seeing a rise in the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals coming into the college. In 2012, 4% of our form 1 entry was entitled to free school meals. In the 2014 intake, that had risen to 14%. The governors and former pupils have been very active in encouraging this.
1278. We have set up a discretionary fund to assist pupils who come from families that may have problems meeting the cost of uniforms. If they want assistance

- with school trips, or even if they want assistance later in their careers exploring university options, that help is there. One of our former pupils, Ian Ross, made an incredibly generous donation to the school recently so that pupils from deprived backgrounds should not be put off going to university because of the cost of fees. He is providing part funding for their fees to encourage them to go to university. So, we are working to find ways to make things financially easier but also to encourage them to come into Methody.
1279. **Mr Lunn:** I do not want to divert from the main theme here, which is shared and integrated education. Others make the point that it is not shared versus integrated. I suggested the title, I think, so I claim credit. We are not trying to play one off against the other, but I want to move you on to a slightly different tack, and I do so sensitively. Is part of the reason why you do not manage to achieve an intake of pupils from the areas that I am talking about because they cannot pass the selection test?
1280. **Mr Naismith:** Academic selection offers the opportunity for pupils and families to decide which school they would like to go to. If we moved to a postcode selection system, the school would not be as diverse as it is. We would be selecting from a much more — how do you put it — wealthy community. Pupils from a range of different backgrounds — as I said, 43 different postcodes are represented — would not have the chance to come here. So, this is actually offering them an opportunity to access Methody.
1281. **Mr Lunn:** OK. I must say, I did not realise that there were 43 postcodes in Northern Ireland, but that is a good statistic.
1282. **Mr Naismith:** There are 78, and we have one from Omagh.
1283. **Mr Lunn:** You have achieved so much in the formats of mixing and so on, but is there any other way that a grammar school like yours could produce an intake that would be satisfactory to the school and to your local hinterland without the selection test, or is that just the absolute requirement?
1284. **Mr Naismith:** Well, again, that has moved on to a different area of ethos; in terms of the value of academic selection, it is a whole different educational argument. The school and the governors are supportive of academic selection as a way within a system that is, in its entirety, comprehensive. I am not talking about a comprehensive school; I am talking about a comprehensive system that allows different pathways and different avenues for pupils — every pupil in the system — to excel and achieve their best. That is why we are still supportive of that.
1285. **Mr Lunn:** I will move back to the subject. Do you think that there is any way that the ethos of Methody differs from the ethos that you would expect to be present in a formally integrated school?
1286. **Mr Naismith:** Again, I suppose, and Michael made specific reference to it, the integrated schools are very much focused on the two major groups, Protestant and Catholic, whereas the ethos in Methody is about taking inclusion in its broadest possible sense, and that is the difference. When you talk about ethos across all schools, I will be honest and say that, with regard to tolerance and respect and trying to get the best out of pupils, I have yet to meet a principal of a school who does not hold those values very much at heart and hopes to see them replicated in his or her school.
1287. **Mr Lunn:** You have highlighted the difference between a formally integrated school and a school like this, in that the requirement for an integrated school — and it is a fault — is the fact that there has to be an initial balance between Protestant and Catholic. However, you have 35% declared as “others”, and they do not count. That is a bit like the Alliance Party votes in the Assembly. *[Laughter.]*
1288. **Mr Naismith:** I could not possibly comment. *[Laughter.]*

1289. **Mr Lunn:** I am glad that I worked my way round to that one.
1290. **Mr Newton:** I am going to quote him on that one, Chair, in the future.
1291. **Mr Lunn:** It is in Hansard.
1292. It is a fact that the basis for an integrated school — and by the sound of it, you agree with me — should be a majority and then a minority and “others” taken together.
1293. **Mr M Humphreys:** The Committee is probably aware — to put my lawyer’s hat on — of the judgement in Drumragh Integrated College and what Mr Justice Treacy said about the delivery of integrated education in that, which was that it was not possible, from a legal point of view, to deliver integrated education in a school that has a particular religious ethos.
1294. Methodist College clearly is a faith school, to use a GB term; it has a religious ethos at its core and so, by definition, it cannot fulfil the integrated notion of education. However, that, again, is to try to shoehorn educational issues into legal boxes. In fact, outcomes for children such as, mutual respect, tolerance, character building, and all the things that schools do best should not be subject to legal definition. If it happens naturally, it is all the better than having to be forced into a particular category by virtue of what is a very complex web of different types of school that we have in Northern Ireland.
1295. **Mr Lunn:** I would not want to cross swords with a barrister, but I do not think that Judge Treacy was quite as specific as that. He said that a school could not be considered integrated with what he called a partisan board, and I do not think for one minute that you have a partisan board; I would be very surprised if there is not a good mix across your board membership. Therefore, he was not actually criticising a school like this.
1296. **Mr M Humphreys:** No, it certainly was not a criticism. I think that he was just applying the legislation as he understood it to mean, and that integrated education in the Northern Ireland context has a particular legal meaning that sets it apart from schools like this one.
1297. **Professor Sir Desmond Rea (Methodist College):** I am substituting here today for Rotha Johnston, who comes from a different identity from Desmond Rea, and she is chair of our education committee. It is important that you are aware that, in recent times, we did an exercise on how effective our board of governors is with governance arrangements and the skills that governors bring to the board.
1298. We also did a report on inclusion and diversity, which has been referred to here, stimulated by our concern about the range of things that you have already alluded to, including the disadvantaged and the social class. For example, this board of governors would be concerned to question the headmaster so that any pupil who comes from circumstances where there is relative impoverishment is not disadvantaged as and when they are at this school, and that that is monitored diplomatically as they go through.
1299. The governors have recently been concerned that we should be looking at the whole question of ethos so that we are very clear that, in our understanding and the staff’s understanding, our ethos is seen to embrace everyone: pupils and families within the ambit of the school. This board of governors is very aware of its obligations in those areas.
1300. **Mr Lunn:** That does not surprise me at all. In terms of ethos, the social mix, your approach and the extent of sharing and outreach that you involve yourselves in, there is absolutely nothing to criticise. This is a marvellous school. If all our schools were on the same basis — and I do not necessarily mean based on academic selection, because we will not agree about that — as Methodist College, we would not be having this inquiry. I always say that integrated schools are where we would like to be. You are, effectively, an integrated school,

but with no need to adopt the title.
Thank you very much. I wish you well.

1301. **Mr Newton:** Thank you for the opportunity to be in Methody. I have visited Methody on a number of occasions. My two children went to Methody. We chose Methody, hoping that they would get into Methody. We chose Methody because of the ethos and manner in which Methody goes about shared education or integrated education. You are the epitome of that and the benchmark to be aimed at. I think that it was summed up in a couple of phrases you used: you do not make a fuss about it, and that it is a natural thing. That is what attracted my wife and me to ensure that our two children went to Methody.

1302. I do not really have a question. I was going to come from a similar angle in terms of the penetration into the less socially advantaged communities. I am meeting two people tomorrow night who come from the Village and went to Methody; one is a dentist and one is a teacher. It is good to see the exercise of the pupils in the school stretching out to primary education. That can only be a good thing.

1303. To finish where Trevor left off, we would not be having this inquiry if all schools were the same as Methody.

1304. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you for hosting us today. I look forward to having another look round afterwards.

1305. Earlier, you referred to the mix that you have here. I imagine that that would change year on year. You talked about the 35% “others”. That is an overall percentage, but the first year students coming in would make the number change year on year.

1306. **Mr Naismith:** We return annual statistics to the Department of Education. As the principal, I monitor that and report to the board on it. This is the eighth year that I have been the principal of the college. We look every year at the background. There are minor variations and very small fluctuations, so the figure I quoted to you is, fundamentally, the make-up of the school and has been for a considerable time. Part of the

reason why we monitor it so closely is that we want to maintain it and to reach out to any community that we feel is underrepresented. Shortly after I arrived here, regrettably, we had to close the boarding department, and there was concern at the time that the closure of the department might result in Methody being a less cosmopolitan school. The reverse happened because of the experience of the overseas boarders. As people from their communities moved into Belfast, given that Belfast has changed over the past 10 years, they had already heard about the college, and Methody was often their first port of call for education for their children. We still get that, so that has enhanced the ethnic diversity in the college.

1307. **Mrs Overend:** That is interesting. The work that you do with other schools is admirable. When there was funding for private projects for shared education, I was involved with that in my area near Magherafelt. However, when the funding stops, you have to find other means to continue that sharing.

1308. In times of austerity and budget cuts, how do you decide what projects continue with other schools? How do you prioritise those? Is it in the delivery of the curriculum or the extension of your ethos? How do you balance that out, and how are you going to make those decisions?

1309. **Mr Naismith:** I am glad that you raised budgets and budget cuts. *[Laughter.]* That is the challenge that Methody and every single school in the country is going to face over the next year if the proposed budget cuts go ahead.

1310. First and foremost, we are required to deliver the curriculum, so we have to cut our resources and allocation of funding to ensure that it is delivered. Most of the outreach projects that we talked about actually cost very little because they are run by staff, who give very freely and generously of their time and ability. Parents also support it, and sometimes private donors are prepared to put money in.

1311. We seek external funding where it is available, but for some of the major projects, the pupils are raising the money that makes the projects happen. That is part of the learning process and of the ethos. We see it as our duty to give back to the community and to create young citizens who have that idea of duty to others, not to just themselves.
1312. We will have to look at what we are able to offer in the future, and we will do our utmost to try to continue with the things that we value, but the likelihood is that some of these projects will finish.
1313. **Mrs Overend:** Do you think that it might be an idea to rethink the delivery of the curriculum so that you can find ways to work with other schools to deliver it?
1314. **Mr Naismith:** Delivering the curriculum through the entitlement framework is probably one of the most expensive ways to do it. Schools that are working in collaboration are finding that the cost of transport between campuses far outweighs any cost benefit to the college in the staffing it releases, so it is not really an efficient way of delivering the entitlement framework.
1315. I suggest that, if the cuts go ahead, the entitlement framework will suffer. Schools will have to balance their budgets, and putting pupils in a taxi and sending them across town is very expensive.
1316. **Mr M Humphreys:** One reason why we have such a diverse pupil background is the amount of choice that the college is able to offer in the curriculum and in extracurricular activities. Parents are entitled to choice and to look for the best possible range of choice for their children. The budget cuts as proposed can only reduce the choice that is available in the curriculum and the extracurricular activities. There is no way to do otherwise.
1317. That is a real concern for us as a board. Whilst we will always do our minimum, which is to balance the books and deliver what has to be delivered as a matter of law, everything we do over and above that is very much the reason why this school is a success. We foresee real problems in the next two or three financial years in trying to deliver what our parents, our pupils and our staff want and we as a board want to do.
1318. **Mrs Overend:** I was trying to draw out the need for that financial capability for the shared projects. So many schools need that to be able to build on their shared education. Thank you very much for your answers.
1319. **Mr Craig:** It is good to be here today. I appreciate that I am here because, unlike others, I have no interest to declare. I was not a pupil here, and my family did not go to this school. I also welcome Sir Desmond to the Committee. Being on the Policing Board, I have heard plenty about you, but I have never met you. So, it is good to meet you today.
1320. I have been listening with great interest, because I know that the ministerial advisory group made recommendations on the social and economic mix of schools. You seem to have bought in to that ethos. You very clearly indicated that you have targeted schools that would get pupils from deprived backgrounds, and you have put a lot of work into that. I am assuming — I do not want to assume; I want you to tell me — that you have bought in to that ethos.
1321. **Mr Naismith:** I agree with that. As we have said throughout, it is about the idea of opportunity for all and the recognised benefits of having as diverse a community as possible. We want the pupils who come here to have the chance to mix with different people from all sorts of backgrounds so that, based on those interactions, they can learn and improve. Therefore, there is an opportunity for pupils from challenging socio-economic backgrounds to access education and the opportunities that it offers them. The type of education that we offer here at the college is very important to us.
1322. **Mr Craig:** I am going to play devil's advocate, because I do not know the answer to the question of your school ethos and what you count as being

- most important. Obviously, this is a grammar school, so academic selection is there and you use that tool. Is that the only criterion you use to select people? I noted with interest that you said that you get pupils from right across Northern Ireland and from all backgrounds. Has academic selection been a barrier, or has it assisted you in getting pupils from other places?
1323. **Mr Naismith:** Again, it has assisted us in getting pupils, because it is our first means of selecting pupils for the school into form 1. If you have a grade that qualifies you to get in, you will get in as long as there is a space available for you. We have no selection criteria based on income or ability to pay; those do not exist. Where families may find challenging the costs that are associated with school and the extras that schools offer, we offer support discreetly and directly where we can. I know that families who have availed themselves of the funding that former pupils have very generously provided are very appreciative of it.
1324. **Mr Craig:** Thank you for mentioning that. One of the other criticisms that those who are against academic selection always bring up is the social inclusion factor and the embarrassment of not being able to afford some of the activities. Do you proactively tackle that in the school?
1325. **Mr Naismith:** Yes. A fund is set aside, and parents are informed of it. The application for the funding comes directly to my office. As I say, it is done very discreetly, but it allows the pupils to access extracurricular activities and extramural educational activities. The idea is that no one will be excluded on the basis of ability to pay.
1326. **Professor Sir Desmond Rea:** Coincidentally, one of your colleagues mentioned the Village. One of our former pupils, who is now a senior QC and an acting judge in England, is from the Village and gave us a sum of money. It is not large, but it is a sum of money. His mother continues to live there and facilitates that funding. We are very mindful of backing the headmaster and his team so that no child is disadvantaged in any way because of economic circumstances.
1327. **Mr M Humphreys:** I think that it is fair to say that, when the current model of academic selection came into being with the two separate exams, the board was very concerned that adopting one of those exams as an entry path would reduce the inclusion and diversity of the school. Thankfully, that has not proved to be the case, and, statistically, we have maintained our levels. If academic selection is to continue, there is no doubt that one test would ensure a much wider range of choice for all children across Northern Ireland. Rather than having to sit what are now five separate papers to keep their options open, we believe that one test would preserve the best opportunity for all to enter the college.
1328. **Mr Craig:** Chair, you will certainly find me in total agreement with that. I think that that needs to be sorted out. I thank you for those very frank answers. They exploded a lot of the myths about what is being said in the debate on academic selection. Thank you very much for that. You are an example not only of shared education, but, as Trevor said, you are integrated without the title.
1329. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr Rogers, if you do not mind, Trevor has indicated that he would like to come in at this point.
1330. **Mr Lunn:** On the back of that, I want to clarify something with you: are you able to take into the first year all the applicants who passed the test, or do you need to use selection criteria?
1331. **Mr Naismith:** We do. We are oversubscribed in form 1 each year, so there is always further selection for a final place in the school. Thereafter, we have a waiting list, and, because of the size and nature of the college, we go back to the families on that waiting list to see whether they still want to apply in form 2, form 3 and form 4. We also have a significant intake into lower sixth.

1332. **Mr Lunn:** You talked about the 43 postcodes. Do the criteria involve giving priority to children who live close to the school?
1333. **Mr Naismith:** We do not use geographical priority in our selection.
1334. **Mr Lunn:** None at all?
1335. **Mr Naismith:** No.
1336. **Mr Lunn:** I just wanted to make sure of that.
1337. **Mr M Humphreys:** Free school meals is our number one criteria if there is a tiebreak situation in academic selection. That is for the very reason we talked about, as the board has set a target for social inclusion.
1338. **Mr Lunn:** OK. I am glad that I asked you.
1339. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** OK. Thank you.
1340. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you. There is very little for me to ask at this stage, but I will congratulate the school and its governors on the school that you have. As you walk to the gents and so on, you see that it is your pupils who walk the talk, and they need to be congratulated.
1341. You mentioned that the school is faith-based. I suppose that the ethos has developed from the Methodist tradition. How are other faith traditions accommodated in the school?
1342. **Mr Naismith:** Fundamentally, the school has a Christian ethos and Christian values, which are universal values of tolerance and respect. When we have assemblies, we make sure that we refer not just to Christian values but to those of other religions. We bring aspects of other religions into form assemblies and assemblies in the Whitla Hall. In the classroom, it is hugely valuable when pupils have opportunities to explore different ideas through the curriculum, to see things from different perspectives and different cultures and to hear from people who represent those religions and cultures. Again, there are the extracurricular activities that I mentioned, such as the India society, which looks at the religious values and ideals there that have created a set of circumstances that our pupils have to understand and address. So, there are opportunities to hear from representatives of those groupings.
1343. **Mr Rogers:** And your Romanian trips.
1344. **Mr Naismith:** Yes.
1345. **Professor Sir Desmond Rea:** Could I just change your question, if you do not mind? It is a question that I would pose to Dr Unsworth. Are they adequate? That is the question that, as a member of the board, I ask of her, because she chairs the committee.
1346. **Rev Dr Janet Unsworth (Methodist College):** Thank you, Sir Desmond — I think. On inclusion, diversity and equality, I would not want the Committee to think that we are resting on our laurels. Although the report that we worked on over the last year came out with an extremely positive picture of inclusion and thinking through the needs of pupils who come from different backgrounds, we want to keep that under review. We are looking at the board of governors reviewing it annually. It is quite a thing to review something annually and to put in to your governance arrangements that you will do that. We hope to do that through our education and extracurricular activities committee and to look at that each year.
1347. We have a sense of making sure that each pupil is valued for the background from which they come, whether that is their social, ethnic or religious background, and we want to continue to do that. As the principal said, there is a mechanism to do that through the curriculum. We also hope that, through the range of extracurricular activities, which is phenomenal in this school, we provide opportunities for pupils to be able to experience difference.
1348. There is an issue around self-identity and the importance of each child recognising their own identity, whether that is culturally, ethnically or religiously. There is also the importance of tolerance. The values that are

associated with the school are exhibited up in different places around the school building. As pupils go about the school, they are able to see the college's values of tolerance and equality. There is a sense of valuing each other's religious experience as well as their own. I think that that is extremely important. However, as I said at the start, we do not want to rest on our laurels. Keeping a watching brief on issues of inclusion, diversity and equality is extremely important.

1349. **Mr Naismith:** I will just add a couple of concrete examples of how that manifests itself on a very day-to-day, no-fuss basis. Where students are engaged in fasting for Ramadan, we take account of that and meet their needs. When we have our form 1 intake, the PTA organises a heritage tour of the school for all the form 1 parents so that they can meet parents informally and begin that integration process. As part of that, our canteen staff meet the parents and talk to them about any dietary requirements that the pupils have that are based on health issues or cultural and religious beliefs. Therefore, we have halal food available in the canteen. Fundamentally, we have a chapel in the college, which is called the Chapel of Unity. Pupils know that it is for pupils of all faiths and is a place of contemplation. It is the spiritual heart of the school.

1350. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** In conclusion, as part of our inquiry, we and the Department are going to look at a legal definition of shared education. I wonder whether you have given any consideration to what that should look like and what should be included.

1351. **Mr M Humphreys:** Perhaps I should lead off on this one. I read some of the works from Messrs Knox and Borooah and Professor Gallagher, as well as some of the evidence that you have received already. There is a feeling in some of those papers that there should be quite a strong definition of shared education. That would involve high-level, sustained collaboration between schools from different sectors. That strikes me as something that may well

have an important role in some parts of the educational landscape, but it is a long way from the experience that we have here, which is a shared, internal experience. The word "shared" does not necessarily have to mean that people who tend to be from different backgrounds meet and use the same facility. It is better, certainly in my opinion, to have those same people under the same roof being educated in the same way by the same people and enjoying the same experiences, and that is really where the qualities of tolerance and equality come into play.

1352. I think that integrated education will always have a particular, separate legal definition. However, I think that, with shared education, the Committee might look at a much broader picture of models that can deliver it. One of them might be that high-end, sustained collaboration that we see examples of in Ballycastle and other places, but there are lots of ways of achieving it. The naturally integrated model, if one wants to call it that, might look something like what happens at Methody and how we try to preserve our inclusion and diversity internally by the models that we have and externally by reaching out to socially disadvantaged areas, to other religions and to backgrounds that might not automatically find their way here.

1353. I hope that this talk has given you some idea of how that model might work, but I will perhaps leave it to the Committee to come up with a precise definition of what that is. *[Laughter.]*

1354. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** That is very kind of you. *[Laughter.]* That was incredibly broad. Thank you very much for your time and for hosting us here today. I look forward to further discussion.

14 January 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Lunn
Mr Nelson McCausland
Mr Robin Newton
Mrs Sandra Overend
Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Ms Jacqui Durkin *Department of*
Mrs Roisin Lilley *Education*

1355. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome from the Department of Education Jacqui Durkin, who is the director of area planning, and Roisin Lilley from the shared education campuses project team. Jacqui and Roisin, you are very welcome. Thank you for travelling down today. I refer Committee members to the various papers in their pack that will be useful for the briefing.

1356. I invite you to make an opening statement. Members will follow that up with some questions.

1357. **Ms Jacqui Durkin (Department of Education):** Thank you. Good morning, Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to brief the Committee today on the shared education campuses programme protocol document. I am pleased to be able to do so in the Moy community, home of the two schools that were successful in the first call under the programme; namely, St John's Primary School and Moy Regional Primary School.

1358. I am aware that the Committee was briefed on the shared education campuses programme in July last year by my predecessor, Diarmuid McLean. As you know, the Minister approved revisions to the protocol document prior to the launch of the second call for applications on 1 October. The revised

version of the document was shared with you on that date. If you are content, I will provide you with a summary of the main updates and revisions made for the second call. Roisin and I are happy to take any questions on any point of detail at any stage, as required.

1359. The shared education campuses programme, as I am sure that you are aware, was established to deliver the headline action in the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy, which was announced in 2013, to commence 10 new shared education campuses in the next five years. Work to develop the new campuses naturally fell to the Department to take forward. At this point, I should clarify that the definition of "shared education" that is set out in the protocol document is that which was provided to the ministerial advisory group on advancing shared education. It is:

"Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion."

1360. The protocol document further states:

"Specifically, 'Shared Education' means the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together."

1361. As you are aware, both the shared education policy and the Bill are out for consultation until 6 March. The protocol document uses the definition of "shared education" as it currently stands.

1362. The Minister launched the shared education campuses programme in January 2014. There were 16 applications under the first call for expressions of interest. In July 2014, the Minister announced the first three projects to be supported under the

- programme. The Moy, Ballycastle and Limavady projects are now at the planning stage, with detailed feasibility studies and economic appraisals being developed.
1363. Naturally, as with any process, we reviewed what could be improved following the outcome of the first call. As a result, the protocol document was revised and updated before the second call was launched. The revisions took account of our experience of the first call, relevant lessons learnt from previous shared education programmes and last year's revision of the Department's capital works protocol. We identified a need for greater emphasis on the programme being about schools and shared education involving different school-management types and across similar age groups, and greater clarity for applicants on what was being assessed and why. We therefore clarified the rationale for the endorsement of the relevant managing and planning authorities and made changes to the minimum percentage for religious balance. That is now a minimum of 15%, and preferably 30%. Stronger evidence of the existing sharing taking place between the schools involved in each application is now an essential criterion. A desirable criterion of disadvantaged-pupil consideration using free school meal-entitlement data and specific gateway, essential and desirable criteria, with only the essential and desirable criteria being scored, has been introduced.
1364. Comments on the proposed changes were sought from the Department's key stakeholders through the area-planning steering group. Its views were incorporated into the updated document. The Minister then considered the proposed changes and agreed the revised protocol document for the launch of the second call. The closing date for applications to the second call is 30 January. At this stage, we expect that the Minister will be in a position to announce the next tranche of shared education campuses in June.
1365. The recent announcement as part of the Stormont House Agreement of new capital funding of up to £500 million over 10 years to support shared and integrated education is welcomed and should advance shared education campus projects. Each project is subject to Executive and Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) approval. We will be working with DFP colleagues on the detail of how funding can be accessed. As with all capital building schemes, selected projects will be taken forward to the economic appraisal stage, which, once submitted, will be considered with normal business-approval processes and in line with the Northern Ireland guide to expenditure appraisal and evaluation guidelines, including value for money and affordability. Only after approval of the economic appraisal, and subject to available capital funds, will a project proceed to tender and construction.
1366. I hope that the Committee has found the overview helpful. As I said, Roisin and I are happy to take any specific questions on detail.
1367. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** OK. Thank you very much. May I ask for a progress update on the three projects that were announced? Obviously, we are in Moy today and will meet the two schools involved. We plan to visit Limavady in March and have also agreed a Committee visit to Ballycastle. It is important for us to have those conversations. For our own information, can you tell us where each of the projects sits?
1368. **Ms Durkin:** Project boards have been established for the Moy and Limavady projects. The Limavady project board is actually meeting tomorrow. The Moy project board has had its first meeting. The detail of how the projects and feasibility studies will be progressed is being taken forward through the project boards. The Department has two representatives on each. The Ballycastle project board has not been established yet, but we are working with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the board on trying to ensure that

it is established as soon as possible. We are hoping for a date in the next few weeks, or in the next month or so. There has already been work done, in that the boards have been working with CCMS in the background to take things forward, but it will be when the schools, the boards of governors and the Department are established in the project board that it will gather some momentum and progress will be made on the feasibility studies and economic appraisals.

1369. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** For forward planning purposes, do you have any timescales in mind for when you hope to see ground broken on any of the projects?
1370. **Ms J Durkin:** I think that it is too early to say when they will be, to use the commonly used phrase, shovel-ready. Until we know more detail about what exactly the projects will be, it is too early to say. Sites have been located for some projects. Until we have a project timeline and timetable, it will be very difficult to estimate when you can say that they will be shovel-ready. Colleagues in investment and infrastructure are working closely with the boards and CCMS on trying to get the project board established and to make some progress.
1371. **Mrs Roisin Lilley (Department of Education):** I know that you are visiting two schools, and we had the first meeting with the Moy project board in early December. We are looking at draft schedules of accommodation, but that is all subject to negotiations between the schools and the Department and capital colleagues. You are looking for things such as a land search. Until we know where that will be, we will not know what difficulties we may encounter. Therefore, although we could have timescales for when we would like to see the economic appraisal, including the technical feasibility aspects, completed, it is only after it is complete that you get into the design and start to get part of the technical feasibility to identify any particular issues that there may be with the land. Issues could include whether there will be flooding or problems with trees. That is why we cannot give more

exact details at the minute. Even though the Limavady project board is having its first official meeting tomorrow, there have been quite a few negotiations in meetings with the Department, CCMS and the Western Board. Moreover, the Limavady project board has had a working group established, so it has been trying to progress matters there. The Ballycastle project will probably be slightly more ambitious than we had originally anticipated, so I think that that is to the better. That explains why it is perhaps not progressing as quickly, but we are hoping to get the Ballycastle project board set up for it. It probably would have been set up before Christmas, but we are hoping for it definitely to be set up, as Jackie said, this month.

1372. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Although we are far from progressing those, we are now going into another stage for another tranche. Therefore, you are adding further anticipation for other schools to get involved in a project that could be quite a considerable distance down the road.
1373. **Ms Durkin:** It really depends on the nature of the projects that come forward, and we have no idea really what those will be through the second call. Of the three projects, some are for new facilities and for a shared STEM centre and sixth-form centre, while others are for a new single building on a campus. Therefore, it will depend on the complexity and scale of the project, and, obviously, it is dependent on how quickly feasibility studies and economic appraisals can be advanced. It is difficult to group all the projects together and say when they will definitely finish their economic appraisal, because each of them, so far, has been slightly different. We really do not know exactly what will come through from the second call.
1374. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** What feedback do you give to the unsuccessful projects?
1375. **Mrs Lilley:** We have given a fair wee bit of feedback, even to those projects that did not pass the essential criteria. They

- might not have got the score, but they were given feedback. All got letters sent to them and to the managing authorities — both the boards and CCMS or the boards of governors. We met all the managing authorities over the summer and gave them additional feedback. In quite a few cases, the boards and CCMS have been working with some of the projects. When the Minister made his announcement in July, he also announced at that stage that he was going to go out for a second call. He said that, if they could address some of the issues that meant that they had not made the cut in the first call, schools would be welcome to apply for the second. We know that the boards and CCMS have been working very closely with quite a few of the projects, and it is likely that those will come forward again in the second call. There has been a fair wee bit of feedback from us to the boards and, in some cases, the schools.
1376. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The scoring process is undertaken entirely by the Department.
1377. **Mrs Lilley:** Yes.
1378. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Do you anticipate bringing in someone from the Strategic Investment Board (SIB), or even from the expert advisory committee, which has been identified in the new Delivering Social Change shared education signature project business case, to give some transparency?
1379. **Mrs Lilley:** The assessment panel is made up of a range of colleagues from across the Department. The infrastructure director sits on it, as does Jacqui. They both sit on the Department's capital project board, so there is quite a bit of input from a capital perspective. Our senior economist and the grade 5 from curriculum and education, providing an education perspective, are also on that board. The new grade 5 looking after shared education and teacher development — that wide remit — is present. We then have an Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) colleague. We are trying to cover a wide range. Shared education, education, and infrastructure and economics are all examined by that cross-directorate panel.
1380. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I appreciate that. There is always going to be criticism, I suppose. An external view on the process might help.
1381. **Ms Durkin:** As Roisin explained, educational benefits and the criteria in the protocol are paramount for a project to be approved. It is about identifying quality shared education projects as well as the campus and what is being proposed. I anticipate that, if expert advice on capital investment is required, the time to bring it in is when the feasibility study is being developed. There is certainly a lot of expertise on the boards and in CCMS. We do not anticipate that there will be anyone external on the assessment panel. If there is another call, that might be taken on board at that stage, but it will not for the second call applications.
1382. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you very much for your briefing and for the help that you have given Duneane and Moneynick on my patch. Some £500 million is earmarked, but we have got only 17 schools. There are not that many coming forward. What are you doing to encourage applications from every area? Are you writing to all the schools or boards? We have three ideas: new facilities; enhanced facilities; and shared campuses. Is anyone expanding from that to other things that could be funded?
1383. **Ms Durkin:** The detail is being worked through, but, as I understand it, the £500 million is for shared and integrated schools. As I mentioned in my briefing, each project is subject to approval from HMT and the Executive. I know that CCMS and the boards have been engaging with schools in their area and encouraging proposals. They have been working very closely with schools. As far as marketing the programme is concerned, indications are that anyone who applied in the first call and was not successful has looked at this call to identify what further information they need to provide and how they can

be more specific about how they meet a certain criterion. However, we have not written to individual schools to encourage applications. That has been down to the managing authorities and the planning authorities, but we have responded, as Roisin said, to calls from schools for feedback.

1384. **Mrs Lilley:** I will add to that. When we met the boards as part of the feedback process, we actively encouraged them by asking whether there were any additional schools on the ground that would consider the second call. We did that with all the boards, not just those that had unsuccessful projects. We met all board chief executives and encouraged them to look at projects. When launching a project, we sent an email to each school. Prior to that, we advised the education and library boards and CCMS that we were launching a second call on a certain date, thus giving them advance notice. They fed in comments through the area-planning steering group, as Jacqui said, but we let them know that we were launching a second call and sent an email to all schools to let them know that the call was out. We then issued a reminder to all schools. Therefore, we tried as much as possible to advertise the programme. Where I personally took calls from schools, I actively encouraged them to contact both their local board and CCMS, which would get actively involved with them, because a lot of the projects are joint ones.

1385. **Mr Kinahan:** Another angle has been pointed out to me. Those schools that are super-mixed or really well integrated fall slightly outside the system. What about those that want to enhance what they are doing in the school because they integrate well or those that want to enhance their buildings? There is that angle. Furthermore, there is a need for more community involvement. There is a great push to get the communities involved, and that is very much part of sharing and integration. Are we pushing those two angles as well?

1386. **Mrs Lilley:** Integrated schools can apply, but one of the gateway criteria, or essential criteria — yes or no criteria

— is that they share with a school with a different management type. There is no debarment of integrated schools, but they need to partner with another school-management type.

1387. Another gateway criterion requires community, parent and pupil support. That is because the applications are coming from schools on the ground, and they can do so only with community support. It is a T:BUC target from OFMDFM, but, again, it is about education. One of the benefits is the community use of schools, and a lot of the projects coming through are looking for there to be community use. That is why we made specific reference in the protocol document to the Department's guidance on the community use of schools. It is a gateway criterion, and we have referenced that in our protocol document as well.

1388. **Mr Kinahan:** [*Inaudible.*] Thank you.

1389. **Mr Newton:** Thanks for coming. You have nearly answered my question. It is about the socio-economic, as opposed to the religious, or perceived religious, mix. There is no criterion for socio-economic mix. Am I right in saying that no points are awarded for that?

1390. **Ms Durkin:** One of the desirable criteria is targeting social need and the free school meal entitlement. Therefore, that will be included. It was recognised in the first call, and the socio-economic mix was one of the issues looked at. That is why the free school meal entitlement is now in there.

1391. **Mrs Lilley:** As Mr Kinahan pointed out, although community, pupil and parent support is essential — a gateway for which you have to show evidence — another essential criterion is societal benefits, and we have given some examples of what those are. There are some marks for that in the criteria, although I accept that they are not as high. Primarily, it is still schools that we are talking about, but we are trying to recognise that there will be something awarded for societal benefits. Then, as Jacqui said, we have tried to take

- account of the social mix, because it was clearly referenced in the T:BUC strategy document that one of the benefits of shared education, as well as raising standards and having that cross-community mix, was that social mix, which helps raise standards. That is why we introduced that as a desirable criterion.
1392. **Mr Newton:** It encourages upward mobility through the education system, but it must cut across bodies, rather than take place within bodies. Socio-economic mix does not receive the priority that it might. I think of young Protestant males, who move within the same board or controlled situation, as opposed to moving outside it.
1393. **Mrs Lilley:** Look at the way in which we have deliberately phrased the gateway check this time: numbers at the school; management type; and phase of the school. We wanted to make sure that cross-community mix was at the heart of it.
1394. The disadvantaged pupil is a desirable criterion. We do not disbar a school if it does not meet that criterion, but the aim is to try to get that social mix, so it is primarily cross-community. We have also said this time that, if an application comes in with schools at different phases — say post-primary as well as primary schools under one application — there has to be a cross-community mix at both phases, because you want shared education to occur across both age ranges. That is to try to take account, hopefully, of the point that you are making.
1395. **Mr Rogers:** Ladies, you are very welcome. Roisin, you mentioned earlier that an integrated school, for example, would have to join up with a school from a different management type in order to avail itself of this. Do you believe that the necessity to join up with a school of another management type inhibits the development of shared education? I am thinking not only of integrated schools but of some place like St Columbanus's College in Bangor or Strabane Academy, where a significant part of the school population comes from the other community. Those schools cannot really avail themselves of this on their own.
1396. **Mrs Lilley:** No, because this is about expanding shared education. If you have a school that is one type of school in name but that has a mixed population, it will still need to join with another school of a different management type as part of the application process. When we are looking at the religious balance, we look at the total school population of both schools. In the examples that you gave, there is already sharing in those schools, so you are not increasing the amount of sharing. This is about sharing with another school and more pupils coming together to share.
1397. **Mr Rogers:** If St Columbanus's College, which is a Catholic maintained school, were to join with a Catholic voluntary grammar school, together they would tick that box.
1398. **Mrs Lilley:** They may not meet the religious balance, though; it depends. They are two different school-management types, but they may not necessarily meet the cross-community test, because there has to be a minimum of 15%, and preferably 30%.
1399. **Mr Rogers:** Let us say that St Columbanus's has 700 pupils and the other school has 700 pupils. Is it 15% of 1,400 pupils?
1400. **Mrs Lilley:** Yes.
1401. **Mr Rogers:** Well, St Columbanus's, with over 300 pupils from the other community, meets that criterion even before the schools are put together.
1402. **Mrs Lilley:** We are trying to get schools of a cross-community mix. I accept what you are saying. We had the religious mix as 30%, and we then deliberately reduced it. The reason for that was not so much because of the example that you have given; rather, it was because of rural schools. In a rural area, it may not be demographically possible for two small schools to come together to have a bigger mix, yet they are still having that mix. That scenario could happen. I imagine that they would then need to

- look at the rest of the test. Therefore, it could be possible, but that is not the intention. The intention is to try to have a cross-community mix. However, you could say that the pupils in the other non-selective Catholic school could then be mixing with some of the pupils of St Columbanus's who are not Catholic. It is possible. However, we are looking for a cross-community mix. I am not saying how your example would be assessed by the panel, but the two schools could probably achieve the cross-community mix based on religious balance.
1403. **Ms Durkin:** It is an interesting point, but the programme is specifically targeted at supporting schools that have a history of sharing and that have almost been like pathfinder schools in reaching across to the other community and establishing shared education experiences for pupils. It is a capital investment programme specifically for that. If St Columbanus's were to partner with another school from another management type, that would not disbar it from applying for the programme either. However, as a single, stand-alone school, it would not be supported.
1404. **Mr Newton:** Methody is the same position.
1405. **Ms Durkin:** However, it is a shared school in itself, because there are pupils from both communities and a good mix of pupils in that school building.
1406. **Mr Rogers:** My point is that such schools cannot avail themselves of this and, as such, are inhibited in developing, promoting and taking this on.
1407. **Ms Durkin:** They would fall into the Department's capital programme. If there was capital investment needed in those schools, they would come under the criteria for capital investment.
1408. **Mrs Lilley:** There is nothing to prevent the likes of St Columbanus's College joining with another Catholic maintained school and a controlled post-primary. You could have three schools involved. It does not have to be just two schools in partnership.
1409. **Mr Rogers:** The other point is a general one. Suppose, for example, that a proposal is endorsed by the two management authorities and the planning authority. Can the Department challenge that endorsement and decide to drop it out of the next stage of assessment?
1410. **Ms Durkin:** No. If it is approved by the Minister, it would go through to feasibility study and economic appraisal. If a project board were established and it became apparent that how the two schools were working together was not as positive as was indicated in the application process, the departmental officials on the project board could raise that, in the first instance, with the chair or chairs of the project board and say that the indication in the proposal is that this project is about whatever it happens to be about. You could raise concerns at that level. However, once it is approved, it will progress to economic appraisal and feasibility study.
1411. **Mrs Lilley:** Can I take you back a step even before that? It may have management authority endorsement and planning endorsement. As long as it meets the rest of the gateway criteria, it then has to be assessed by the panel. So, whether it gets to the stage where it is recommended to the Minister will depend on how it scores on all the rest of the criteria.
1412. **Mr Rogers:** But, if it ticks the boxes of the strategic plan in both schools, that would be a very strong factor in what the project board would look at.
1413. **Mrs Lilley:** No. Are you talking about the assessment panel here?
1414. **Mr Rogers:** Yes.
1415. **Mrs Lilley:** There are four gateway checks that they have to meet. The management endorsement and the planning authority endorsement are two separate checks. We have explained the reason for that, and it was important that that was part of the feedback. If we explained to schools why they needed to have those endorsements, they could understand it. So, they need to meet all

- those gateway checks. They are simple yes/no answers. If they score a no on any of those gateway checks, they will still be given feedback, and the rest will be looked at but will not get scored. So, they may meet those four gateway checks, but they still have to be scored against all the essential criteria and the two desirable criteria. They will then get a score.
1416. **Mr Rogers:** And the other gateway checks are?
1417. **Mrs Lilley:** The number, management type and phase of school and the evidence of community, parent and pupil support. They are just yes/ no answers; either you have them or you do not. There are then the essential criteria. The primary one of those is the educational benefits, because these are schools and it is about raising educational standards. So, the four essential criteria are educational benefits, evidence of existing sharing, the societal benefits, which Mr Kinahan referred to, and the religious balance. They are awarded marks on the essential criteria. If you score zero on any of the essential, we will still score you, but we will have to say that we could not recommend it. If it is an essential criterion, you have to pass it. There are then two desirable criteria. There is one about location, and there is the disadvantaged pupil consideration.
1418. **Ms Durkin:** Schools need to provide evidence. It is not just ticking a box and saying that they have that. They have to provide actual evidence of how they are meeting that criterion.
1419. **Mr Rogers:** How is evidence of sharing measured?
1420. **Mrs Lilley:** When you are looking at evidence of sharing, you are looking for schools to giving examples such as, "Here is where we have been sharing for x number of years. We have so many classes that we share and so many pupils cross over." It could also be, "We have joint board of governors meetings", or, "We have joint pastoral policies." They have to show evidence that they have a history of sharing. This is perhaps more relevant to post-primary, but some schools even have examples such as, "We synchronise some of our timetables so that our pupils can share."
1421. You could have a primary school where one teacher [*Inaudible due to mobile phone interference.*] share a class between two pupils and somebody else takes a class and they share our computers. It is them saying, "Here is how much sharing we've done". Some of the teachers may have done joint training. So, they provide evidence to us of what sharing they have done.
1422. **Mr Rogers:** It would really be a shared class rather than a shared teacher?
1423. **Mrs Lilley:** A shared teacher is an element, but we are looking more for shared classes, where the pupils are sharing and have a history of sharing. That is so important because we know that there are likely to be issues as we move through the process. It is one thing to have a history of sharing when you have joint classes moving back and forward and another to physically have a building that you are jointly responsible for. Issues will arise from that, and if we have two schools that already have a history of dealing with difficult issues as they arise, the chances are that they will be better placed to deal with them. So, sharing a teacher is an example, but we would be looking for something more than that as a strong basis for scoring highly in that category.
1424. **Mr Rogers:** Take two rural primary schools that share a teacher. That is a big step, but it is something that is practical and can be done, whereas sharing pupils and the cost associated with doing so is just [*Inaudible due to mobile phone interference.*]
1425. **Mrs Lilley:** I am not going to try to preclude it, and I am not trying to prejudge anything that may come in. One of our desirable criteria is location, so this is all about a shared community and bringing communities together. It is about bringing the children together

- and the sharing of education. So, the question that you would pose then is, “What shared facility are you going to create?”. You are going to have to bring the pupils together in a shared facility. If it is only about sharing teachers, there are other programmes that the schools can avail themselves of, such as the Delivering Social Change shared signature programmes.
1426. This is about, as Jacqui said, us putting capital infrastructure in place specifically for sharing. Whether that is a mobile, a STEM centre or a new school, you are going to have to put pupils in it. So, if the schools feel that the way they are currently working precludes that, I am not sure how a shared facility would enhance what they are doing, because a shared facility would presumably have to be used by the pupils .
1427. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr Newton, you wanted to come in on a small point.
1428. **Mr Newton:** I have just a very short question. In terms of the schools that you are in communication with about a shared campus, the list — our list, anyway — starts with Belfast Royal Academy (BRA) and finishes with St Mary’s in Brookeborough. What would be a rough timescale for a decision?
1429. **Mrs Lilley:** Sorry, the schools that we are in communication with about the shared campuses are the six schools that have come through from the first call. The application for the second phase does not close until 30 January. The boards and CCMS are the ones who have been working with schools who are bringing forward projects. Some schools may contact us directly if they are looking for a bit of clarification, but we have generally tried to steer them towards working with the boards and CCMS because they need their endorsement. The likes of BRA, which you mentioned, have their own managing authority. However, if it is going to be sharing with another school, it will need that endorsement. So, we are not in direct contact with schools that are thinking of putting applications in for the second call.
1430. **Mr Newton:** OK.
1431. **Mrs Lilley:** Other than to provide clarification that they have a particular question and feedback from the first call.
1432. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks for your presentation. The sharing agenda predates T:BUC by many years, as we know, and the original aim was to improve educational outcomes and deliver the curriculum. What is the priority now? It is societal or is it educational?
1433. **Mrs Lilley:** It is still primarily educational, and that is said in the T:BUC strategy. T:BUC refers to the fact that shared education can raise educational standards. It will help to break down intergenerational educational disadvantage and community disadvantage. So, education is still the key. It is about education but on a cross-community basis. Education is still the primary objective.
1434. **Mr Lunn:** Is it fair to ask you about the £500 million that has been announced. Presumably, that is £50 million a year, but I wonder whether it has to be £50 million a year for a start. Could it be front-loaded?
1435. **Ms Durkin:** Our finance colleagues are discussing with DFP exactly what the detail of that is. We do not have that detail other than the headline announcement. However, how that will actually break down into what is for shared education and what is for integrated education, how it is phased and what it is used for is not clear. As I mentioned earlier, it is about Executive and HM Treasury approval for individual projects. So, we need to work with colleagues on how that will work and what it will look like.
1436. **Mr Lunn:** If it is a bit vague at the moment, it will fit quite nicely with the rest of T:BUC in my opinion, but we will see where it goes. The £500 million is specified as being for shared and integrated education. You are going to be putting out calls for shared education

- projects. Will you put out calls for schools that might want to transform to integrated status or for parents to think about establishing a new integrated school?
1437. **Ms Durkin:** As I understand it, as far as I am aware, we will not be doing that, because this programme is specifically about the shared education campuses programme. So, I do not envisage that happening. Although colleagues who are working in that area may be better able to advise the Committee on that point. What you are concerned about is the T:BUC commitment and the shared education campus. As you know, we have a second call out for projects. The aim is to have 10 projects commence within the next five years. That is the priority for the programme at the minute.
1438. **Mr Lunn:** The Department now has the same obligation to facilitate and encourage shared and integrated education. The word “promote” has been slipped in there about shared projects, but not shared advances, whether that will make much difference to the situation. So, it seems odd that, on the face of it, we have a pool of £500 million to be spent over the next 10 years. The good folk in the integrated sector would be concerned that the main emphasis and the whole thrust of how that money is going to be spent is on shared education projects not integrated.
1439. **Ms Durkin:** We are alive to our statutory obligations. As I said earlier, the shared education policy and Bill are out for consultation and, if agreed, would put on the statute book equal parity to facilitate and encourage shared education. This particular programme is focused on shared education campus projects. It is not clear yet how that £500 million will be divided between shared and integrated education and how it will be applied to specific projects.
1440. **Mr Lunn:** In five or 10 years, when the reviews are done, it will be interesting to see how it all pans out. I am not trying to be particularly critical. Can you tell me about two of the projects that you are working on in Ballycastle and Limavady? What is the actual proposal in Ballycastle?
1441. **Mrs Lilley:** I am just flicking through the papers because I want to make sure that I get it right. As Jacqui said earlier, we have three of them, and they are quite different. I know that you are going to visit the two primary schools later today. St Mary’s High School, Limavady and Limavady High School are two post-primary schools that are located fairly close to each other. They have a long history of sharing already as part of the delivery of the entitlement framework. Even prior to that, they had a history of sharing. The project is to provide two new shared facilities: a shared sixth-form centre and careers centre on the St Mary’s school site; and a shared STEM centre on the Limavady High School site, which would be used by both schools. There is a walkway between the two schools that is council property. You asked earlier about local community and council involvement. One of their proposals is that there would be a peace/harmony bridge over the walkway between the two schools and, as we understand it, funding has been approved by the council. That is the St Mary’s project.
1442. I understand that there have been a few working group meetings between both schools, the Western Board and CCMS. As Jacqui said earlier, because the projects are new pathfinder projects, the project boards are slightly different from the normal project boards for capital, in that there are joint SROs and joint chairs. So, it is jointly chaired by CCMS and the local education and library board, in recognition of the fact that it is those three projects anyway. So, they are having their first project board meeting tomorrow afternoon. Hopefully, if the weather is clement enough, we will all go up there.
1443. The Ballycastle project involves Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College. Again, they are two post-primary schools that are physically quite close to each other. They have a long history of sharing over a large number of years. Their proposal is for

two new core schools and two shared centres, one for STEM and one for the performance and creative arts at Key Stages 4 and 5. The actual sharing in the two shared centres will be very extensive.

1444. **Mr Lunn:** Will there be one on each site?

1445. **Mrs Lilley:** That is under negotiation. It is part of the discussion on how the actual layout would look; whether it would be one building or a building on each of the two sites. That is where we get into the issues of the site and the actual physicality. Colleagues who know these things, our architects, tell me that you have to look at whether there is hilly or damp ground. I would never have thought of things like this. We do not know the detail of how that will look. That is a significant project, and we need to get into the detail of how it is taken forward, but that is their proposal.

1446. **Mr Lunn:** OK. Thank you.

1447. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you. It has been an interesting discussion this morning. I wondered about the criteria. Are they the same as before or are they weighted differently?

1448. **Mrs Lilley:** We have revised the criteria. We took account of the lessons that we had learnt earlier and we have revised them slightly. The gateway criteria are not marked any more. That is a specific yes or no: you either have it or you do not have it. You will excuse me if, this morning, I do not actually say what the allocation of marks will be for each of the criteria. This is a public meeting. It is still an open competition; it does not close until 30 January. We are happy to give that information to the Committee for Education. We did that for the last assessment. Sharing has moved from being desirable to being essential. We have changed the balance for the religious aspect. We have put greater emphasis on this being about schools and schools sharing. We have introduced that new desirable criterion for disadvantaged pupils. We have emphasised in the protocol document and the criteria exactly the type of thing

that we are looking for as evidence. We thought that that made it easier for schools. Certainly, the feedback that we have had so far — even from some of those who had applied in the first call — said that schools welcomed the revised criteria because they think it makes it clearer to them exactly what it is we are looking for.

1449. **Mrs Overend:** Are you doing anything differently to try to encourage more rural schools to participate? You talked about Limavady. The two schools are side by side. That makes it much easier for them to share. A lot of rural schools in my constituency, for instance, are five miles apart. It is a big effort for them to share. A lot of schools do that. Are you looking for value for money?

1450. **Ms Durkin:** Roisin made the point earlier that it is important that there is history of sharing. Some rural schools already have a track record of successful sharing. They have worked around the logistics, depending on how far apart they are and how they get pupils together for shared education experiences. Through the area planning steering group and working with CCMS, the boards and others, we have tried to say, “Be aware”, to give as much notice as we can about the launch of the second call and remind them about the timescale for submission. They are really working on the ground with individual schools where they know that there is already that pattern and history of sharing between partner schools to try to encourage them to say whether they are candidate schools for this programme.

1451. **Mrs Lilley:** Location is a desirable criterion, and I appreciate the comments about rurality. Where the schools are not side by side, and if there is a distance between them, we have tried to ask how the school will try to minimise disruption for the pupils. It is primarily about the educational benefits. That is the key thing. We are not trying to say, “You cannot be a distance apart.”. If they are a distance apart, we are asking, “How will you minimise the disruption for the education of the children?”.

- Rural schools may be used to thinking about that anyway. We have tried to take account of it as much as we can. The majority of the schools — the ones that we are aware of anyway so far, but there could be others coming in that we are not yet aware of — are working with their local planning and managing authorities, and, because we have had quite a lot of engagement with them through the three projects that have come through the first call and in feedback that we have given to other projects, I would like to think that the boards and CCMS would have a good idea of the sort of evidence that we are looking for and how they will encourage the schools to present that evidence.
1452. **Mrs Overend:** Saying that, even schools within a town have distances between them as well. That is evident. Does the sharing have to be as part of the 9.00 am to 3.00 pm day? Could it be for extra-curricular activities? That might minimise the disruption to the school day, but it could be something like a choir club or a STEM club. Is that sort of thing acceptable?
1453. **Mrs Lilley:** It is an example of sharing.
1454. **Ms Durkin:** It is about educational benefits. Primarily, there should be good examples of the educational benefits of the sharing experience, but I expect that schools will provide evidence of all the types of sharing that they are doing, whether it is curriculum-based or extra-curricular activity or, as was mentioned earlier, is about community use in that, if the facility was available, how it would encourage cross-community activity in a particular community. The focus is very much on educational benefits and quality education experience, but it is also about as much evidence as schools can provide — *[Inaudible due to mobile phone interference.]*
1455. **Mrs Lilley:** A lot of the schools have that extra-curricular element to their sharing, but, if they are putting in a bid for a capital infrastructure, they need to say what they plan to use it for.
1456. **Mr Lunn:** I will follow up on John's point, if you do not mind. If it is primarily about educational benefits, why is there such an emphasis on the requirement for a cross-sectoral approach? Let me develop that a wee bit. For example, what if BRA and Methody both needed a state-of-the-art STEM facility, but it was not economically viable to provide two, and so they wanted to share one? Bear in mind that BRA has about a 40% Catholic intake and Methody has a 40% Protestant intake. So, in all other respects, except that they both come from the voluntary grammar sector, they would fit the criteria, but they would not be allowed to apply under this scheme. Is that correct?
1457. **Mrs Lilley:** Under the current criteria, yes, because we are looking for two different management types.
1458. **Mr Lunn:** That is my query. If you say that you are looking for two different management types, that would make most people think that you are emphasising the societal benefit of all this. But, in fact, you have told us several times that it is really the educational benefit that is important.
1459. **Mrs Lilley:** I apologise if I have caused confusion. It goes back to Jacqui's point; this is an OFMDFM strategy. It is from Together: Building a United Community. So, it is looking to build a united community. That was one of its headline actions, and, because it is about education, the Department of Education is implementing it. We are looking for it to provide quality education, but it is under the auspices of Together: Building a United Community. You then have to show that there are good educational benefits, too.
1460. **Mr Lunn:** I could make the same case for two integrated schools. It is not very likely because of the distances involved, but they could find themselves in the same position.
1461. **Ms Durkin:** If they are both the same management type, at the minute, under the criteria, yes. Or if you have a controlled and a GMI —

1462. **Mr Lunn:** What about a controlled integrated and a grant-maintained integrated that wanted to put a project forward?
1463. **Ms Durkin:** Again, it would be about that quality educational experience and about whether they had a history of sharing. I expect that it would be very difficult for schools to come forward and bid for this programme if they did not have a previous history of being involved in shared education activity.
1464. **Mr Lunn:** We will see how it goes.
1465. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
From the essential criteria, it appears that small schools are not really encouraged to come forward. You say:
“That consideration of the Bain report recommendations of not more than 2 composite year groups in a class and a school of a minimum of 4 teachers will be met.”
1466. Is that as an individual school or is that as two schools combined?
1467. **Mrs Lilley:** That is from the Bain recommendations on finance for education. Under the gateway criteria, we said that the planning authority approval is that they meet the criteria in the sustainable schools policy or, where that is not the case, the CCMS, if it a Catholic maintained school, and the education and library board, if it is a controlled school, have to say why they feel that it meets part of their sustainable schools policy going forward. That is why it is so important that you get planning authority approval. We are saying that that is what the normal criteria are, the same as for other schools. However, if they are putting forward a proposal where the schools do not meet some of or one of the sustainable schools criteria, the planning authority then has to state why they still are endorsing it — that is that it is part of their overall strategic vision for that area and the managing authorities say that it fits with their strategic views for their schools.
1468. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
So, small schools should not necessarily be discouraged by reading those criteria?
1469. **Ms Durkin:** No, but they should be engaging with their managing authorities and their planning authorities to ask whether they have any intention or plans in relation to that school. That is why it is really important at an early stage. As I said earlier, a lot of these projects have arisen from a long history of sharing in individual schools, and this programme is potentially providing access to capital funding to build on that — no pun intended. So, it is important that they engage with their planning authority and ask what the area plan is and what the intention for these schools is going forward. They are certainly not precluded from participating where they have that endorsement from their planning authority.
1470. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
No one else has indicated any further questions. Obviously, we look forward to speaking to those involved in the projects that have been selected, and we look forward again to hearing from you, as time goes on, with an update on various projects. Thank you very much.

21 January 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Andrew Bell	<i>Department of</i>
Mrs Faustina Graham	<i>Education</i>
Dr Suzanne Kingon	
Dr John Hunter	<i>Education</i>
	<i>and Training</i>
	<i>Inspectorate</i>

1471. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Good morning. With us are Faustina Graham, director of collaborative education and practice; Andrew Bell, head of the shared education and community relations team, Suzanne Kingon, who is also from that team; and Dr John Hunter from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). You are all very welcome to the Committee. Please make an opening statement, and members will follow up with questions.

1472. **Mrs Faustina Graham (Department of Education):** Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the Committee for the opportunity to brief you on the shared education policy and Bill and on the community relations, equality and diversity in education policy, which is probably better known as CRED. I will refer to it as that in the briefing.

1473. Turning first to shared education, I am pleased to report that the work has advanced considerably since I briefed the Committee on the topic in July 2014. Obviously, there is a high level of interest in shared education, and

the Committee will therefore be aware that the Minister recently launched an eight-week consultation on his proposed shared education policy and the accompanying Bill.

1474. I emphasise at the outset that the Department is keen to listen to the views of all interested parties and to have an informed and meaningful discussion on the plans to move forward. The policy sets out a comprehensive framework for the development of shared education, and it builds on the research, consultation and recommendations of the ministerial advisory group. It aims to ensure that schools and youth settings receive the resources, support and encouragement that they need to start, or to continue to develop, high-quality shared opportunities for their children and young people. It is very much a blueprint that seeks to build on our existing educational structures.

1475. While in no way attempting to compromise parental preference, the policy offers the opportunity to create a more cohesive education system in which increasing numbers of children and young people from different community backgrounds will be educated together.

1476. The policy contains 14 overarching actions that will support the advancement of shared education. It sets out plans to define, encourage and facilitate shared education through the legislation and, furthermore, to support structures to fund, develop and embed sharing throughout the education system.

1477. Practical progress has already been made on key ministerial commitments. The Delivering Social Change shared education signature project was launched in September, and the first call for applications was issued in November. The response has been very encouraging, and it is clear that there is a significant appetite in our schools for

- shared education. Successful applicants will be informed shortly. A second call is planned in the spring for projects that will commence in the autumn term of 2015.
1478. Inspection findings and the accompanying research tell us that educational settings are at different stages in their readiness for sharing. Therefore, the application process for the DSC signature programme was accompanied and supported by a new self-evaluation framework, which the Education and Training Inspectorate, under Dr John Hunter's leadership, has developed for shared education.
1479. The self-evaluation framework is a tool designed to assist practitioners in carrying out initial self-reflection to identify their baseline, set effective goals and then measure their progress, both throughout the programme and at the end. The process of self-evaluation leading to improvement is fundamental to the further development of not just our entire education system but, in this specific instance, the development of shared education. Our intention across the whole programme is that all elements of it will seek to explore, evaluate and incorporate key learning across the four years of the programme. So, it really will be an ongoing learning journey across the four years to the end of the programme, looking at the lessons we can learn and how we can modify the programme across the period rather than waiting to the end to accrue all of the learning.
1480. Importantly, all of the work in schools will be contextualised in the Northern Ireland curriculum. A key aim is to ensure that shared education becomes integral to and infused with school development planning and improvement.
1481. The education and library boards are nearing the end of a recruitment phase for a team of dedicated officers to support schools in advancing shared education. They will provide local, on-the-ground assistance, working with the partnerships to promote, plan and implement shared activity.
- In addition, 16 associate assessors, who are practising senior managers in schools, have been appointed by ETI to support them in the evaluation process. Obviously, capacity building will be developed across the four years for those working as associate assessors. Additionally, DE officials are working on proposals for a strategic approach to additional capacity building for teachers that will build on existing expertise.
1482. A proposed shared education Bill accompanies the policy. It provides a legislative definition of shared education, placing a power on the Department and associated arm's-length bodies to encourage and facilitate shared education. Members will be aware that the Education Act places a similar duty on the Education Authority. As I have outlined, shared education is very much a developing area, and, given its wide scope, a power will provide the necessary flexibility as we seek to further explore, develop and ultimately embed the benefits of shared education. Enshrining the concept in legislation sends a very clear message that it is now a permanent feature of our education landscape.
1483. Of course, there has been considerable debate about what constitutes shared education. Therefore, the Bill takes a very common-sense, practical approach. Essentially, shared education is about two or more schools, youth groups or early years settings coming together and educating children of different religious beliefs and from different socio-economic backgrounds together. The Bill is supported by the more detailed description in section 4 of the policy on how shared education will work in practice.
1484. The aim of the CRED policy is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others. The policy was designed to underpin and support existing curricular requirements to develop young people as contributors to society, that being contributors one of the three key objectives of the Northern Ireland curriculum. It aims to provide

- young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours that enable them to value and respect difference and to engage positively with it.
1485. Since the introduction of the policy in 2011, considerable work has been taken forward. Dedicated CRED support officers have provided advice and help to schools and youth work settings to assess needs and deliver appropriate interventions. Almost 800 schools and youth work settings availed themselves of that support within the last two financial years. Guidance is available for all organisations, and it maps the policy across curricular subjects, links to teacher and youth work competencies and provides a self-assessment framework used to identify gaps and plan suitable interventions. A dedicated website provides a one-stop shop for practitioners and includes case studies, resources and support materials.
1486. A survey undertaken across schools and youth work settings identified training needs, and a training strategy was put in place. Over 2,000 school leaders, boards of governors, Youth Service management, teachers and youth workers attended awareness sessions. In excess of 4,000 teachers and youth workers availed themselves of training to improve their CRED-related knowledge and skills. One in four principals engaged in training on dealing with controversial issues in the classroom. Over the last two financial years, 500 education settings availed themselves of CRED enhancement funding to reinforce learning. That involved in excess of 25,000 children and young people.
1487. Since the policy's introduction in 2011, a series of measures to assess its effectiveness has been undertaken. The measures included a series of focus groups with practitioners as well as young people and the commissioning of a module in the young life and times survey. Both concluded that the majority of young people experienced CRED activities and that, where provision is good or better, these are effective in changing attitudes. The focus groups provided evidence of a more collective, whole-school responsibility for CRED work rather than relying on one or two teachers, with connections being made across subject areas and clear learning outcomes.
1488. To inform future policy, the Department then commissioned the Education and Training Inspectorate to undertake a formal review of the CRED policy and its impact on children and young people. Work was undertaken over the autumn term of 2014, and it is expected that the ETI report will be published in the next few weeks. Early feedback from the report has been very positive. Most of the schools and youth organisations visited demonstrated effective CRED practice. Indeed, the majority of the sessions observed were very good or better. The report will include a number of recommendations for further embedding CRED in the education system.
1489. The Committee will, of course, be aware that, as part of the action to address pressures on the extremely challenging 2015-16 education budget, the Minister has proposed ending earmarked funding for CRED. The public consultation on the budget proposals closed on 29 December, and the Minister is reviewing the responses prior to finalising the budget. A full equality impact assessment is planned over the coming weeks.
1490. These are still early days, and there is much work to be done in the weeks ahead to plan how best to move forward within a challenging financial context and in a manner that reflects the Minister's key priorities of raising standards for all and closing the achievement gap. In this context, we are looking at how best to support the further embedding and mainstreaming of the CRED policy, and to explore the synergies with shared education so that the good work observed by inspectors is built on and continues to make a significant difference.
1491. I trust that this has provided the Committee with an overview of the work to date, including the difficult decisions for the Minister in balancing the budget. We welcome the opportunity to

- answer any questions from Committee members.
1492. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much, Faustina. I refer to your final comments on CRED. We have a draft shared education policy and a draft Bill. One would think that, because there might be a certain element of duplication, there might be an attempt to phase out CRED. You said, however, that you may be mainstreaming or embedding it. Will they run as separate pieces of work or together?
1493. **Mrs Graham:** The CRED policy, which was in place before we came to shared education, is designed to support the curriculum, particularly with regard to young people as contributors to society. It is almost like an umbrella policy, of which shared education forms a part. Equally, and alongside that, there are the other elements to do with equality and diversity, such as special educational needs, anti-bullying and the pastoral elements — all those things that will enable our young people to be active citizens of the 21st century.
1494. The important thing for us is, as I said about shared education, to aim for the integration of all this work into the curriculum. Earmarked funding for CRED was designed to allow schools the opportunity to take something within the revised curriculum, as it then was, and think about how to make it an integral part of what they did, giving time and space to both schools and youth workers to look at how it was different, how it fitted in and how it made sense. We have now progressed that work. There is still plenty of work to do, and the report, I am sure, will indicate that to us.
1495. For me, the two policies are complementary, and shared education forms part of the CRED policy, as do other supporting policies in the Department. CRED will not be phased out; rather, it will be phased into the curriculum, as I see it. The same is true of shared education. It is an opportunity for schools, in particular, to look at something that they have to think their way through. In truth, we have to think our way through, too. It is a learning experience for all of us. The ultimate aim is for that to become integral to the work of every school and to be part of the ethos and DNA of every school, but we have to accept where we are now and the fact that we are on a journey to that point. The same is true for both policies.
1496. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** In some ways, then, the draft policies on shared education that we are looking at enhance and support CRED.
1497. **Mrs Graham:** Absolutely.
1498. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I know we will come back to that again and spend a great deal of time on it. We will move to the Bill. You mentioned that the shared education policy and the Bill are going to “encourage and facilitate”, but the Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 states, “encourage, facilitate and promote”. Why are they not complementary?
1499. **Mrs Graham:** I think they are. To me, “encourage and facilitate” are stronger terms than “promote”. The term “promote” is used when you are not in a position and you want to highlight it but cannot actually effect change. It is about trying to encourage that change. “Encourage and facilitate”, however, are stronger words. Would you like to add anything, Suzanne?
1500. **Dr Suzanne Kingon (Department of Education):** There is no inherent contradiction between “encourage, facilitate and promote” and “encourage and facilitate”. In preparing the Bill, the Minister decided that he would go for the latter, which is in line with the Department’s duty to the integrated and Irish-medium sectors. Those are the words that went in. There is no inherent contradiction.
1501. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It is a power rather than a duty.
1502. **Dr Kingon:** Yes, it is a power. The reason for that is that shared education is not a sector; it is not neatly wrapped and packed. It will, hopefully, involve a

majority of our schools, and we felt that a power provided more flexibility. Also, some activities — curricular collaboration or teacher development, for example — may require more development at a certain time. It encompasses such a broad remit that a power gave greater flexibility than a duty, which is more suitable for a tightly wrapped and packed sector, if you follow me.

1503. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I anticipate there will be quite a bit of discussion about the definition of “religious belief or political affiliation”. How do you determine the political affiliation of a child or young person?

1504. **Dr Kingon:** The crucial reason for putting in political opinion is that not all young people would subscribe to a religious belief, and it was designed to reflect that. The crucial thing in the definition is that it must bring together children from different community backgrounds, different religious and political beliefs, and children who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not. They are the two crucial elements.

1505. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I will look forward to the responses and to discussing that again.

1506. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation, although I would disagree about “encourage, facilitate and promote”. I think “promote” is stronger than the other two, but I will leave it at that.

1507. I wonder what the impact will be upon integrated education. Critics of shared education will say that this may be the death knell for the demand for integrated and that it will slow down the whole process of schools becoming integrated. I am looking for your views on that.

1508. **Mrs Graham:** Again, I think it is a case of accepting where we are now. It is entirely possible for schools to be developed that are integrated and also for schools to transform to integrated status. That has not happened in substantial numbers over the last period; nevertheless, we cannot stand still on improving good relations and the education system for

our young people in a range of ways. We have worked, certainly, with the integrated sector on the previous shared education programmes, and there is nothing contradictory about integrated schools being involved in shared education.

Obviously, if in the course of that journey a school decides to transform to integrated status, that is something the Department would be content to happen. It has to be a case of bringing people with us. Saying to people, “We are going to tell you what is good for you, and you should be doing this” is not the way to win hearts and minds in sensitive areas such as this. It is about ensuring that we look at the stage people are at and allow them to integrate what they do into their current school. If they should then choose to transform to integrated status, that option is there at every point in the journey.

1509. **Dr Kingon:** They are complementary. For some schools, shared education will be the right approach. Other schools may want to look at the option of transforming. Shared education can lead to schools wanting to go down the transformation route. For others, it will not lead that way, but the two are complementary.

1510. **Mr Andrew Bell (Department of Education):** The integrated sector is at the upper end of the continuum for shared education, so the two are complementary. We found through the work on the shared education projects funded by the International Fund for Ireland that the integrated sector has already addressed a number of issues that it can share. Shared education is about sharing good experience across schools and between teachers and educators. So, for that reason, we see the integrated sector as part of this. It will share that experience with other schools and, equally, may benefit in other areas from other schools’ experiences.

1511. **Mr Hazzard:** Undoubtedly, some people will see the integrated sector as, as you say, the upper end of the continuum, but there is another view that — I would like your view on it — there is a contradiction in that the Department

- is now setting out to encourage and facilitate shared education when it already had a duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education. Some people will see it as a contradiction and think that it will negatively affect the original duty and so they should not be doing that. I want your take on that.
1512. **Mrs Graham:** Ultimately, the Department's vision is to ensure that all young people get the best possible education. That is the overriding vision for the Department and that has to inform everything else that happens subsequent to that. So, to me, there is no inherent contradiction there in the sense that, given the range of schools that we have in Northern Ireland, the duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education will not be hampered in any way by something that is slightly different but complementary. If you want to probe the concept a wee bit further, I am happy to —
1513. **Mr Hazzard:** There will probably be plenty of conversation today around it.
1514. **Mrs Graham:** I am just not sure if I am answering exactly what you are asking.
1515. **Mr A Bell:** The other key point is that the Minister has, on a number of occasions, when he has talked about shared education, mentioned the statutory duty and stated that he remains firmly committed to that. I do not think that there is any contradiction.
1516. **Mr Hazzard:** No problem. I have one final point around the definition. How broad can schools take it? Can it include ethnicity? Can it include urban/rural? What about coed? An awful lot of our schools are still single sex. Will we see a move around the coed? Finally, will there be a penalty in place for schools that remain in isolation and do not look towards sharing?
1517. **Mrs Graham:** I will ask Suzanne to answer that.
1518. **Dr Kingon:** There is a definition in the Bill but, when you go into the policy, you will see that there is a detailed description of how shared education will work in practice. It is broadened out and makes it very clear that a key element of shared education is bringing all the section 75 groups together. That will obviously include ethnicity, children with disabilities and a different gender. You asked about a penalty, but, no, this is about encouragement. This is not about penalties for schools that are not involved in it, and we hope that, with a positive approach, a lot of schools will want to get involved in the programmes.
1519. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks for your presentation. I would also cross swords with you over the word "promote". I am quite happy that it is not there because, according to the dictionary, Wikipedia and all the rest of it, it is stronger than "encourage and facilitate". But that is by the way. Just leave it out; it is OK.
1520. From what I am reading, it seems the end product of the shared education programme is to promote more integration, if that is not a contradiction. The end result of the programme is where the integrated sector is at the present time. The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) said to us only a few weeks ago that where we are is where the shared education promotion people would like to be. If you look at it the other way, what do you say to people who say that, in a lot of cases, shared education may well just be a cop-out that will give parents, groups and schools the opportunity to not integrate when that is the end goal that we are all looking for? I do not mean integrated per se as in a formula. I mean schools coming together. I want to talk about the Moy in a moment, but what do you say to people who see it as a cop-out?
1521. **Mrs Graham:** As I said, this is contextualised in the Northern Ireland curriculum, first and foremost. It is not about different views in the sense of saying, "This is about all schools becoming integrated", so you are quite right in what you say there. This is about how our schools fulfil the objectives of the Northern Ireland curriculum, which include educating young people, first of all, as

- individuals, as contributors to society and contributors to the economy —
1522. **Mr Lunn:** Before you finish that, I just want to slow you down. The opportunity for schools to partner each other requires cross-sectoral input.
1523. **Mrs Graham:** Yes.
1524. **Mr Lunn:** So, how can you say it is purely educational? I wish it was purely educational, but it is societal as well. There is a big emphasis on the societal benefit; it is written all over this document, with the end result perhaps being that children are being educated together.
1525. **Mrs Graham:** I would argue that the societal element is educational in that way, because it is a fundamental part of our curriculum. Our young people need to be able to survive and thrive in a global economy in the 21st century, and they need to be active citizens. So, all of education is geared to ensuring that our young people have all the skills and attributes that they need to survive in a global economy.
1526. For all of our schools, when we look at the elements of the curriculum, particularly around personal development and mutual understanding, we look at the statutory requirements of the curriculum around active citizenship and learning for life and work, all of which schools are required to pursue in order to deliver those elements of the curriculum meaningfully and to a high quality. It would be very difficult to do that without dealing with all the challenging issues that are going to come to light through the interaction with another school.
1527. When I was working in ETI, the evidence that we accrued through the evaluation of all the sharing and education programmes demonstrated very forcefully that it would be very difficult for young people in those situations to fulfil the aims of the Northern Ireland curriculum without engaging with partner schools. That is something that we will look at as this programme develops, because it would be very difficult to do all the things that are required in the curriculum meaningfully — looking, as
- I said, at the curricular elements and but also at thinking skills and personal capability, attitudes and dispositions — without challenging people's beliefs, attitudes, understanding and tolerating difference and respect for difference.
1528. In that way, rather than finding ourselves in a situation that has been criticised in the past, where community relations and education for mutual understanding, for example, were viewed as extra or additional to the curriculum, we seek, through the ongoing work on shared education, to ensure that it is integral to every aspect of education and in particular the ethos of a school.
1529. For that reason, it would be very difficult for a school to engage in this in a way that would be, as you described, a cop-out. Obviously, John Hunter is here this morning with us. As this programme progresses, the expectation is that that work will be integral to the individual inspection of schools. Therefore, if a school is not delivering the curriculum in that way, ultimately that will come to light through that work. That said, that is not something that is going to happen right now; it will be built up over time and experience across the four years, because we want the Education and Training Inspectorate in particular to work collaboratively with the schools to accrue the learning across the four years.
1530. **Dr Kingon:** It might be also useful to reference the ETI continuum and the fact that it is built into the Delivering Social Change programme that schools must progress at least one level along the continuum in three areas. Funding is contingent on progression, and progression and evaluation are built in, so there is no possibility of schools engaging in this in a half-hearted manner or not progressing along that continuum. That is a key element, and schools have been asked from the outset to self-evaluate against the continuum. John and his colleagues will be evaluating the progress.
1531. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks for that lecture. The criteria for cooperating between sectors and schools appear to allow for a

- situation where a controlled grammar and a voluntary grammar could apply for shared funding. Technically, they are different sectors, but, in terms of societal division and so on, perhaps they are not. You can contrast that with a situation around an integrated school which is already operating on the cross-sectoral, for want of a better phrase, basis, but which cannot, on its own, apply for shared funding.
1532. **Mrs Graham:** The important thing is that, as Suzanne said, we are trying to ensure that there is flexibility in how schools will apply for this work, and we are trying to ensure that they are looked at on a case-by-case basis. However, it would never exclusively be the case that we would look at which two schools are working together, because there are so many variations of how schools can be described in Northern Ireland. One of my colleagues described it as the eccentricities of the number of school categories that we have. For example, we will have a controlled school that may comprise almost entirely of Catholic pupils. So, we have to look at the range of factors that any group of schools applying for funding is bringing into the proposal. Ultimately, it will be on the total quality of the proposal. I am not saying that we would exclude any partnership, but something that looks as if it is not going to challenge the school in some way to further its thinking — as you have indicated — will be picked up in the range of evidence in the proposal that the school presents.
1533. **Mr Lunn:** But an integrated school which, as you say, Andrew, is at the top end of the continuum as we speak, cannot of itself apply for shared education funding under this, unless they partner with somebody else. They cannot do it in-house. They are where you want to be.
1534. **Mr A Bell:** One of the key issues of the programme is that it should be mutually beneficial to schools in the partnership. Integrated schools can bring to other schools their experience of how they deal with some of the issues around educating Catholic and Protestant young people and, indeed, people from other communities. There should be benefit to both sides, because it is about learning for the young people but, it is also, ultimately, about improving educational standards and learning for teachers in schools. Through the evidence in the pilot project, we learned that when schools — including integrated schools — work together on that basis, schools within that partnership benefit in totality. To leave an integrated school on its own means that it would not benefit from some of the wider issues that, potentially, it could do.
1535. **Mr Lunn:** Can I ask about the Moy, very briefly?
1536. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I will bring you back in. Mr Hazzard wants to comment on the previous point.
1537. **Mr Hazzard:** Can two integrated schools be in the process?
1538. **Dr Kingon:** We look at everything on a case-by-case basis. There is no definite, “You can” or “You cannot”. Everything is going to be looked at in terms of the quality of the application. We do not want to rule out anything at the outset. Take a controlled integrated school, for instance. Is it controlled or integrated? Or, a controlled Irish-medium school; is it controlled or Irish-medium? Schools can have a multiplicity of identities, and it is important that, at the outset, we do not say what will or will not qualify without looking at the details of the proposal. We need to look at whether it is bringing a good community balance and a good social balance together. That is our plan.
1539. **Mrs Graham:** One of the issues for the integrated sector is that we have a number of schools in which there is not a balance insofar as even the expected levels. So, if there is an advantage there for schools that are close to each other, for example, and which are integrated but have a different balance, and those schools could benefit from working together, we would look sympathetically at that type of submission.
1540. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you very much for your presentation. I share almost all

- of your goals in trying to get everything integral. When I look at the definition in the Bill that is coming up, I am concerned that it is going to force people to have to choose to be of a certain religious or political belief. Is there not a better route of including cross-community, because there are so many other little different forms of communities in an area? One of the questions I have been pushed to ask is this: should we not be including communities in their schools, particularly mixed communities, because everything is not just Catholic, Protestant, rich, poor and everything else? Is there not room there for a little bit more flexibility by making it mixed community rather than trying to divide us into different groups?
1541. **Dr Kingon:** Obviously, it is possible to put certain things into legislation. We collate the religious background of children through the school census, just as the socio-economic background is done. It is quite easy to read at school level. It does not involve an individual child self-identifying for the purpose of a programme. It is information that is readily available and, therefore, it is easy to make a rough-and-ready assessment of the school: what religious background the children come from and the social mix in the school. From that perspective, the legislation allows us to do that. Shared education simply must bring together children from different religious or community backgrounds. The definition does that. It also says that it is about achieving a good social mix. We know that systems in which there is a good social mix tend to be higher achieving. This is about tackling the long tail of underachievement that has pervaded our system. So this is a common-sense approach. It does what it is possible to do in terms of a legal definition.
1542. **Mr A Bell:** I think that, if you look at the policy, as Suzanne said earlier, you see that it refers to all the section 75 groups, so it includes all those. That builds and adds to the legislative definition.
1543. **Mr Kinahan:** It is my aim and we are also pushing for community use of schools. So, if you add in football, rugby, cricket, Gaelic or whatever, there are a whole lot of different groupings in there.
1544. **Mrs Graham:** I think that, in trying to keep the definition simple, as Suzanne said, it is also taking account of the fact that every school is required to interact with its community. That is a key element of Every School a Good School; it is one of its four tenets. Therefore, that expectation is there. Within this particular programme, our expectation is also that schools will demonstrate links, not just with external stakeholders, but around how they are going to improve interactions with community. Interactions with community form a key part of the framework that ETI has developed. So, for us, one of the benefits will be that schools will look much more systematically at how they are interacting on that community level. So, it is not that it has been ignored in any way. As Suzanne said, it is about keeping the definition as practical as possible and in a common-sense way while being very aware that there are other requirements that will support exactly what you are talking about.
1545. **Mr Kinahan:** Good. On a slightly different note, we have this conflict at the moment between schools that are integrated and those that have a super mix and are in different groupings. Do you see that, in the long term, leading to a change in how we define integrated schools? Will it make things more flexible? Part of our difficulties at the moment is that we are stuck to our definition of what integrated is, and that means that everything else is seen as not being integrated. Do you see it leading to change, so that schools that might be controlled but are really well mixed are allowed to be relabelled without it causing —
1546. **Mrs Graham:** There is the issue that it is almost like discussing a label, as opposed to us discussing what the important elements of any school are. The Department's duty is to encourage and facilitate integrated education not to

- encourage and facilitate the integrated schools or a sector as it exists at the minute. We have a definition of what constitutes an integrated school from the Treacy judgement, but, if we can move to a world where there is a broader understanding of what integrated education means, that would obviously be something to be welcomed. As Suzanne said, there is a debate about what shared education means, and the same debate exists around what integrated education means. What we are attempting to do with the definition in the legislation is to give something straightforward on which we can build over time and begin to get a clearer consensus around what that definition is.
1547. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Just on that point, do you see shared education as reconciliation or as achieving educational outcomes?
1548. **Mrs Graham:** Both. This is something that we are debating and discussing at the moment as well. I see reconciliation outcomes as an element of educational outcomes, because all those things are intertwined. I think that everything that we do in the education system will lead to an educational outcome. We do not have sufficient clarity in talking about what the curricular, reconciliation and examination outcomes are. Truthfully, the language around all of that is quite confusing at the minute. We struggle with it ourselves. Part of the learning process for all this will be to get a sharper understanding of the various elements and how they all fit together. That is the honest answer.
1549. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome. In terms of listening to other people's questions and what is coming out, is this about schools working together or children working together? There is a certain amount of confusion out there. Look at examples of really good practice and sharing, be it integrated, such as Shimna Integrated College in my constituency, a controlled school like Down High School or a maintained school like St Columbanus' in Bangor, where there are excellent cases of sharing going on. Those schools are being disadvantaged because they cannot apply for that funding. If our priority is bringing children together, surely there should be a lot more flexibility. It is nice to join up with a school of a different management type, but if the priority is our children working together, the Department should be creating more flexibility to encourage and facilitate shared education in the schools that are doing a really good job, be they integrated, maintained or controlled.
1550. **Dr Kington:** They can apply for the funding; all schools are eligible to apply for the funding. Quite rightly, as you say, there is really good practice in a lot of our schools, but we want to share that practice; we do not want to keep it pocketed in a few schools. Those schools are very well placed to participate in shared education programmes and bring the expertise that they have developed through dealing with children from different religious backgrounds. They are really well placed to bring that to a wider reconciliation programme in dealing with schools from different community backgrounds. That is what the programmes are about.
1551. **Mr Rogers:** Yes, but surely they are knocked out immediately because of one of the essential criteria: they have not joined with a school from a different sector.
1552. **Dr Kington:** It is about two or more schools coming together to share. They can partner up with another school and apply for the programme and share their good practice.
1553. **Mr Rogers:** I go back to my original point: it seems to be more about the politics of bringing schools together than celebrating children working together.
1554. **Mr A Bell:** The policy is very much learner-centred. Indeed, the continuum model makes it absolutely clear that it is learner-centred and for the benefit of the pupils, children and young people. From that point of view, you need to ensure that the education workforce has the capacity and skills to address those

- issues as well. It is very much focused around the whole broad spectrum of being beneficial to schools and to the pupils. Ultimately, if it is beneficial to the schools, the pupils will benefit as a result. It is very much learner-centred.
1555. **Mr Rogers:** I am delighted, John, to hear about the self-evaluation framework for sharing. There is a lot of confusion out there about what sharing actually is. Unless we have that framework, how can you even set a baseline? Will you tell me a wee bit more about that?
1556. **Mr John Hunter (Education and Training Inspectorate):** We recognise very clearly that schools are at different starting points in this and that some do not wish to be at the starting point. Therefore, the concept of the continuum is to cater for the projects or partnerships that can get under way and those that need further time and training. The idea behind the continuum was to allow partnerships to have a set of indicators or criteria as a baseline to measure themselves against. Our view was that the partnerships set their baseline, and that our job, particularly in year 1, is to be very supportive by quality-assuring in working partnership with them. It is to throw out the old concept that we are policing a system; we are working alongside. We are in going to be in a learning mode as well.
1557. The continuum deliberately did not call its pillar level 1, level 2 and level 3. We were very deliberate about giving the notion of defining, expanding and embedding. Schools in partnership will find that they may not be in just one section but a variety of sections. Therefore, they can draw on what targets they wish to set for the partnership. We were very clear and honest that schools out there are not entirely sure about the concept. There are those who have experience of having gone through the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) projects, and they will probably be the mentors and leaders in the first outworking of the programme. We felt that the continuum was the beginning of allowing them to give themselves a self-evaluation and almost a mirror of their current practice that could be used individually within the school, but, more particularly, as part of partnership working. It was designed for that reason.
1558. We consulted quite widely, and it was built on the concepts in Every School a Good School. Schools are also very used to Together Towards Improvement and the methodology and approach within that. So far, it has been well received by the schools that have shown an interest in shared education.
1559. **Mr Rogers:** Chair, I have one last one. If this is about all our children, why has it not been extended to special schools?
1560. **Mr A Bell:** It has. Special schools are also involved in it. Indeed, our experience with the IFI-funded projects was that special schools were involved in those. Where they were involved, it brought a completely new dimension to the partnership, and more learning was derived from it. Special schools are involved.
1561. **Mr Rogers:** If a special school was to look for funding, it would have to join up with a school from a different background and a different management authority.
1562. **Mr A Bell:** They would join —
1563. **Dr Kingon:** It would not need to be a different management authority; it just could not be another special school. It could be the same sector — a controlled special school and a controlled school. There would be no issue with that. It is always done on a case-by-case basis, but special schools are very much included in the programme.
1564. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you.
1565. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr Newton.
1566. **Mr Newton:** I am content, Chair.
1567. **Mr McCausland:** I want to ask a quick question before my main point. You mentioned that, under Every School a Good School, there are four areas and that there is something about interaction with the community. Is there some documentation that you could direct me

- to, to give some more indication of what that is expected to mean in practice?
1568. **Mrs Graham:** The policy itself will give you the four elements that are required from schools. As Andrew said, those would be a need for it to be learner-centred; the quality of learning and teaching; the quality of leadership; and the school and its community. You will find all the various indicators that demonstrate that within the Every School a Good School policy.
1569. **Mr McCausland:** OK. Thanks.
1570. I was interested in Suzanne's point that a school could have a multiplicity of identities. That is true of us all, as well as schools. As the Chair said earlier, you touched on the issue of political and religious identity. However, running through all the documentation is the word "cultural", and we all have a cultural identity as well as a political and religious identity. If you bring schools and children together to share, however that is done — I am sure that those are some of the areas that they would want to look at in the course of that sharing — is there anything to ensure that there is something done on the issue of equality? That was a point that was raised by Professor Hughes when she was before the Committee. Is anything done to allow them to come together with a similar understanding and appreciation of the home and community from which they come?
1571. Some schools have a very strong focus on cultural traditions. Obviously, if a school is an Irish-medium school, it will have a focus on the Irish culture, and that is largely the same in schools that are overseen by the CCMS. However, that may not be as clear in controlled schools. How is that issue dealt with?
1572. **Mr A Bell:** Having a culturally diverse learning experience is already part of the curriculum. That is a requirement of the curriculum and what it is built on. That is a key element in both primary and post-primary education and, in Key Stage 3 and above, cultural understanding features in every subject area under developing young people as contributors to society. It is an area in which, as you have rightly said, some schools are more advanced than others in addressing those issues.
1573. There is an opportunity for improvement in that area, and shared education brings that opportunity to explore identities and cultural backgrounds. Indeed, when Professor Hughes and her colleagues were here, they spoke about cultural differences and said that shared classes broaden and deepen pupils' experiences. That was certainly the experience that we had with the IFI shared education programmes, which allowed for that.
1574. We have touched on the CRED policy, and one of the issues with that is developing self-respect and respect for others. Part of that policy and the work that has helped schools to move forward in that area is about allowing pupils to fully explore and understand their own cultural background, either before they engage or as well as engaging with others. It is a core element, but shared education will help in that process.
1575. **Mr McCausland:** Educationally, it is good that children are aware of the culture of the home and community from which they come. It is also a human rights issue, as we know. However, the issue is how it is actually implemented. From my understanding, it is not properly monitored across sectors and nobody has done any work on it. I have asked all the different groups — it is the same question that I ask all the time. It is an area in which there has been a lack of investigation, research and the establishment of good practice so that some sectors can learn from others. I make the point to you — I am sure that we will come back to it in the future — that there is a vast difference between the nature of cultural traditions work in controlled, maintained and Irish-medium schools, even though a controlled school may be in a community that is essentially monocultural, serving a particular community which, by nature, will quite often be that way. I was in a maintained school when they were

announcing the school play, and it was about the life of the Irish rebel Robert Emmet. I do not think that I will ever go into a controlled school and find that they are doing a play about the siege of Derry.

1576. **Dr Kingon:** You also have to be aware of the differences in the legislation that constitute the schools. Controlled schools are constituted under legislation that means that they must provide non-denominational religious instruction. That is obviously different and feeds through to cultural identity. Building on what Andrew said —

1577. **Mr McCausland:** Sorry, what did you mean by cultural identity in controlled schools?

1578. **Dr Kingon:** There is a difference in the legislation, and, you know —

1579. **Mr McCausland:** The legislation does not specify that a Catholic maintained school has to do only Irish culture or give an Irish perspective on life.

1580. **Dr Kingon:** I appreciate that.

1581. **Mr McCausland:** Likewise, I would suggest that is nothing about what is being indicated about controlled schools —

1582. **Dr Kingon:** I think the —

1583. **Mr McCausland:** Controlled schools should surely reflect the culture. Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, schools must reflect the culture of the homes and community from which the children come. If it is a school in the Catholic maintained sector, it will, for example, probably have an Irish traditional music group. What is the equivalent of a traditional music group in a controlled school in a largely Protestant or unionist area?

1584. **Mrs Graham:** The important thing, as you have pointed out, is our lack of monitoring, specifically —

1585. **Mr McCausland:** Would you concede research as well?

1586. **Mrs Graham:** I am sure that there probably has also been a lack of that.

However, I think that we have to be careful about constituting particular sectors as lacking in some way in cultural identity. You have talked about plays and for me, as an English specialist, my first choice would be the quality of the literature. I would then look at what other cultural elements they might explore.

1587. **Mr McCausland:** I do not know whether the play about Robert Emmet the Irish rebel was good literature. I do not even know who wrote it.

1588. **Mrs Graham:** It may not be. In all honesty, I am not familiar with that, nor am I familiar with plays about the siege of Derry. It is about the educational benefits that would accrue from that and whether there are opportunities to explore cultural identity, first in your school and ultimately in a programme like this one. If the vehicle was literature or drama, it would be about looking at what benefits could accrue for both schools from that. Importantly, in trying to address your concerns — because I think they are genuine, and it is an indication of where we are at in our curriculum development — the continuum that John talked about and the framework for development there challenge schools to have the important conversations that you are talking about. It is hugely important that we begin to have those conversations.

1589. In allowing two or more schools to come together, there is that then questioning of their work in all those areas and what their school is about, in order to begin to develop the partnership. In the work that I did with John prior to that, we discovered that even we in the inspectorate evaluating programmes did not have the language to explain and articulate our thinking in a way that allowed us to communicate that effectively with other people. That has been part of the learning process. Your question is well asked and is one that we hope to answer.

1590. **Mr McCausland:** The monitoring and research that has not been taking place — how does that get started?

1591. **Mr Hunter:** In the CRED survey, on the direct connection and observation of practice in schools, schools set out to meet the needs of their school population. One school may have a prayer room so that Muslims can have the time and space to explore, develop and meet their own religious needs, while in others there could be a common room where each denomination is allowed to practise distinctly or learn from one another. All that is building an understanding of difference and diversity, which is contributing to those who are developing and understanding fully their own identity vis-à-vis the identity of others. Add into that a school's focus entirely on special educational needs and you will find that that becomes a strong focus within the cultural aspect of the school.
1592. When we are looking at the continuum, it is helpful to think that in one of the areas that schools find more difficult to face the challenging issues that are the elephants in the room in this situation, the best practice has actually brought within the PDMU programmes the more controversial issues. The pupils can use that platform to understand where their opinion sits vis-à-vis their cultural thinking and experiences. When you get to the embedding stage, it should be seen as the way we do things about here — that it is open, natural and transparent, that you think about others and reflect that in your own thinking, therefore it should give dispositions that engage better the learner and lead to better outcomes.
1593. **Mr McCausland:** The issue that I have raised is an issue in itself, but it is given an added importance and significance once you move into the area of shared education. Whilst school A is doing what it does and school B is doing what it does, and they are miles apart, once you bring them together there is an additional focus on this. This issue about the cultural identity of controlled schools, based on the United Kingdom Government's commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, is fundamental. I have asked the Inspectorate about it and the academics who have come in from various universities. I will keep on about it, because it has been the elephant in the room and nobody has talked about it.
1594. **Mr A Bell:** It is a key element of the CRED policy, which is founded on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have always said that the CRED policy was there to support and underpin what was already in the curriculum and to help schools to deliver the curriculum. Through the implementation of the CRED policy, I understand that one finding the inspectorate report is likely to reflect is that the learning of young people is experiential. When you bring young people together on a cross-community basis, it offers more opportunities to explore those issues. If young people do not feel that they know sufficient about their own background, that generates the interest, and they go and seek that. The CRED policy is a starter around that and has moved the work forward and enabled schools to better address that issue. As Faustina has said, there is more work that can be done in this area.
1595. **Mr Hunter:** Much of the literature suggests that success through shared education is clearly linked to a balanced partnership in which the partners have common goals and common outcomes identified. In that sense, they really need to be focusing on the issues that provide division and difference, so that the understanding and the respect does grow with that. The other aspect of it is that shared education should highlight identity but not threaten it. I think that, in the best practice that we have looked at, pupils, young children and young people are very happy and content to engage in conversation with that. In fact, in our discussions with young people, they are becoming more articulate about their understanding and how they can express their identity and also explain the commonality of it with other youngsters.
1596. I think that culture is a mindset and an ethos, but there will be those schools that have to move from the link being an

event or a subject across the school's event to it becoming a way of thinking and planning, not just at leadership level but across departments. That takes time to embed, and I think that partnerships will need that time. Very few schools, if any, are at the embedding stage, and quite a number are at the first two stages, that of asking what shared education is and that it has to be something that has benefit to all of the participating schools. It is when we get to the expanding stage that we will begin to see that there is a culture or ethos of thinking, shared-education-wise. It is then that we will see the recognition. The programme that we are looking to evaluate is a four-year programme, so evaluation will take four years. We expect that, after consultation, support and interim reporting, we will be able only in the final report to say what have been the positive outcomes of the experience of the shared education for all of the partnerships.

1597. **Mrs Overend:** The discussion has been very interesting this morning. There are a few area learning partnerships in existence already, and they are very successful. I presume that you have been engaging with them. What have you learned from them? Sometimes partnerships have been very successful, but with other education policies such as the entitlement framework, which really forces schools to step back and to deliver the whole range of subjects themselves. That means that they step back from the area partnership and it is not as successful as it was. There is that variation of policy and going in opposing directions. How do you see that being solved?

1598. **Mrs Graham:** I think that all of it is a learning process. Back at the beginning of area learning communities, that was something that of itself did not grow organically. Schools were really grouped together into area learning communities, and we found that, over a period of time, some of those have really taken off, as you have indicated, and have become stronger and stronger. Others still struggle. From our perspective,

we can look at the successes of area learning communities and allow some of this work to take place in those communities. Everything is staged in some ways. As John has indicated, there is a progressive journey there to be accrued. In the first instance, the entitlement framework was looking broadly at expanding choices in the curriculum and schools partnering for that reason. We have seen some very good work that has accrued over time. Where those partnerships are helping and where additional breadth has been offered to the curriculum, those area learning communities are in a really strong place to ensure that they can now integrate all the more challenging aspects of shared education into the work that they do. They have much more mature relationships built up now. The original focus was on curriculum, but it is now on integrating and on benefiting from all the other elements that they may or may not have addressed, because there are area learning communities that have looked very much at shared education. It is about taking those steps.

1599. **Mrs Overend:** Can you explain that a bit more? What are the steps?

1600. **Mrs Graham:** Looking at the broader elements of the curriculum. For example, if I were working in a school at the moment as an English specialist and teaching a GCSE or A-level class, I would select particular texts to teach. I can choose texts that do not appear to have any controversial issues in them or, as we talked about earlier, something that is related to any kind of cultural identity related to this society. In choosing the text initially, I decide what I want to focus on. I can develop empathy for all the young people, which is part and parcel of our requirements here on equality, diversity and community relations. I can do that with a group of young people yet never deal with anything that might challenge their thinking on how they view others, how they view difference, how they show tolerance and how they are resilient in the work that they do. Equally, I can teach a certain text

- and ensure that, alongside its literary elements, I am tackling explicitly, as opposed to implicitly, all the elements that we are talking about that challenge their thinking, that challenge them to look at the other young people in the class with them and that make them think about how all the elements of their experience work to fulfil the examination requirements, obviously, as well as the broader aims of the school in which I am teaching.
1601. **Mr A Bell:** If I have understood your question correctly, you are asking whether schools will step back from doing that at a later stage.
1602. **Mrs Overend:** No, what I am trying to say is that some area learning partnerships have been successful in working together to deliver subjects, but the entitlement framework has perhaps meant that some schools say, “We need to deliver all the subjects ourselves and not work with the other schools”. As such, the children will lose out on that sharing experience because of a policy that every school needs to deliver the entitlement framework. How can you overcome that to encourage sharing to continue?
1603. **Mr A Bell:** The simple answer to the question is this: through the experience of the schools involved, because, when they start sharing, schools start to realise the benefits of doing so. For example, a couple of small rural schools may come together. A teacher may be teaching a year group and is the only teacher in the school doing that. Suddenly the school has a partner school and somebody else whom the teacher can bounce ideas off and share materials with. The two schools can do joint development events. We found that the schools funded through the IFI programme — do not forget that that funding has finished — start to realise the benefits that can come from the partnership, and that is what drives them forward to move to a more embedded stage. Once the schools start to realise that, they tend not to step back from it. They want to explore the benefits further.
1604. **Mrs Overend:** I appreciate what you are saying, but a new principal may come in with a totally different idea, and the whole thing may fall apart. In the event of that happening, can you step in and provide guidance? Can anything be done to save the partnership?
1605. **Mr A Bell:** One of the key things with shared education and the CRED policy is that a whole-school approach needs to be taken, because, if the school suddenly changes principal, there are sufficient others in the school who know the benefits and who can explain them to the new principal. It is they who become the driving force. Particularly around the CRED policy, one of the findings of the ETI report was that it was left up to one teacher, or one person, in a school who really wanted to drive community relations schemes, and what happened if that person suddenly stops working there? When a whole-school approach is taken, that culture spreads throughout the school, and, as John said, it becomes “what we do around here”. That avoids the sort of issue that you raised.
1606. **Mr Hunter:** I will give you an example from viewpoint of special schools. When special schools were invited to join area-learning communities at the beginning, for the first year and a half, they were coming to people like me and saying, “We’ve absolutely no idea why we’re in this partnership. What use is it to us? What are we getting from it?” A year down the line, however, they had found their niche, and the other schools involved had recognised that there was something to be learned from the special schools being in the sector. At this stage, a sizeable number, if not more than 50%, of the learning communities have established subgroups for special educational needs support across the learning communities. The subgroups are being driven by the special schools. In some ways, area learning communities, and shared education in those communities, will be successful, but there are people who are willing to drive and sustain that, and all feel that they will get something

- out of it. In that sense, the better area learning communities are those that have been very active around how they can help their pupils and learners, irrespective of their school, and that accept their shared responsibility for pupils across the area-learning community. That is where we wish to end up. We want to move schools from the position of thinking of just their pupils to thinking of all pupils. That will contribute to improvement.
1607. **Dr Kingon:** A very positive thing that we have seen in the applications for the Delivering Social Change project is a significant number of schools that originally came together as partners in an area learning community wanting to build on that work and come into the shared education programme. There were a notable number of schools and partnerships like that. That is very positive and encouraging.
1608. **Mrs Overend:** I have one final question. Everything that you talk about is carrot. Is there any stick in your thinking, or is it all carrot?
1609. **Mrs Graham:** Ultimately, the evidence that we have accrued to date in the evaluation process around all the work previously done has indicated quite clearly that it would be very difficult to deliver the Northern Ireland curriculum meaningfully without engaging in some form of shared education. That is partially hypothesis at the moment and partially evidence-based. We do not have all the evidence to be very firm in saying that, but, really and truly, that is where we will find ourselves, because the more that we look at and explore shared education, the more that it seems to be indicative of what will constitute a good school. If you were to deliver the curriculum in its entirety and, subsequently, look at inspection outcomes after a four-year period, it would be very difficult to justify how you were doing that without engaging in partnership with other schools. That is the answer at this stage. I would like to think that we will get more information on that as we move through the programme.
1610. **Mr Hunter:** It is important to say that, alongside the shared education projects, we took a decision that, in all inspections from last September, we would report on shared education where we found evidence that it was good practice. The carrot is at work. Our view is that, because it is an option, the schools willing to move in that direction will find it recognised and celebrated through their own internal evaluation or the inspection process.
1611. **Mr Craig:** Apologies for being late. I picked up on what you said about the learning experience in the whole shared scenario, especially around the area-learning communities. Mrs Overend raises a good point. I speak from experience: the school of which I am chair of the board of governors linked up with the local maintained school on the A-level curriculum. It has been a good experience for both schools, because resources have been shared. I have listened to the debate since I came in, and we have been talking about the shared experience. The shared experience is almost a by-product of what drove all of this, which was shared resources. Are we going to lose sight of that aspect? Ultimately, for the Minister to get around any sorts of financial difficulties that are coming down the road, for not only the Department of Education but every other Department, that aspect needs to be central to what is driving this forward. In some respects, lack of finances will bring some form of integration into the whole sector. Is that still the main driving force and goal in all of this or are we now starting to change the emphasis?
1612. **Mr A Bell:** You say the “main” driving force. The case for shared education is based on three main areas. The first is the educational case, while the second is the social case. The third, which is equally applicable, is the economic case. There are benefits to be accrued from schools sharing resources in the way in which you say. Part of the policy is around the shared campuses programme, in which there are opportunities. I know that you had

- witnesses here from the Department last week talking about that. At the school level, yes, schools do find that there are opportunities for them to save resources. If they do joint development days, that halves the cost of bringing in a facilitator. They can share materials and resources. That is still a key element of shared education moving forward. The focus has not shifted from that, but it is not primarily on the economic case and the need to save money. Shared education is driven not by that alone but by the educational case, the social case and the economic case together.
1613. **Mr Hunter:** It might be helpful to add that our view as a result of the inspection process is that the last year of the evaluation has to focus not on the progress that has been made but on the capacity of partners to develop and sustain the provision. It is particularly about having to think of that as having been built into your system rather than thinking that there will be ongoing resource, which there may not be. We think therefore that our last year has to focus very strongly on how partners will sustain the provision beyond the current funding.
1614. **Mr Lunn:** My question concerns the Moy experience. We were there last week and visited the two schools. They are two good schools, with very committed boards of governors, principals and teachers. We formed a good impression of both. We now have this proposal, which is one of your projects, to bring them together on one site under one roof but with different identities, classes and uniforms — you know the argument. What soundings do you take before making a decision to support such a scheme, which is, so far, unique? What is the extent of parental involvement and choice in your making such a decision?
1615. **Mr A Bell:** That is the remit of the team here last week. What I can tell you, because we have been doing work on the CRED policy, and so on, is that those schools have worked quite closely over a number of years. They have built up quite an experience of working together, as I am sure you found when you visited them. One of the things that we have said, particularly on that whole area, is that communities ultimately need to be comfortable with what is proposed. Therefore, schools need to engage with the communities. I know that they held a number of sessions in those schools, where they brought in communities, local politicians, councillors, and so on. They did a lot of work with the communities. The expectation is that, by the time they come forward with a proposal, whether it be for a campus or shared education, schools will be engaging with their school communities — the teachers, the pupils, the parents and the wider communities that they serve.
1616. **Dr Kingon:** In the protocol document for the campus programme, one thing that schools have to demonstrate is that they have the support of the individual managing authority. They have to provide clear evidence, as Andrew says, that they have engaged with the community and have its support for their proposal.
1617. **Mr Lunn:** That was my point. The school did a community survey. There were 85 responses in favour of the solution that is on the table, 70 in favour of an integrated model and five that did not want anything to do with either.
1618. The Department has the same obligation to promote shared and integrated education, more or less, although you can forget about the word “promote”. Why would the Department therefore run with such an unusual solution as bringing schools together under one roof while maintaining different identities? I am well aware that the CCMS opposed this thing at the start but has now come around to accepting what is on the table. However, it would have opposed, implacably, any further move towards integration. Where does the Department’s obligation in all of this begin and end? It seems to me that this was an ideal opportunity for a groundbreaking solution — the sort of solution that we need to see in Northern Ireland. It was an opportunity to have a maintained school and a controlled school come together. Use the word

- “integrated” or otherwise, but the opportunity for an amalgamation of two schools from different sectors was there for the taking, yet we have gone down this route.
1619. **Dr Kingon:** The Department does not superimpose solutions on to communities. That was the proposal that came forward from the community and the managing authorities. The Department’s role is to look at proposals as they come forward from communities. It is not the Department’s role to superimpose a preferred solution on to individual communities. That is the proposal that the community came up with together.
1620. Another point that I want to make is this: nothing in education is permanent for any amount of time. It may be that the schools develop and evolve as they go forward in their new building. There is plenty of scope for that to happen.
1621. **Mr Lunn:** I get the impression from both schools that that is their ultimate wish. Therefore, encourage and facilitate the same obligation on either solution from the Department. Surely the Department must have an opinion on what is the best way forward.
1622. **Mr A Bell:** We know from experience that, if you try to drive ahead of what communities are prepared to do, you will run into difficulties. Therefore, from the Department’s point of view, what a community is comfortable with is where the starting point is. We do not want to discourage communities from moving forward. Those schools have done a lot of sharing in the past, so the opportunities for sharing that their model will give increases the number of those opportunities. Thus, the work in that area moves forward. As Suzanne said, over time, it will continue to move forward. I think that we need to move at the pace at which communities are comfortable to move. In this case, the community said that this was its preferred option and what it was comfortable with.
1623. **Mr Hazzard:** I was delighted to hear that a Northern Catholic school is doing a play about a Southern affluent Protestant. It shows that even our single-identity schools can branch out and be diverse, even within themselves.
1624. There is a cross-border dynamic to all of this. There is a lot of shared education going on in Fermanagh, for example, particularly around cross-border areas. We had a teacher exchange, where teachers from Church of Ireland schools in the South came North and taught various things. Where do the cross-border dynamics come into play?
1625. **Dr Kingon:** Peace IV is very much a cross-border programme. There is going to be shared education programme funding for the Irish Government and the Executive. We see that very much being taken forward on a cross-border basis.
1626. **Mr A Bell:** It is complementary to the work of the Delivering Social Change signature project. That project is being developed for those schools that are already doing a lot of sharing, and sharing in a meaningful way. It is being developed to embed further that sharing, because we know that, by further embedding it, more of the benefits are realised. We are working with the Special EU Programmes Body on the Peace funding. You are probably aware that an element of that funding is specifically for shared education. The aim of doing that is to have a programme that will tackle schools that are not doing sharing at the moment, or that are doing very superficial sharing. From the experience of the IFI projects, we know that schools at that level need a different level of support and a different type of support. They need to do more work with their communities, and they need to address such things as timetabling issues. All of that can be overcome, and there is experience of how to address it.
1627. Additionally, the Peace funding will involve the schools in the South. We are working with the relevant Department in the South on how that can be implemented. Shared education is not

a concept that the South has, per se, but the projects that you mentioned were IFI-funded projects, and the schools in Fermanagh were working on a cross-border basis. We will bring that experience through the Peace funding. In totality, the Peace funding and the Delivering Social Change signature project allow us to deliver all the policy areas in the programme.

1628. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Thank you. You will be glad to know that no one else has indicated to ask a question. Thank you for your time. We will see you again when you come back to brief us on the Bill.

4 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Ms Dympna McGlade	<i>Community</i>
Mr Peter Osborne	<i>Relations Council</i>
Mr Darren McKinstry	<i>Equality</i>
Dr Michael Wardlow	<i>Commission for Northern Ireland</i>

1629. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome all our witnesses this morning. I invite you to introduce yourselves. I understand that both organisations will give a short statement, after which we will follow up with questions.

1630. **Dr Michael Wardlow (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland):** Thank you. I am the chief commissioner of the Equality Commission, and it is great to be here to add some discourse to what you have already had. I take it for granted that you have had the opportunity to read through both submissions. Peter will speak for five or six minutes on the strategic background to the Community Relations Council's (CRC) submission. I will do exactly the same for the Equality Commission submission, which means that it will probably take around 10 minutes. We then thought that the most opportune thing to do would be to enter into some discussion. It is a great honour to be here to talk about this issue.

1631. **Mr Darren McKinstry (Equality Commission for Northern Ireland):** I

am the director of policy at the Equality Commission.

1632. **Mr Peter Osborne (Community Relations Council):** I am chair of the Community Relations Council.

1633. **Ms Dympna McGlade (Community Relations Council):** I am the director of policy at the Community Relations Council.

1634. **Mr Osborne:** I want to mirror Michael's thanks for the opportunity to be here today. This is an important inquiry and, from what I have read so far, a very thorough one, and it is vital to consider the issues. I will make a couple of brief comments from a broader perspective. I will look at the inquiry into shared and integrated education in the context of peace building and of the reconciliation work that has been done over many years in Northern Ireland and that remains to be done in the years and decades ahead. I also want to put on record how positive many of the achievements in this society have been over the last 10 or 20 years or so, including achievements by all the political parties that have contributed to the process and by members of civil society. I sometimes think that we do not recognise how far we have come, or the contribution that everyone has made, including politicians from all political parties and backgrounds. This is a long-term process, mind you. The building of peace and reconciliation may take another 20, 30, 40 or 50 years. In such a "pacted" process, as many would call it, there are considerable challenges and risks. There are risks if we do not keep moving forward; we need to keep moving forward, no matter how incrementally. There are risks that past battles will be fought today in different terms but over some of the same issues. There are risks that some things that were considered very necessary in a past decade are considered less necessary now.

1635. When it comes to education and children and young people, we need to keep moving forward for this generation of young people, because they will be the leaders of the future. It is important that we do not let them be shaped by what has shaped us and the factors that shape us in society today. Our focus is on outcomes for children. Our focus is on educational outcomes, and it is about the needs of young people and the needs of this society and not particular systems, structures or forms. We want an optimum model for children and young people to learn and develop together. Remodelling will take courage, as it will take support to sustain the change that is needed. If we want to achieve the aims of the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy, we need to tackle seriously the needs involved in facilitating more and more of our young children to learn and develop together. Let me quote from T:BUC. It states that we want:

“to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.”

1636. T:BUC also talks about the need to take down interface barriers, for more shared housing and for things like cross-community urban villages. If we are to be successful in any of those endeavours or in any of the targets and aims that T:BUC sets out, we need a united community in which children and young people learn and develop together now and increasingly in the future. That brings big challenges to relationships: relationships between those children and young people, between parents of those children and young people and between teachers. That is a challenge for everybody, because, in all those contexts, separation is not a sustainable option. An important challenge is to understand the economic benefits of children and young people learning and developing together, of ending or breaking down a system of virtual benign educational apartheid into something that allows sharing to take place much more vigorously. It has been estimated that, if some village schools

came together, it would save £100,000. That is a saving to the education system of £100,000, which can be invested in different ways: £100,000 for critical services and, indeed, £100,000 that can be added to reducing the costs of division more generally. We need to understand what that means and really grasp the opportunities involved.

1637. The challenge is also about building a cohesive community. If we are to do that, we need an education system that tackles underachievement and involves communities more vibrantly and representatively in the management of schools. Look down the road to Dundonald High School, and you will recently have seen local communities getting more involved in its management, which did huge credit to the school and was extremely positive.

1638. We also need to face the challenge of not avoiding the hard questions and issues about what sharing is, what criteria will be applied in sharing and integration, what milestones there are in the continuum of change and the courage that is needed to make sure that that change happens.

1639. I also want to reinforce two or three things. This is about children and young people. It is not about structures, systems or forms; it is about the needs of those children and young people and the needs of this society. It is about the best education possible. It is about not letting down those from the most disadvantaged communities who are being failed by the education system, and it is about supporting the peace building and reconciliation needs in this society to try to help to create and build a more united community in the future.

1640. **Dr Wardlow:** Thanks, Peter. Before I make a couple of specific points, I will pick up on that. We are on a journey that has been about how we make our educational system more porous. However, I think that, if we stick to systems, we miss the point. This is focused on young people; they are at the centre of this. It is about how we make a shared opportunity for those

- young people. On the one hand, we have had experiments for some years now, including integrated schools, shared education, Atlantic Philanthropies, the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and people funding opportunities. Having moved through a shared future, cohesion, sharing and integration (CSI) and now Together: Building a United Community, I think that, with a little moral imagination, we can make a significant difference. However, I do not want you to be under any doubt: we cannot put young people where adults are afraid to go. Education will not solve the underlying fault lines of the problem in this place that we call home. It will certainly go some way towards that, but, if we are really committed, this needs to be resourced. We need to address all sorts of other things in the educational system, so we should not be under any misapprehension that shared education will deal with all the underlying educational inequalities. I am with Peter on that. This is about function and not form; form should follow function.
1641. As a commission, we believe that societal mixing and cohesion are limited by, among other things, the fact that we do not have enough shared schools, whether they be integrated, shared or in partnership. However that works through, separation in education is one of the barriers to social cohesion and mixing in this society. We are recommending a move to a system of education that routinely allows young people to mix from as early as possible right through until they leave school. It should not be the norm that young people do not meet somebody who is different until they go to further or higher education or step into the workplace or an apprenticeship for the first time. Sadly, that remains a fact for a significant number of young people.
1642. It is not that it is anybody's fault, and shared schools will not, as I said, be the only thing to try to bring about a more cohesive and shared society, but it will have a substantial role. Day to day, over 300,000 young people interface, sometimes with others. This sharing has to be deep and meaningful; it cannot simply be moving together in the same classroom. I shop in Marks and Spencer with people of other traditions, but that does not make me love them more. I have had contact with them, but, unless contact is sustained, meaningful and resourced — unless teachers are comfortable working with it, and it is supported back in the communities of origin of those young people — it will simply remain, in some cases, only that — like meeting somebody on holiday. Those things are important in and of themselves, but, if not handled properly, they can reinforce difference.
1643. We also believe that there needs to be clarity in definitions. Obviously, we have not put forward our response to the Bill, and we note that there is a proposed definition of “sharing”. Whatever the definition is, it needs to be clear and concise and to show what sharing is as opposed to integrated education. In our view, it should complement and not replace the duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education.
1644. We believe that sharing in education can do a number of things. It can create an equality of opportunity that does not exist, does not depend on a postcode or where you live, is not urban versus rural, and whether young people have an opportunity to have that engagement with the other. We know that that is also gender specific. One school in six is single sex here, and we know that boys tend to perform better in coed schools whereas young women tend to perform better in single-sex schools.
1645. A whole range of things are going on when we talk about sharing. It also has a hugely important role to play in good relations. Peter touched on that, and, hopefully, we will be able to tease that out a little. It is not for us on the commission to go over all the research that states that, when young people learn to work together and respect difference, it does not mean that difference disappears but that it is put in a context of tolerance and understanding. When that happens, people's friendship patterns develop.

- They are more likely to have a more positive attitude to the other so that people, instead of living parallel lives, live much more integrated lives. There are also sustainability and cost arguments. We would argue that cost should not drive this, but there are economic, social and educational benefits to sharing.
1646. We also know that there are lots of experiences to be had from other jurisdictions and places. I have often said that, if a problem exists, it has been solved somewhere else and that we are not looking hard enough for a solution. So we should not think that what we are doing here is reinventing the wheel. There is huge experience in the shared education programme, in integrated schools, in some of the community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) programmes and in other jurisdictions, so we should not be afraid to ask for help from outside, but we should also cross-fertilise from within the system.
1647. There is a huge need for us to engage with all stakeholders, not only parents, pupils and educational providers but bodies such as the Youth Service and those community relations and good relations workers who have often done this type of work. There is sometimes a fault line between the informal Youth Service and the formal education service. There is a lot of benefit to be had from the interface between those two.
1648. I started by saying that this on its own will not solve the inequalities of the educational system. Huge inequalities remain. Whether you accept our view on, for example, the retention of academic selection or the removal of the Fair Employment and Treatment Order's exemption for teachers and teacher training, there is a whole raft of things.
1649. Look at the underperformance of looked-after, disabled and black and minority ethnic (BME) children; boys versus girls; and underachievement not only in loyalist working-class communities but in some Catholic rural areas. Do not believe that this will solve everything, but it will be a start. As we said on the commission, this needs to be systemic, real and measured. More importantly, it is not about programmes.
1650. This needs to be measured by outcomes. No matter what we put in the system, people will just behave that way because the law is there. We need to address hearts, minds and attitudes. Success will be measured by outcomes. Do young people, as a result, learn how to live better together in citizenship?
1651. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. Peter, the CRC's submission calls for a statutory duty on schools to promote good relations. How would that work?
1652. **Mr Osborne:** There are two or three underlying issues. We are saying that the statutory duty is needed because there is a real need to focus people's effort, and a statutory duty is the best way to do that. If something is legislated for in that way, I suppose that it focuses minds on what is required in particular schools. It would also make people focus on the means of delivery across schools. It would look at what that content might be across the bodies and agencies that contribute positively to that type of delivery.
1653. **Ms McGlade:** Section 75(2) fits neatly with the promotion of good relations and sharing across schools. It is about finding ways to support schools to be able to do that and fit within this programme and the support programmes to help schools to deliver shared education. Some schools have been engaged for some time in sharing education, and others have not, some of them because of competing priorities in delivering the education system. Other schools, perhaps, have some resistance. We feel that this is not optional; we are in this peace process together.
1654. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Have you done a study on how good relations are being applied in schools? Is there evidence of bad practice?
1655. **Mr Osborne:** Sorry, Chair, I did not catch the first part of the question.

1656. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
You raised this as an issue, so have you done sufficient research to qualify this request? Are there examples of bad practice in schools? You mentioned that there is a certain reluctance because of competing pressures. What type of evidence do you have to support that?
1657. **Ms McGlade:** I suppose that the evidence is on the other end of the argument, which is that those who have engaged in good relations programmes have done so very successfully, the results have been very good, the contact has been good, and the impact on young people, their communities and schools has been very good. It is to try to ensure that those who are not responding automatically to it are engaged through some encouragement.
1658. **Mr Osborne:** From what I have seen in the schools that I have been to and the teachers to whom I have spoken, I would want to put a lot more emphasis on the positive work that goes on, because there is a huge amount of that across all schools from all sectors, and I would not want to suggest that the CRC is saying anything other than that. The organisation is about positively supporting that and encouraging more of it.
1659. I also picked up from some teachers and others involved in the education system that there is a wariness about doing that work and a real view that one has to be very careful about it. There is a concern about putting one's foot in it in different ways. There is a lot of capacity already, but I think that there is a need to focus the work to help teachers to develop that capacity further to be able to deliver the work. A while ago, someone said to me that they thought that, in some cases, children were much more ready to do that than teachers, because teachers did not have that background or teacher-to-teacher training together with people from different traditions or have that contact and know how to work it as effectively as possible. The statutory duty will bring a greater focus and will put a greater obligation on schools to do it, but it also needs to be in a certain context whereby — you are absolutely right — it is about supporting good practice and trying to push that further and deeper down into schools.
1660. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
You also referred to the level of funding that is being invested in shared and integrated education. You equated that to the limited number of young people who have benefited from it. Do you have a concern about value for money? Do you think that money could be spent differently to benefit a greater number of young people?
1661. **Mr Osborne:** Value for money in terms of —
1662. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
You focused on the money that is being spent on shared and integrated education in your paper and highlighted the limited number of young people who have benefited. Is there an issue with value for money? Do you think that it could be spent better?
1663. **Mr Osborne:** No. I think that the paper is suggesting — this is backed up by a lot of research — that children and young people benefit from learning and developing together. Research shows that, when that genuinely takes place with children from all backgrounds, they benefit, become much more rounded individuals and experience positive change in their ability to learn and not only to get a better academic qualification but to learn in much broader ways in personality, attitudes and so on. They then make that positive contribution back to society. The paper suggests that we want more children and young people to learn and develop together in that way. It is absolutely right that a relatively small proportion of children benefit from shared and integrated models as they currently exist, and the paper highlights that. The challenge for all of us is to get to that optimum model in which more children and young people learn and develop together. They will benefit from it, their education will benefit from it and our society will benefit from it.

1664. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Michael, your submission mentions article 64 and the obligation on integrated education. You say that shared education would benefit from being clearly defined and that the relationship with the shared model needs to be made much clearer, but you said that it should not replace article 64. Why not?

1665. **Dr Wardlow:** It is important to say that there are two areas of the education system where there is a duty to encourage and facilitate — those are Irish-medium education, through the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, and the 1989 Order, which encourages and facilitates integrated education. When you bring in this third non-sector, as such, this is a type of education that a school can arguably work through a system to get kite-marked, say, to be a shared school. It is important for us, first, that that definition is clear. What is a shared school? If you are, for example, two schools sharing a campus, is that enough to be a shared school? We say, first, that there should be clarity of definition.

1666. If you are, then, putting that into a Bill in which there is either a duty or a power — we have not responded yet as to whether there should or should not be — we are clear that there are parents who want a formally integrated school. There is a duty on the Department to encourage and facilitate that at the moment. Were a comparable duty to come in, we would see those as complementary and would not want to see shared education as some substitute or replacement for formally integrated schools. We are saying that there is room for both and, of course, for Irish-language schools, for which there is also a duty to encourage and facilitate.

1667. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Does the duty that relates to integrated and Irish-medium education not create a hierarchy of sectors?

1668. **Dr Wardlow:** The Equality Commission does not have a view on whether it creates a hierarchy. However, when we respond to the Bill, we will consider

whether there should be a duty or whether it should be a power. That will allow us to look at the other duties and powers that there are at the moment. Were I to say something now, it would be my personal view, and I do not want to do that, because as a commission we do not have a considered view. Our view at the moment is that if you are bringing in shared education and there becomes a duty or a power to do that, it should not be at the cost of the formally integrated sector which the Department of Education, at the moment, has a duty to encourage and facilitate.

1669. Do you want to add anything, Darren?

1670. **Mr McKinstry:** No. The commission's view was that that should not be at the cost of the formally integrated sector and that parental choice should be facilitated to access integrated education if it is so wished. If we wanted to move further into shared education, that could be an addition to that provision. The focus of sharing between sectors that has been discussed would allow the sharing between the integrated and other sectors as well.

1671. **Dr Wardlow:** The important thing is that the duty to encourage and facilitate is to bring together in roughly equal proportions Protestants and Catholics and out of that comes the formally integrated school. However, transformed schools, of course, have also carried out the same duty. This is not about a structure but a type of education. Shared education seems to be similarly saying that there is a product that we are going to call shared education, but we are saying that that needs to be clearly defined. However, it is not the same thing as integrated education, and, therefore, there needs to be a clear delineation between the two.

1672. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** With regard to barriers, you mentioned teacher training in order to advance shared education. Would you, perhaps, develop that?

1673. **Dr Wardlow:** What we are saying is that there is a number of areas — fault lines,

if you like — in education at the moment that we do not believe contribute to the best possible sharing that we can have. We are agnostic about what the teacher training looks like at the moment, but if you remember when Queen's University and Stranmillis University College were moving towards a merger, we said that it would be unfortunate if that became the case because there would be St Mary's University College on one hand and on the other — I am using shorthand here — a larger, so-called Protestant training college. We are saying that you should be looking at the opportunities to maximise sharing when teachers are being formally trained, and, alongside that, we have asked for the removal of the exemption of teachers from the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. Those two things together act, in that sense, as barriers, so we are saying that we should optimise the potential for teachers to be trained together.

1674. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It is outside the Committee's remit, but you will, obviously, be aware that there are ongoing discussions in relation to finance and the impact that that is going to have on the futures of St Mary's and Stranmillis, but there are opportunities, if we are serious about shared education, to look at sharing with other —

1675. **Dr Wardlow:** Absolutely. There are other things that are happening, where teachers are being trained together in continuing professional development (CPD). With the early professional development and the ongoing professional development, it is quite common in the education and library boards that teachers are trained together. It is not as if this is a new thing; very often you will have teachers from a so-called Protestant background doing teacher training in so-called Catholic schools. This does happen; it is not the norm. As I said earlier, this is happening in places. It is about asking how we make that happen. Is it incentivisation? The way in which the system is set up must follow the

function. We would like more sharing, and we would like there to be fewer fault lines. What would the system look like to be able to best facilitate that?

1676. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you very much for your presentation, Peter, it was great to hear. A lot of us forget the positive work that you say is going on all the time. The divisions are more often here than anywhere else. I have two or three questions. You talk about having clearly defined goals for where you are going, yet if you look at the definition in the shared education Bill, it calls for people to be defined as Catholic or Protestant or in a socio-economic group. Do we not need it more blurred so that we can get the mixed communities involved in it? If you have set definitions of what one is, people are going to have to fit into one or the other to be able to avail themselves of the funding that allows them to have the shared schooling.

1677. **Dr Wardlow:** We will be responding specifically to what the Bill is putting forward. I cannot say what the commission's view will be, but let me give you some of the background to it. As it sits in the education system already, schools are asked to respond in a pupil census under five headings, so this is already captured. The integrated sector is asked from day one to ask parents to designate a child Protestant, Catholic or other, and if it does not do that, you cannot prove that there is a minority tradition of 30%. In the same way, when we track fair participation in the workforce, we have been asking the workforce since the 1970s to capture its figures on those broad terms as well. This is part of what we do.

1678. In the future, would it be something that we would like not to have? It would be great, in an ideal world, that that is not there. However, if we are trying to say that there needs to be mixing, we need some evidence of how we know that that is happening. We know that, in one measure, up to 20% of people say that they are neither. Quite what that is saying about denominations we are not sure, but in addition to that, we have an issue about the use of the

- word “and” in the Bill. You have religious and political “and”, and then, basically, socio-economic status, how do you measure that? For example, since the new measure of social benefit has come in, free school meals (FSM) has jumped from 7% to 12%. There is something about how we measure disadvantage; is it by FSM or by the receipt of some type of welfare or is it geographic location?
1679. There are some indeterminates for us, but if we are saying that this system is meant to say that sharing is not just Protestant/Catholic, to use the old headlines, but about what we will call “class”, it is about how you would measure that and what that is saying about your endgame. Does that mean that grammar schools have to go with non-grammars, or a rural school with an urban school? When I looked at the Bill, I found it difficult to find out what it was actually saying.
1680. Your question, Danny, begs a question about what it is that we are trying to measure. If we are trying to measure x, then you need to have a way of data collecting x. This is not about numbers, however; it is about whether relationships are built that are sustainable and whether, at the end of it, the young people’s attitudes are in some way developed so that they are more at ease with difference.
1681. **Mr McKinstry:** As Michael said, the commission has not formed a view on the policy or the Bill, but within those documents, questions arise about whether we are looking to share between sectors or between the individual backgrounds of pupils. There is an issue there to be resolved. You talked about it being wider, and, obviously, the policy talks about the importance of sharing between mainstream schools and special schools and, obviously, that would fall outwith the definition. There are clearly some things to be worked through as to what the Bill is looking at and what the policy looks at.
1682. **Mr Osborne:** May I add a little bit to that? Like the Equality Commission, the Community Relations Council will be considering its formal response over the next number of weeks, so we do not have a formal stated position on that. It seems to me, though, that the Bill identifies two of the big issues that we need to tackle around education. That is a positive thing. The Community Relations Council produced its peace monitoring report earlier this year, which highlighted really significant educational underachievement linked to disadvantage, particularly among working-class Protestant boys but also among working-class Catholic boys. It is across the community divide in different areas. If we do not tackle that, we will be storing up issues related to community cohesion in this society for many years to come. It is a big issue, and the fact that it is there in the Bill is important.
1683. It is important also that, in the Bill, there is a recognition of the dual system of educating our young people here. The need to move to an optimum model where children and young people learn and develop together is critical. I think that the issue for you, as well for everybody else in civil society, is to ensure that what happens next is sufficiently robust to ensure sufficient movement on all of those issues. I think that, when it comes to disadvantage, that is quite clear, and part of that is linked to investment in those areas where that disadvantage is clear. It is linked to investment in schools in those areas. Across the water, a pupil premium is paid for schools that have kids who are entitled to free school meals. That is the sort of thing that we might need to consider here even more vigorously than we currently do. That is an investment on both sides of the community, and the CRC’s report earlier last year demonstrated that.
1684. On the issue of Protestant/Catholic and people from different community backgrounds, I think that it is important to acknowledge that, and the focus needs to be to have the courage to change the systems that we have to ensure that there is that optimum model of people learning and sharing and developing together. That is about the milestones and the targets. It is not

about buildings, structures, forms or which system we support; this is about what is best for children and young people and this society. That is what needs to drive us as the primary focus of anything that we do.

1685. **Dr Wardlow:** One point is important, and Peter picked it up. As I read the Bill, it reads almost as if this is about integrating and joining up systems. A lot of the measures seem to be about numbers and about projects. You need to search far to find out about attitudinal change in young people. If we are saying that shared education is a system as opposed to a product, I think that there is an important difference. Integrated education is both a set of schools and a type of education that I would argue could take place in other places if the same conditions were to apply. So, if shared education is saying that it is maximising mixing between socio-economic groups, Protestant, Catholic and other, but we are saying that that is limited simply to a Protestant and a Catholic school coming together, I think that we sell this short. I think that this is about optimising the opportunities that there are for this interaction to take place. Shared education, therefore, is a system and a way, but it is more than that; it is a way of doing it. It is the relationship building, and that, I think, is the brand rather than the type of system that supports it.
1686. **Mr Kinahan:** What I was really looking for was some form of flexibility. We talk all the way through about how we measure the outcomes. That is the hardest thing of the lot. How do you see us measuring the outcomes in the way that you spoke about at the beginning?
1687. **Dr Wardlow:** Very simply, there is a huge amount of experience out there from integrated schools, youth work, programmes funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) and self-inspecting schools to show how you develop attitudinal change. You can see it in race and in disability. It is possible to measure the attitudinal development of a young person or an older person

from point a to point b. You simply need to capture the start point and look at how it develops. Young people can write portfolios and take photographs. There are all sorts of creative ways. It has been done, so I do not think that we need to worry about reinventing the wheel. Schools are now much more self-examining. They know where their benchmarks are, and they know how to demonstrate success. But the most important people are the young people themselves; they can tell you and give you examples of how they have changed as a result of that engagement. I do not think that it is something to be frightened of, but I think that teachers need to learn how it happens. We need to look for where it is and bring it in. So, I am less concerned about that because I do think that it is there. In youth work, it has been there for about 25 years.

1688. **Ms McGlade:** With the overall project peace, we are looking at Together: Building a United Community, bringing down barriers at interfaces, shared education and shared housing etc. Some of the measures will have to go into the good relations indicators for future generations. If we are working with our young people, they are the next generations who will be living in shared housing. They will have to help us to prepare to live in a society without barriers. Attitudinal change is one thing, but looking at how we progress and dismantle, if you like, the whole structure of segregation and work towards integration and a more normalised society in our peace process is also critical.
1689. So, I suggest that, when we are looking at shared education, we also link into the other programmes and priority areas and key headline actions within T:BUC to see how it all fits in. We are also talking about young people not in isolation. Many of them go back into communities where they will need support to be able to be the peace-builders that we want them to be, because their communities sometimes inhibit that. It is about the whole joined-upness that you can measure young people and their schools

- and teacher training, but it is how our society and young people in it move forward collectively as well.
1690. **Mr Craig:** I suppose I should welcome into the room the “Trojan Horse”, as others described the equality agenda. That is tongue in cheek, by the way.
1691. I read here that the commission is arguing that the rights of parents to select faith-based schools should not be allowed to overshadow the importance of education in maximising good relations. I would like to understand exactly what is meant by that. Hopefully, this will not be seen as another attack on a person’s faith. I have a number of reasons for asking that. Not all faith-based schools are not mixed. A number of weeks ago, we were at Methodist College, which is almost 50:50 Catholic and Protestant. In my constituency, Friends School in Lisburn is about 40:60. So, a being a faith-based school does not necessarily mean not mixed. What exactly is the commission getting at there?
1692. **Dr Wardlow:** We have predicated this on two things. The first is that the child has to be at the centre of this; and, secondly, we still accept parental choice. Because of the way that demography and money work, parental choice in accessing what are seen as good schools, in some areas, is about postcode. I am just stating what happens. So, parental choice is not absolute, and it does not work in that way, but it is at the core of our educational system, and we do not want to diminish that. Nor would we want to diminish the fact that there are systems in place, and we are not arguing for one system and doing away with faith-based education.
1693. This is not to say that faith-based is any less than non-faith based or a secular system, which, as you know, we do not have. We have church-related schools in the controlled sector, where transferors’ representatives are still on boards of governors. You probably have more of a faith-related system in the Catholic sector. The integrated sector is, essentially, Christian in character. We do not have what in other places might be regarded as non-faith or secular schools. You should not read into this that there is any sense in which the commission wants to diminish the rights of parents to choose a form of education, whether in faith-based or other sectors.
1694. Do you want to amplify the specific point?
1695. **Mr McKinstry:** Yes. You have covered most of it. Certainly, the commission absolutely recognises parental choice over whatever school the parent is interested in. However, the point behind it is that it should not impact on the system, as a whole, being focused on sharing. The commitments within things like T:BUC that talk about sharing becoming a central part of the system and impacting on every child’s educational experience, are key and similar to the commission’s interests and concerns. It is really just to make the point that we wanted to ensure that sharing is central to the system as a whole.
1696. **Dr Wardlow:** Take, for example, Jonathan, Catholic maintained schools: fewer than 1% of children attending would be designated non-Catholic, and about half of those-Protestant. It would be totally wrong to say that Catholic schools do not support and promote good relations. Some Catholic schools have 50% or 40% Protestants at them — granted, though, they are very small in number. However, the mix of children attending is not the only parameter by which you can measure someone’s intention to mix. Simply because they are designated “Catholic” and attended mostly by Catholics does not preclude them from any form of mixing. You should not read anything into this, and, should there be an ambiguity, we will correct that.
1697. This is saying that parental choice lies at the core but is limited by geographic location and by money. We are saying that systems are there, but if we are looking at sharing in education, that should be the core, as T:BUC states. Systems getting in the way of that, as an excuse, need to be challenged. However, it is not saying that someone in a faith-based school is any less capable or

able to share: absolutely not. In fact, the contrary is true in many cases, and you cited some of them.

1698. **Mr Craig:** Is the underlying thought behind this that there should be some form of, almost, forced integration? I have seen bitter experiences of that in communities, where trying to force integration backfires. Integration comes about through a natural process almost, where parents and pupils make up their own minds on that issue.
1699. **Dr Wardlow:** I think, Jonathan, the important thing is that “sharing” is the term and not “integration”. That is why we say that there needs to be a difference. We have always argued that voluntarism lies at the centre of this. The problem is that you can only choose something if it is there. So, lots of people want to live in mixed housing, but they are still living separately because there is not an opportunity. Therefore, there is something about demand and supply. There needs to be a match to people’s desire to volunteer and want to be in a shared system — a shared education. At the minute, that is not there. There needs to be something, and that may be in the systems, and it may be a systemic answer as well. However, we are not saying that people should be forced to integrate; we are saying that children should have the opportunity to share, and that that should be core to the educational system.
1700. **Mr Osborne:** Chair, may I add one or two things as well, and it goes back to something that we touched on earlier in the discussion. There is a huge amount of positive and brave work going on in schools across the community divide, and I know that because I have seen some of it directly, as I am sure members have as well. We want to highlight and commend the schools for doing that rather than anything else; we need to recognise that when it happens. Jonathan, you mentioned a few schools. On the Catholic maintained side, the same thing happens. The children do an awful lot of learning and developing together.

1701. At the same time, there is an awful lot of education going on where children and young people are not learning and developing together, and I think that that issue goes to the heart of where we need to progress as a society. We have not talked about a particular model; it is about optimising a model for that learning and developing for children and young people together. We have to face certain questions. For example, I think that the T:BUC strategy is very ambitious in saying that we should take down interface barriers and peace walls. However, there are a number of factors that are important in taking those interface barriers down. If we genuinely want to achieve that, we need to look at the safety and security that people feel on either side; we need to look at an inclusive process where there are not gatekeepers; and we need to look at the regeneration of those areas. Paramount, however, is the fact that we need to look at relationship-building across those peace walls. If we are perpetuating a system — this is not about some of the schools that you mentioned — in north, west and east Belfast, in Portadown, and in Derry/Londonderry where kids from one side of that interface never meet the kids from the other side of the interface, do not do any genuine learning and developing together and the depth of their contact is pretty shallow, then I know what we will get in 20, 30, 40 or 50 years’ time. We will get the same attitudes, because they will be parents of children in 20 and 30 years’ time, and the interface barriers will still be there.
1702. If we really aspire as a society, and OFMDFM’s T:BUC strategy says that we do, to take down those barriers, and if we really aspire to shared housing, then we need to have the courage to change how the system operates. I am not saying that it is one system or another, because this is not about systems or structures or forms; it is about how we approach the issue in our heart and in our head, knowing that change is needed in how we get children to learn and develop together. If we do that, and we approach it on that basis, which I think that we all know is the right basis on how to

approach this, then we will develop a greater continuum of change within the education sector that we have.

1703. **Mr Craig:** I do not think that anybody is arguing about the concept. I think that sometimes the practicalities do not work out on the ground. You are almost into the mindset of the people in an area itself and whether they are ready for that change. Some areas are and some areas are not. I have had that bitter experience myself locally when you talk about shared housing. With regard to where we are going with shared education, resources — or the lack of resources, if we are being honest about it — will drive us down that route no matter what. If there is not enough finance there to provide two separate schools and there is only enough finance to provide one single building, and you have a maintained school and a controlled school, the answer is staring us in the face. That is where shared education is driving this. The resources may well bring about the shared educational experience that we are talking about. I have seen an example of that in my own constituency when it came to the area-learning community network around A levels. That is precisely what has occurred because of a lack of resources.
1704. **Dr Wardlow:** The danger is that people will see that they will be forced into sharing or integration. If you look at the integrated sector, you see that there has been an argument for a long time that schools choose to transform because they are failing schools. Tests were put in to ensure that that did not take place. It would be a terrible thing if people felt that sharing was only an option for closing down a school. We argued that communities should be involved in this. There was one example in Omagh a number of years ago where a deliberative poll was taking place. Parents were actually polled before, during and after a process of more sharing in the Omagh area. What actually happened in that area was that parents were not aware of what opportunities they had. To envisage

something different and to have that moral imagination, you actually need to know what you can do. Sometimes, we actually think that maybe communities are not ready. The Institute for Conflict Research (ICR) did a piece of research in north Belfast looking at the potential for sharing. What it discovered was that parents choose a school because of its geography; because of conflict; because of its location to a wall; and because it is a good school. When you talked to them about sharing, they were actually up for it, but those were the barriers in their minds as well as being the big barriers. There are ways of actually ameliorating that and mitigating it. They are out there. There are schools that are actually working this through. This is not, Jonathan, something parachuting down — and heaven help us if parents think that they are being somehow manipulated into this. This is why community planning is core and key to this. It is not just in the education service; it is about how we have shared opportunities. That permeates everything, not just education.

1705. **Mr Osborne:** Briefly, if I can, I would like to make two other points on that. Jonathan, I think that you are right about attitudes in local areas. I agree with Michael as well. When I talk to people in those areas, I think that there is more of a willingness to change than we maybe appreciate. I have to say that I think that can be encouraged when other people in public life — all of us, whether we be elected representatives or other members of civil society — find the courage to say what they really think on some of these issues and encourage that change in people's minds at a local level. It is important that that message is actually vocalised and then heard because that makes change easier.
1706. With regard to the shared-education side of things, there may be many pressures that lead down a particular road. There is research in other areas which shows that, where you have one building and that building is used in a segregated way, it actually makes the situation worse. I have heard of some buildings

where one particular community goes in one entrance and the other community goes in another entrance. I have heard of where a sports pitch is used by one community in the morning and the other community in the afternoon. That reinforces segregation. It reinforces mindsets and attitudes. That is why I think that the issue here is not about structures, systems, forms or buildings; it is about the needs of children and young people and society. It is where the continuum, milestones and targets are really important here as we push this into a better place around learning and developing together.

1707. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation so far. It has been really interesting. Just to pick up on a couple of the later points and to play devil's advocate, I suppose, a bit; should we not force parents a wee bit more? Even around parental choice, if parents still decide to choose a faith-based education, how far will we actually get? I take on board what you are saying about attitudes in society, but should we not say to them, "Look, it is 2015. This is the best way forward." The Donaldson report into health is telling us that we need to take some hard decisions. Peter, you said yourself that we should not avoid asking the hard questions. Yet, in education — I am playing devil's advocate here to a certain extent — parties and people always fall back on parental choice. Would you agree with that to a certain extent? Is parental choice the get-out clause for people to say, "Well, the Minister cannot go ahead unless it is what communities want". Is there an argument that, if we always say that, we are not actually going to advance?

1708. **Ms McGlade:** That is an interesting point. Our experience of working in lots of different areas with regard to breaking down barriers and all sorts of segregation has been that the important part of the work is creating the conditions. On the parental choice part, sometimes the word "choice" is key here. Quite often, we could ask whether there is a choice for people living in single-identity areas to do that and take that step. We need to create

the conditions. I take Michael's point about giving people enough information. People live in certain conditions and are used to them. They are not thinking beyond that because they are not being inspired, if you like, or the conditions are not being created for them to consider whether there could be better ways or a better future for their child or a different way forward and what they are. They may come to the same conclusion, which is that they do not want that, or, when they get the right information, they may consider different options. However, there is often a lack of information on the ground and a lack of engagement with parents on making those decisions. We need to work harder at that as well.

1709. **Mr Hazzard:** We need to get our head around this. We are sending mixed messages to parents. Parents sitting at home value the choice that they have, yet, when they make that choice, they hear that they are institutionalising benign apartheid or segregation. They are saying, "Hold on. I've made a choice, and the system cherishes choice". We need to tackle the issue of choice. I myself am not sure about it. Is the choice right? Do we need to start pushing communities down a particular path? Is it the default position that the system is right for offering choice, or is it the case that our system reflects tensions in society? Is it that the system itself is broken? If so, how do we start to put it together?

1710. If we start to talk about choice, parents will always choose faith-based education; they will always choose integrated education; or they will always choose Irish-medium education. We are always going to have what some people describe as segregation or benign apartheid, and we will always end up back to square one. I cannot help but think that various sectors here are on different roads. Some see the end as being shared education between the various sectors, while others see it as being an entirely integrated sector. I think there is confusion among parents. At the minute, when they are choosing schools, the vast majority of parents will

- not choose an integrated school. That does not mean that they do not support societies coming together. I do not know whether there is a question in there or it was just rambling.
1711. **Mr Osborne:** I do not think that it was a rambling question, but I will give a rambling response.
1712. There are a lot of factors involved in why parents choose a school for their children. I am not sure that you can ever get away from parental choice in that sense. I am a parent myself, and a number of factors will go into our choice of school when our son gets to that age. Some of those factors are reflected in the Bill. Some of it is about the personal development of children as they mix with people from different backgrounds and of a different gender. All sorts of factors will go into the choice made, so I think that it is important to have.
1713. The Life and Times survey repeatedly shows that the vast majority of people want more sharing in schools, with young people and children learning and developing together. If memory serves me, that survey states that 80%-plus feel that way. I am not sure that the principle reason for the choice made by any parent will be around whether a child goes to school with people from one side of the community or another. The statistics do not necessarily reflect that. There are multiple reasons that parents make a particular choice about what school their child goes to. There is an obligation on people in leadership positions, in places such as this, and in such organisations as the Equality Commission, CRC and others to shape what that model is — I do not want to get into systems — in order to benefit the child and young person, and therefore society as a whole. In trying to shape that, I do not think that you can get away from the underlying core principle of the child and the young person sharing, learning and developing together. If that drives what that model is, it is going to be a model that almost all parents will buy into.
1714. **Mr McKinstry:** It is also important to add that you can separate out the difference between parental choice regarding an individual school and a sector that has sharing at its core, which would want to encourage sharing between schools or within schools. That could be done through joint management or being integrated. Therefore, I think that you can have those two separate things. I go back to the commitment in T:BUC where sharing becomes a central part of every child's commitment. That is really saying that if it is every child, it is every school, and that goes back to the earlier question about how you incentivise, how you recognise that there is a continuum and how you move to being the norm in the system, thus allowing the choice while still having a pro-sharing system.
1715. **Dr Wardlow:** We need to address the fact that the system is not set in concrete. The system leaks. It is porous in nature, and we should maximise that. For example, other jurisdictions have federations. They bring schools together under one head teacher, and there are multiple ways of doing that. They have joined together faith schools, joined together Church schools and have sixth-form colleges attached to two other colleges. There are system models that work towards an end. The system is fixed to create the outcome.
1716. We have 1,200 schools. By some estimates, we probably have 300 too many. We have 500 schools with 100 or fewer children. That partly reflects how we have been in this place. We have separate systems. The nature of the state and how we have come to be here is another issue. We cannot simply delete 1,200 schools, but we can ask ourselves how we work within that system to make it leak more. How do we enable all parents, wherever they are, to have access to an integrated, Irish-language or faith-based school? More importantly, when they buy into that, how can we ensure that at the system's core DNA is sharing? That is the test. It is not about the systems but about ensuring that there is no postcode lottery in this

and that parents have the access and young people the opportunity that T:BUC promises.

1717. **Mr Hazzard:** I have two final points to make, one of which is linked to that. Do we leave it to the communities to lead the way, or should the Department perhaps enforce more change from the top down? For me, the three big issues that come out of this are academic selection, teacher training and — what we are talking about here — the integrated or shared model of education. Do you feel that there perhaps needs to be more top-down control of those issues and more political agreement to drive them forward?

1718. The second point concerns academic selection and its effect on community cohesion. You referred to Dundonald High School. Talk to Ken Perry down there, and he will say that the effect of academic selection on the east Belfast community caused the greatest harm to that school. I would like your thoughts on that.

1719. **Mr Osborne:** I will give you a personal reflection and move on to my general thoughts.

1720. I failed the 11-plus. I had a brother — he is no longer with us — who went to Dundonald High School. He also failed the 11-plus. I failed because I think that I was too young when I took it. Had I been six months older, I might have passed. Therefore, passing or failing the 11-plus does not necessarily direct the rest of your life, but it certainly has a big impact. I am not sure that that is the best way in which to treat children when they are 10 or 11. Again, I think that goes back to the point about whether some kids are being failed by the system. I am not necessarily a fan of the 11-plus, but I also understand the need to give children and young people the best education possible. I also think that we need to try to get an agreed way forward around this, because children and young people are at the core, and some of the things that they have to go through at the minute are not

reasonable. They are why policy should be made around that issue.

1721. The other thing about Dundonald High School is that, when the community got much more involved in the board, that significantly helped the school. There is a vibrancy around getting more people involved in boards. How communities really engage with schools through the boards is important for schools. We need to reflect on how that happens between schools and communities. That is an example of how positive that sort of change can be when communities get involved in the management of their schools.

1722. On the issue of teacher training, I am not sure that we can expect our children and young people to do something if, as adults and teachers, we do not do it ourselves. I am aware of situations in which children and young people are willing to get involved in some significant, hard issues, questions and dialogue with one another, and many teachers facilitate that. However, I am also aware of situations in which teachers are reluctant to facilitate it. I suspect that that is because the teachers themselves have not gone through the training and capacity-building that is needed to engage in such sessions. I think that that goes back to relationships and our courage to make change happen, in a way that we know is needed in this society and for our children and young people, around teacher training and the general relationships between kids across the community divide.

1723. **Dr Wardlow:** The commission has made its points on academic selection, but fixing that will not fix the system. You divide the education system seven ways here: Protestant and Catholic; boys and girls; those who pass and those who do not; Irish language; integrated; hospital schools; special schools. In fact, it is probably divided about 10 ways, and in a jurisdiction of 1.8 million people.

1724. We would not start from here, but we are here, so how do we do what we can do, if you think of young Protestant males

- in a non-grammar school and young Catholic females at a girls' grammar school.
1725. There is something wrong if, when we look consistently at outcomes for looked-after children, black and minority ethnic (BME) students, disabled students, and boys and girls, we see that the system does not come out with equal outcomes. Either something is going wrong with the method of teaching, which I do not believe, or we need to look at the system not just to provide more equality of opportunity and sharing but to enable those young people to fulfil their potential.
1726. If they go to a non-grammar school, there is sometimes an expectation on young people that they will not perform. It is a poverty of aspiration. Some then have to over-perform to get there. We should not simply be saying that one type are bad schools and one good.
1727. Every child should be able to get a good-quality education. If that means changing the systems at the end of it, absolutely, but we are talking today specifically about sharing, and I guess that we are saying there is also the socio-economic thing about sharing in this, which you have identified in the Bill.
1728. **Mr Lunn:** It is good to see you all. Peter, you mentioned the community situation of some hall that has separate entrances for different traditions. On the basis of that, what is your view about one of the Department's shared education programmes, which is in the Moy? The proposal there is to set up one school to replace two — one from each tradition — but effectively keep the pupils separate?
1729. **Mr Osborne:** You go back to why something is being done and to the benefits of children and young people learning and developing together. I would not necessarily say that the proposals for the Moy — I am probably not as aware of the detail as you, although I know a bit about it — are a bad thing, depending on what happens over the next five, 10, 15 or 20 years as that facility develops.
1730. This is not about buildings. It is about the needs of the children and young people, and of society at large. Therefore, if there are milestones and is a real focus on the continuum of change in that community, you may have a successful intervention there. However, if it is just about two separate schools and one building, and everything is separate going forward, and in 10 years' time the kids still have no contact through learning and developing together, you have to wonder whether, although there may have been an economic benefit to having one facility, we are really optimising the benefit to that local community of the children developing better relationships with each other?
1731. **Dr Wardlow:** We obviously do not have a view on whether it is good, bad or indifferent, but let me say what our principles are. On the face of it, it seems to be one community saying to the other community, "Your school could go, but if saving it means that you can share a campus with us, that is what we will do", that seems to be a reasonable act of generosity.
1732. I have worked in single-identity communities that really want and are thirsty to work with the other, but this is a journey, not a destination. If you are saying that that is the endgame, I am saying that it cannot be the end game. Sharing has to be systemic and go to the core, but the alternative to that is that one tradition loses its school. You know what happens in communities if they lose the railway station, post office and, eventually, the school — those communities leak.
1733. One of the arguments for setting up the integrated school in the Cutts in Derriaghy was that the Protestant community was feeling that there was a loss, and, rather than lose a school, it was happy to have a transformed school there.
1734. Therefore, this is about more than simply having a school. If the school is saying an act of generosity took place,

that is a good starting point. We said at the start that there is no one-size-fits-all here. There are buddy schemes and shared campuses, but it cannot simply be left there. The research in Scotland seems to state that shared campuses can reinforce division rather than promote sharing, if teachers go in separate doors and have different timetables. However, if it is a place in which to start formal sharing, I think that it should be welcomed for the generous act that it is. That is my personal view, drawn from what we say in the commission around the nature of sharing. Would that be fair?

1735. **Mr McKinstry:** For us, we can separate the sharing of facilities from the sharing of curriculum and the sharing of classes, and the commission is very clear that it wants sharing in mainstream education for every pupil — a shared curriculum and shared classes.

1736. **Ms McGlade:** In conclusion to that from a Community Relations Council perspective, our interest is in the quality of the sharing and the impact of the sharing — the learning from it, how it is rolled out and where it is working, and, indeed, how we can improve on it where it is not working.

1737. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you all for that. The situation in the Moy is that the community survey was done. Out of that, 85 responses were in favour of what is now proposed, 70 were in favour of an integrated solution and five did not want anything to do with any of it. It seems to me that the influence of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) came into play very heavily there, because CCMS has set its face very firmly — in front of the Committee — against any attempt to integrate a maintained school and another sector. It is absolutely adamant about that. If you compare that with the situation that is developing in the Republic — obviously, it does not have CCMS, but it does have a structure — you will see that it has become obvious that the Catholic Church, which runs most of the schools down there, has now realised that its position is not sustainable. Educate

Together, which you have probably heard of, is now coming into play in a big way. I know that I am inviting controversy, but do you think that CCMS's attitude is sustainable or realistic?

1738. **Dr Wardlow:** First, I do not want to comment on CCMS's attitude, because, for 15 years, I was the director of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), so I understand its situation. It has made it very clear that if a Catholic school becomes an integrated school, it can no longer be a Catholic school. If that is its working premise, I understand why the outworking of that is what it says. What we are saying here is that we are asking a community how we actually have a shared education system. When we go through an equality impact assessment (EQIA) and get a community response, we are always clear that the numbers are not the only thing that determines the outcome. The numbers are one measurement in the toolkit. Therefore, there is something about the full involvement of communities, and we have said that in our response. If you are looking at sharing in a community, it should not simply be a vote on something. It should be much more around community engagement and outcomes involving the young people, and we know how to do that in this place. I do not know the background to the Moy. I am simply saying that we know that, in other places, the communities perhaps do not get the voice. One of the things that we have said on our inequalities is that, too often, that civic voice is lost. Too often we hear so-called gatekeepers saying things. Community planning allows us a way in there, but it has to be a long-term solution, whereby we say what is best for that community. I do not know enough about the case, and I am not denying anything that Trevor said, Chair. I am simply saying that this should move beyond systems, CCMS and the controlled sector. This should be about how we best make a shared establishment for the young people in that area. If that is in two schools sharing or in one school sharing, that is for the community to decide.

1739. **Mr Lunn:** I will tell you something about the case. Originally, CCMS opposed this adamantly. The first instruction that it gave to the maintained school down there was to withdraw from all discussions and have nothing whatsoever to do with it. It has at least moved in some direction. However, it has come up with a solution that, frankly, could happen only in Northern Ireland. It is going to be a school with two boards of governors under one roof, separate classes, one entrance and separate uniforms. The only hope for it, in my view, would be that it actually led somewhere, which is the point that you made, Peter. Twenty years down the line, good sense may prevail.
1740. To me, however, it was a golden opportunity. Chris mentioned the possibility of a wee bit of pressure being applied in some situations. Almost half the parents canvassed agreed that integration was the obvious solution. To some of us it is the obvious solution. That is not to say that I do not agree with faith schools, believe me. It comes back to parental choice. Parents are free to continue to use faith schools, although with levels of faith perhaps diminishing in this country, that may have to change, as has happened in the Republic.
1741. I will just take issue with something that Jonathan said. I always correct him on Methody. In Methody, 45% of pupils are Protestant, 25% are Catholic and 30% — a telling figure — are unattached, if I may use that term. Methody is a terrific school, and a very good example of how things can develop.
1742. **Dr Wardlow:** It will be interesting to see, leaving aside the nature of the structure, whether the definition of “shared education” could be applied to the school if the Bill becomes law. This is about outcomes, and if that type of educational establishment were able to deliver over time what we define as “shared education”, which is wide, deep, intense and intentional, the judgment is, if you like, taken by the outcomes or measurement.
1743. I understand what Trevor is saying. It is not for me to comment on what the community has done there, because I am not quite sure where that is going at the minute. I have heard only what has been said in public discourse. What we would say again, though, is that at the core of this has to be the outcome for the young person. This is about shared outcomes, where young people really get to learn about one another, and facilitating that well, rather than the systems.
1744. **Mr Osborne:** I would like to say two things in response. Again, I do not know the detail as well as Trevor.
1745. **Mr Lunn:** I just explained it to you.
1746. **Mr Osborne:** There is a real need for the benefits of the outcomes that we are talking about. The focus needs to be not on structures or systems reform but on the needs of the children and young people. It seems to me that there is a significant debate needed on why learning and developing together is good for those children and young people. I have not met a parent yet who does not want the best for his or her child. That debate might inform a lot of communities going forward about what is in the best interests of their children and young people.
1747. One other thing occurred to me when you mentioned Methody, although I think that this is true of many schools. We are not dealing with a monoculture, in a sense, of Protestants and Catholics. That is not the only issue here. We are living in a very multicultural society. Methody and many other schools are examples of people being schooled from all sorts of different faiths and backgrounds, which, again, reinforces the benefits of everyone across this community learning and developing together, learning about others and learning the importance of living in this sort of multicultural society.
1748. **Mr Lunn:** Just one more question, if you do not mind. I have got about 10 more, but one will do. The departmental drivers of the shared education programme were with us a few weeks ago. They were absolutely clear in their own mind that,

as far as they were concerned, the aim of shared education is educational. If there are societal benefits, they are a spin-off or a bonus, frankly. I hope that it is a big bonus, but let us wait and see. What is your view on that? I would have thought that you would be more interested in the societal side.

1749. **Dr Wardlow:** I read the submission. The issue for me has always been this: what is the purpose of education? Is it simply to create young people for university or to create jobs? Absolutely not. The Latin verb “educare” means “to draw out”. The purpose of education is to draw out, not just to put in. It is both. When that best education takes place, there are societal benefits. The departmental officials say — I read it in their submission — that education is an academic process; that is, education is a synonym for academic learning. I would not say that that is the purpose of education or, indeed, what education is. Education is about how you learn to fulfil your potential in a pluralist world and how you relate: it is all those things. Otherwise, why are some subjects taught in school? There is a limit to the extent to which sharing is simply about education, because then it is about priorities and looking at how you do systems. This is about societal benefit, which I see as the key purpose. Lifelong learning is at the core of what we do. It is not just what happens between the ages of four and 18. Of course, there should be societal benefits. Sharing for me is academic or, in that sense, intellectual, but, equally as importantly, it is about learning to live together.
1750. **Mr Osborne:** The Community Relations Council highlights in its response some research showing that sharing and learning together increases academic achievement for those who partake in that type of schooling. That is partly what I mean when I say that I do not know any parent who does not want the best for his or her child. Well, academically parents will get the best for their child when their child learns and develops together with other communities from different

backgrounds. Separate schooling contributes to an own-group bias, which has societal implications, while learning and developing together benefits society hugely. In addition, however, it benefits the individuals who take part through raising their academic achievement.

1751. **Ms McGlade:** A huge amount of money has been invested in sharing in education, not least in the shared campuses, so the purpose is sharing, but not only educational sharing. It is sharing as it relates to the T:BUC commitments. The Atlantic Philanthropies is investing a substantial amount of money through Delivering Social Change in shared education, for which Peace IV has also proposed a huge chunk. There is therefore a responsibility to ensure that the money is not wasted but targeted, built on and supported.
1752. **Mr Lunn:** Certainly, the buzz at the moment is for shared education. Some of us are slightly worried that there is too much emphasis on it, which is why I keep hammering on about these things. Frankly, I wonder where we would be now if the same emphasis had been put on integrated education over the past 40 years. What difference do you think that the words “facilitate and encourage” have made to the integrated sector over the past 40 years? Now it is going to be cancelled out by the fact that shared education will have the same emphasis.
1753. You do not have to answer that.
1754. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome. I want to carry on from Trevor’s points. I was a bit alarmed, Peter, when you said that some of the projects reinforce segregation. Have you, for example, spoken to the two communities in Moy?
1755. **Mr Osborne:** When I made that comment, I was not dealing with a specific example. I do not know the details of the Moy project, although I have heard about it in the news. The answer is no, I have not talked directly with the various communities in the Moy.
1756. **Mr Rogers:** It would certainly be worthwhile. I go back to an earlier point

- about societal benefits, and so on. Queen's University's Centre for Shared Education believes that there has been greater penetration when the outcomes have been educational rather than societal. Where do you stand on that?
1757. **Dr Wardlow:** I declare an interest, as I served on the advisory panel for shared education at Queen's, because I am a senator there. I saw the early stuff, and then I worked for 15 years in integrated schools, so it is hard for me to set that aside and talk in my current role, which has a much more restricted brief.
1758. I have a problem when people talk about hard outcomes and soft outcomes. I challenge anybody who teaches STEM subjects — the hard outcome being A levels — and says that those are harder to teach than a soft subject about the other, race or homophobia, or that the outcome is more easily attainable. I would love to lose those two words. The idea that educational outcomes are only measured in A levels and GCSEs at Key Stages 1 and 2 needs to be lost. It says that we measure numbers. Are we valuing what we measure or measuring what we value? I think that we do much of the former and that we should start measuring what we value instead. If we really value educational outcomes, measure them — absolutely — but measure and value how societal difference is impacted on by young people who learn to live with difference, who learn not just to tolerate but to deal with difference and say that, "I can still say who I am, and you can be who you are. I hear your narrative. I grow up with you. I learn to live alongside you, but I can disagree with you and still remain your friend or colleague". Sharing that is real, deep, penetrative and intentional can both deliver the educational outcome and reduce the impact of some of the prejudicial attitudes that we see. We see homophobia, we see racism and we see all sorts of attitudes, even sexism, in schools. Almost one in five kids say that they have seen a racial attack or heard racial comments in school, despite all the bullying policies. The level of homophobic bullying is still high, yet we know that there are good policies. Of course, educational outcomes are important, but they should not determine someone's future or be the only measure of their life. If we are really serious about sharing, it is not simply about getting 24 or 27 GCSEs and A levels; it is about how we can learn to live together in this place that we call home.
1759. **Mr Rogers:** You mentioned difference. It does not mean that the difference disappears.
1760. **Dr Wardlow:** Absolutely not. Personally, I have some concerns about celebrating difference, because I do not want to celebrate all differences. We are almost being told, "You have to welcome what I do". Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a very simple example. No one here would say that we should celebrate that difference. I am being pejorative here because we need to be careful. This is not social engineering, bringing up children to say that we are all the same. This is about bringing up a society in which we can understand difference and realise that it is not a threat but something that enriches. Proper sharing can do that. We have well-formed young people, and you see that when you go to some of the shared schools. These young people are not clones; they live with and accept multiple identities. They are not born with a barcode stating who they are. Not all identity is fixed. I often say that, at one time, I was not a father, a parent or a brother, but I am all of those now. Identity moves through life. At schools in which sharing takes place, young people realise that their identity is not the only thing that forms them and that, in fact, they may have more than one. When that is facilitated well, it can only augur well for the future.
1761. **Mr Rogers:** Do you see a place for religious or even political imagery?
1762. **Dr Wardlow:** It is already in the curriculum. My colleague Darren put it well. Think of an axis: a single identity school in a single identity neighbourhood can enhance that part of an axis by having a shared curriculum. Its

- governance can be shared; it can bring in teachers from the other tradition; and it can have outside groups coming in for extracurricular activities. In so doing, it develops that axis. However, if it moves to sharing with other schools, it moves up to the point at which it impacts on what we see as good shared education. We should not diminish the fact that people can start from where they are. In fact, we should encourage and incentivise that, but it should be real sharing. We should not simply say, "You can't do it, so you're not in the game." Trevor's idea that we are somehow being shepherded into a shared education future against our will should not be something that people fear. However, if we are saying that it is a shared society, surely one element of that is how we can maximise sharing in the education system. We should not be afraid to say that.
1763. **Mr Osborne:** The critical aspect of that is whether children and young people are learning and developing together. It is about the kids and the people; it is not about the buildings and structures. It is not about the — *[Inaudible due to mobile phone interference.]*
1764. **Mr Rogers:** Is there a place for religious instruction in schools?
1765. **Dr Wardlow:** I have my own views on that. I have not heard that discussed or debated in my three years on the commission, so I have to defer to Darren. I do not think that we have formed a view on that.
1766. **Mr McKinstry:** I am not aware of the view.
1767. **Dr Wardlow:** Let me go back to see whether there has been one. I would be very surprised if the commission had a view that it should not be there. It was formed by the main Churches. People have asked whether other faiths should be represented in the primary-school curriculum. That is not for us to say. As you know, there is an opt-out, meaning that children do not have to take part. Some schools do not necessarily tell parents that, but it seems to me that the RE that is being taught is a great opportunity to maximise sharing.
1768. **Mr Osborne:** I am not sure whether the CRC has a formal view on that either, but it seems natural to me that, if you want to understand other communities, you need to have some understanding of the religious side of things. Therefore, that should be part of the curriculum. The debate, I think, is how and where.
1769. **Mr McKinstry:** In answer to a question on parental choice at the start of the session, we talked about the ability to attend faith-based schools, which would allow for that.
1770. I want to talk about the Queen's research and the educational advantages. Obviously, the commission is very keen on educational advantage. We want every child to maximise their potential, irrespective of their background. Lessons on advancing the social side that came out of the Queen's research on shared education were the importance of sustained and meaningful contact and the fact that it had to be about more than isolated incidents or projects. There had to be the opportunity to build relationships between the pupils and build the idea of mutual understanding. That was key to advancing the social side.
1771. **Dr Wardlow:** Interestingly, a few years ago, longitudinal research found that there is a domino effect. So, for example, Darren is a Catholic and I am a Protestant, and we become friends through a shared project. His friendship circle will have a reduced antagonism towards the out-group — in this case, me— through his friendship with me. We have all this research that states that shared education works, but it should not diminish the fact that it should be good shared education — in other words, as Darren said, the educational outcomes should be good. So we should be addressing underachievement. One should not be played off against the other.
1772. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you, that was helpful.
1773. **Mr Newton:** I welcome the witnesses.

1774. A couple of important things have come out of the discussion. I am surprised that you have not made any effort to try to understand the Moy situation. Producing your paper without having looked at what will be a significant development, led by the principals and parents for the pupils and the entire Moy community, is a huge weakness. I say that as someone who, like others at the table, believes in integrated education. My wife and I tried to encourage our children to embrace integrated education via the Methody model, which is, I believe, a paragon. When we eventually arrive at shared education, I hope that it will be similar to that. I accept that we do not have a definition of shared education, but I believe that it will have many of the Methody features, which I know that people will embrace when they see it. That is, I believe, the way that things are going.
1775. With your not having looked at the Moy situation, and based on what has been said, I find some difficulty with the ethos of the response, Michael. I am concerned about, and have a difficulty with, placing a statutory duty on principals and teachers. In response to the Chair's point about a hierarchy of sectors, you said that — I hope that I got this right — you do not have an opinion on that. Surely the Equality Commission should have an opinion when one sector is disadvantaged against another in the educational process. What you said gives me some concern.
1776. It is certainly not coming through to me that either the CRC or the Equality Commission embraces shared education with any enthusiasm. Is it not true that shared education is, perhaps, a logical step on the way, finally, to integrated education? However, it is totally focused; it is not forced. It is just a natural educational process that parents, schools and bodies will embrace for their betterment. Whether it is societal or educational, I believe that society and the educational process will work it out and gain advantage from it.
1777. **Dr Wardlow:** Let me respond to the simplest point first. We have not asked for a statutory duty to be put on schools; in fact, the opposite is true. We have been arguing that the section 75 duties should not be put on schools, and that is our current position. Schools already sit under bodies that have a section 75 duty, and, therefore, for anything that a school does, there is a subvention under that. The various anti-discrimination laws, with the exception of the Fair Employment and Treatment Order, apply to young people and teachers in schools. Transgender children are not covered by equality legislation in a school, and there is an exemption in the curriculum as a result of the discussions on sexual orientation. So, Robin, I am not sure where you read that.
1778. **Mr Newton:** I may have picked it up wrongly. I am sure that I will not find it again.
1779. **Dr Wardlow:** That is the easiest one for us. We do not believe that, at the minute, there is enough evidence for us to say that we should put that duty on the 1,200 schools. The Minister is minded to look at that, and we are quite happy to respond to it, if and when it comes. However, our current position is that there are enough protections without it.
1780. Secondly, on the Moy, this may come down to us trying to explain to people the role of the Equality Commission. It is what I tried to say at the start. The Equality Commission is a creature of statute that has certain responsibilities placed on it. Looking at what is happening in shared education, shared villages or shared housing is not one of those responsibilities. Our role is to look at government policy or the policy of public bodies and at the implementation of their statutory duties and whether they comply. If, in doing this, we felt, or it was reported, that one of the statutory bodies in the controlled or maintained sector was in dereliction of their duty, we could have a view on it. So, it is probably a misunderstanding of our role, Robin. That is not trying to dodge anything. We do not have a view on the Moy, but I am very happy to bring your concerns back

- to the commission before we take our view on the Bill. I undertake to do that.
1781. Thirdly, you mentioned the hierarchy. This is also about the Equality Commission taking a view on current legislation, the carrying out of policy, and whether the current 1989 Education Reform Order breaches any equality duties. It does not, to the best of my knowledge. No case has ever been raised. There has never been an issue on which the Equality Commission has said that something gives a higher level to the integrated or Irish language sector than to other sectors, which have the education and library boards and CCMS to promote them.
1782. Finally, on the question of our embracing shared education, it can be hard to put passion into a written response. There was unanimity on our board when we were signing this off. We welcomed it, and we have said that. However, as we do not yet have the full response to the Bill, we have not talked about what sharing should be defined as. Let me make it clear that this is absolutely a very good step. If it is systemic and sustained and has all the outcomes and parameters that we outlined, we absolutely embrace it. As to whether this is the road to formally integrated schools, there are those who believe that to be the case. Our view, at the minute, is that some parents will want formally integrated schools and they should continue to be supported; other parents will want a shared educational system, which may or may not end up in a formally integrated school, and they should also be supported. If that did not come through in the response, I am sorry.
1783. **Mr McKinstry:** The commission has been very clear in a number of responses that it feels that sharing should be central to the system, it should be meaningful and it should impact on every pupil. I will clarify the first point: we have said that we feel that shared education is likely to benefit from a statutory obligation on the Department. However, we last looked at the issue seven years ago. We have not said that we think that schools would benefit from having a statutory obligation placed on them. There seem to be various models being proposed in the sector, whether it is a variant of section 75, enhanced or light; a policy directive from DE; or mainstreaming through the curriculum. If the Department is going to look at that, we look forward to seeing the outcome.
1784. **Dr Wardlow:** The issue is how you ensure that a school fulfils a duty of the Department, which has a policy aim of sharing. That is why, as we talked about, you have to value what you measure.
1785. **Mr Osborne:** I agree with the tenor of what was said in a couple of those responses. The CRC is probably in the same place. For us, the critical issue is children and young people learning and developing together. If shared education helped to bring that about, we would warmly welcome it. You will be aware, Robin, that there are many different views on all of these issues. We, as an organisation, will want to embrace and understand all those views. If it leads to children and young people learning and developing together — hopefully, it will — it is, potentially, a very positive move. I think that it is about the continuum and what happens over the next number of years.
1786. Personally, I have not been down to the Moy, but I am very happy to do that. I am not sure whether the organisation did so as part of formulating its response. I will find out. We should be learning more actively from that.
1787. **Mr Newton:** I think that shared education will share many features of that brand. The important thing is that all those who have the best interests of children as their priority — the parents and principals — can buy into it.
1788. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you for your presentations and the papers that we were given. I will start with a couple of questions to the Community Relations Council. In fact, I have a statement first. I welcome the fact that your paper states:
- “Ethos and identity issues should be dealt with using the UNCRC framework”.*

1789. We have had a number of references this morning to religious diversity, but we also heard the term “multicultural”, and Michael reminded us that identity is multilayered or multifaceted. I welcome your endorsement of that importance by the UNCRC. In particular, you draw our attention to article 29(1)(c), which states:

“States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: ...

The development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living”.

1790. So the CRC recognises the importance of the right of the child to be educated in relation to the culture of the community from which they come. That is good.

1791. You also reference the Human Rights Commission report on education reform in Northern Ireland, which says that it is important:

“To ensure that in the context of an increased move towards cross-community collaboration, that children’s and young people’s rights to their own cultural identity and freedom of religion are protected in shared arrangements.”

1792. I took that up with other folk who were here making presentations because, before you even get to the shared arrangement, it is important that children come together on the basis of equality. That point was highlighted to the Committee by a number of academics and by others who have written about it but have not yet been to see us. I welcome that.

1793. Has the CRC carried out any investigation of or inquiry into how the cultural rights of children are being realised or implemented across the different sectors in Northern Ireland? Are you aware of any research on that? We are bringing together different sectors here. Clearly, an Irish-medium education sector will have a strong Irish cultural ethos, with the Irish language, Irish traditional music, Gaelic games etc. The same is largely true, although to a lesser degree in language, in the

Catholic maintained sector. Have you any views on the controlled sector or done any work on that?

1794. **Ms McGlade:** Do you mean training?

1795. **Mr McCausland:** I would like to know how well the rights of the children are being realised or implemented in the controlled sector. Are there differences of approach to culture in the classroom between the Irish-medium, the Catholic-maintained and the controlled sectors? We have heard views from others on this.

1796. **Ms McGlade:** Our interest is in bringing the diversity together, rather than exploring how the curriculum is delivered. Is that what you mean, Nelson?

1797. **Mr McCausland:** No. You mentioned that children have the right to learn about their culture in school. One of the purposes of education should be a child learning about his or her cultural identity, language and values, because what is taught in a school is affirmed by the system to be of value, worthwhile and something to be affirmed, so it is seen as a positive; whereas, if something is kept out of a school, it is seen, largely, in a negative way. Quite clearly, there is a strong cultural ethos in certain sectors. Have you any thoughts on how that is working out in the controlled sector?

1798. **Ms McGlade:** Key to that is teacher training, sharing, understanding and diversity. We have engaged with our groups on the ground and supported them in engaging with the schools to explore cultural identity and others’ identities. Of course, there is the commemoration aspect of the work: understanding how people view history and reflect on it. Through engaging with schools, we are doing a lot of work on that.

1799. **Mr McCausland:** I am encouraged by your mention of that in the presentation. I am disappointed that, across the presentations — I will come to the Equality Commission in a moment — there has not yet been an acknowledgement of the different approaches to culture and traditions across the different sectors. If you bring together children from different sectors

- and cultural backgrounds — one group's background is that its cultural identity is affirmed, validated, esteemed and embraced in the school, but another group comes from a community in which cultural activities and so on are, in some cases, locked out of the school or given limited access without being mainstreamed in the curriculum — you do so on an unequal basis. Previously, I have used the Pierre Trudeau metaphor of Canada being in bed with the elephant of America. How do you work on bringing groups of children together so that both come with the same cultural confidence to engage with and embrace each other?
1800. **Ms McGlade:** Are you suggesting that a section of the community is being disadvantaged in accessing its culture in school?
1801. **Mr McCausland:** It is an issue that has been around for quite a number of years. I remember going to the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) about it in the mid-1990s. A very senior person in CCEA at the time, who has since moved on to even better things, made this point: a Catholic school is part of the parish, which has its GAA club and all its cultural identity, so it is rooted and grounded; the controlled sector deals with culture differently. So, should the CCEA want to organise an event, it could go to a large number of Catholic maintained schools to get an Irish traditional music group to perform. He said that when CCEA went to a controlled school — he mentioned one somewhere near Castlederg, I think, that had a pipe band — the choice was very limited. That is just a small illustration of a fundamental difference. Has CRC looked at that?
1802. **Ms McGlade:** It has not been raised with us as an issue that anyone said that they wanted to explore further. Nelson, our interest is in bringing together children to share and explore together their diverse backgrounds. In relation to the sector —
1803. **Mr McCausland:** So CRC has no interest in —
1804. **Ms McGlade:** We certainly have. You have raised it, and, if it is an issue, I am happy to speak to you about it. The specific issue of children in a school being disadvantaged when it comes to accessing their identity or traditions has not been raised with us.
1805. **Mr McCausland:** At the moment, the Ulster-Scots Agency, for example, has to fund directly from its core budget programmes in schools and certain cultural activities. So, it may facilitate the school in providing additional teaching in Scottish country dancing or whatever the activity is. It is not necessarily automatically embraced.
1806. **Ms McGlade:** I see. The programmes that we are engaged in with schools to bring them together to look at culture and identity include Corrymeela's Facing History and Ourselves. It explores with young people from different backgrounds their culture and identity, and the aim is, perhaps, to tease out some of their —
1807. **Mr McCausland:** My point is about coming together on the basis of equality, whereby children have equal strength and affirmation in a school. Not so long ago, I picked up on a comment by an American academic, Professor Elshain from the University of Chicago:
- "Education always reflects a society's views of what is excellent, worthy, necessary."*
1808. She said that in a different context, but, if the curriculum in the school system does not embrace the culture, it is not affirming it and saying that it is excellent, worthy and necessary. However, if another school reflects culture in a, b and c activity, that is seen as excellent, worthy and necessary because it is in the classroom. The former's culture is not because it is kept outside the school.
1809. **Mr Osborne:** The CRC acknowledges daily cultural expression across the community in all sorts of ways. We support a huge amount of work in the Protestant/unionist side of the

- community, the Catholic/nationalist/republican side of the community, the black and minority ethnic (BME) sector and many other sectors.
1810. The CRC, in its funding role, for example, would not get into the youth or school side of things. Nevertheless, the principle of approaching things on the basis of equality and making sure that we support good cultural expression is part of the future for this society because we need to value all sorts of cultural expression from all sides of the community.
1811. The issue from the schools perspective, if I am taking you up right, Nelson, is not about disadvantaging one side of the community. In other words, if you are saying that there is a very positive expression of culture on the Catholic-maintained side, that is fine. What you are asking is whether that is reflected on the other side of the community divide in its schooling system.
1812. **Mr McCausland:** It should be right for all sectors.
1813. **Mr Osborne:** Sure, and we do not disagree with that principle. That is absolutely right. It may be that the conversation needed on the Protestant/unionist side of the community divide on culture and how that is reflected in schools is something that we want to engage in. If that is not being done adequately or is not reflected in that side of the community's learning about its cultural identity, we need to engage with that. Our view is that cultural expression needs to be part of the learning. Therefore, the school sector needs to reflect on that, as do the organisations outside it,
1814. **Mr McCausland:** I will certainly pass that on. I am sure that there are folks who will take up that offer.
1815. I will turn to the Equality Commission for a moment. I read through the document, and there was no mention of equality in accessing the cultural rights of the child. Maybe there is a crossover between you and the Human Rights Commission on that. Maybe the commission is meant to look after that as part of its human rights remit and implement it equally. Maybe there is no discrimination. Is there a crossover?
1816. **Dr Wardlow:** Our response was on the nature of sharing and shared education, and how that is maximised. We talked about the deep sharing and so on. I do not think that we touched on Catholic culture as opposed to Protestant culture in this sense.
1817. If you are asking me in broad terms, I am old enough to remember single identity work when Brian Mawhinney introduced it. The idea was that you prepare your community to understand itself before engaging with the other. Then, you went into some cross-community contact and, eventually, sharing. There was a sort of virtuous circle, and that was how you did it.
1818. We now know that there are lots of different ways to do it, but research shows that people need to be reasonably aware of who and what they are before they engage with the other — absolutely. As we said at the outset, we are not pointing out all the areas of research; we are simply saying that, within our gift, we will talk about what we feel is important.
1819. There is a huge amount of work out there. It seems to me that most important is this flimsy word “ethos”, which I have researched. The closest that I found to a definition is “It is the way we do things round here”.
1820. In a school or a joint school and talking about shared schools, the person who develops and controls the ethos — research on ethos shows that it is not fixed — is the head teacher. Head teachers come and go, so the ethos of a school can change. Those in charge of a school have a trickle-down effect on the ethos. The research is clear on that. How, then, do kids engage with culture in school? It is in the curriculum and the extracurricular activities. More important, it is in what we in research call the hidden curriculum. It is what people say and do — it is how we do stuff around here. Now, you cannot write

- that down, but there is a huge amount of research around how people feel that generous gestures are being made towards them. I think that teachers need learning in that. They tell us that constantly, saying, "I do not know how Catholics/Protestants think". Protestant teachers will often say that the Catholic culture is very visible. In the integrated system, when a school was transforming, it was seen as a lot of Catholic imagery coming in, and there is almost a Protestant deficit created.
1821. The research says that, when schools address that and ask what it is that defines Protestantism, there is huge amount of curricular material around. It is everything from engaging with the war to going to graveyards and bringing people in from the outside. For me, it is out there, and it is extremely important, whether or not it is directly an equality matter. I do not see that it falls under our gamut, but that does not mean that we are avoiding it. I think that it would be wrong if there was some imbalance in sharing and it was seen to be all one side. Therefore, we are saying that the training and resources need to be there. Youth work and the NGOs from the outside can give a huge amount of help on that, and young people can actually be allowed to experiment and understand what it is. As a four-year-old, do I really know my culture? As a 16-year-old, I begin to develop that. So, absolutely, Nelson, it is an important thing.
1822. **Mr McCausland:** In deference to and respect for the Chair, I will stop there. I do think that it is quite often the elephant in the room, and the fact that it did not appear significantly or has not been looked into yet causes concern, but we will follow it up and come back to you on that.
1823. **Dr Wardlow:** Likewise, if I undertake anything, I will be back in touch with you, Nelson, and will make sure that that goes back to our commission as well.
1824. **Mr Osborne:** From our perspective, we want to understand better the point that is being made. If we can engage in any positive way, that is what we will do.
1825. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mrs Overend for a final question.
1826. **Mrs Overend:** I have cut my questions right down to one. My apologies for not being here at the beginning, but I will be sure to read the Hansard report for all the information. Have you had a chance, or do you propose, to examine the independent review of home-to-school transport? I am sure that you will find that interesting. What is your view on achieving more integration if children are forced to go their nearest school? It could mean that we would have more single-identity schools rather than fewer.
1827. **Dr Wardlow:** It is a very simple answer. It is something that we will look at and respond to, because there are issues about equality of access and equality of opportunity, inevitably. At the minute, you can choose to go beyond two or three miles and pay for the transport, unless there is no school of your type within that area. We know that and we know that there are restrictions, but does that have the law of unintended consequence somewhere down the line? Those are the things that we need to look at.
1828. **Mr Osborne:** I think that we would mirror that answer. It probably will be part of the response [*Inaudible.*]
1829. **Ms McGlade:** We are also interested in sharing across schools, and the issue of transport has to be accommodated if we are genuine about enabling that to happen.
1830. **Dr Wardlow:** There were some issues in the learning partnerships when they were set up. Young people who moved for a day to school B were showing their bus pass and the driver was saying that they were not coming from that school, or things ran beyond 4.00 pm and the bus driver said that it was only valid until then. So, there is also an issue about whether schools should have the budget in their own hands. There are other ways of looking at it that need to be examined, but we will certainly look at whether there is any equality impact in terms of the public sector duties that fall on the boards and whoever provides

the transport. Would it have that law of unintended consequences? Indeed, it may have a very direct consequence, particularly if you think of rurality and some of the urban areas.

1831. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Thank you very much. That was a very long session. Thank you for your contributions. I am quite confident that we will meet again. Thank you very much.

4 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr Sam Fitzsimmons	<i>Integrated</i>
Mrs Tina Merron	<i>Education Fund</i>
Professor Brandon Hamber	<i>Ulster University</i>
Professor Alan Smith	

1832. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome Tina Merron, the chief executive of the Integrated Education Fund (IEF); Sam Fitzsimmons, the communications director of the IEF; Professor Brandon Hamber from the University of Ulster; and Professor Alan Smith from the University of Ulster. I apologise for the delay. You were here for at least part of the previous session, so you understand the engagement that there is with members. I did not want to curtail that conversation too much, but I want to extend my apologies to you.

1833. Would you like to make your opening statements? I assume that you have spoken among yourselves about how you wish to organise that part of the session. We will follow with questions.

1834. **Mrs Tina Merron (Integrated Education Fund):** Thanks very much for inviting us. The Integrated Education Fund will go first, so it will be me followed by Sam, and then it will be Professor Brandon Hamber and finally Professor Alan Smith. The IEF's presentation is very brief, which might help with the timing.

1835. Let me introduce myself, first. I am the chair executive of the Integrated

Education Fund, and, as I said, I would like to thank you for inviting us. I want to give you a brief background on the fund and outline some of our plans and some of the points in our submission. It will be brief.

1836. The Integrated Education Fund is an independent charitable trust that is dependent entirely on fundraising. The trust is needed because the Government does not adequately plan for the development of integrated education in Northern Ireland. The dual purpose of the fund is to increase places across Northern Ireland to meet parental demand and to support the meaningful reform of our education system into a single system.

1837. Without educational reform, the vast majority of our children will continue to be educated separately according to their religious or community background. The cost of inaction will mean another generation growing up with limited contact with one another. Northern Ireland has reached a point where most people agree that educating our children together is the way forward. That is evidenced by regular independent surveys and polling as well as community support.

1838. The task ahead is to encourage and challenge everyone to imagine what it could be like if our children were educated together, rather than apart, and to bring about the changes needed to make that a reality. We recognise that reforming a well-established education system will not happen overnight, but we have already come a long way and some major steps have been taken.

1839. Further change is needed in planning and the Integrated Education Fund wants communities to be put at the heart of that educational planning. Any future decisions for our education system must include the views of the community. Educational planning that does not take account of parental

- demand or aspiration is neither sufficient nor acceptable. It cannot be left solely to the existing education providers or sectors to determine the future of schools in any area.
1840. The Department of Education must seek a method to find out what parents want in the types of schools in their local area. To do that, it needs a process of engaging and involving communities in the area-based planning process. The IEF asks the Education Committee to be supportive in helping to find an independent mechanism to assess parental demand. We should not assume that the types of schools that we have are what parents want. Putting communities at the heart of education should threaten no one.
1841. I will now pass over to Sam.
1842. **Mr Sam Fitzsimmons (Integrated Education Fund):** Again, I would like to thank the Chair for inviting us to give evidence. My presentation will be quite brief as well, but I will expand a little bit on what Tina said.
1843. In 2014, the fund published an alternative manifesto for education, in which we advocate a move away from the current divisive nature of our education system. Education is central and vital to creating an inclusive society, and that can only be achieved by establishing a unified and coherent education system. The IEF alternative manifesto sets out our shared vision for an inclusive and equal society in Northern Ireland, which is free from social and cultural barriers. It is a road map that indicates opportunities to deliver sustainable change and alternative approaches to six key areas of Northern Ireland's education system.
1844. The first of those is area-based planning that is shaped by the community and which reflects parental choice, community needs and the desire for a shared future in physical localities. The second is a single authority for the administration for education. The third is a single teacher-training system. The fourth is a single model of governance for all schools. The fifth is the extension of fair employment legislation to the recruitment of teachers, and the sixth is the application of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act to all schools.
1845. The Integrated Education Fund challenges the Committee to recommend that a comprehensive independent review of the economic impact of both shared and integrated education is carried out, with the principal aim of better informing policy decisions. We also encourage the Committee to recommend establishing an accessible evidence base on shared and integrated education that would be used to underpin policy decisions on strategic investment and the reform of our education system.
1846. I thank the Committee again for taking the time to hear us.
1847. **Professor Brandon Hamber (Ulster University):** Thank you very much for inviting me to address the Committee. I appreciate the invitation. I am here in my capacity as a practitioner and a researcher who has been working on peace-building and reconciliation issues in a range of societies over nearly two decades. I am also the director of the International Conflict Research Institute at Ulster University.
1848. Given the limited time, I will be very brief in my opening comments. I will speak for about three to four minutes and will focus on the challenges that education here faces from an international perspective. Incidentally, that is not something that you can do in three or four minutes, but I will give it my best shot. Before I do that, I want to acknowledge the substantial progress that has been made towards peace. All those involved should be commended, and that is recognised internationally. That said, Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society that is emerging from conflict.
1849. As you all know, 90% of children are educated in schools that are predominantly Protestant or predominantly Catholic. DE figures show that almost half of Northern Ireland schoolchildren are still being taught in

- schools in which 95% or more pupils are of the same religion. When I share that fact with politicians, practitioners and peace builders around the world, they are astounded, as integrated education is internationally considered to be a fundamental building block of sustainable peace. That is not to say that schools that are dominated by one tradition or another are inherently bad, and many serve their children very well with very sound academic education. However, I think that it is questionable whether they are able to fully supply the core skills that children need in today's society.
1850. The consultation document on a shared education policy, which was launched in January 2015, raises that very issue. It asserts that:
- "Society is changing rapidly and we must respond to that change to best meet the needs of our children and young people."*
1851. In addition, there is growing international research that shows that diversity increases productivity on a number of levels. In Northern Ireland, research has also convincingly confirmed that separate schooling on grounds of religion can create negative social attitudes of those who are perceived as the other. I can share all that research with you and will not quote it all.
1852. The United States Institute of Peace, which is one of the largest state-funded peace-building organisations in the world, funded by the United States Government, concludes that:
- "integration of schools also is an important structural aspect of education."*
1853. It goes on to state:
- "When ... ethnic groups are educated separately within the national education system ... important overt or hidden messages to students"*
- are inevitably conveyed about other groups in society. That is from a report from 2006.
1854. It is interesting to note that several high-level documents and local policies specifically recognise the importance of integrated education too. As you know, the 1998 agreement sees integrated education as an:
- "essential aspect of the reconciliation process",*
- and key to:
- "the promotion of a culture of tolerance."*
1855. The Consultative Group on the Past says:
- "reconciliation may never be achieved if our children continue to attend separated schools."*
1856. The consultation document on a shared education policy notes:
- "Our education system mirrors historical divisions in society here."*
1857. It states that:
- "the benefits of educating children and young people together are increasingly recognised."*
1858. As Tina mentioned, social surveys also show that the vast majority of the general public routinely see integrated education as key to the future. In fact, the consultative document that I quoted before notes:
- "Public and political attitudes have evolved to the degree where moving to a more inclusive educational system is a distinct possibility."*
1859. Yet the provision and, therefore, the choice are simply not available to many parents. Indeed, there is an inequality in provision. Comprehensive research on the subject has concluded that the main reason for preferences for integrated education not being met is insufficient numbers of shared spaces to accommodate demand.
1860. Other divided societies continue to learn from the work of the integrated education movement in Northern Ireland, yet, within Northern Ireland, there appears to be little political will to support that ground-breaking and internationally recognised movement. Instead, the learning from what has been achieved by the integrated education movement seems to have

- shifted into the direction of shared education.
1861. At face value, sharing and contact between groups is, of course, positive. The research in that area is promising and shows, among other benefits, that the type of inter-group contact that shared education offers can lead to more positive relationships and perceptions of others and can build into school collaboration. In many senses, however, the move to shared education merely proves the obvious. International social psychological research has shown for decades now that, under certain conditions, contact between groups can promote positive views of others. Of course, any increased contact between school-age children of different traditions is to be welcomed, but, as recent research on shared education notes, an environment that seemingly reinforces a monoculture order can limit the potential of such programmes. In other words, contact programmes taking place within an overall segregated social context, despite their positive indicators, are not necessarily conducive to creating positive attitudes between groups over the long term. It is, from a policy perspective, counter-intuitive to set up a new large-scale community relations programme to bring children into meaningful contact in schools with one another through various collaborative ventures at great expense financially and in terms of resources when the context itself will continually undermine any potential achievements unless this is part of a wider strategy to fundamentally change the context.
1862. Of course, there are many reasons why the context cannot be changed instantly, and we must foster contact where we can, but to lose sight of the fact that, logically and economically, the most viable place to foster contact is in an integrated classroom on a day-to-day basis is missing the most obvious long-term sustainable solution. Shared education should not become a policy end in itself. I therefore urge the Committee to be bold in its recommendations and set a staged long-term timetable for integration. This will truly offer the children the best opportunity for the future locally and globally and give Northern Ireland its rightful place as an exemplary peace process.
1863. **Professor Alan Smith (Ulster University):** Good morning. I am also grateful for the opportunity to meet the Committee. I provided a written submission. I hold the UNESCO chair at the University of Ulster. I have worked in this area for most of my professional career, from the early 1980s, both as a teacher and then as a development worker in promoting, what has now come to be known as, shared education in communities such as Strabane, Enniskillen and Limavady — interestingly, the same sort of areas that seem to be promoted and still engaged in shared education today.
1864. My interest here is in trying to give some kind of independent critique, really, on what I see as where shared education is being introduced into legislation and its policy aspirations, but maybe trying to ground that a little bit by looking at the realities of what is represented in the actual operational plans that are proposed by the Department of Education. I think that the inconsistencies there are often the things that should be of most concern for us.
1865. There is a more detailed submission, which has highlighted some significant limitations in the Department's operational plan for this policy, particularly in terms of the impact; the numbers of pupils who are currently affected — I think that my academic colleagues at Queen's estimate that about 10,000 pupils are currently involved, which is actually less than are involved in integrated schooling at the minute; the additional financial costs of what is already an expensive separate school system, particularly around sustainability after the philanthropic input over the initial four-year period is no longer there, and how those costs are likely to be absorbable by schools given other competing priorities; the added logistical and bureaucratic burden

if this is actually scaled up to the level that is proposed in the Department's operational plan, which, I think, is hugely ambitious; and evidence from other international contexts, which you are familiar with from other inputs. Shared campuses may seem like a well-intentioned, perhaps, stepping stone in some people's eyes towards greater integration in the education system, but evidence from other contexts suggests that it might actually increase animosity.

1866. I am willing to respond on the detail behind any of those. I would just like to conclude with three comments about how things have moved on since my making that written submission and, now, the Minister's statement and the Shared Education Bill, which is, in some sense, overtaking your deliberations on this. We are now in the situation where the Bill commits to the promotion of shared education as yet not defined. I am not quite sure if it is very common in the legislative process of many jurisdictions to actually create legislation to commit to something that has not been defined, but that is the situation that we are in. There would be concerns around the definition of shared education. It is not clear what problem it is actually designed to address. Is it about creating better community relations? Is this another iteration of a community relations programme? Is it about trying to address intolerance amongst children and young people? Is it about addressing socio-economic deprivation? Is it about economic inefficiencies? Is it to improve learning outcomes? It is not clear from the definition provided here. It is very minimalist. It includes a reference, surprisingly, to children's political opinion. I am not quite sure how primary schools will ascertain that in their engagement and involvement in this programme. I imagine that most schools would look on that as a huge challenge.
1867. In operational terms, it is significant that the statutory duty is on the Department to encourage and facilitate integrated education, which, as some of the members have already indicated,

has been quite a passive approach. It has been in the statute book for 25 years. We still have the same level of segregation in our education system. It is also significant that this is not about integrated schools: the statutory duty is about integrated education and the Department's responsibility to do something about increasing integrated education, not simply consolidating an integrated school sector. However, the shared education power through the Education Authority rather than in the Department actually goes further than that statutory duty on integrated education. The consultative documents talked about encouraging facilitation. I see in the draft that it is about actively promoting shared education, which I think will bring a tension between the statutory duty of the Department to encourage and facilitate integration and the statutory power of the Education Authority to not only encourage and facilitate but actively promote shared education. So, you are already introducing some kind of differential here in the priority that you are giving to these two policies. I think that will lead to trouble further down the track.

1868. Another point is that there is a main limitation in that most of the evidence that I have heard so far is that shared education seems to concentrate on attitudinal change between children; nowhere in the Department's plan are there targets or indicators to suggest that this is a stepping stone towards anything other than more sharing between children and young people at a cost every year. For example, there are no targets for increasing diversity of staffing in schools that are sharing or indeed for recognising diversity at the level of school governors.
1869. Finally, my biggest concern is that this policy may actually deepen inequalities. After the initial four years, the Department's own plan suggests that only 65% of schools will actually be eligible to receive funding from this because the rest are too culturally isolated. One of the criteria to access funding is that you are already involved

- in some sharing. Of course, we know that the most culturally isolated schools are also mapped very strongly onto the most socially disadvantaged areas. So, we will have a programme for four years that gives those who are already sharing the opportunity for more sharing, and we will not allow access to those who are possibly the most important target group; children who are in schools where no diversity of learning environment is already in place.
1870. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. I will be very brief because members have indicated. If we were starting from a blank sheet, I think that we would have a very different schooling system. Given where we are, in some ways, we have to work with what we have. I am not entirely sure whether there is hostility to shared education or whether you just have genuine concerns as to the route of travel. I have read your submissions, and I find them very interesting, particularly Alan's comments in relation to where we are going with the investment of money. In your paper, you have given us alternative proposals for discussion. I am interested in how you see voluntary amalgamations working across the traditional school sectors and whether you see that as a viable option.
1871. **Professor Smith:** I think that the question has not been asked. The decision already seems to have been made to put the financial investment in inviting schools to put forward proposals to share. No one has suggested that there is an equivalent amount of funding available to school governors or parents in communities who would like to come together in processes to explore the possibility for rationalisation of the educational facilities in their area. All I am saying is that it is not a very aspirational goal. You are already foreclosing those in communities who would be willing to engage in discussions about how there could be integration of schooling. You are only making the funding available to those who want to share.
1872. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I have been on this Committee, with the exception of a short time, since 2007. I have been through three variations of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and, as it became, the Education Authority. I became very aware of how entrenched people are within their systems and the challenges that there are to get over sectoral interests. If you were to go down that route — I think that it is something that should certainly be explored — I have that experience of how difficult it is to get people together, and to cross that barrier of sectoral interests is a huge challenge.
1873. **Professor Smith:** But there is not the opportunity in the fund. You have a £25 million fund and it is only open to invitations for proposals to share. None of it is open to groups that would like to investigate the possibility of voluntary amalgamation.
1874. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I am not sure that it has been closed down, but the Committee may want to explore that with the Department.
1875. **Professor Smith:** I have read the business plan and looked at the criteria.
1876. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** As a Committee, we will certainly explore that.
1877. **Professor Smith:** It would be fantastic if it were to be broadened to be inclusive of that, because that would be responding to parental demand and community interest, not simply through sectoral bodies.
1878. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There are certainly challenges in all of that. All of you referred to section 75 in your submissions and said that it should be applied to schools. Obviously, you heard the previous presentations, and neither organisation was promoting that. Will you expand on that point?
1879. **Mrs Merron:** Sorry, I did not hear the beginning bit of the other presentations.
1880. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It is in relation to section 75.

1881. **Mrs Merron:** Sorry, we were not there. We only came in in the middle of it, so we did not hear what the Community Relations Council (CRC) or the Equality Commission said on section 75.
1882. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Neither of them promoted what you have been suggesting — that it should be applied to schools. Where have you come from in order to have that conclusion?
1883. **Mrs Merron:** We are looking forward to common features across all schools, whether a common form of governance, administration, in terms of section 75 or the fair employment legislation, so it is standardised across all schools and they start off on the same platform. That is what we are trying to work towards — a single system.
1884. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation. On a point of clarity on the money, I was at the briefing when the Department was here. They clarified that all moneys available were available for both shared and integrated projects. I may be wrong on that, but that is certainly what I took from it. I look forward to getting clarity on that.
1885. What should take primacy here — parental choice or the concept that integration is best in theory for going forward? Tina, you talked about ascertaining what parents really think. If parents come back and say that they want choice in the system, is the Integrated Education Fund content with that, or would you still think that that would be a segregated system and that we need to get rid of that system? What should take primacy?
1886. **Mrs Merron:** Integrated education is always about parental choice; it is about what parents want. We surmise, however, that a lot of parents are not actually asked. There are integrated schools in so many areas, but a lot of areas do not have them. By asking parents, I mean asking through an independent process like a community audit, where someone goes out into the community, talks to people over time, has polls, ensures that they get all the information from the different sectors and that they understand the difference, and then asks the community as a whole what it would like. It is not about sectors deciding what everybody should have; it is what the parents want. I am not aware of any full community engagement or audit the Department has had across all the different sectors. It should go into one area, especially an area where there is going to be major change. You should ask the parents what they want — not what they have got, but what they would like to see in the future.
1887. **Mr Hazzard:** The opposing argument is that a parent in Belfast has that choice available at every single level. There is that good choice there, for every system, yet the vast majority of parents still do not pick integrated. It suggests that they are being asked, but that you, perhaps, do not like the answers that are coming back. Again, I am playing devil's advocate here.
1888. **Mrs Merron:** Let us put it this way: are they being asked? Two integrated schools in the Belfast corridor have just had their enrolment numbers increased because of demand. I would say that they are not being asked. What you have got is the current system. No one has actually asked them through an independent mechanism — not just polls, but going into an area and asking parents what they want. If the parents want what they have got, that is fine. It is not about making all schools integrated schools, but asking the community. We did a lot of community engagement work about two or three years ago, mostly in rural areas, and it is amazing how pragmatic parents are. They want a local school for their child, fairly close — they do not have to travel miles and miles — and they are quite happy for it to be a community or integrated school. They are less worried about the type of school as long as it is close to them.
1889. **Mr Hazzard:** So that variety of choice is fine. I find it difficult to match that with the language used, like “segregation”

- or “benign apartheid”. The integration movement itself says that choice is fine if that is what parents want, but is it really fine if you are describing it as segregated?
1890. **Mr Fitzsimmons:** The Integrated Education Fund does not describe it as segregation. OFMDFM’s T:BUC document says that we have a segregated education system. Also, the 2008 United Nations rapporteur report said that we had segregated education and that we should take steps to address that. Chris, maybe it is a higher authority —
1891. **Mr Hazzard:** That is why I was talking about parental choice earlier. Maybe we keep falling back on parental choice when we should not.
1892. **Mr Fitzsimmons:** I will take up what Tina said on community audits. Michael Wardlow from the Equality Commission referred to a deliberative poll that took place in Omagh in 2007 or 2008, I think. Parents were informed about the options for education provision that they could have, and they opted for either greater sharing or more integrated education. That is probably where we, and the Department, need to move to. We need to inform parents of the options that they have, rather than allowing institutions to dictate rationalisation within their area. To date there has been a deficit in engagement with communities and parents.
1893. **Professor Hamber:** The way I hear the recommendation is that it is really about truly understanding the issue of choice. It seems to me, from the comments you and others have made and from listening in before, that there are a lot of different understandings of what choice is. Parents actually make quite complicated choices when choosing a school. Sometimes it is purely pragmatic; sometimes it might be about culture and other backgrounds. We do not really know that landscape of choice exactly. When there is only a 7% opportunity within a certain type of schooling, there is not an equal choice. It cannot by definition be an equal choice, in the same way that it cannot be an equal choice if one school is ten miles from your house and another is one mile away; that is not an equal choice. That does not mean that we need to be pie in the sky and say that we can simply change that, but we need to understand what we mean by choice in a much more detailed way.
1894. There are all sorts of dimensions to choice. Take my personal situation: if I want to take my son to an integrated school after he turns 11, that school is much further from our house than another type of school. I happen to have a good job at the university, so I have that choice, because I can get into my car and drive him there, but if I did not have that job, I would not have that choice. I therefore understand a more complicated sense of understanding what we really mean by choice, which also tries to help square the circle — if that is the right terminology — and explain the fact that we have all these high-level surveys that clearly show that people are in favour of integrated education and greater levels of sharing, when that is not really happening. There is something there that needs to be explored. I would understand a much more detailed analysis of all of that.
1895. You made a point about segregation and its challenges. My position would be that you can look at a range of international research which suggests that an education system that is divided in different ways has a much greater potential to lead into different types of narrow perceptions of the other. That is quite well established by research. The point was raised whether we were presenting hostility to shared education or a genuine concern. For me, it is a genuine concern that we need to outline the road map. When I read these documents, I have no sense of what this will look like in 25 years. It seems like a series of initiatives that are being outlined. When I say “a long-term vision”, I am thinking that that is where you as politicians have to provide direction. Yes, that might bump up

against choice at different moments in time, but that is what leadership is.

1896. **Professor Smith:** While you may not agree with all the terms, the common feature in many of these situations — whether you call it separate schooling or a segregated system — is that the state is systematically funding separation of our children based on identity factors. The system is being funded systematically by the state. The missing piece in our situation is a choice which has been able to secure the confidence of sufficient parents from across the whole of the community as a legitimate choice. Societies that have made the transformation from highly sectorised education systems have not done it through voluntary integration. Desegregation in the United States would not have happened if it had been left to parents to integrate voluntarily. The ANC took a decision not to continue with separate schooling in South Africa. There had to be elements of leadership, legislation and state governance in order to provide an option that parents would have confidence in across the many different identity groups in society. There is a missing piece in our jigsaw, and that is a missing choice that the state has not yet provided. There was an aspiration at the foundation, and there is a history.
1897. **Mr Hazzard:** I go back to issues related to South Africa and America. You were talking about race relations. Here, of course, a lot of fears are about national identity, and there is a contest over constitutional issues that may not have existed there. This is another issue in America. The Coleman report concluded that educational outcomes stayed exactly the same after desegregation. So do we need to look at —
1898. **Professor Smith:** Except in areas where there was socio-economic mixing. This is where there is confusion — sorry for interrupting you.
1899. **Mr Hazzard:** That is another part of it, and I think it is very important. There is some confusion. Is it the case that we want to get to the point where there is entire equality of choice, so that

every single parent has the choice of an integrated solution? If that is the case, then, of course, public funding will have to be used differently. Or is it the case that we want a single system, because anything else simply will not do? That brings me to some of the criticism of shared education, which I do not understand. We say we want equality of choice across the board: well, shared education brings different sectors together in different ways, and surely that can only be a good thing. I am confused.

1900. **Professor Smith:** That would be fine if that was not taking that option. The political leadership, if you like, is challenged to say, “Which direction are we going in this society?” There is not an open chequebook. We have got to be realistic, and we have got to make that choice. All these diverse groups have their own schools and their own options. It is the most expensive option.
1901. **Mr Craig:** I have listened with interest to what you are saying. In some respects, I have no argument with what you are saying about schools being segregated, because if you have a faith-based education system of any description there has to be a level of segregation. Parents have chosen that option. Are you saying that under no circumstances should government fund faith-based education?
1902. **Professor Smith:** There is a difference between faith-based education and faith-based schooling. In most societies that have resolved this issue, there has been an ability to provide faith-based education in the context of more plural schools and learning environments. I think that that is the resolution of it. It is similar to the question about religious education. Of course that can be provided within the context. It happens in many schools, and it happens in faith-based schools.
1903. **Mr Craig:** I am listening carefully to what you are saying. I get the idea that you are saying there should be no Catholic maintained sector in Northern Ireland. I cannot take anything else out of what you are saying. Is that impression right or wrong?

1904. **Professor Smith:** No, I am not saying there should not be. I am saying that part of the dilemma we have found ourselves in is that we have a highly sectorised and, therefore, politicised education system in terms of governance, in terms of those employed within it and in terms of the enrolment of children in those separate schools. The shared education that you presumably support is trying to find a way out of that. I am raising critical questions about whether that is going to be the way that we will find out of that. There will need to be some kind of more structural, systematic change, and there may well be a place for people who want faith-based schools, as well as faith-based education. I think you need to distinguish between faith-based schooling and faith-based education. It is possible to provide faith-based education within a plural school system.
1905. **Mr Craig:** We can play about with words all we want. We all know what we are hinting at here.
1906. **Professor Smith:** Sorry, I am not clear on what you mean by that.
1907. **Mr Craig:** Faith-based education and faith-based teaching seem to go together in the Catholic maintained sector. It is either right or wrong; I do not know. I do not send my child to a Catholic maintained school, so I have no idea. It is a choice that thousands of parents across Northern Ireland make every year. I am not going to sit here and question that choice that they make; I think they have every right to make it.
1908. **Professor Smith:** Of course, if they want a faith-based education for their children, they have a right to have it. I am saying that, within the structural arrangements we have at the minute, that does not necessitate the governance, employment and enrolment also being determined by faith within their education institutions.
1909. **Mr Craig:** Another thing that has always puzzled me about the integrated sector is the high-level indicators that tell us that everybody is on for the integrated sector. It puzzles me, because, after 30-odd years, 7% of children are being educated in the integrated sector. There is another thing that absolutely baffles me around this. I watched with interest one of our local primary schools transform into the integrated sector. It was heavily pushed by the senior management in the school, but it was a process which literally took 10 years. There were several parental meetings around it, and several times the parents rejected that option. On the last occasion, it was passed by three votes at a parents' meeting. That does not tell me that there is a huge, huge sway of people out there really interested in integrated education. Does that not indicate that some of those high-level indicators that you are talking about just cannot be right?
1910. **Professor Smith:** I think that that is a question for the representatives of the integrated education movement.
1911. **Mr Fitzsimmons:** The attitudinal polls that reflect the community's aspiration that their children be taught side by side cannot be ignored. The fact that —
1912. **Mr Craig:** But are they right?
1913. **Mr Fitzsimmons:** Are they ready?
1914. **Mr Craig:** Are they correct?
1915. **Mr Fitzsimmons:** Well, they are scientifically conducted polls which are approved by the British Polling Council, and I think that the methodology cannot be questioned. The actual results are pretty consistent with successive polls over the last 20 years. The challenge that you put down that 79% would support their school transforming to integrated status, whilst only 7% actually send their children to schools, was dealt with when Professor Brandon Hamber suggested that there is a whole host of reasons for that, including the geographical locations of integrated schools. Many parents just cannot access an integrated school. Integrated schools are not planned by the Government or the Department; they are set up by parents. No other school sector or education sector has those

challenges or barriers put in front of it. That is one of the reasons why we have only 7% of children going to integrated schools. I think that Trevor referred to the fact that the Community Relations Council and the Equality Commission thought that if the same incentives were put for integrated education as have been put in front of shared education, perhaps we would have more children going to integrated schools.

1916. **Mrs Merron:** One of the things that has helped unblock the growth of integrated education recently has been the Drumragh judicial review. Since then, about 10 development proposals have gone through for integrated schools to increase, and the majority of those — seven or eight — have gone through. They were all for increased numbers. The majority of them are for primary schools to go for double enrolment and for post-primary schools to increase numbers as well. Therefore, that has opened the door, and the Department now recognises that it has that duty, and those proposals have gone through. As I said, seven or eight of those have gone through, and there are more in the system. You will see more of those coming through, and there will be an increasing number of integrated places available through that. However, that is mainly through the existing schools growing.

1917. **Professor Hamber:** To look at the growth of integrated education outside the context of an extreme political conflict would not do justice to its development. To expect that people would have been able to come together and create all those integrated spaces in the midst of a conflict over the last 30 years, when the conflict itself was driving those things apart — you could turn it around and say that 7% is quite a remarkable figure in that context. To just assume that it could grow at the same rate, notwithstanding the information from my colleagues here, does not take into account the context in which it was developed.

1918. In relation to your other comments, I do not envy the challenge that you have to deal with. All that I can do from my perspective is read the information,

integrate it, have a look at it and feed some of that back. In that context, it is very hard to see how maintaining a multiple form of choices over a long period of time is a financially sustainable way of going ahead with the education system. I think that the type of comments that have been made by IEF — that one needs a much more detailed sense of the cost-benefit analysis over a long-term period with some sort of a vision — is a much safer way to go than to simply say, “Yes, we understand the context, we understand why there are all those multiple choices; everyone has that option, and we are just going to stick with that.” When I analyse the documents, I cannot see that that is a sustainable form of a future. If you add shared education on top of that, as much as I am in favour of it, you might just be investing in another ongoing and very expensive community relations project, when actually there might be another way of restructuring. That is notwithstanding your point. You are absolutely right: it will take 10, 20 or 30 years — of course it will. However, that is the challenge that we face.

1919. **Mr Craig:** This is my last question, Chair. You seem to be saying that there should be almost some sort of forced movement towards it. That is what I am getting at: that there should be some sort of legislative rationale behind forcing people down that route. You quoted two big examples — South Africa and the United States. I have researched both of those countries with some interest, because I have family there. What I found fascinating about the figures that I have seen is that, when you down the route of forced integration, you may force the integration from a racist point of view, if you know what I mean — you mix the races — but, ironically, from a social point of view, you seem to separate the haves from the have-nots. The haves will choose to send their children to private, almost elitist, education, which is out of the Government system altogether. Would that not be the inevitable consequence of doing the same thing here?

1920. **Professor Smith:** That question was also asked in the context of the inquiry into academic selection. The conclusion was that we do not have an economy that could sustain a private schooling system here. We are a very small system — 1,000 schools or something like that. Parents who wish to have private education are very well served by grammar schools in this system, so there is no real incentive for them to send their children to private schools. I do not think that would be viable.
1921. **Professor Hamber:** I did not use the word “forced”, but what I would say is that your first step is to decide on your vision and, when you read the policy documents, the vision is quite confusing. I quoted a number of those policy documents, because, in a number of them, it is stated that the lack of integration in schools is a problem and that we need to fix it. There are numerous documents coming out of government in different places that make that sort of statement, but there is no real policy to match that to trying to find a way of answering that question.
1922. So, before we say that we are going down the route of forcing people in a certain direction, I would ask the Committee what its vision is of the education system that it would like to see. That might be something like, as we saw in the T:BUC strategy, “by 2025 we want peace walls down.” It might be by 2040 or 2050. How are we going to get there, and how will we get there so that we do not repeat the mistakes that others have made, and take that information and do it better? That is more of a legacy that is linked to the hard work that people have done on the peace process than not posing that vision.
1923. For me, the vision and what you want to get to is step one. There might be cajoling, forcing and different types of incentives in that process, but that will be a long-term and complicated process. You cannot say that we will force something down x, y and z tomorrow.
1924. **Mr Lunn:** I would normally say, “Thank you for your presentation,” but that would really not do justice today. That was the biggest dose of realism and common sense that I have listened to in seven years of sitting here. If I start with you, Professor Smith, you have laid bare the deficiencies and the contradictions in the Government’s proposals and so have you, Brandon. I do not need to comment on the work of the IEF, because you know that I support it absolutely.
1925. I only have one question, Chair. It is pretty simple, and I will address it to you, Brandon. You talked about the international context and perhaps the international perplexity at the way in which we have continued to do things here. What is the international view of something like the Moy solution? Are you familiar with that?
1926. **Professor Hamber:** Broadly; I cannot say intimately.
1927. I cannot speak for the entire international community, but, broadly speaking, people think that the idea of trying to move schools under the same type of roof and build a system around that type of structure seems quite antithetical to a lot of what is in the international literature. That is not to say that there would not be support for areas of integration, transformation and connection. I do not think that anyone is naive enough to say that one should not have some of that as well. I think that people would be quite perplexed. The most well-known case — Alan can speak about it — is the Bosnian case. That attracted a lot of international attention.
1928. **Mr Lunn:** I am not too sure about learning from Bosnia. Alan, do you have any thoughts about this?
1929. **Professor Smith:** The figures that you quoted on the parental views in Moy tell the story. There is a fairly equal group of parents who would prefer to see one school, and there is another group. Both those groups have contacted me since that ‘Spotlight’ programme. There are already differences of opinions among the parents. It will be an expensive experiment, and we will see how it

- unfolds. I hope that it will be a positive experience.
1930. **Mr Lunn:** I sincerely hope that it is a one-off. It is one of the three programmes that the Government has selected and is going to support, and it just seems unreal to me that they could come up with a solution like that and not go the whole hog. Through a wee bit of cajoling, encouragement or incentivising, they could do the obvious thing, which they will probably come to in 10 or 20 years anyway.
1931. **Professor Smith:** Those solutions tend to avoid the two other big structural issues that I referred to in my opening remarks, which relate to institutional change. What are the arrangements for the shared governance of those schools or the schools on the Omagh site? What are the arrangements for shared staffing and the employment of teachers, so that all the pupils in all those schools on the same site, or under the same roof or whatever, have their learning opportunities enriched by being taught by educators from different backgrounds? If we keep focusing on children and changing their attitudes and their perceived intolerance or whatever else, we are just avoiding those other key issues.
1932. **Mr McCausland:** I have two quick points. Alan, you referred to the issue of areas of particular disadvantage, where there may not be the same extent of sharing. I was not clear on that. In north Belfast, there are very high levels of disadvantage and more interfaces — violent and troubled interfaces — than anywhere else in Northern Ireland. There are schools there — I will not name them, but I can think of two that are a couple of hundred yards apart on either side of a very difficult peace line — which are involved in a number of programmes. So there is as a high level of disadvantage and a high level of division, yet they are doing that. Is there some documentary evidence for the point that you made?
1933. **Professor Smith:** I drew on the statements from the Department's business plan, which made the statement that only 65% schools — I am not sure of the exact number; 762 or something — would access that funding, because the other areas are too culturally isolated. It would be interesting if the Department would tell us how those culturally isolated groups map to social deprivation.
1934. **Mr McCausland:** Is that not more to do with rural areas where huge swathes of the country are either overwhelmingly Catholic or overwhelmingly —
1935. **Professor Smith:** We do not know; the Department has not clarified that. I am saying that the possible consequence of mapping social disadvantage to cultural isolation will be that we only fund those who are not culturally isolated and will, therefore, widen the inequalities gap.
1936. **Mr McCausland:** A bit of clarity is needed around where the lack of sharing occurs at the moment and how that correlates with economic disadvantage.
1937. **Professor Smith:** It would have been good to have thought of that in advance.
1938. **Mr McCausland:** I will pass that on to the Department.
1939. The other point is that there are two sectors with different positions insofar as integrated and Irish medium are concerned. You talked about Catholic schooling and Catholic education; presumably the same thing could apply to Irish-medium schooling and Irish-medium education. In a shared situation, how do you see Irish medium fitting in?
1940. **Professor Smith:** I cannot speak for Irish medium; I can give only an opinion and interpretation of it. In a sense, I see Irish-medium education kind of caught in the same dilemma as integrated education, in that it did not intend to be a sector. The intention of the early integrated schools was to demonstrate that theirs was a viable option and another way that the system could be organised with more inclusive schools. Equally, my impression, based on the contact that I had in the 1980s

- with those advocating Irish-medium education, was that they did not intend to become a sector; it was to have available throughout our system an entitlement to Irish language education. In a sense, integrated and Irish language or Irish-medium education are, in a sense, collateral damage of our highly sectorised system.
1941. **Mr McCausland:** Looking to the future, how would it fit in?
1942. **Professor Smith:** Irish medium? Well, I think that all pupils in Northern Ireland should be entitled to have access to a mother tongue language instruction. That presents a huge challenge. Whether in a state school, a Catholic maintained school or whatever, there should be the opportunity for mother tongue language instruction. That is a kind of universal right. The implementation of it is difficult, and it would be the same, I assume, for Ulster Scots.
1943. **Mr McCausland:** There is no desire there for schools, I can assure you.
1944. **Professor Smith:** Sorry.
1945. **Mr McCausland:** There is no desire there for schools, even though, technically, it would be an entitlement, there is no desire for it yet. I think that their cultural rights can be met within the controlled sector or whatever sector. OK, that is fine.
1946. **Professor Smith:** Basically, I am saying what my position would be on this entitlement or —
1947. **Mr Hazzard:** I am interested in a couple of points to finish, perhaps. What do you think the Department should do straight away? What is the most important thing that we could get on with to fulfil the ambitions that you talked about? Equally, in your opinion, what is the most important thing that the Committee inquiry needs to be addressing or saying? Lastly, do you feel that there is a duty on the Department to provide secular education to those who want it? I often feel that that is the white elephant in this whole debate, in that, to me, integrated is still ecumenical, still faith-based to a certain extent, because we are still talking about religion and not about the entirely secular separation of church and state. Do you feel that there is an onus on the Department to provide that?
1948. **Mrs Merron:** The integrated movement would certainly like to see an analysis of the benefits and costs of shared and integrated education, going forward. I would also like to see the vision that is missing, which Brandon talked about. As well as that, one of the key things for us is to have community engagement to really find out what communities want, and not assume that what is there is what they want. Do you want to add anything to that, Sam?
1949. **Mr Fitzsimmons:** I just reiterate the need for community engagement and community audits. I would like to see some accessible evidence base that would help policymakers in their decision-making around strategy and the fiscal element, in particular. I suppose that the independent review of shared and integrated education and its impact would feed into that.
1950. **Mrs Merron:** In terms of secular education, the integrated movement has always struggled with that scenario. The aim was to have multiple faiths in one school, with the option for parents to opt out. However, we thought it easier to put everything in and let parents decide later whether they want to withdraw their child from religious education. It has always been a case of putting everything in and get everybody to agree that, and then, if people want to withdraw, they can.
1951. **Professor Hamber:** It is a difficult question. From my side, I would probably cite some of the things that IEF just outlined in terms of the cost-benefit type of analysis. I would like to see us moving away from trying to assess what strategies are being proposed in quite a narrow way, for example, by saying that, if we start getting greater sharing, this might improve relationships. We should maybe step back from that and ask in what context we are trying to improve relationships and how is what we are doing impacting on this wider

context. I alluded to it at the beginning of my submission. In the international context, others around the world are focusing very much on trying to educate their children with as much diversity and cross-cultural input as possible to make them as competitive in the world as possible. Here, every time we raise issues such as integration and other things, there seems to be a rolling back from that. There is a massive opportunity right now to do this differently, and I would like to see some vision in people grasping that and taking it forward. The simple thing would be — I know it is almost impossible — for there to be some way of getting round the table saying, “This is where we want the system to be”, and asking, “How do we get there?” There might be multiple avenues to get there and it is going to be complicated, but, for me, that would be the single thing.

1952. You asked a question about secularism. I am an educator; I work in a university and would say that, for me, the primary role of education is to teach people to think critically. What I would like to see — some integrated schools achieve it but not all, and other schools achieve it — is an environment in which people can learn about whatever religion they want and can express whatever sense of secularism they want or they can express their atheism in whatever way they want, and we teach young people to have a critical engagement with that and move away from the idea that this is embedded in this type of sectoral learning. Granted, I accept the comments about whether that means the end of the Catholic-based education system; I do not know what that looks like in the long term. My advice, simply from looking at international lessons, would be that, if we can bring that all into one place and let people engage with their religions and their secularism in different ways, we have much better hope for the future.
1953. **Professor Smith:** On secular provision, personally, I would encourage my children and engage with them on whether they wanted to participate in religious

education or, indeed, religious instruction in some of our schools. However, my position is that any school that is in receipt of state funding from the taxpayer should have a responsibility to provide education for all faiths and none. I do not think that the opt-out is sufficient. If my child was opted out of any faith provision, I would expect his or her time to be used constructively and that he or she would not simply be left to twiddle their thumbs or be supervised in some room. Quite a lot of research has been done in the Republic of Ireland on that, where many parents who did not want their children to be involved in religious education provision were complaining that their children were being neglected and not adequately provided with educational alternatives. The responsibility should be on all schools.

1954. What should the Department do? Well, it seems that the way the legislation is stacking up, this power to facilitate, encourage and promote will be devolved through the Education Authority, however it ends up being defined. It might be defined as Irish-medium education; I am sure that would do in this retrospective definition. So, in a sense, that is a role for the Education Authority with a statutory authority. I would say to the Department that, after 25 years, maybe it is time that as well as the statutory responsibility on the Department to encourage and facilitate integrated education — I am not talking simply about a sector but about finding out how our system could be more integrated — it should have a statutory responsibility to promote it.
1955. The state should start to take responsibility for this, rather than, for 25 years, discharging its responsibility by giving about half a million pounds a year to a voluntary, semi-governmental body to try to change a whole system. That is not good enough. We should have the sort of governance now that can take on these challenges and give leadership on them. Give the Department a statutory responsibility, which is extended to promote as well as encourage and facilitate.

1956. **Mr Lunn:** I have only a one-line comment to make. The Assembly voted in favour of doing exactly that about three years ago, but the Department did not take a blind bit of notice. It was a private Member's motion; it happened to be mine.
1957. **Mrs Overend:** Thanks very much for your presentation. It cannot all be done at once, and you recognise that. In going forward from where we are now, would you suggest that there should be more integration at primary level or at post-primary level? If we cannot do it all at once, where would it be more beneficial to begin?
1958. **Mrs Merron:** I think that wherever the parental demand is now is forcing integrated education. A majority of the integrated primary schools have put in proposals to increase their numbers because the demand is there. That then feeds into the post-primary schools. You may not be aware that a lot of post-primary schools will also this year be submitting development proposals to increase their numbers. A lot more development proposals will be coming through where the parental demand already exists.
1959. Sam alluded earlier to the fact that it is not the Department of Education that plans for integrated education; it is parents who are expected to plan for a new integrated school. To ask parents to do that is to ask them to take on a massive task. The Department, along with the Education Authority, should take that responsibility on, plan for it and look to see where there are potential changes in an area. It should ask parents what they want and, if it is integrated education, it should provide an integrated school.
1960. **Mrs Overend:** You mentioned asking parents previously. Sometimes, when surveys are done, you find that parents are in favour of integrated education, but when it comes to choosing it, they are not doing so. How can finding out about parental choice be done more effectively?
1961. **Mrs Merron:** So far, we have been involved in a lot of polling. We have asked an independent polling company to do that, but it has to be more than that. It has to be about community engagement. You need to go into the area and get to the right stakeholders. You need to find out who they are, bring them together and let them be aware of the different types of system. You need to let them know what will happen, what the changes are, where their local schools are, where the surplus places are and what the vision is for the area. You then need to establish focus groups, which takes time. It is not about having a quick poll and that would be the end of it. It can take two to three months to get all that information and feed it back to the parents. Then you can have a final poll or ballot at the end to see what parents want. There has not been anything like this; I am not aware of it except for the deliberative poll that you mentioned in the Omagh area. There has just been a one-off poll; this has not been done before. The Department has said that it is looking for an independent mechanism. It is about helping the Department to find that mechanism and doing this in areas.
1962. **Professor Hamber:** From a research perspective, we have quantitative data from many years of surveys but we need qualitative data. We need to ask people what they really think and engage with them at a much more detailed community level to understand whether people know what the choices are and how they are making them. What we might find could be quite interesting compared with what we think about how people go about making that decision.
1963. **Professor Smith:** I will make a quick practical response. Where do we start? Well, it is already in the plan for the Department: appoint 20 people who will go out and be the development workers to try to work with people and find out what the appetite is for integration and how that would take place. These are investments that are now going into our education system that have never been invested in facilitating

the exploration of people's appetite for integration. There are 15 development officers – £36,000 a year. Do the same and promote integrated education in the same way in the spirit of equality.

1964. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Thank you all for your submissions and for taking the time to come to the Committee today. I apologise again for the delay, but I appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

11 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Paul Lawther	<i>Belfast Education and Library Board</i>
Mr Ray Gilbert	<i>North Eastern Education and Library Board</i>
Mr Nicky McBride	<i>South Eastern Education and Library Board</i>
Mr John Unsworth	<i>Southern Education and Library Board</i>
Ms June Neill	<i>Western Education and Library Board</i>

1965. The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):

We have a representative from each of the five boards here today: Paul Lawther, assistant senior education officer at Belfast Education and Library Board; Ray Gilbert, senior education officer at the North Eastern Education and Library Board; John Unsworth, assistant senior education officer at the Southern Education and Library Board; June Neill, deputy head of curriculum advisory support services at the Western Education and Library Board; and Nicky McBride, the chief administrative officer at the South Eastern Education and Library Board. Thank you very much for coming; you are all very welcome. I ask you to make an opening statement. I am not sure whether each of you wants to make one in turn; I assume you have agreed the process outside.

1966. **Mr Ray Gilbert (North Eastern Education and Library Board):** Thank you, Chair and members, for the opportunity to meet in relation to the inquiry into shared and integrated education. I am delighted to be here. John Unsworth and I will both say a few words by way of opening statement.

1967. I will start off by setting a little bit of context. We represent the five education and library boards, which since 1973 have had a wide range of educational functions, including education for young people, support for teachers and schools and a range of other services. Over the years many of those services have been provided, as they are still, across the community divide. For example, professional development for teachers is a fully integrated process. There is, therefore, quite a lot of background and experience of working in an intercommunity group through that. We appreciate that we are here today as representatives of the education and library boards, but we are some eight weeks away from moving into the Education Authority, and we understand that context. We also set what we say today in the broader context: education is currently, and has been in the past, important in our society to developing community in a post-conflict society, so that we move into a position where we try to build those cross-community relationships. We hope to build on a lot of practice that has gone on for a long time.

1968. Obviously, the education and library boards have, and, in a number of weeks' time, the Education Authority will have, significant responsibility for educational provision in Northern Ireland across all educational sectors to ensure that there are a suitable number of educational places available, including in the integrated sector.

1969. We set our presentation today in the context of recognising that there is a continuum in the whole area of sharing. At one end, there might have been, in the past, occasional cross-community contact between young people from different religious backgrounds; at the other end of the spectrum, there is fully integrated, immersed education; in between, there are things like controlled integrated provision and, obviously, the shared education concept. The boards have in recent years been involved significantly with external partners such as the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), the sharing education programme (SEP) and Atlantic Philanthropies in a range of shared education projects. We hope that we bring a reasonable amount of experience of working with schools on this kind of cross-community work.
1970. We are also significantly involved currently with the OFMDFM shared education signature project. The education and library boards have members on the project board, including some of us here this morning. We have been significantly involved in the development of that project, particularly at the present, and June Neill, to my right, from the Western Board is leading operationally on putting together the first tranche of schools to be involved in the first phase of the project. Getting the signature project up and running is a very important role. Beyond that we in the Education Authority will have a significant role in providing support through the development officers we are in the process of appointing. They will support schools as they bring forward their shared education projects and, more importantly, in the whole area of capacity-building, because we want this to be mainstreamed into the normal life of our schools.
1971. By way of summary of where the five education and library boards are on shared education, I can say without equivocation that there is a very supportive attitude to shared education right across the five education and library boards. We as officers reflect the views of our members and of the commissioners of the South Eastern Board. That has been reflected in the very significant involvement of boards in shared education projects over time and particularly in recent times.
1972. The benefits of shared education are not only what we have observed through our work with schools. There has been significant research done by the University of Ulster, Queen's University and the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) on the projects that boards have been involved in through school partnerships. There is a full range of projects, and we see real benefits. There is emerging research that shared education activity can raise standards. I know that you have had presentations from Professor Colin Knox of the University of Ulster, who has done work on this. There certainly is emerging research evidence that would tie in with educational evidence which we have had for quite some time that, where young people, for example, write for an external audience, the standard of writing is often higher than when writing for their own teachers whom they see every day. Certainly, in the curriculum-based projects we have been involved in, we see the impact on the learning of young people working together and working with teachers from other schools.
1973. Obviously, there are significant wider benefits. A significant ambition for shared education is to build cross-community confidence and trust, recognising that we are all human beings and are very similar in many ways, but also learning to respect our differences. These are benefits that broaden out to the community. Significantly, we have seen in some of the shared education projects that boards have been involved in an impact on the community through governors and also parents. I quote an example from the North Eastern Board, which we presented to the Committee before in the progress in English (PiE) project, which specifically targeted rural areas, where there was quite often a significant community divide. When the schools, the governors and the parents came

- together, it had a significant impact at a very simple level. People were meeting colleagues from other schools on the streets and were able to engage in conversation because they knew them, where, perhaps, previously they would have seen one another as part of a separate community.
1974. We recognise that there are opportunities for potential economic benefits in these very stringent times. We are involved in the shared campus programme. The Western Board is involved in the Lisanelly project. My colleague from the Southern Board is involved in the project in the Moy. I am involved directly in the Cross and Passion/Ballycastle High School project. These are the three projects that were approved in the first round of shared campus provision. Certainly, the early work recognises that that kind of provision affords significant opportunities for efficiencies: you can perhaps have a single block for STEM or a single set of playing fields, as opposed to replicating these for each school.
1975. We also recognise, and, again, the evidence of recent shared education projects shows, that when teachers work together, it creates a professional development network. Teachers from different management types learn together and work together. We have had projects that shared teachers from schools of different management types, which, as with all continuous professional development (CPD), are on a totally cross-community basis. School partnerships have had significant benefits, particularly for smaller schools, whose teachers are often quite isolated, in the form of working with colleagues from other schools and sharing ideas and best practice.
1976. Obviously, the clear and significant benefit is to our children and young people as they develop their attitudes and experiences. They recognise their own and one another's culture and learn to respect and trust one other. That, we feel, is very significant. I will hand over to John at this point.
1977. **Mr John Unsworth (Southern Education and Library Board):** I will follow on from what Ray has said. I know that the Committee is particularly interested in the key enablers that support and facilitate the development of shared education. We are focusing in on shared education, but much of what we say will apply to integrated education as well. As Ray said, we are speaking from our experience as boards in supporting and facilitating a lot of the research and development work in the projects, which has led us to the point that we are now in this whole process of developing and implementing shared education. I am sure these have been brought to your attention by other contributors, and in many senses they are obvious, but there are things that we can say directly from our own experience enable and facilitate the effective and successful development of shared education.
1978. The first enabler is clearly visionary and determined leadership. In all the projects that we have been involved in and all the communities that we are working with now in our boards to develop shared education in response to local requests and local desire, it is clear that where it works it is because of visionary and determined leadership. That is leadership from the appointed staff at the school — the principal and other teachers — as well as, very importantly, from the governors. Our experience has been that it takes that vision, even if there is only one in a school to say that this is something would be worth doing for the sake of our school and our wider community. That leadership and vision need to be built, encouraged and sustained, but, from our experience, if they are not there, they cannot be imposed. Nor would we, through any of our work, seek to impose them on schools or communities. That leadership and vision among staff and governors have to be present, nurtured, supported and developed, if shared education is to be truly effective.
1979. Another key enabler is effective communication and engagement with the local community: with parents, the

- wider community and other schools, obviously. In most situations we are talking about a direct partnership between two, three or, in some cases, four schools. There is a need to build those relationships, that understanding, that trust in the wider community, and, in our experience, to proceed carefully and with attentiveness to the issues and concerns that communities may have. Effective engagement with governors and parents and the wider community is therefore a key enabler.
1980. Another key enabler is the provision of support, time and resources. There is, we believe, clear evidence of the need for pump-priming at the start when school communities say, "This is something we feel is the right thing to do for our community, by coming together to develop shared approaches." There is the need for an injection of time, energy, resources and very focused professional support at the early stages. What we have been able to do, through a number of the projects, is give that support in a way that the process does not become dependent on it, but in a way in which the balance of input and support externally, if you like, decreases over time. One of the key issues that we find in our work on shared education is the need to develop approaches which are sustainable and which do not depend, in the longer or even the medium term, on additional funding and input of external support. Our observation and experience is that it is certainly needed in the early stages. We have been fortunate to have had access to resources through IFI, Atlantic Philanthropies and other sources, such as OFMDFM and the Department of Education through the signature project, to enable that sort of injection of support and professional expertise. Again, our experience is that, if that is not present, and it is not put in the early stages, the success of any programme or project will be seriously hindered.
1981. Another observation of what we see makes for successful shared education is that it has to become part of the way we do things around here, in the school community. It is not an add-on, an initiative or the latest bright idea to come out of wherever that we have to do. It is most effective where there is ownership within the school communities and also when it just becomes part of the way we do things — this is the way we provide our history, or this is the way we do Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) between our schools. Those are examples of some of the areas of collaboration, but it could be much broader than that. It has to become part of the way that the schools provide their educational experience for their pupils, rather than an add-on or an additional initiative. Again, we have experience in the work we have been doing of seeing how that can be done so that it becomes embedded in the day-to-day life and operation of the schools.
1982. We see those as some of the key enablers which, from our experience, will help to make shared education effective. The boards have been privileged to have had access to resources to take forward some of that work. As Ray has mentioned, we have now been charged with taking forward a signature project on behalf of OFMDFM, DE and Atlantic Philanthropies, and that is a very exciting opportunity for us. We look forward to bringing the lessons that we have learnt across the boards in this work into that project, which, we hope and believe, will help to pave the way forward for the further development of shared education across our system.
1983. Clearly, there are a number of issues still around. Obviously, you will be aware of the consultation on the policy and the definitions of shared education. From our experience, those are very important issues, which certainly need to be discussed and explored across our society to arrive at a shared understanding because there are a variety of understandings in the system at present. That is our experience. We think that that process, that consultation, will ultimately be a very helpful one in terms of our system arriving at an understanding

- and definition, or definitions, of shared education.
1984. There are a range of other issues which, no doubt, you have been exploring or will explore. For now, that is sufficient for us to bring to your attention.
1985. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much, and thank you for your presentation. Thank you for your written briefings as well. Ray, you mentioned this morning and in your written briefing, the educational, societal and economic benefits of shared education. How would you prioritise those?
1986. **Mr Gilbert:** I think, obviously, the societal benefits are extremely important because we are moving through the process in a post-conflict society. We all want to see the development of our society in Northern Ireland. Our experience, and the evidence from the research that has been done around some of the projects that we have all been involved in, is around making that core change to people's attitudes and how they approach colleagues and that sense of trust, understanding and recognition. I suppose that, at a very simple and basic level, it is an understanding that, as I said earlier, we are all simply human beings. We are very similar, and yet we have differences but respecting individual cultures in that and learning to live together, even though we come from very different cultural backgrounds. So I think that, in terms of a broader impact, those societal issues are extremely important.
1987. The economic issues are very pressing and, certainly, I think that we should be exploring where there is potential emerging from shared education. Again, I will use an example which I am very familiar with, of the work in Ballycastle. I know that you have had a presentation from colleagues in Cross and Passion and Ballycastle High School. Certainly, we are working through a process at the moment to look at how those schools can benefit from capital investment made more efficiently, rather than providing the particular requirements for them as two individual schools.
1988. This is an important point as well. I talked earlier about the continuum. Communities in Northern Ireland are all in very different places because they all have had very different experiences. Some are ready for the full process of integration, some for sharing and some are not yet ready. We have to set everything in that context. However, in the example that I refer to where, hopefully, there will be a significant economic benefit, there is a situation where there are two schools: one of 600-plus pupils and one of 430, in a relatively rural area. If you look at the basic sustainability figures, you might raise a question around the 430-pupil school. However — I know that Barbara Ward and Ian will have shared this with you — the fact is that, in Ballycastle, the planning is done for 1,000 children, to get the best educational pathways and opportunities for those children. There is over 25 years of shared-class experience there. The economic benefits that will come out of investment that takes account of that, as opposed to providing perhaps duplicated facilities when there is a significant pressure on capital, means that, hopefully, others can benefit from making the capital more readily available to a broader range of schools.
1989. So, in summary, I think that the societal benefits are likely to be more far reaching, but we cannot lose sight of the potential for learning together as well when we do shared facilities.
1990. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Are we not in the business of educating young people? Educational outcomes are clearly very important in all this.
1991. **Mr Gilbert:** Absolutely, and we recognise the emerging evidence that, where young people learn together, it can have a major impact on their performance in their educational output, not just in GCSEs or A levels but that broader issue around the wider educational benefits. I am not sure whether my colleagues want to add anything to that.

1992. **Mr Unsworth:** Let me just pick up on the educational benefits. We know that, through shared education and collaboration between schools, the range of courses and so on available to pupils is wider than it would otherwise be if there were not that collaboration and partnership. Certainly, through some of the projects — June may be able to speak more about this as well — we have evidence that, where pupils from different schools are coming together to learn together in a subject, for example, A-level history and politics done in a shared class is going to be very different. The way those children learn and the depth of learning that they will have, in a sense, because they are learning in a shared classroom rather than in separate ones, is different. Does it lead to a better grade in their A level? We believe that it does, and that it leads to deeper and richer learning because it is being done in a shared manner.
1993. **Ms June Neill (Western Education and Library Board):** I think that it is important not have a narrow view of what the outcomes of shared education are. Some of those broader outcomes are in terms of what our aspirations are for the kind of young people we want in this society and what skills we want them to have. It is important for them to be able to dialogue effectively with a range of communities, both in the community, the workplace and so on. I think that shared education fits very well into the current Northern Ireland curriculum in terms of those wider skills that we are looking to impart to young people. Shared education is an ideal vehicle for the delivery of some of those wider skills. Therefore, I think that we need to be careful not to interpret outcomes just in terms of literacy and numeracy. Of course, those are terribly important, and we take that for granted, but there is an additionality that will come from the kinds of experiences that young people will have through interacting with another school and young people of a different community. That is terribly important.
1994. We have a lovely example of that, which John raised, of two schools in Londonderry/Derry, where pupils from what is predominantly a grammar school serving the Protestant population go to the Catholic boys' grammar school to study government and politics at A level. The level of discussions that must go on in that classroom, to me, must enrich their experience of that A level, not only in what grade they might get but in the kind of young people who will come out of that experience, having had an opportunity to engage with diverse and differing views. We need to think about all the potential in shared education for those wider outcomes that we can get from it.
1995. **Mr Gilbert:** I just want to make a short comment. Picking up on the example that June has given, I was very struck in recent months by the fact that two young people from schools in Derry/Londonderry swapped uniforms and went down the town to see how they were perceived wearing the uniform of the other person. We could talk at length about that, but for those young people to have reached the level of maturity to say, "We need to see things from another perspective" was a lovely example of mature thinking and development.
1996. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I was interested in the Western Board's paper. You highlighted the concern that by promoting shared and integrated education, you believe that the controlled sector would be disadvantaged.
1997. **Ms Neill:** It is a particular issue, and I cannot comment on other education and library boards, but we have a significant number — we quoted figures and gave you that information in the paper that we submitted — of schools that are designated in the controlled sector where the population is ostensibly mixed. In fact, in Derry, we have two controlled schools that are predominantly serving the Catholic population, so, sometimes, we need to be aware of the issues. We can generalise about controlled schools

working with maintained schools or whatever that this is what it is about. I am not saying that they are not designated as integrated schools. We have only one primary school in the city that is designated as a controlled integrated school, but there is a level of integration in those schools. What can we do to try to nurture those schools to be able to lift the experiences of those schools in working with others? In my experience of the conversations that we have had with the principals in some of those schools, they do not necessarily feel that shared education is something that they are going to engage in, because the definition of shared education is that there are two schools from differing communities but there is a level of sharing. I think that that challenges our definition of shared education. We have to be careful that we do not get something that is terribly prescriptive and that schools that are slightly different fall outside those circumstances. You could argue the same for integrated schools. We would be keen, particularly in the signature project, to ensure that the programme is open to all schools, whether integrated, maintained, controlled or whatever, and that the mix exists in those schools. We need to be careful not to see it in that very narrow way, of maintained and controlled, and to look more about the population in those schools so that appropriate partnerships are developed.

1998. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Something that is not necessarily missed by this Committee but may be missed externally, and, I would like to think, is not missed by you, given the fact that you are the advocates for the controlled sector, is that it is non-denominational and there is natural sharing in that sector anyway. That came out very strongly in the Western Board paper.
1999. **Mr Gilbert:** Also, in a recent discussion at the North Eastern Board, there was a significant discussion around that issue and a recognition that controlled schools are non-denominational schools and recognising that, depending on the

community that they serve, there is quite a significant mix of our traditional population in what would be termed by some people as a school representing only one side of the community. I know that is something that my members feel very strongly about.

2000. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There is just one more question from me at this stage. Again, in the Western Board paper — I am not going to show bias towards that paper in any way — you mentioned that the legal definition of integrated education is becoming difficult to define in its own right. Could you perhaps expand on that?
2001. **Ms Neill:** The notion of integrated as a designated sector and then the whole notion of integration as something that has happened naturally in schools begins to dilute — “dilute” is probably not the right word — to challenge that notion of designated integrated schools. That is fine, but there is already a level of sharing and integration in certain schools. It happens mainly in the controlled sector, although there are some examples of it in the maintained sector. We need to think about how we work with all the differences that exist. In the years since the integrated sector was established, I am not sure of the extent to which integration in the other sectors has increased. To follow on from Ray’s idea for a continuum, for some schools that come together to share, further steps may be shared campuses while maintaining two schools and two identities. For some, further steps may mean going the whole way to integration.
2002. Depending on community support, parental support and all the other things, we have a sort of continuum. We need to look at that continuum more carefully and see how it develops.
2003. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** A number of you were present at our area-planning event last Wednesday evening, so you will be aware of some of the comments made, including one that not all sectors are being treated fairly and that there are sacred cows. Is there a hierarchy of sectors?

2004. **Mr Nicky McBride (South Eastern Education and Library Board):** That is not something that we recognise. It is certainly not how the education and library boards treat the sectors.
2005. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You believe that all are being treated equally.
2006. **Mr McBride:** That is how we would like to provide our services.
2007. **Mr Paul Lawther (Belfast Education and Library Board):** We certainly provide our services to all sectors on an equal basis. We would not single out one for special treatment above another. Our role is to provide services to teachers, which we do on an equal basis. They are all schools, they are all teachers and they are all pupils. That is what we do.
2008. **Mr Gilbert:** There is a contextual piece here. As the person who leads area planning in my board, I can say that we continually struggle with the board's overarching responsibility to ensure there is effective provision, and of the right type. However, we are not the managing authority for all that provision.
2009. I concur with my colleagues' comments that, despite what has sometimes been portrayed in the media, there has been very close working-together between different sectors as area plans have been developed. We recognise that that can always improve, and we seek to do that.
2010. **I also concur with what Nicky said:** boards work with all schools. Even though we are the managing authority for the controlled sector, we have other responsibilities across the full range of schools. I used the example earlier of us having a statutory duty to secure support for teachers across all sectors. One of the interesting things over the years has been that teachers working together on professional development, and so on, are completely integrated. It is cross-community and everything else. Networks grow from that because, for example, maths teachers work together and history teachers work together.
2011. **Mr Kinahan:** I have hundreds of questions, but the Chair raised three questions that I want to focus on. The definition in the draft Shared Education Bill indicates that everyone is going to have to be in one form of education or the other. Should we be changing that to give us some form of flexibility so that either the Department or the Education Authority can choose where there is to be a different flavour of sharing that must happen? That way, we will not just be tied to the maintained and controlled labels. If so, who should have that power?
2012. **Ms Neill:** The point that you make is a very important one. There needs to be a bit of flexibility. That follows on from the point that I made about being very rigid about sectors. A more useful way might be to look at it in the context of the particular community and ask whether, as you say, there is a level of sharing and what the mix of population is in a school. We may be excluding schools and certain contexts by being very rigid about what does and does not apply. We need to be aware of the diversity that exists through the sectors that our education system has, and even the diversity that exists within each of those sectors. We need to be very careful that any legislation does not exclude particular contexts and communities, and is therefore fair and equitable to everybody. The willingness of people to come together and share is the key thing.
2013. **Mr Lawther:** We have many examples of where principals, senior management teams (SMTs) and other groups in schools share, but we do not define it as "shared education". They come together and work together. They share what they do. That is disseminated in schools. The benefit that we are looking for by doing that is the raising of academic achievement in all schools, which, in turn, will produce economic benefits for Northern Ireland. We do not define that as "shared education", but a lot of it has gone on, and has done for a very long time. Perhaps that is something that we should do. It is probably very

- effective. As I said, it has been in existence. Those networks of principals, other groupings and coordinators in schools and in areas of Belfast have worked together. We are probably not really defining it for them as “shared education”, but that is what they do. It probably has a very big impact.
2014. **Mr Kinahan:** It seems to be coming down to to whom we give the role. Do we need a different body to drive sharing, or do you just do it through the new Education Authority?
2015. **Mr Unsworth:** One of our concerns is the further division of our system. You have the shared sector. You have the controlled sector. In our experience, that would not be a positive step forward. As I said, some of the projects that we have been doing with the existing sectors and groups have involved integrated, grant-maintained integrated, controlled, maintained — the whole wide range. Our hope is that it will become part of the way in which things are done rather than a completely separate approach to education that needs some sort of separate body.
2016. Language and definitions are clearly very important. The current consultation provides an opportunity for the whole education community and beyond to engage and to contribute thinking. That is a process that is going on in our boards. Obviously, we are not in a position to give you our boards’ position on the definitions, other than to say that it is an ongoing process of consultation and discussion. Ultimately, we feel that the definitions will be helpful.
2017. **Mr Kinahan:** To follow on from the Chair, we have different sectoral bodies, if we call them that, with different strengths and powers in legislation. Is the way forward to try to have bodies that represent everyone, with the same powers and control, or is it to have none at all and to leave it all to the Education Authority?
2018. **Mr Gilbert:** We have to accept that, in Northern Ireland, there are many education bodies. It is often interesting trying to explain it to someone from outside. The key thing is the very close working relationship between those bodies. As John indicated, in the shared education projects that we have been involved with, it has been a joint effort. Although we work for different organisations, we have a significant and long track record of working together. In many ways, that is an example of sharing. We are respectful of the management position of each of the different authorities, yet we find common ground to work together to the benefit of children and young people. That is not always apparent. There is perhaps a perception that different management types and sectors are paddling their own canoe, but that is not our experience.
2019. **Mr Kinahan:** Therefore, it works all right.
2020. **Mr Gilbert:** Yes.
2021. **Mr Kinahan:** I cannot remember who talked about having an audit, or a baseline, on sharing. From looking at the amount of sharing that is going on in all our schools, my gut feeling is that we are at about 25%. Are any of you brave enough to say how much sharing you think goes on?
2022. **Ms Neill:** I do not know, but I think that that percentage might be low. The issue is what you mean by sharing.
2023. **Mr Lawther:** It is about how you define it.
2024. **Ms Neill:** That is the problem. When we are talking about shared education in the context of the shared education policy, the Bill, or whatever, we are talking about sharing that has a particular purpose to build reconciliation, and so on. A lot of sharing is going on in the system. Although you can say, for example, that all the collaboration that is going on between schools on the entitlement framework is a type of sharing, the question is whether that is an example of sharing with that particular purpose in mind and whether it leads to that particular purpose’s outcome. In our system, we could encourage lots of sharing and collaboration. We have worked

- for years with teachers, and lots of various collaborative efforts have gone on. However, this is what we need to distinguish: is shared education about any type of collaboration, or is it about a very specific type of collaboration that has a very clear outcome in mind? That is the challenge.
2025. **Mr Unsworth:** As part of the shared education signature project that we have been referring to, the Education and Training Inspectorate has developed, in a very collaborative way with us and schools, a framework for shared education that contains a continuum and progression. It is still at the formative stage, but it provides some sort of a way for a school, a school in partnership, an employing body or any member of the public to see where the school or partnership sits in that continuum. We found that to be very helpful. As I said, it is a work in progress. I am sure that the ETI may have already shared, or may wish to share, it with you. It helps put some flesh on the bones when it comes to understanding what we mean. It also helps in our work with schools for schools and partnerships to see how we might deepen and widen the extent of sharing that we are engaged in so that it is not just a narrow thing.
2026. **Mr Gilbert:** As part of the process of application for the shared education signature project, we have asked schools to evaluate their current sharing against that framework, and, in presenting their proposals, to identify clearly how they will move through the continuum to broaden and deepen the sharing. As I said earlier, when you look at it in a broad sense, it could be everything from once-in-a-while contact through to complete and total immersion. The tool is very useful. It fits in very well with what we are encouraging schools to do, which they are doing it very well at the moment, and that is the whole process of self-evaluation and self-improvement. All of that is part of what a number of us referred to, which is the building capacity strategy. External support and funding is great while it is there, but how many projects have we seen that were great until the money or support dried up? Sometimes, the two are aligned, because the money pays for the support. This is about building capacity. The tool is extremely important in helping schools to get a real sense of what it means to broaden and deepen the sharing between them.
2027. **Mr Craig:** I have listened with interest to what you are saying about the definition of “shared education” and how it needs to be quite broad. You will hear absolutely no disagreement from me on that. Shared education goes way beyond what some people think about education in the traditional integrated sector. It has huge potential for you, as administrators, and not only in sharing educational experience between communities but in improving how our resources are being used, because there are resource implications.
2028. We need to think outside the box when it comes to shared education. Prior to Christmas, a transport situation arose in my local community in Derriaghy, to which the Ulsterbus manager in the area came up with a solution. There was a bus route that was transporting children to one of the local maintained schools. He was on the verge of having to shut down the service because the numbers were so poor. By varying the route, he was able to transport not only the children to the maintained school but other children who had lost their transport to the local controlled school. I suppose that this goes to show how sad I am: on Christmas Eve, I was sitting in a public meeting with parents in Derriaghy explaining the proposed solution to them. The thing that fascinated me was that they bought into it immediately. They had no difficulty with the concept of the children sharing the bus route. It struck me how naturally a shared resource led to a shared experience and, in some respects, shared education out of nowhere. It was a lack of resources, however, that drove the solution and the shared experience. Such has been my experience of sharing

developing naturally. Do you see shared education going down a more natural route? As school finances get tighter, we will naturally have to share resources, not only within but across sectors. To me, what happened in Derriaghy was a prime example. If it happens more naturally, there are fewer difficulties with implementation, because the school communities buy into the solution.

2029. **Mr Gilbert:** I will comment briefly, although not on the specifics. Nicky may wish to pick up on those. The strategic point that emerges out of that — we have found this in our experience, and it is confirmed by the research — is that there has to be a purpose. You have described a very pragmatic purpose. We have had huge success with the work that we have done, much of which has been embedded in the normal learning of the curriculum. I suppose that things have developed, but that is very different from where we were perhaps 10 years ago, when the ambition was simply to get pupils together to meet someone from the other community. That was at the shallow end of the continuum. Strategically, one of the big enablers, which John referred to earlier, is having a meaningful purpose. I am sure that colleagues can cite experiences from their own shared education projects. The North Eastern Board's two recent major projects — the PiE project in rural primary schools, and the partnership, inclusion, reconciliation, citizenship and history (PIRCH) project, which is for post-primary — are both firmly embedded in the curriculum. I recall attending an event at a school in the Magherafelt area that Sandra will be aware of. Schools had gone on a joint visit to the Normandy battlefields as a contextual part of working together in history rather than as a trip away on the same bus. The outworkings of that were fantastic. The strategic issue at the top end is to have a meaningful purpose, whatever it may be, to bring people forward. I take the point that you make about thinking outside the box. Other colleagues may wish to comment.
2030. **Ms Neill:** I agree with the point about it happening naturally. The key thing to keep in mind is that we have to start from where people are at. I have been involved in community relations all my professional life, and I can think of an example from many years ago, in which a difficulty with transport forced schools to begin to interact in a more collaborative way. The children were fighting on a shared bus on the way to school, which indicated to the principals that they needed to do something a bit more proactive. As a result of that very negative experience, the schools engaged in a positive experience of bringing those primary-school children together for meaningful work, and they could demonstrate evidence of better interaction. There is something to be said for people working outside of their own experience. We need to be very clear in the system about what we want the purpose to be, and so on, but the starting point for different people has to arise out of their own context and issues. I caution that you cannot drive people to share if they are not ready. That is what capacity-building is for. We need to build the capacity of the system to share. In the past, mistakes may have been made, where people came together when there was still a level of hostility and a lack of trust, things that do not necessarily lead to a good experience. We need to be mindful of the range of contexts in different communities. It is a continuum, from those who are very willing and have been working at sharing for many years to those communities in which there is still a lack of trust and suspicion about what sharing could lead to.
2031. **Mr Craig:** Another prime example of where sharing tends to occur naturally is in area-learning communities, especially through A-level provision. I am chair of the board of governors at my own school, which now shares with the local maintained secondary school. To be honest, we all had fears and concerns initially for the safety of the pupils, and so on, but the experience was completely different from the fears. Sometimes, practicalities override the

- fear factor, and, ultimately, the solutions come. It is up to all of us to encourage that. Have you any other experiences of that occurring?
2032. **Mr Gilbert:** I will make one observation. When I talk to young people, I am struck, as I am sure you are in your day-to-day work, by the fact that they did not grow up in the conflict. I remember watching an interview one evening with a group of young people from a secondary school in Belfast who were asked to comment on their community and politics. Their attitude was almost this: “Why are you asking us this?” We have to remember that the climate among the young people is not the climate that we grew up in. It is very different, and that is great, as it creates potential.
2033. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you for your presentations. This one is for you, June, I think. The Western Board has made the point that there is increasing natural mixing in its area and that, in a way, the sectoral definitions are no longer accurate. I am glad to hear that, but do you have statistics for that, or is it just an impression? Is it led by the increasing number who define themselves as “other” rather than as “Protestant” or “Catholic”?
2034. **Ms Neill:** Our paper identified schools and what the numbers were in each of them. However, if you want more detail, we are very happy to provide it. It is in the statistics. From memory, I think that the number of controlled schools in which there is significant mix in the population is about 12.
2035. **Mr Lunn:** What do you mean by “significant”? I know that I should have read the paper —
2036. **Ms Neill:** In some cases, we are talking about a quarter and more, while some of them are half-and-half. I mentioned previously two controlled schools in Derry on the city side. A population change has occurred in the city over time.
2037. We have a number of them, they are scattered all over the board area. You will be aware, for example, of Sion Mills Primary School, which is integrated in nature, although not by designation. It is the only school in the village. You have to know the history of that. Herdman’s Mill set up one school in the village for the working population. That school is in the controlled sector, but it has a long history of serving both communities. There are a number of examples in Limavady and Strabane. There are perhaps not so many in Fermanagh, where there are a larger number of smaller schools, but in Derry, Limavady and Strabane, there are certainly degrees of mixing in both primary and post-primary schools.
2038. **Mr Lunn:** I ask you because we tend to rely on the figure of 90% of our school population being educated purely with their co-religionists. That percentage is probably out of date now. Do the rest of you disagree with that percentage now? Is it redundant? It sounds as though it is in the Western Board.
2039. **Mr Lawther:** It depends on the phase that the school is in. In Belfast, some of our grammar schools are certainly very mixed. They are not termed “integrated schools”, but they have pupils from both sides of the community, in some cases a significant number, which would not have been the case perhaps 10 or 15 years ago. Things have moved, and maybe 90% is not totally accurate now. It may be at primary, but probably not at post-primary and certainly not in the grammar sector.
2040. **Mr Gilbert:** I will make a comment wearing my other hat as the person responsible for the inclusion and diversity service in Northern Ireland. It is about recognising the significant number of what we call “newcomer” young people. Some of them will fall naturally on either side of the traditional religious divide, but many do not. Significant work is being done on building the understanding of different cultures and so on. That is taking place with significant intensity in John’s board, the Southern Board. The point about the flexibility of sharing has been made a number of times. It is not just about the traditional

- “orange and green” sharing, as we characterise it in Northern Ireland; it is much broader. We have to be mindful of the fact that new communities and significant numbers of young people from newcomer backgrounds are coming into Northern Ireland. Increasingly, other types of cultural diversity are part of our society. As I said, there is very intense community work in the Dungannon/Portadown direction.
2041. **Mr Unsworth:** I could not say definitively that the figure is 90%. My impression from working in Southern Board schools is that it would be lower than that. The intake of a number of schools, such as the one to which June referred, has become much more mixed over time. Those from the newcomer population in our board area do not necessarily gravitate towards a school from their own religious tradition. They go to the nearest school or to one that makes them feel welcome and included. That may be a maintained or a controlled school.
2042. **Mr Lunn:** I get the impression — June may have mentioned this — that the proportions at primary level are still pretty much what they were, but, because of the desire of people in this country to send their children to a grammar school, the grammar schools are mixing. We were at Methody a couple of months ago, which is, I think, 45:25 in favour of Protestants. That leaves 30%, and I do not think that they were all newcomer families. There were clearly people who chose not to designate, which is fine with me.
2043. You all talk up the societal and economic benefits of sharing, which I acknowledge, although their extent has yet to be proven. We will find out in a few years’ time. June, you mentioned reconciliation as a big factor. I liked the anecdote about swapping uniforms. The departmental officials who were here recently saw this project as very much educational, with societal benefits as a possible bonus. You seem to think that the societal element is vital. I agree. Is that your impression?
2044. **Mr Gilbert:** My initial reaction to that is this: as educationalists, we have a very particular view of education, and I do not wish in any way to comment on the views of departmental officials on education. We recognise the pressures of the Programme for Government targets and other economic targets in Northern Ireland. Our perspective is across the full range of domains on which education impacts. We recognise absolutely — it has been said a number of times — that it is critical that young people get the best outcomes in literacy, numeracy and so on, but I was struck by something said a number of years ago by, I think, a director general of the CBI. He said that we employ 80% of people because of their qualifications, only for 40% of that 80% to lose their job because they do not have the skills required to do the job in the modern world. The skills needed to operate in the modern world, where probably the only predictable thing is change, include good interpersonal skills: the ability to work with different people and break down barriers. From an educational perspective, we recognise that education is a broad spectrum. We understand fully, and we work very hard at, the raising standards agenda for literacy, numeracy, GCSEs and A levels. We also believe, however, that education is a process of rounding young people before they go off into society.
2045. **Mr Lunn:** June, you are definitely the revolutionary on the panel. You advocate that, as the balance of a school changes, perhaps you should move away from partisan boards. I do not like that term, but I know what it means. How would you do that?
2046. **Ms Neill:** I did not quite pick up your point. Will you repeat your question?
2047. **Mr Lunn:** I am sorry; I have a cold.
2048. **Ms Neill:** I have, too.
2049. **Mr Lunn:** We share that as well. Your paper makes the point that, as the balance of Protestant, Catholic and others changes in some of your schools, the boards should be less partisan. That

- picks up on the Drumragh judgement. Will you expand on that? You are talking about controlled schools.
2050. **Ms Neill:** I am not sure that I am the best person to comment on the implications of that.
2051. **Mr Gilbert:** Perhaps it goes back to the earlier point. We do not see boards as partisan in any way; we work with all sectors.
2052. **Mr Unsworth:** The responsibility is to provide support to all sectors, and we do that. There is the added dimension of our also being an employing authority for the controlled sector, but, as we said, that sector is not homogenous in any sense.
2053. **Mr Lunn:** This is my last question, Chair: who is responsible for the Moy?
[Laughter.]
2054. **Mr Unsworth:** I will not claim responsibility for it, but I have the privilege of serving schools in that community.
2055. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You are prepared to put your hand up.
2056. **Mr Unsworth:** I have no problem. I know the Moy and the schools there very well.
2057. **Mr Lunn:** We were there recently.
2058. **Mr Unsworth:** So I believe.
2059. **Mr Lunn:** I do not want you to be political; I am sure that you cannot be. Was the proposed outcome of that situation your preferred outcome when the process started?
2060. **Mr Unsworth:** What outcome do you mean?
2061. **Mr Lunn:** I mean that the Moy is moving from two schools with one in each sector to two schools with one in each sector but under the same roof. Some of us find that idea strange. The population there was surveyed by the school, and the figures are imprinted on my memory: 85 contributors said that they wanted the solution now proposed; 70 said that they would go for full integration; and five did not want anything to do with it. It was pretty close. Did you have an advocacy role in that?
2062. **Mr Unsworth:** No, the board does not have an advocacy role in that sense at all. The board has responsibilities for planning, development and provision. The situation in the Moy came about very much because the community and the leadership in the local schools and more widely wanted it to happen. As a board, we supported and encouraged that once the enthusiasm from the two schools and the communities that they serve became clear. The two schools were part of one of the shared education projects that we managed with funding from IFI. The board and I, as an officer, do not have a personal view or preference, other than to say that this is clearly what the communities, the leadership of the two schools, their governors and the community that they serve wanted. How will that develop in practice? You spoke to the folks there, and I hope that you were encouraged, as I was when I spoke to them, by their vision and their integrity in wanting to do something new, meaningful and sustainable for their community. I admire that integrity and commitment hugely, and how it will eventually work out in practice is in their hands. As a board, we are there to support and encourage, and they have continued to work to develop sharing between the two schools.
2063. **Mr Lunn:** When the community expresses a preference like that, does the board make a recommendation to the Minister?
2064. **Mr Unsworth:** No. The development proposal, as you know, goes through the board and up to the Minister. Ultimately, he will make a decision.
2065. **Mr Lunn:** Do you express any opinion or preference?
2066. **Mr Gilbert:** From a procedural perspective — I am not commenting on the Moy, which is, for the next eight weeks, outside my area — we have a development proposal procedure. That proposal has to come from a managing authority; in the case of a

- grant-maintained, integrated or voluntary grammar school, a board of governors; or another maintained school. In the controlled sector, members of the education and library boards have a role to play in agreeing to put forward a proposal. In other sectors, the board, under the 1986 Order, simply notes and publishes “on behalf of”. Other than that technical role, it has no advocacy or other role.
2067. **Ms Neill:** We have to learn lessons from the range of shared campus models. There is the type at Ballycastle; we have one in Limavady; the huge one at Lisanelly; and an interesting one coming forward from Derry. There, they want a shared facility, not on any of the school premises but on the development at the Ebrington site. That is at an early stage.
2068. We need to be mindful of the range of campus proposals. There is a job to be done in monitoring how the various models develop and what impact they have. In many ways, we cannot predict exactly how they will all work out in practice. Like anything, some may work better than others. We should not make judgements in advance of trialling some of the models, but we need to be mindful of what happens as a result of the various types of shared campus.
2069. **Mr Gilbert:** I will use an example from my area of another necessary consideration. Two small schools in the environs of Toome — Moneynick and Duneane — have a significant history and are seeking to apply for a shared campus project. Sometimes, it makes a nice story to characterise children walking in a door and turning in two different directions. When a shared campus is built on a history of working together in shared classes — as it is in the Moy and in my example — schools in that context feel that they want to move forward together but maintain their ethos. There has, I think, been an over-characterisation of children going into separate parts of the one building. It is about sharing and learning together but respecting each other’s ethos. Who knows where that takes you years down
- the road, but it is about starting from where the community is at.
2070. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation. On the point that Trevor raised, I take on board that you do not have a duty to advocate. You do, however, have a duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education. To what extent did the board action that duty at the Moy?
2071. **Mr Unsworth:** The issue of whether the board has or does not have that duty has been under discussion and debate.
2072. **Mr Hazzard:** How is that?
2073. **Mr Unsworth:** The Drumragh case.
2074. **Mr Hazzard:** OK.
2075. **Mr Unsworth:** The board, in the context of the Moy, fulfilled its obligations, as I understand it. There was not a demand or request from either school or the local community for integrated provision in the Moy.
2076. **Mr Hazzard:** That is good to have on the record.
2077. In June, we visited County Fermanagh and saw a lot of good work in sharing. We heard that about 38 schools and 14 partnerships were involved. When you talk to the people there, and we have talked to them since, they are frustrated that, apart from the Brookeborough proposal, nothing is being done to the level that they think is needed to take them further along the continuum of sharing. Do you agree with that analysis of the situation? What has been done in the 14 partnerships to advance the sharing proposals?
2078. **My next question is to all of you:** how many officers in each area are working on shared education proposals? John, you said that we can get better grades out of this. Is there not a danger that we over-egg the pudding? Some of our single identity schools produce the best grades. I cannot imagine that we would get better grades just by putting people from different backgrounds into a classroom. Good teachers should be able to pull out different opinions in a

- classroom anyway, so is there a danger that we are over-egging the pudding by saying that shared education will somehow improve the grades in our system?
2079. **Ms Neill:** There are a lot of questions there. I will start with Fermanagh, as it is in my patch. As you know, the Fermanagh programme was run with the Fermanagh Trust, so we were not directly responsible for that, although we are aware of it and had some fairly tentative involvement. In many ways, I am quite surprised by what you said. We are well aware of the Brookeborough proposal. As said earlier, proposals do not come from the boards. Staff in the development section in the Western Board deal with the business of proposals from boards of governors, so I would have to go back to them. At this time, I am not aware of the specific proposals from Fermanagh to bring about shared campuses and so on. I am well aware of the Brookeborough proposal because it is at a further stage of development. We, as a board, would be interested to know what discussions there may have been with individual schools or pairs of schools in various communities, and I can find out. I, personally, am not aware, but others in the Western Board may be aware of what has been happening.
2080. **Mr Hazzard:** I am surprised at that because the Western Board's area plan specifically names the 14 partnerships and says that they will advance shared plans.
2081. **Ms Neill:** Yes, but they are probably at an early stage. I am not the person dealing with it, so I do not want to comment in any detail in case I misrepresent anything.
2082. **Mr Hazzard:** Do two specific sections of the board look at area planning and sharing respectively, or does the same section look at both?
2083. **Ms Neill:** Area planning and shared education are being looked at together in the same way, but, increasingly, the board has been working to bring together those dealing with the campuses and estate issues and those dealing with the other aspects of sharing, such as the signature project. There is a clear link between the shared campuses and the level of sharing and engagement that has already happened in schools. For shared campuses to be successful, it seems that a significant amount of that has been needed, and we are increasingly recognising that people have to come on that journey through the experience of sharing and developing trust and understanding to the point at which they realise that this may be an issue.
2084. Fermanagh is a unique community for schooling in Northern Ireland. As you know, it is a very rural community. It has a significant number of very small schools, some of which will always be there because of the very rural community and the isolation that would be caused if children had to travel long distances, particularly in the primary sector. A significant number of post-primary schools are in Enniskillen, and the children all travel there. The Fermanagh Trust had significant involvement with primary schools in rural areas on the project that you mentioned. Sharing is particularly challenging in the area because, for example, a maintained school could be 10 miles away from the nearest controlled school. I am aware that some of those schools have come together themselves, almost in mini-area learning communities.
2085. **Mr Hazzard:** It does not always have to be capital builds; it can be federations or confederations, and it perhaps provides the best breeding ground for what is possible elsewhere.
2086. **Mr Gilbert:** I will pick up the second question, wearing my area planning hat. We have made the point continuously that area planning is organic, changing and moving. It does not simply happen, and then we all implement the plan. It is very much an ongoing process that has to be reviewed in the context of development. We are seeing things coming through. I cited the example of schools near Toome coming forward, and

we have other examples. Quite a number of small schools in the North Eastern Board have looked at their provision and said that there may be different ways of working, and they are engaging with us on that. I just wanted to make that point that area planning is an organic process. Hopefully, the impact of previous projects and the current shared education signature project will influence how that moves forward. You asked about the number of officers. Over the years, each of the boards had dedicated officers working on related issues such as community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) projects and so on. Some of those officers are sitting in front of you. One of the benefits coming out of the OFMDFM project is that we are in the process of appointing dedicated development officers. There will be up to 10 in the first instance, and we are going through the recruitment process. They will become very much involved in supporting the first cohort of the signature project and helping schools potentially seeking to apply for the second cohort.

2087. Another angle on this is that we understand that further funding may come through the Peace IV initiative, which is specifically targeted at schools with little or no history of sharing. As I understand it, there is capacity within that four-year funding package to add further development officers as and when required to meet that demand. We stress a point made on a number of occasions: it is not about providing external prop-ups; it is about building capacity and growing from the bottom up. John will pick up on the last point.

2088. **Mr Unsworth:** I will pick up on your point about the risk of over-egging the pudding. Our experience of working in shared education is that important educational benefits can come about when there is sharing. Based on our experience, we firmly believe that a breadth and depth of learning is possible when a wider diversity of backgrounds and views is available. I totally agree that that is not beyond the skill and capability of a very good

teacher in a single identity school. Of course, that happens, and you are right that some of the most effective, successful schools are perceived as single identity. We do not want to overplay it, but our experience is that when sharing happens, there is more opportunity than might otherwise be available.

2089. You picked up a very important issue, which is that there is a risk of elitism: schools not involved in shared education might think that somehow they are not as good. In all our board areas, we recognise that it would be very difficult for some schools to engage in shared education because they do not have any schools geographically near to them to share with. We are very attentive to and aware of that. We do not want the kind of elitism to develop whereby, if you are not engaged in shared education, somehow you are a worse type of school — absolutely not. Where the opportunity is there, and where it can work and make sense in a local context, our experience is that it adds to the learning or it has the potential to.

2090. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks.

2091. Ray, I accept your last comment about the organic nature of area planning. Sometimes, the public and various members of the Committee would like a bit more cajoling to be done to help to drag organisations or individuals along. I think that the public would like to see a bit more of that.

2092. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you very much. The discussion has been really interesting this morning. A lot of my questions have been asked. Our stakeholder event last week reaffirmed the belief that a lot of our controlled schools are not single identity by any means, and your paper shows that, June. In my constituency, I am learning more and more that there is a wide variety of people in that sector. Do you believe that the end goal of shared education should be integrated schools, whether that is with a capital “I” or a small “i”? Should that be the end goal of the education system in Northern Ireland?

2093. **Ms Neill:** For some schools, that may be the end point, but, as we have said before, this is on a continuum. Some will naturally come to the point at which they say that integration is what makes sense to them. We need, however, to be respectful and make sure that what comes from sharing is right for people. At this point, in Northern Ireland, we have to accept that we have a range of schools in different sectors and diversity within them, and it is not about driving a particular school. To me, what is most important is that we all want to see that shared education, in whatever school, contributes to promoting a more cohesive society with mutual respect, respect for difference and all the things that we want to move forward with. So, regardless of the kind of school — integrated, mixed, controlled, Irish medium or whatever — we must ensure that the end point is mutual understanding and that young people walk out of school fit for a diverse society. That is probably more important than starting to tinker and asking whether we want more integrated schools. If we have more integrated schools and that is what people want, that is fine, but we should not tie ourselves to it being about changing sectors.
2094. **Mrs Overend:** Looking at the sectors, we now understand that a lot of them are more diverse than we previously thought. It seems that the non-Catholic population is more likely to be in sharing mode. Therefore, the Catholic-maintained sector might need more encouragement to share because it is not happening in its schools. Will those schools need more encouragement?
2095. **Mr Gilbert:** It is a very complex issue. We are very conscious that none of us represents the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools, and we certainly would not want to speak for it.
2096. I have experience of very mixed schools in all sectors. The point that keeps coming through is that there is no single characterisation; it very much depends on the community context. In my board area, and other colleagues will relate to this, I have a very high number of rural primary schools and quite a significant number of rural villages in which there are two types of primary school, both of which, in sustainability terms, may well be struggling. Lots of examples of working together are emerging.
2097. Sandra, you made a point about the end point. That, too, is very community driven. Some communities whose schools are into sharing may, a number of years down the line, have developed and moved on so that people question whether there is really any point in having two schools, each with a distinctive ethos. They may ask whether the ethos of both schools can be accommodated in a single approach, whether that is fully integrated or shared. There is some work being done in the Department on another management type, which is a shared church school approach. We have had some involvement in that project, and Danny will be aware of that.
2098. So, it is about getting it right for the communities. Looking at my board area, the legacy of the conflict is much starker in some communities than in others. Therefore, we keep making the point about growing it from the community, and the really good success that we have seen has been a consequence of that. John made the point earlier that it can never be top-down. We cannot have an ambition for everybody to look a certain way in 10 years' time. What we are really saying is that from a societal and educational benefit perspective, we hope that people will become better at understanding each other and better at working together, regardless of where they come from in the community, and our society will benefit from that. We are already seeing a very different society from the one of 10, 15 and 20 years ago.
2099. **Ms Neill:** An unwillingness to share is not the only reason why people do not share; sometimes it is just the geography and how the population is divided. The classic example for us is Derry, because it is predominantly nationalist and has a large number

of schools that serve mainly the Catholic community. All are very willing to share, there are very good relationships between the schools and the area learning community there is very well regarded across Northern Ireland. However, the ability to share is determined by the capacity of the schools. When the number of schools in a particular sector is small and everybody wants to share, those schools have only so much capacity to share with others. It is not that people are unwilling; sometimes, it is just not appropriate or there may be challenges that come from schools being very far apart. People may be willing to share, but other things prevent it.

2100. **Mrs Overend:** That is great. Thanks very much. I appreciate your perspective on that and agree with you. In regard to resources and resourcing the sharing of education, the current resources are on the capital side. How could it be resourced better on a day-to-day basis?
2101. **Mr Gilbert:** There are three elements to that. We have significant evidence of schools investing their own resources, where it is of benefit to the school and there is a history. The second layer of that is the recurrent resourcing that is becoming available through the signature project. Again, that is a significant resource, and the Peace IV initiative, which will come after that for the schools new to sharing, will be another significant resource. We recognise that, as this thing develops, there may be increased capital demand. In light of the Stormont House Agreement and other things, I suppose there is a question in the system around whether we are ready for the level of shared campus investment that might be available and what the impact of that will be on other schools that are waiting for development in other sectors. Again, I am probably wearing my area planning hat in that regard.
2102. **Mrs Overend:** We would need more resource funding, rather than capital funding, to help support the sharing.
2103. **Mr Gilbert:** There always has to be a balance, but the important thing, which we referred to earlier, is that we cannot become dependent on resources. We have to build the capacity to sustain it, because the resources are not always likely to be there. We have seen over the years, across our community, too many projects collapsing because the resource has gone. Generally, when the resource goes, the support goes. One of the encouraging things we have seen, post projects that we have been involved in, is how schools have used their own resources. Maybe not to the same degree, but they have amended and adjusted their practice. They have cut their cloth. The willingness to do that is important. John made the point earlier about initial support and pump-priming being needed to get things up and running, but that must not be done in a way that cannot be sustained. In fact, it should be a decreasing recurrent resource situation.
2104. **Mr McCausland:** The paper from the Western Board is quite interesting, because I had never really read that section of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 before; you just tend to hear it quoted. It is interesting to see it put down. It is noticeable that there is not capital “I” or capital “E”, and there is no reference in that extract to the governance of the school. It simply states that there should be Protestant and Roman Catholic children educated together. That seems quite a broad and inclusive definition of integrated education. The paper states:
- “Examination of the legal definition prompts the question as to what ‘integrated education’ means in the Order, as opposed to ‘Integrated Education’ and if it is implied that ‘integrated education’ is an ‘umbrella term’ and ‘Integrated Education’ is a Sector within it.”*
2105. That is really, really interesting, and it is something that we may need to get clear advice on because obviously we have no legal expertise. There are judges who comment on these things, so it will be interesting to see what comes of that.

2106. **In our papers, there is a reference to the T:**BUC shared education campuses and the second call for expressions of interest. Those go through the boards first; they have to get the endorsement of the boards. One of the gateway criteria is evidence of community, parent and pupil support. How do you judge whether there is community support?
2107. **Mr Gilbert:** In terms of the process that has been set up there, the education and library boards, as the overall responsible bodies for area planning and provision, are required to endorse any applications, but we do not evaluate them. We take a look to see that, in broad terms, they meet the requirements and that there is support from the governors and the community and so on. The actual judgement is made by the Department.
2108. **Mr McCausland:** Yes, but you say that you look at whether there is community support or not. How do you judge whether there is or not?
2109. **Mr Gilbert:** In the submissions that we have received to date, there is, for example, evidence that the board of governors has discussed it with parents and so on. They provide evidence that they have done an exercise in engaging with the community to ensure that it is not simply an idea that a school has come up with that is not impacting in the broader sense. There is a variety of ways in which that evidence is presented.
2110. **Mr McCausland:** If there were a project such as this and 99% of the people in the community in that area other than the board of governors and the PTA knew nothing about it, would that meet the criteria?
2111. **Mr Gilbert:** Again, as you have quoted, the criteria show that there has to be broad community support, and therefore that needs to be evidenced. There were examples in, I think, all of the boards that came forward for the first tranche that were not actually endorsed by the boards. While we put them forward to the Department, because we were very conscious that we were not the judge and jury on this one, the boards themselves, regardless of what sector they originated from, were asked whether they were prepared to endorse. There were examples that came forward that blatantly did not really address the key areas in the criteria, and boards did not endorse them.
2112. **Mr McCausland:** The parent-teacher association is the representative voice, in a sense, of parents. It is not the representative voice of the community.
2113. **Mr McBride:** There is probably a useful resource in relation to our youth service, which works in the communities and does a lot of valuable work through its informal education processes, working in their own communities and across communities as well. That is a useful gauge. It is outside of my area of expertise, but it is another evidential aspect of the community work that is done and is something that could be tapped into and explored as well.
2114. **Mr McCausland:** I make the point that I think that community support has to be more substantial and more demonstrable than simply a board of governors with whatever number of people on it and a parent-teacher association that may well have another 10, when the other 20,000 people who live in the area know nothing about it. Twenty does not really equate to 20,000. I think that it is important to make the point that, in bringing these forward and endorsing them, it is not left then to a very late stage when this is away down the road and, when somebody raises an issue, they become the worst person in the world because here was a project and everybody was behind it. You bring people along from the start, and I think that the schools should be going out and talking to people at their own door and leafleting the area to say, "We are thinking about this. What do you think?"
2115. **Mr Gilbert:** I totally and absolutely accept that point, and, probably, at this stage, as you will be aware, there were, potentially, 10 shared campus projects

in the Programme for Government. Only three were approved in the first tranche, and all three were very mature projects and were very clearly able to demonstrate that. In getting that level of significant capital investment, it would be very false to take that forward without a very strongly bedded approach. With all three — Lisanelly, Ballycastle and the Moy — there was oodles of evidence of very significant community involvement, and one imagines that that would have to be the case. It is an absolutely very well made point.

2116. **Mr McCausland:** It would be helpful, when boards are assessing whether to endorse them or not, that they make sure that they have clear, firm evidence of that broad community support. Ray, you talked about children coming together, and you referred to children coming together with different cultures. We have had a point made by a number of the academic folk who have been in over the period that sharing really only works well when children come together on a basis of equality. I use Pierre Trudeau's illustration of Canada and America: Canada is in bed with an elephant. Sharing works when you get people coming at it from a basis of equality. You work across all sectors. Do you see any differences in the way that different sectors view cultural traditions and expressions and how that is embraced in the schools? That is one of the issues. We can talk about religious differences and children getting an RE background in a school or whatever. By cultural traditions, I am talking about traditional music, games etc.
2117. **Mr Gilbert:** I think that there are some very good examples. The creation, five or six years ago, of the inclusion and diversity service was very explicitly for newcomers and to move us beyond what was the English as an additional language service. That was very focused on language, which is only one element. There is a very significant programme of intercultural awareness that is done with schools and all sectors, because that service services all sectors, not any particular sector. We were chatting before, and I think that colleagues have some very interesting and specific examples of cultural sharing. I know that John has some examples from the Southern Board.
2118. **Mr Unsworth:** Through IFI funding, we managed a programme called the primary curriculum partnership programme, which brought together schools, mostly primary schools in the same village, to engage. They were doing it through the medium of personal development and mutual education, which is an area of study on the revised curriculum. They used that as the vehicle to come together in shared classes. As Ray has already indicated, exploration of their own cultures within their single-identity schools was part of that process, and then there was coming together to explore each other's cultures. That certainly included looking at different types of music, different types of flags and emblems, and visiting each other's churches. Some very rich and, indeed, moving learning experiences came out of that, and I can think of specific examples that I visited where the Lambeg drum was being played alongside Irish traditional music. There was another situation where schools were exploring what the loyal orders mean in their village, because these were things that children in both of the schools in the village had experienced.
2119. **Mr McCausland:** Did the maintained school have a traditional music group of its own?
2120. **Mr Unsworth:** In the particular instance that I am thinking of, yes, it did.
2121. **Mr McCausland:** Did the controlled school have its own fife and drum tuition?
2122. **Mr Unsworth:** In the particular instance that I am thinking of, yes, it did.
2123. **Mr McCausland:** That is good.
2124. **Mr Unsworth:** They actually came together then to make one music group for a particular event.

2125. **Mr McCausland:** I am interested in getting a perspective from across the boards.
2126. **Ms Neill:** I do not think that you could say that that is widespread. It does occur, but there is still a lot of work to be done. I think that you could have a perception that, in certain schools, it is very clear what we are talking about in terms of what the culture that is appropriate to that community is. When you go into other schools where there is a very diverse population, schools will be challenged, no doubt, by the range of culture that exists in their school and how they have due respect to all of that culture. In the recent IFI projects, we did similar work to the Southern Board, where we did very direct work around cultural understanding within and between schools because we were very clear that there needs to be a connection between what happens in the school and, in doing that in your school, moving out and discussing and looking at those issues in the wider context of other communities. There is a richness in doing both of those things, and there is a value in both of those things. My experience is that cultural understanding needs to be something that comes out of the curriculum in an individual school. It will be enriched if that cultural understanding then comes into a situation where you are looking at it in the context of other cultures. What is similar? What is different? Why is this your culture? Why is that my culture? Those are the kinds of questions. There is quite significant evidence from some of these projects that quite young children in primary school are very capable of engaging in quite high-level discussions about culture, provided that our teachers have the capacity and the skills to manage those kinds of discussions with children. That is one of the things that we will be thinking of in terms of capacity. Our teachers have to be the facilitators of that kind of dialogue.
2127. **Mr Lawther:** I am not sure that I can add much more to that. There have been a number of projects in Belfast and in all boards, such as community relations, equality and diversity in education (CRED). That has been ongoing for quite some time, where they have brought schools together from different backgrounds to experience the different cultural identities that they have and have been very successful. St Patrick's, along with Ashfield Boys' High School, have an involvement in a shinty project, through which they have been to Dublin and, I think, Glasgow or Edinburgh in Scotland. Those things have been going for quite some time, and I think that they all contribute to what Northern Ireland is about and how education is progressing.
2128. **Mr McCausland:** I was talking to Andy McMorran the other day, and I make the observation that I do not find many shinty teams around the Shankill or the Newtownards Road, so it is a bit of an artificial thing.
2129. **Mr Lawther:** It is. I mean —
2130. **Mr McCausland:** It is in that sense. I think that the key point is that you are absolutely right in so far as there are a number of schools that do Lambeg and fife tuition, but it is a very small number, and it is all being funded out of the budget of the Ulster-Scots Agency. It puts the money in to do that, because that has not been something that teachers have been encouraged to do, maybe through our teacher training. I think that there is an issue about teacher training and about how culture is dealt with in St Mary's, Stranmillis, Queen's and so on. There is a big issue there that needs to be unpacked if we are going to bring children together. You will get difficulties and problems. It is not good for the children, the system or anybody to have that. That issue has been an elephant in the room, or maybe put into the "too difficult" cupboard for too long in the controlled sector in particular. It comes back to the point that it is not about the ethos of the school, it is about the culture of the child. It should be child-centred; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be implemented.

2131. **Mr Lunn:** Just on the music issue, it is a fact, surely, that almost all schools promote music very actively, not necessarily of a traditional nature for one sector or the other, but on a basis that could easily be shared and, in fact, is being shared across schools. Nelson makes that point continually about the controlled schools not advocating Protestant cultural-based music, if you could call it that.
2132. **Mr McCausland:** I never used the word “Protestant”.
2133. **Mr Lunn:** Yes, but you know what I mean. It is a fact that the musical output of schools is something to be proud of, in the form that it is now delivered. I think that it is great.
2134. **Mr Unsworth:** Very much so. Our music services, across all five boards, are some of the best examples, and have been for many years through the most difficult of times, of young people from different backgrounds coming together and sharing.
2135. **Mr Gilbert:** I was going to add that point. I made the point earlier about music services being one example of working together completely. For example — I am sure that there are other examples that colleagues could cite — we have a harp orchestra that is made up of young people from a range of traditions who work together and are fantastic when you see them. While it is coming from another direction, it is another part of the service that we provide that encourages young people to work together, live together and so on.
2136. **Mr McCausland:** Since he got a chance to come back on the schools bit, I want to respond to that point by saying this. The key point here is not inclusion, it is exclusion:
- “Education always reflects a society’s views of what is excellent, worthy, necessary”.*
2137. The point I make is that, if a thing is excluded, it is seen as being, in some way, second-rate. That is why bringing the culture of the child into the school is good educational practice across the board. I do not think that anybody can argue with that.
2138. **Mr Unsworth:** To pick up on June’s point, one of the things that we have found in our experience of these projects is that it is absolutely essential to explore those issues with the teachers first. In best practice, that is what you would do. There have been some very difficult and challenging workshops that some of our colleagues have done with teachers in their single schools and then bringing them together. However, we find that it is essential for the teachers to have explored these issues before they then can come together to help facilitate that learning with the children. Our experience is that that is the sort of practice that really makes a difference, where it is not hidden, set to one side or excluded, but openly explored.
2139. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome, and I apologise for missing the first bit. I read somewhere about the strategic plan for cross-sectoral collaboration. Bearing in mind that sectoral definitions no longer consistently reflect the original make-up of the school, do you believe that the new Education Authority will be a key driver in bringing that forward?
2140. **Mr Gilbert:** The potential of the new Education Authority will be that we will have a single strategic approach, and I think it will be one of the key drivers. We are currently five separate organisations doing very similar work, but we are accountable through five channels. The new single Education Authority will bring us together as a single body, so yes, in time, as the transition takes place. I would not want to characterise us as all very different. Hopefully, it has come across this morning that, regardless of the fact that we work for five different organisations, we do very similar work and we work very closely together. However, one would hope that moving into a single strategic authority will have benefits, Province-wide. One of the big challenges for the new authority will be around service Province-wide, because it is a single authority and, therefore, to use that old phrase: what you get in Ballycastle should not be drastically

- different to what you get in Belleek, provided it meets your needs. So, yes, I think that there is potential there, Seán.
2141. **Mr Rogers:** Do you think we can learn anything from the past in terms of managing conflicting priorities? I think, in particular, of area-based planning. In our first attempts at area-based planning, all we had was so many thousand empty seats and whatever. So we end up, it being Northern Ireland, with at least two area plans: a maintained one and a board one. Maybe, in some theoretical situation, three maintained primary schools over a large country area were coming together. However, had we been looking at building a shared future together, there would have been another option, whereby the maintained primary school could join with the local controlled primary, which would help to meet the challenges, particularly of the rural White Paper and access to services. At least it would keep a primary school in the area.
2142. The other part of that question, really, is what work has been done with cross-border education authorities in terms of working that through? The Brollaghs of this world, where it is a small maintained school on the borders of Fermanagh and you have small Protestant primary schools in places like Cavan and Monaghan. If there were a close relationship with some of the schools here, it would at least maintain a school in those areas.
2143. **Mr Gilbert:** I will make one brief comment on that. It is something that I feel very passionately about. Despite how it has been characterised, area planning is about educational provision for children. Certainly, for those of us involved in it, it is not about who can get the most empty seats taken away. It is about making sure that there is sustainable provision for children and young people. The point I made earlier was that, as this develops, there will be the sort of change that you are outlining. Certainly, one assumes that that will be paid attention to as we move forward. June might want to comment on that.
2144. **Ms Neill:** You raise an important point, Seán. We need to be careful that education policies and initiatives of various kinds do not end up in conflict with one another. At the minute, there is a bit of tension between the notion of shared education and sustainable schools. In one village — it is an issue in some of our villages — you could have two schools that want to come together on a shared campus in a shared way for a shared future but for the sustainable schools policy.
2145. My feeling in all that is that, if we are really serious about sharing and being in the way that we do things, regardless of all these sectors and whatever, sharing needs to be something that is embedded across a range of education policies, so that we do not end up in a situation where one policy conflicts with another. There is potential for that as we bring shared education in this way into the whole system. Just as we would do for other things in terms of equality, we need to impact-assess everything else and ask this question: does this encourage sharing, or has it any potential to actually militate against sharing? That has to be embedded in every policy in education. Otherwise, to my mind, we are still tinkering at the edge of the system. If we are serious about embedding it, then sharing must be fundamental to every education policy. Any policy may not be about sharing, of course not. However, one example at the minute is the review of the transport policy. There is a nonsense that goes on where children in the entitlement framework have to take a bus to the school that they are enrolled in and then, at the cost of the public purse, they get a little bus to take them to wherever they are going when they could have hopped on a bus in the morning that would have taken them to the school that they were going to. That is maybe not a particularly good example, but it is an example of how we need to keep all policies up to date, so that they reflect and support sharing. That is the most important thing in all that.

2146. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Just in conclusion — I do not mean to pick on you directly, Nicky — in the absence of a paper from the South Eastern Education and Library Board, can you perhaps give us an overview of your experience of sharing within the board?

2147. **Mr McBride:** I am probably not the best person to ask about that, Chair, to be perfectly honest. In comparison with other boards, there have probably been fewer examples of shared education on a formal basis in the South Eastern Board area. I am encouraged to note that, on the second call, there have been a number of schools applying for it, but there does not appear to have been the history of shared education that we have heard, for example, in Moy, Ballycastle and those areas. That is not to say that they have not been happening on an informal basis. We have some examples of that, but they are not formalised to any great extent.

2148. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

When you go back, can I ask that you collate some information for us so that it can at least be included for our deliberations? If any of you feel that there is anything that we have missed or there are particular recommendations that you would like to highlight, please feel free to forward that to us as well, as we move through this process. Obviously, that will also inform us as we move towards a definition and the Bill for shared education. It will be useful for us.

2149. I thank you for your time this morning; it is very much appreciated.

11 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Dr Peter Cunningham *Ceara School*
 Mr Colm Davis *Tor Bank School*

2150. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome Dr Peter Cunningham, who is the principal of Ceara special school, and Colm Davis, who is the principal of Tor Bank special school. I offer our apologies for not being able to visit your school this morning. You understand that the plenary sitting on the Welfare Reform Bill has been extended to today. I think that we are all probably under some type of whip to be here today, so it would have been impossible for us to have had our meeting with you. However, we would like to rearrange that if it is possible.

2151. **Dr Peter Cunningham (Ceara School):** So I am told, yes. You will be very welcome. We are not going away.

2152. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Good. We hope to be in attendance. I just want to apologise for that again; it is outside our control. I ask you both to make your opening statements, and members will follow up with some questions.

2153. **Mr Colm Davis (Tor Bank School):** Thank you very much for inviting us along to give evidence. Obviously, you will have read both submissions. I am sure that you read them with intrigue. You may have learnt new things from

the submissions and, hopefully, the submissions were quite informative.

2154. We have a very different view of the whole concept of shared education and that of integrated education, and maybe the terminology that comes with both. We argue, and are able to discuss, that special schools were the first integrated and probably fully inclusive schools in Northern Ireland. They have been ignored quite a bit in the examples of working with other schools, working with different cultures, incorporating and including different cultures and disabilities, even within the very small field in which they operate.

2155. We are here to enlighten you a wee bit more and maybe look at a way forward for special schools within this concept of shared education. Hopefully, you will listen and ask a few questions.

2156. **Dr Cunningham:** Absolutely. As Colm said, shared education is nothing new in the special school system. I am slightly horrified to see that we got a mention in this document from the Department of Education, albeit on page 22; it is a document that has 23 pages. It is almost as though shared education is being landed on the education world as something that is new and novel: it is not. We have been practising this in our special schools from 1986, when we came under the umbrella of the Department of Education. Even prior to that, from 1947, our special care schools were operating shared education provision, because special educational needs is no respecter of religious or political affiliation.

2157. Special education hits everyone. Therefore, the good people who went before us set up an education system that was totally inclusive. Anybody can come into our special educational system. What frustrates me is a lot of the things that these people who were in front of you before said. I do not know

- who they are, but they were talking about different initiatives, different policies and different procedures. Do you know that they call us “other”? Those folk never mentioned the special schools system when they were sitting here, but they talked about community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) policies and signature policies. Did you know that we are excluded from them? Our kids do not do assessments, therefore we cannot tie into these little ticky boxes that you have to complete before you can take part in a scheme that we have been doing in my school for 20 years. That absolutely and totally frustrates the life out of me.
2158. **Mr Davis:** The key question for us and for you in this debate is this: who is best placed to bring the whole concept of shared education forward? What role will special schools play in that? How will they get more integrated status? I do not particularly like the term “integrated status”, by the way. I would call it “inclusive status”, and I have been challenging even the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) on that one. I have been working with NICIE to look at rebranding and redefining that terminology, which is well outdated.
2159. I really cannot see in any proposals that came through any great difference, apart from accommodation. Educational and mutual understanding programmes have been going on since I started teaching in 1981. I am enthusiastic about the concept and idea, but the driving force, and given our financial position and being able to build complexes that have a variety of schools, mean it will be for the very long-term future.
2160. We really have to make a positive commitment to see who is best placed to drive all this. I am not sure whether that will be the new board. It was interesting when you were asking those questions, but has enough thought been given to that in the creation of that board?
2161. For me personally, and speaking off the record, I was very disappointed that we did not have more of a merger. If the money is coming from the Department of Education and beyond, it is disappointing that all those sectors were not integrated into our new model as a natural progression and reorganisation to enable and push people together a bit more than is going to happen. That is off the record, but you can see in the models and work that we have been doing over the years —
2162. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** By the way, just to let you know that everything is on the record.
2163. **Mr Davis:** OK. The shared education models that we have been very much looking at in the last number of years and the likes of Tor Bank, and I can speak for other schools, have been developed from within. They have been self-driven.
2164. I think there is a concept that special schools are exclusionist by nature because they sit outside the mainstream school environment. Actually, we are inclusionary by nature. We are always looking at ways in which we can make our children more inclusive and independent, and to become fully inclusive and contributing members of society on leaving school.
2165. We have driven a lot of this. We were doing this before area learning communities (ALCs) and the entitlement framework (EF) came about and before we got additional funding, and we get very little funding for this. As you know, special schools do not have their own budgets. We strongly believe that we should be looking at formula funding to enable us to be more of a leading edge in a lot of this activity. Having our own funding model would help us in that.
2166. You can see where we have driven projects over the years through sharing with other schools. You can look at our make-up and, yes, we are controlled. Unfortunately, some parents find that label quite difficult. There are 120 people who work in Tor Bank School, and they are from all different backgrounds, be it cultural, religious

- or otherwise. It was very interesting when you were given the example of a shared bus. When children get on that bus, nobody asks what religion they are. They all come to our school. They come from west Belfast and the middle of Ballybeen. They come from everywhere, yet that has not been a problem. I like the idea of the shared buses in the future.
2167. We were able to develop our own models by linking in with local schools, and it was not just local grammar schools or secondary schools but primary schools. Peter will be able to give you his examples of that as well. The commitment of those schools to get involved in a special school has been incredible, and the religious side of it has never been a problem for us. That is a quick overview. We will maybe talk later about some of the projects that we have been involved in.
2168. **Dr Cunningham:** I have been in special education for 37 years. I know that it is hard to believe that, but I have. Colm made the point that there is a view, I believe, among education and library board officers that special education, aka special schools, is segregated provision. It could not be more integrated. I do not believe that there is a special school principal in the country who does not hold the view that a child should be educated in his own area with his peers, but some children, whose special educational needs are of such a nature and degree that they cannot be met in their local community, go to a special school because, de facto, special schools are not community schools. You might say, "Hey, but you just said that you are into shared education". Yes, we are. It happens through the bus.
2169. My school is in Lurgan, and the smallest percentage of children attending my school live in Lurgan. They are brought in from all over the place. We are in the education system. It is horrendous. These are the points that need to be shouted from the steeples. The area learning community is absolutely brilliant. I am a dyed-in-
- the-wool supporter of the area learning community. I chaired the Craigavon area learning community for two years in a row. Did you know that, at the start, special schools were excluded from the area learning communities because they "had nothing to contribute"? It is absolutely breathtaking. There was not a single special school representative in the community relations documentation that the Department of Education put out a number of years ago. Every school in the country got counselling services, but special schools did not because somebody forgot about the special school system. We are consistently forgotten about.
2170. I believe that the ALC is an absolutely fabulous conduit for examples of good practice. In my school this month, we will have children from the local Catholic maintained grammar school and we will be celebrating achievements. Children from my school attend the local controlled grammar school every week. There is a natural osmosis. Do you know why? Because it is the right thing to do. Shared education is working in our special schools. We have practitioners who are excellent at fostering and developing relationships and at fostering and welcoming cultural diversity, but we cannot get our staff out into that educational world because there seems to be a mindset. We are on the periphery of an education system. We are there but are not really part of it.
2171. Our budgets are a disgrace. We manage less than 1% of our budget. Most schools get their budget on 1 April; I got my last budget in the middle of October. How can a school be expected to be proactive and plan when we do not know how much we have in our budget stream? We have been talking for a long time about more delegation of budgets to special schools to allow us to facilitate the types of schemes that we would like to do. Even Bob Salisbury, who I had a chat with, accepted that recommendation, but, once again, nothing was done about it.
2172. **Mr Davis:** Peter made some very valid points. Without doubt, the area learning

- community has been fantastic, but we had to carve our own niche in that. We listened to the politics that went on. I found it very difficult at the beginning, but it allowed us to control the collaborative nature of it a bit better. The focus was very much on the academic, moving the vocational side of it and the resistance to both. We were caught in the middle; we were not perceived as a threat. In fact, it was probably quite good for us, but it was a hard battle. That is a good example of what we always have to do. We always sound like we are fighting. We did not come into this to fight; we came in to celebrate and recognise achievement and to do our best for our children and young people.
2173. It was very interesting earlier when Nelson asked the boards about the whole concept of culture and child-centredness. We are certainly child-centred; we always have been. The whole culture side of it is very interesting. We have teachers and classroom assistants who have been trained in different backgrounds; we have some from St Mary's training college, some from Stranmillis and others from wider afield. I see progress in the last five or six years. Peter, like me, has been involved in challenging the colleges to address the whole concept of special needs so that it is not just an optional module if you feel like doing it. We are saying that, if you are truly committed to the concept of inclusion, you have to ensure that all teachers, whether a chemistry teacher or a primary-school teacher, will get an understanding of autism or whatever. We push the boat further: everyone should have a placement in a special school as part of their training. Thankfully, we have not been affected by that background. Maybe Peter will see a shift like I have over the years. It tended to be very much the case that, because special schools, except for one, were with the controlled sector, we attracted people only from Stranmillis training college. In more recent years, we have been attracting people from St Mary's. It is good to see that shift.
2174. The children and young people who come to the like of our schools are fantastic. We love our job. We will do everything we can for them. We want them to have every opportunity possible out there in other local schools and their local areas, such as local youth clubs and the local community. We would like to ensure that we have linked up with business to get some employment opportunities for them in the future.
2175. The barriers to the concept of shared education are in terms of us getting an integrated badge, if we want to go down that route, or being officially recognised with a more inclusive badge. Under existing legislation, it is very difficult for that to happen. That is a bit of a barrier for our children to being truly recognised as being inclusive members of society. We are seen very much as a controlled school. We do not believe that the controlled system battles for us; it does not battle for us to get a more inclusive nature or to push us down the integrated route. I have been linking with NICIE on a positive partnerships programme towards integration. We are leading the way; we are showing it good practice. We got the rights respecting schools award level 2. That is very much around the concept of respect for and understanding each other's culture. That has helped to push us down that route.
2176. People will argue it that is not a barrier, but it is a barrier for us. A lot of our parents — we have discussed this with them — would like to see an integrated or inclusive badge and a rebranding of the school.
2177. **Dr Cunningham:** Teacher training is important. We have been in special education for 60 years between us. The system is a little bit better. Every so often, though, we get a wake-up call. Just before Christmas, I had a very good student in with me; I will not embarrass the college by naming it. We were sitting having our conversation. She had a great time at the school. She looked me straight in the face, and asked, "Were your grades not good enough to teach in a real school?" That cut the legs from underneath me. She had just spent

- four weeks in our school celebrating our achievements, and here was somebody who would be a qualified teacher within six months but still did not view our school as a real school, and thought that the people who work in our school are in some way inferior. I thought that horrendous; it was absolutely horrible.
2178. **I have said this before:** the only difference between the battle of the Somme and the relationships between the Health Department and the Department of Education is that they have not started shooting at each other yet, but the trenches have been dug.
2179. We represent a group of children, an increasing group, who require the closest, joined-up, collaborative work with the Health Department, and we do not have that. That is a part of shared education that is maybe not in these documents, but I am not going to waste this opportunity here to say to you good folk that, at this moment in time, we are on a divergent path from the Department of Education, the Health Department and the Department for Employment and Learning. We need a very much more joined-up, collaborative model, very much so.
2180. **Mr Davis:** I totally agree. Around the concept of collaboration in special education, we have tried to create those partnerships ourselves. They should have been connected at the top. Maybe you see it differently, but we certainly feel that top-level policymaking should be connected.
2181. A lot of problems arise with therapy provision, for example, because it is not connected at the level it should be, and that is a big problem for us. Shared education for us, which is, I think, the point Peter was making, is beyond just schools. It is very much about partnerships with local community representatives, business, health and education representatives, including you. We are all here for one reason and one reason only: the best interests of each child in our schools.
2182. I am not sure whether you have looked into the barriers for us to shared education. Finance will be a big problem for us in this model. We created the model, and it works well in the small local community in which we both operate, yet, in an ideal world, we would like to do a lot more work. Both our schools have had dual enrolments. In other words, if a child comes from 20 miles away but there is a local primary school near to where that child lives, we would like to be work a lot more with that primary school to see whether we could have partial placement in that school and partial placement with us. That costs money. We would have to send a classroom assistant and provide transport, but the benefits would be enormous for that child, who would get the best of both worlds. It is about us controlling that model, but, unless we have the money, we cannot do it. To do such a thing, we would have to put a request in to the board. It may or may not be heard of six months later; it will probably be ditched somewhere. We will be getting it from parents. We have suggested it as a good idea to the parents, but developing such models beyond our local community is very difficult without the appropriate funding. I see that as a major barrier. We are committed to it — even the parents are committed to it — but the system has not been perfected enough to be able to do that. We have had some fantastic examples in the past of Tor Bank, like Ceara, thinking outside the box. It is being led by us. We have run a lot of the schemes. However, because of the financial constraints and whatever way things are going to go, there will be less of that in the future.
2183. **Dr Cunningham:** Absolutely. When you come into Ceara School, I am told that it is like walking into Strasbourg, because we have the flags of all the European countries. We have been to every one of those countries. Our view of shared education means that we go to other EU member states to look at their special education system. The special education system that we have in the Province is far better than

- any other special education system. I read the greatest load of rubbish about how brilliant and integrated the Finnish education system is. I believe that the Department of Education has shares in Finland. It is all we hear. I have been there twice: it is absolutely rubbish. After a school principal showed me around his super-duper school, I asked, "Where are the special children?" He said, "Oh, they're in the annex". I said, "Oh, the annex. Can I go and visit it?" He said, "No, it's 38 kilometres away". I said, "In our country, we call those special schools". He got very upset and said, "I pay for those teachers", so now we have fiscal inclusion. I asked, "How often do those children come to your school?" With a horrified look, he said, "Never". If you go onto the Internet today or into any educational bookshop, they will talk about the fabulously integrated education system that they have in Finland. It is not a patch on what we have here, and we are firing on one cylinder. There are barriers to making our current shared education provision much more inclusive. One of those barriers is the education and library boards. Another barrier is the Department of Education. I make a plea to you good people. We have been in this job for a long time. Lots of politicians have been in my school. There has never, ever been a politician, irrespective of whatever political party they were in, who did not give the same message of support for our children and teachers. All I ask is that, in this big House, somebody somewhere should maybe say, "Let's go for a more collegiate, joined-up approach to our special schools". They are part of the education system; they are not on the periphery of it. That is a plea.
2184. **Mr Davis:** To qualify: when I talked about needing money to do this, I do not mean that we want more money. It would be great if we could have that, but we need a funding model that gives us greater flexibility to use the money in a smarter way. We strongly believe that it has not been used in a smart way. We have a fantastic system of special education here, but it has probably been largely down to individual enthusiasm and commitment. Board officers have been very good over the years, but we know the model that we need to create to best meet the needs of those children. It is a different model than the one we have now. It is not just about classroom assistants and teachers; we have to learn about other things, such as buying in. It is about being able to bring in a behavioural therapist, a music therapist or an art therapist — not necessarily full-time. The whole funding model and the way in which we are funded needs to be looked at. Something that gives us a bit more flexibility to be able to do that would be fantastic for the children and young people. There would also be benefits for mainstream schools and partners that we are collaborating with. That expertise and those support services will be led from the school. Rather than a board trying to fire fight, we could be more proactive; we could support the needs of the teachers and pupils in those schools.
2185. **Dr Cunningham:** The research is very clear that children who are on the spectrum with autism react very positively to a dog, usually a Labrador. It would nearly take an act of God to get a dog into my school because of health and safety and all sorts of things, but yet they have been in schools in Sweden, Norway and France, and, you know, they have not eaten a child yet. We cannot get one into our schools because of a barrier that has been placed there on no evidence whatsoever. As you can see, special education is a bit of a passion for the people who work in it.
2186. **Mr Davis:** We are probably a bit of a pain for a lot of people. Many a time, I have been told to stop lobbying.
2187. **Dr Cunningham:** Our children cannot speak. They literally cannot speak, so we do it for them.
2188. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I sense your frustration. I also sense your passion. Thank you for your presentation and to both of you for your written submissions as well. I think that we will

- have to return to a number of the issues that you have raised again, particularly when we are looking at the SEN Bill. You are also being invited to our event on 18 March. We talk about the disconnect between health and education and the challenges. Your input to that session will be very valuable.
2189. With regard to shared and integrated education, I always got the sense that special schools were totally inclusive and that there was never any difference made, regardless of your background or creed. Certainly, it resonated very strongly with me that you are naturally integrated, regardless of the fact that you have a “controlled” label. For me, that is always very much about management as opposed to anything else. I do not really understand why you feel that you need to take on another label of “integrated” status, which very much ties you to Catholic and Protestant as opposed to just being naturally integrated.
2190. **Mr Davis:** I suppose that it is a control element for us. It is about looking at how we can develop and the governance of our schools, which we feel, at the minute, is very much dictated by a board model that is quite outdated for special schools to move forward. I feel that, with the whole concept of integration, in some cases, a lot of our parents see the controlled sector as being Protestant schools. You have this range of parents who, do not forget, come in and have no choice as to where their children go. When they are in the maintained sector, for example, they will go to the local primary school, but their child will be bussed to a controlled school somewhere else. We have had parents who initially had issues with that whole concept, but that was the only option they had: a school that was 25 miles away. It would have been a softer element for them, I would imagine — I know this from talking to them even recently — if it had been an integrated school.
2191. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Were you to transform, you would still be a controlled integrated school.
2192. **Mr Davis:** As for the whole transformation, we are already there. We are already integrated, but we are not recognised as integrated in any legislation, are we?
2193. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I get your point that perhaps the education and library boards do not battle for controlled schools. I think that you may not be the only schools that have an issue with that. I would like to think that the controlled sector support body, once it gets up and running, will be a voice and an advocate for you as it will be for other controlled schools.
2194. **Dr Cunningham:** We were not on the circulation list for the establishment of that body, which I thought was pretty interesting.
2195. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** That point has been made.
2196. **Dr Cunningham:** We get documents all the time. At the moment in Craigavon, we have this debate on controlled schools, and it talks about all the controlled schools. Do you know what? It is not actually about all the controlled schools because they never came near us.
2197. **Mr Davis:** With things like that, you are left out quite a bit. It is an afterthought. There is a bit of a panic when we go to an area learning community meeting or an extended learning community meeting, and, all of a sudden, you have been left out. How were we left out? The board officers have a massive panic. That does not happen just in your board; it happens across the boards.
2198. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You both mentioned that you have chaired your local area learning communities. Obviously, there has been a movement towards greater sharing with the schools that you are involved with. Can you tell us about the benefits that not only your school but those other schools have had by having a relationship with you?
2199. **Dr Cunningham:** I chaired the Craigavon area learning community for two years.

- I have to say that we had been working with many of the schools in the area learning community for the previous 30 years. There was nothing new. Other schools were brought into that area learning community that we did not have a relationship with, but we now do. We have very dynamic relationships in the area learning community. We are not paying lip service to an ideology: we are into practical things here. As I say, we will have a big function in the school later on this month from one of the grammar schools. We have the wall of hands, where, for everybody who comes into the school, if you help us and we think that you have helped us enough, your hand is put up on the wall. The number of people who come into our school is amazing. We have a full wall of hands of the great and the good, from the Chief Constable right the way through to the wee man who raised £50 for us.
2200. **Mr Davis:** Peter Cunningham has one on the wall as well.
2201. **Dr Cunningham:** We will not even go there.
2202. As regards the advantages of the area learning community, I am going to put it down to the other schools. In my opinion, the advantages of having a special school in an area learning community are all to the other schools, because there is a conduit for them to come into the school and see it. We now have active relationships with local post-primary schools. They will lift the phone and say, "We have just got a child in our school with Asperger's. Is it all right if my year 3 teacher comes and has the craic with you? Perfect". That is the sort of thing that we are looking for. It is almost like a sticking plaster over the absence of special education in initial teacher training. The area learning community absolutely facilitates staff working relationships together. The community was mentioned earlier. We photograph any events that we hold, and they are put in the local newspaper. I absolutely and totally support the ALCs.
2203. **Mr Davis:** I will go back to what you were asking for, and one example is careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). We have opened up their eyes to what is available for young people with learning disabilities and physical disabilities. Some of those kids are already in their schools. We have helped them to build partnerships with the voluntary sector that supports employment. One scheme that we are trying to operate with one of our local secondary schools is that some of their young people go out on work experience with some of our young people and support them during that work experience and learn about what it is like to be autistic, the working environment and the type of young person. It opens up their eyes and that in itself — how to work with someone — would be fantastic when it gets off the ground.
2204. We do constant training. As Peter says, this probably has not changed, but maybe there is a bit more. We are in demand for training for very individual children and also collective training on the whole concept of autism, children with multisensory needs or whatever. Without doubt, a lot more of these children are in the system. There is the vocational route and the type of qualifications that we offer for young people. They have learned and we did not realise that those existed, so that has been of value. It has been a two-way process for our teachers and classroom assistants. They are getting a better understanding of the mainstream sector, and, if one of our children ended up being lucky enough to move into the mainstream sector, how they could be supported, the barriers, what we would need to do to support them to overcome the barriers and so on. Apart from that, there are collaborative things with music, choirs and small dramas. Some of our children in Tor Bank go to Newtownbreda High School and Knockbreda High School for classes. We have also gone on college placements together through Belfast Met. Again, all that is expensive. I know that we said that we are not asking for

- money, but the additional money that we got for the early learning community, and a reduction in funding for that and for EF, would put us at a significant disadvantage. Our worry is that, if that is reduced now, can that be sustainable for us, because we do not have our own budget to complement and supplement that?
2205. **Dr Cunningham:** The elephant in the room about the ALC is that there are some school principals and some schools that just cannot work together. That is the reality of it. Therefore, I bring to the Committee's attention the fact that there is a level below the principal's level, and that is that every school will have an area learning community coordinator who will be the senior teacher. If I could be so bold — this is not to deskill school principals — that is where the work is done. The area learning community coordinators are the people who meet, develop and monitor all the activities that we do.
2206. **Mr Davis:** If you do not mind my saying, we are involved in the extended learning community in Dundonald, and that has a make-up from nursery schools right through to secondary schools. That has been a great advantage for us. We have joint French classes and joint sports events. Familyworks counselling comes in to do counselling for the primary-school children. We do not get any funding for that, because a lot of our parents will not fill in free school meal forms. As such, we get money from the cluster but not direct funding for the school. It is an interesting one. It is only in the last five years that we have got fully involved in the extended learning community. A special school has an age span from three to 19, and the problem for us is that we are out of the school quite a lot to attend various meetings to do with all the curriculum initiatives and so on, but we still have to be legally responsible for, or to introduce into the school, a watered-down version —
2207. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Of course, your new build and your relocation have aided that as well.
2208. **Dr Cunningham:** My new build was built for 40 children; there are 140 children at Ceara School, and more children are educated in mobiles than are educated within the brick walls.
2209. **Mr Davis:** We are lucky; we have the new school. I must admit that it is fantastic, and thank you to everybody for that one.
2210. **Dr Cunningham:** Can I have a new school, please?
2211. **Mr Davis:** Our numbers are already increasing, as Peter said. The worrying thing is that we have so many kids and young people with special education needs, and the best provision will be provided in special schools, but there are not enough places. I do not know what will happen in the near future. I am sure that all of you will have letters galore from parents looking for places. We have 10 children leaving this year, and we have only 10 places technically. We already increased the enrolment by 10 from last year. The school was built for 162, and it now has 172. The physical size of the school may not be able to accommodate any more. It will be difficult.
2212. **Mr Lunn:** I had various questions for you, but you have really answered them all. I have a question about the budget. Peter, you mentioned the frustration of having to wait until part way through the year. Is it cynical to say that that is because the board waits to see what money it has left —
2213. **Dr Cunningham:** We get the crumbs from the table.
2214. **Mr Lunn:** Yes.
2215. **Dr Cunningham:** Absolutely.
2216. **Mr Lunn:** So it is not cynical; it is correct.
2217. **Dr Cunningham:** It is factual. There is no budget mechanism whereby I can say, "Look, you have given me x amount of money. Could I please see the formula that you have used for calculating that?". I have been looking for that formula for the last 15 years.

2218. **Mr Davis:** It does not exist.
2219. **Mr Lunn:** With regard to the question of integrated status or otherwise, if you were allowed to apply for integrated status, what would the parents' view on that be? Have you tested their opinion?
2220. **Dr Cunningham:** I am not sure that I would.
2221. **Mr Davis:** We are still testing the waters with parents with regard to that. They are very positive about the whole concept. With respect to our school, the religious background in the community is very mixed. If they think that there are going to be benefits for their children and we were able to sell those benefits for the children, that would be —
2222. **Mr Lunn:** It would not change the ethos of your schools because both are well mixed anyway. That is due to natural demographics and geography, and the fact that parents whose children have the need for what you offer would be much less concerned in the first place about whether it was a Protestant or Catholic school. It would not be an issue for them.
2223. **Mr Davis:** You are right: it would not change the culture of the school. That is already there.
2224. **Mr Lunn:** It would change the funding situation.
2225. **Mr Davis:** That is what we are looking for, if it were a way to help change the funding mechanism. It is the fact that we cannot apply for it; we do not fit in. It is yet another equality issue for a special school. Here we go again. We are fighting our way all the time through this quagmire of a system that tends to ignore special schools.
2226. In England, they had their own funding formula, and we have been to every finance chief and chief executive and tortured the life out of them over the last number of years about this. We brought people over from England who have worked in their special schools under a local authority funding mechanism that changed so much over the years. We have tried to say that we strongly believe that we could have a better system using the existing money but having control over it. We are excluded from that.
2227. **Dr Cunningham:** Absolutely. Over here, we have the local management of schools (LMS), and, in England, there is the local management of special schools (LMSS). Our colleagues in England screamed loudly that they did not want this system 20 years ago. However, you would not find one special school principal in England now who would go back to the old way. They want to be in control of their budgets.
2228. We want to be in control of our budgets. We are effectively de-skilled, because every other principal in the country looks after their budget and is held to account, but we are not. We get our budget in September/October-ish, and sometimes there is money in it and sometimes there is not, and little bits of money go in during the year, but you are never told.
2229. **Mr Davis:** We have to remember that part of the boards' function is to help with training in special education, and we have received very little to no training in the last, gosh knows, how long, apart from team-teach training. This is because, with the closure of Muckamore, we have some very difficult children to manage. This is a good example of positive partnerships. There was a community reintegration model where schools were not consulted, and we and parents have been left with a problem on that one. We believe that if we had additional money, we could train our staff to be trainers. We do it ourselves, but it puts us under enormous pressure.
2230. **Mr Lunn:** Peter, I fear that changing to integrated status would not do much about your point about half your school being educated in mobiles. You share that honour with most integrated schools.
2231. **Dr Cunningham:** In fairness, if someone had asked me 10 years ago if there would be 140 children at Ceara School, I

would have said, “Absolutely not”. It is a fact that Ceara has the highest number of newcomer children in any special school in the Province.

2232. I will relate this to money. Every other school in the country got £1,000 per newcomer child. Nobody told us, and I found out about it only over dinner about a year ago. I asked the education board, “Where did that money go?” and I was told that it went into the big pot. So, we had to fight. This year, we got that money put into our budget. For previous years, we did not. There was behaviour money given to every school in the country, which was allocated to those school budgets, but it was not put into the special schools budgets until we heard about it, once again, through the grapevine. If we had control of our own budgets, the schools would be run very efficiently and effectively.

2233. **Mr Lunn:** You are actually making my final point. You just keep highlighting the contradictions. We are here, talking about sharing and integration, but you have all this experience going right back to 1947 — of course, not in your particular cases — and the beneficial effects for your children and other children, the relationships you have built up, and the way you operate sharing the system should be of value to this new project. Yet you appear to be being sidelined. I think you mentioned Limavady at one stage. The special school in Dungiven contributes to that area learning community, does it not? It is very well received, I believe. I can only agree with you. I am sorry, I cannot keep asking you questions.

2234. **Dr Cunningham:** I suppose the irony for me is that the 11 year-old I once taught is now the lady at the education and library board who now OKs my budget. Ding ding.

2235. **Mr Lunn:** I will not make the comment that comes to mind.

2236. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome. Peter, as somebody who has visited your school, I see the point. I see that you are very passionate about your work

but also very frustrated. I suppose that one of the frustrations right through the whole education system is that we are advancing shared education, but that the entitlement framework has been cut by 29%, which sort of runs contrary to that. I have a very quick question from what I have read. You say somewhere that dual enrolment should be permitted. What do you see as the benefits of dual enrolment?

2237. **Mr Davis:** For me, there are about five very positive benefits. Basically, it is very difficult to get a proper diagnosis for a lot of children initially, especially young people with autism and behavioural challenges. They may not respond to the usual testing requirements and psychological tests. We get them in at three or four years of age. We get them settled down, we work on the behaviour and we put the structure and visuals in — they have no communication. They then start to develop very quickly. You are looking after the needs holistically in a special school and in a supportive environment. However, we may feel that the children would benefit from partial placement in a local nursery or year one. We have done this with Brooklands Primary School, Dundonald Primary School and St Joseph’s up in Carryduff — wherever the parent wants them to go. In some cases, they have then moved to that school permanently. We have opened the eyes of not just the parents. To be honest, it is very hard to get children out of the school, because the parents are delighted that they have made such good progress. We have recognised, however, that we have done our job by getting children fully included. We support the school through that transformation programme. Certainly, that would be an idea and one of the main targets for us of dual enrolment.

2238. We also have some children with good verbal skills but who are very low-functioning when it comes to their academic ability. They would benefit from interaction with other children in the mainstream sector, but not on a permanent basis. It might be for a morning or an afternoon. It may be for

- a sports activity or whatever. We find in that sort of collaborative venture that the social benefits for the young person are enormous as well. That is just two quick examples.
2239. We have had others who have gone through the whole of primary school, spending one day a week at St Joseph's, for example, and the other four at Tor Bank. We take responsibility for the programme and work with the teachers throughout those respective years. The teacher learns a lot from having to work with a child with autism. The pupils learn how to cope and interact with the child with autism. It becomes more difficult as they move further up towards — well, the transfer is not there — the more academic years 6 and 7 and then on to secondary. It works well in early secondary. Again, when it comes to the pressures of GCSEs and so on, schools are a wee bit more hesitant to take the children and young people in.
2240. **Dr Cunningham:** To be pragmatic, sometimes it is very difficult for us to reintegrate children back into a mainstream school. It means that they would maybe come to me for six weeks and then, for one week, go back to their own mainstream school for an hour or so. Then we would build that up to two hours and then a whole day. It would facilitate the move from the special school to the mainstream school and from the mainstream school to the special school. A teacher could ring me and say, "I have a wee fellow up here with sensory issues", and I would tell them that we have a great sensory room and to send him up. They would then say, "I don't know how I could send him up. You are too far away. Who is going to pay for it?". It would facilitate that.
2241. **Mr Davis:** To me, a lot of that part of shared education is ignored. The ultimate goal for us is to build on that.
2242. **Mr Rogers:** I think that that is fantastic, because, to me, that is really advancing shared education for the sake of the child.
2243. **Mr Davis:** Very much so.
2244. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you very much for that.
2245. **Mr Craig:** Peter, Colm, I get the distinct impression that you have a lot of frustrations, and I can understand them. I have worked closely with Beechlawn and Parkview in my constituency, and the frustrations that you have shared with us, equally, have been shared with me by those schools. I have done what I can to help them.
2246. I have one question, and I am honest about the fact that I am a great admirer of what you do in your schools. You are working in a very difficult environment, almost in a one-to-one teaching situation. That is the nature of what you are dealing with.
2247. I pick up very clearly your frustration around the financial model of how your school is run. I need to be fundamentally honest here: even though you have the title of "controlled", it is an absolutely meaningless title. I am the chair of the board of governors of a controlled school, and, in fairness, I have control over the finances of that school. You do not, so it is a meaningless title for you. I do not think that the title is that important, to be fundamentally honest with you. Is your frustration really around, first, the lack of finance for your sector — end of story — and, secondly and more importantly, the lack of control that you or your governors actually have over how that is used in your school? To me, that is fundamentally ignoring the expertise that you bring to that sector.
2248. **Dr Cunningham:** You are absolutely and totally right. No one could argue that my school, for example, is underfunded. You walk into Ceara School, and you see that it is not a poor school. It is not an underfunded school, but I have this thing about proactive as opposed to reactive planning. You will get a telephone call saying that there is £100, £1,000 and £5,000 but that it has to be spent by the end of next Wednesday. Or, at this time of the year, you will get a telephone call to say, "There is £30,000 left in the pot; put your best bid in". You are thinking, "I have to spend £30,000. I

actually need pens, but that will take six weeks and I can't get the invoice in on time. I will buy another photocopier". Photocopiers are expensive, but you can get the money gone quickly, and it can be invoiced quickly. However, that is not the effective management of a school. Effective management is being able to predict what your budget will be; that you will get your budget on 1 April like every other school in the country, and that you will then make out a budgetary management scheme and spend your money according to the needs of the children and staff in your school as opposed to reactive spending to simply get the money spent. That is not an efficient use of taxpayers' money. It absolutely is not.

2249. My sense of frustration is not due to lack of money, because my school is well funded, and I can speak only for my school. The frustration is in that we do not have ownership of that money. They talk about a delegated fund. Delegated funding implies that we do a bit of it and you do a bit of it; but in my school I am responsible for less than half of 1% of the total budget. That is crazy. That has to be crazy. We then have people who are not educationalists and who definitely have no experience in special education telling us, "You can't buy that because it costs more than £4,000, and you have to do whatever". I say, "But, I need this now. We have need." It does not allow for proactive planning. I have spoken to several permanent secretaries, although not the current one, and volunteered my school to be an LMSS school for one year. At one time, it was just Colm and me banging on this drum and saying, "We want our dedicated budget". I suggest that now there are quite a few special schools in the Province that would welcome the opportunity to go to a full, dedicated budget.

2250. **Mr Craig:** I fully get that frustration. I was up in Parkview last week, and when I walked through the door I saw an example of what you are saying about small pockets of money being thrown at you and having to be used instantly.

They had a beautiful, all-singing, all-dancing system for me to log in as a visitor. It was touch-screen and all the rest of it. My first question was, "Where the heck did you get the money for that?" The answer was inevitably what you said: it was the result of reactive budgeting. The school was told, "Here's a pocket of money we haven't spent, throw it at that." That is no way to run our education system.

2251. **Dr Cunningham:** I have a problem here. Without a doubt, the greatest amount of funding spent in a school relates to staffing. I am constantly being handed documents from the education and library board pointing out that the level of absenteeism in special schools is significantly higher than that in primary and post-primary schools. But, there are not too many people in primary and post-primary schools who get their noses broken or their heads pummelled against a wall. There is not a day in life that I do not have to intervene with the girls in my school. I had to take a girl out last week to get a hepatitis B injection because a child took a lump out of her arm.

2252. There are bald statistics. On the one hand, we do not get our budget when we want it and we do not have the responsibility over it, and on the other hand you are shown a document that says, "You're absenteeism rate is three-and-a-half times more than the average." We are not equating like with like. The population in our schools, and I do not know whether you agree, Colm, has changed significantly over the past 15 years. We now have children who have very extreme behavioural issues. It is testament to the people we have in our schools that the absenteeism is not ten times higher.

2253. **Mr Davis:** As you know, the Department has done a review on the behavioural side of things. It softened the documentation that it brought out on the outcomes. We were not very happy with that. I will give you an example. I had a meeting with the Health Minister a few years ago about the community reintegration strategy when they closed

Muckamore to children. How have they linked that in with schools? They have not. What additional funding has come? None.

2254. Education is saddled with the bill for minding some of those children. In some cases, it is very difficult. We are talking about trying to manage pupils when they get to 6 feet 2 ins or 6 feet 3 ins on school premises. In those circumstances, full-time education should not be an option, but we still try to deliver it. Three children left Tor Bank school at 19, and we were very disappointed to learn that within three months they were in Muckamore permanently. So, education had been saddled with the bill the whole way through, but once the person was handed over to health, this happened. We had worked as best we could in partnership with health, which at the time pays lip service to the issue, and we have got the problems.
2255. That expense is very hard to plan for, even if you have your own budget. Whatever funding model there is in the future for special schools, there will still need to be something sitting outside that to enable us, maybe health and education, to address such expenses. We are talking about accommodation, and we have discussed attaching a satellite to Peter's school — probably outside his mobiles — or outside my school that is organised and run by health and education. The child or young person could go there part of the day and get music therapy and whatever health could provide, but they could also come in and out of the school for as long as their concentration level would permit them to do so. Let us be realistic about this.
2256. **Mr Craig:** This is more of a comment. I share your frustrations on a lot of this. I hope and pray that the Minister listens to the Committee — he normally does — and what you have said about the finances and the lack of a joined-up approach. In fairness, he listens to a lot of the special education stuff, as we saw over the sixth-form provision in Beechlawn. The issue is how you

progress these people so that they can integrate into work and society. It is a frustration I share with you. I do not have an answer or a solution.

2257. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you for your time this morning. Apologies again for not having relocated to Ceara, but we plan to be there in the near future.
2258. **Dr Cunningham:** There is a place in the wall.
2259. **Mr Davis:** To put your hand.
2260. **Mr Craig:** Is that the fingerprint technology? *[Laughter.]*
2261. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you.
2262. **Mr Davis:** Thank you very much, folks, and good luck.

18 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Rev Donald Ker	<i>Methodist Church in Ireland</i>
Rev Dr Ian	<i>Transferor</i>
Rev Trevor Gribben	<i>Representatives' Council</i>

2263. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
 We have three members of the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) with us this morning: Reverend Trevor Gribben, clerk of the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; Reverend Donald Ker, secretary of conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland; and Reverend Dr Ian Ellis, secretary to the Church of Ireland board of education and secretary to the TRC. You are all very welcome, and thank you very much for your paper. I ask you to make an opening statement, and members will follow that with questions.

2264. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis (Transferor Representatives' Council):** Thank you, Chair, for your invitation and welcome this morning. It is a little while since we have been at the Committee, and we thought that we should refresh your memory of who we are and where we are from. We represent the three main Protestant dominations: the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church. Each of our Churches has a board of education, and we work together as three Churches in the Transferor Representatives' Council.

A number of years ago, my predecessor came up with the idea of a council to represent our three Churches, because there was strength in the three being together.

2265. Originally, the three Churches were school owners, and, as you know, most of our schools were transferred to state control in the 20th century. In return for that, transferors were given legal rights of representation in local schools and on area bodies or area boards, as they now are. Of course, transferors are also represented on the new Education Authority. That was all about ensuring that a Christian ethos remained in the schools that we transferred and that in their governance and in the regional body itself, where principals were appointed and where planning took place, there was an emphasis placed on the ethos in the schools. That was achieved in the early 20th century and persists today. We have been here a long time, in the business of the controlled sector especially. As transferors, we tend to speak about our role in the controlled sector, and many of you know that we were up here many times during the debate about the Education Authority.

2266. We are here today to speak to the paper that we gave you in October about the shared education inquiry that you are undertaking. As you know, in parallel with that is the Minister's consultation on shared education, so we may refer to some of the questions that he raises in that as well as some of the points that we made in our submission to the Committee. If it is agreeable, we will do that.

2267. From the outset, it is important to say that the Churches have been strongly in favour of shared education as a concept for quite a number of years. I think that we have even been here talking about it, incidentally, on the margins

- of other topics in the past. It has inspired and enthused us, and, if you look back at the records of debates in the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Church of Ireland over the past four or five years, you will find that each of our Churches has passed resolutions of strong support for the concept. We believe that, within it, there is the potential for so much good: in the educational outcomes achievable when schools work together and in the reconciliation benefits and community cohesion that can come about through contact and the process of sharing in an educational enterprise. As Churches, we have felt that it is a concept worthy of exploring and developing, and we have been keen to see it developed.
2268. Now that I have given the opening comment, my colleagues will say a little more on other topics of interest to you in your inquiry, rather than your hearing one voice all the time. I hand over to Trevor, and Donald will come in after that.
2269. **Rev Trevor Gribben (Transferor Representatives' Council):** Chair, thank you for the invitation. As transferors, we have strongly advocated the need for a definition of shared education. It can be a very nebulous term, and we welcome the move towards defining it. However, we express grave concerns, as we did in our response to the Minister's consultation, about the definition that the Department proposes.
2270. The definition that would sit much more comfortably with us is that proposed by the ministerial advisory group, which reported in 2013. The reason for that is the Department's inclusion in its definition of "socio-economic sharing", for want of a better phrase. We want to be very clear on this point. We believe that a lot of work has to be done to counter and deal with economic and social disadvantage in education and that such work is so important that it should have a particular focus. We also believe that huge work needs to be done on shared education by bringing together schools from different sectors and communities to share real educational experiences. We feel that attempting to mix the two in one definition could limit the potential of shared education to be very effective in Northern Ireland.
2271. We can illustrate the point by referring to an earlier departmental consultation on special educational needs, on which many of us worked incredibly hard. As Churches, we brought together a group of leading experts from this island and put in what we felt was a very credible submission, as did many other groups. We said at the time that the widening of the definition of special education beyond the accepted understanding would damage both the consultation and the prospect of moving forward in special education — that is exactly what happened. The other issues that the Department wanted to attach to special education through the redefinition were good and worthy in themselves, but attaching them to special education meant that much good work was lost. We fear that exactly the same could happen here. Let us deal with these two issues: both need to be dealt with, but let us not try to lump them together in a definition of shared education.
2272. Our response to the Minister's consultation also addressed the proposal to designate schools public authorities, thereby bringing them under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. As Churches, we are not opposed to section 75. Sometimes, we express concerns about its implementation, but we do not want to give the impression that the Churches are against equality. We are not; we are strong advocates of equality. However, placing on schools, and particularly small primary or rural schools, all the administrative demands of being a public authority under section 75 would, we believe, distract them from their real job of education. The sheer bureaucracy that would come with this designation would be counterproductive to education throughout Northern Ireland, so we have real concerns about that. I will come to another issue later, but, first, Donald will address one or two other issues.

2273. **Rev Donald Ker (Methodist Church in Ireland):** Thank you, Madam Chair. What does good shared education look like? We want to express strongly the view that good shared education will not look the same in every situation — the cliché is one size does not fit all. The Department and the Committee need to understand that local situations demand different local responses. It would be invidious to name any particular places. It could be that the fairly simple sharing happening in one place might not be perceived as all that significant, but the local context, its history and the community surroundings need to be borne in mind when seeking to evaluate what good shared education looks like. This has a couple of implications. It has an implication, first, for the inspectorate. If the inspectorate simply says that it needs to see A, B, C, D and E — in other words, it is simply a question of how the sharing fits into a pre-constructed template and no account is taken of the local circumstances and where the community has come from to get to the stage that it has achieved — we will have a difficulty.

2274. Secondly, we want to emphasise strongly that, even where a school is perceived to sit within one section of the community or governance structure, there is already, in a wide variety of cases, substantial cross-community sharing in schools. The population of any given school does not necessarily simply reflect its governance structure. Therefore, where sharing is happening within a school, there should be encouragement and incentive to help that forward.

2275. Where should the capital investment go? We are aware of the announcements made in the last 24 hours. Capital investment should go to places where shared initiatives already take or have taken place and where good outcomes — by “good”, I mean evaluated according to the local situation — have been demonstrated. We are asking for a flexible approach and a deeper understanding, which do not always sit easily with very tightly constructed definitions.

2276. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** I will address one additional issue, Chair. Lacking in the proposals in the Department’s consultation document is the role of sectoral bodies in shared education. We raised this in our submission to the Committee in October. At the very core, we are involved, as you are aware, in getting the sectoral body for controlled schools up and running. In the very remit agreed with the Minister for that body is the promotion of sharing between the different sectors, meaning that the sectoral bodies have to be not just an advocate for their own sector but a leader of that sector in sharing with other sectors. I am sure that we all have our own view of how we ended up with the Education Authority and the sectoral bodies, but we are where we are, and we are very positive about wanting to make that work and maximising the potential of the new era beginning in April. It seems to us that the Minister’s consultation and the various pointers on who will be involved almost totally miss the role of sectoral bodies. The controlled sector body will have a key role in promoting good practice in sharing, in working with other sectoral bodies to help to negotiate local situations and in coming together with other sectoral bodies to advocate together how sharing can be maximised in local situations. We want the role of sectoral bodies, which is, we feel, absent at the moment, to be written in very clearly. It is acknowledged in certain aspects of departmental policy, but — surprise, surprise — that policy is not always as joined up as it might be. In the document on shared education, no real role is given to sectoral bodies, yet the policy on sectoral bodies encourages them to become involved in shared education, which is what we want. That needs to be written in. It may be an administrative oversight, but we fear that sectoral bodies have simply been forgotten.

2277. We operate largely in the controlled sector, as you are aware, and we are perturbed generally, and specifically when it comes to shared education, that the controlled sector body will not

- be up and running on 1 April. Therefore, despite all the developments in shared education — we hope that the Education Authority and Department will lead on that and that the Committee and others will be involved — the controlled sector body does not have the capacity to operate. That is because, largely, it has not been possible to deliver on the assurances that we were given. We have been held up by what one might call bureaucracy. We are still without a chief executive or a body to advocate for the controlled sector in the area of shared education from 1 April; other sectors have publicly funded posts so that they can be involved in that work. We make that general point and attach it to shared education. We are aware that others are coming to talk to you later today and would welcome your exploring that issue with them, if you are so minded, Chair.
2278. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** I have a final point, which follows on from what Trevor was saying about a role for the controlled sector support body. A key role is in providing ethos support. I mentioned that the foundational ethos of controlled schools is characterised by a Christian spirit. Over the years, we have discovered that our colleagues, the Catholic trustees, are very keen to work with us on sharing because they recognise that controlled schools have a Christian faith foundation, as do their schools. We have, over a good number of years, had very positive conversations with our Catholic trustee colleagues, who are keen that we develop work together because of that common bond.
2279. We have been looking at the new concept of a jointly managed church school, which is a possible option for sharing in the future. We are all aware of the spectrum of options for shared education. One of those narrow points on the spectrum is the possibility of a jointly managed church school. That is where the transferring Churches and the Catholic Church come together to form a group of trustees — they would be the trustees of the enterprise — which nominates governors to sit on the school board alongside governors who come from parent groups and teachers. The school then becomes a new type of school, but it is founded on common Christian principles and on the interplay between the two sides, the Protestant Churches and the Catholic Church, which work together in an agreed way.
2280. We are keen to develop that, so the Department, to its credit, has been trying to devise a circular of guidance, which has been requested by a number of schools. We have been working together to finalise that, and it is at a fairly advanced stage. A number of ramifications need to be thought out, not least transport policy, but that is progressing well, and we see it as one option on a spectrum of options for sharing. Requests have come in to the Department from a number of areas for guidance on how that might come about.
2281. If it did come about, it would, in our view, be an integrated school, meeting all the criteria of an integrated school. Both communities are represented there at the heart of the governance and foundation of the school, and that goes right through to the ethos that is developed within it. If such a school could be devised and a pilot produced, it should have all the benefits that flow to and are enjoyed by the integrated sector — that is “integrated” with a small “i”, of course. That is one option for the future, and it comes about because the Catholic trustees are keen to work with us on the basis of a common bond.
2282. That was my final point. Donald, I think, will wrap up.
2283. **Rev Donald Ker:** Yes, and I will do so with what I hope you will not think a cheeky postscript. In so far as we are aware that initial teacher education is not the remit of this Committee, it seems to us to provide the opportunity for a good model for sharing. In the current situation, some enhanced collaboration between the two institutions particularly responsible for initial teacher education would be a good way forward, and we strongly encourage that.

2284. That is all we want to say by way of an opening statement, Madam Chair. We are very happy to respond to questions.
2285. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. You covered quite a number of issues, and I very much enjoyed that neat segue to the controlled sector body.
2286. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Thank you, Chair.
2287. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You were also kind to the Department when you said that the role of sectoral bodies not being in its paper was, perhaps, an “administrative oversight”.
2288. You mentioned the ministerial advisory group’s definition of shared education and pointed out that you have an issue with the focus on socio-economic. The new definition proposed includes terms such as “religious belief” and “political opinion”. What are your views on that?
2289. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We are not convinced that it is a useful change to the definition that the ministerial advisory group recommended, which would sit much more comfortably with us and does not include the word “political”. Let me illustrate our point: would it mean that two schools on the Shankill Road that were influenced by different groups in loyalism could be defined as collaborating in shared education if they were perceived to have different political leanings? We do not think that that is what shared education is meant to be about; it is meant to be about the two communities.
2290. We recognise that not everyone is churchgoing — from our Churches’ perspective, our job is to change that, of course — so some people may no longer define themselves as Protestant or Catholic. However, we are aware also that, in legislation, people are defined as being perceived to be from the Protestant community or Roman Catholic community. That is often how fair employment works, and it is how the Equality Commission works.
2291. Therefore, perceived Protestant or perceived Catholic, or perceived to be from a Protestant or Catholic background, is better phraseology than bringing the word “politics” into it. We are not against politicians; they are wonderful people, but we should keep politics out of the definition, if possible.
2292. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** I come back to Trevor’s original point about the socio-economic aspect. There are lots of towns and villages in this country in which the mix of people is limited. In some towns, there are no great socio-economic divides, and schools just happen to be placed where they are. The definition seems to rule out sharing where the mix of pupils is fairly homogenous. We think that the definition is limiting and are happier with the kind of thrust that Paul Connolly’s group came up with, which was about promoting social cohesion and community identity and so on, rather than placing it in the Bill as a must-do list of things that have to be covered.
2293. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Other than your comment towards the end about jointly managed church schools, which I will come back to, you have not really mentioned integrated education. The comment that I want to make is on the controlled sector. It is often, perhaps, misrepresented as a sector. Natural sharing has taken place in the sector over many years, and there is natural integration there already. Do you have a comment on that?
2294. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** You are right to say that there is some natural mixing in schools. The controlled sector was weakened because it did not have the same support as other sectors. Some schools in the Catholic sector have good mixes, and there are super-mixed non-denominational schools that have quite a range of religious identities. We have not really been opposed to integrated education. As Protestant Churches, our line has been that, where a community wished to develop integrated education and there was no threat to controlled school provision, we have supported it. We have supported communities that wished to engage in the process of controlled schools transforming to controlled integrated status. At the end

- of the day, the Churches still have a place in that kind of new arrangement. There are places for transferors in that.
2295. The downside is that the process has always been perceived as being one way. No maintained school has ever transformed. So the transformation process has been faulty from the beginning, and there is a sense of loss in our community when it happens. The sense of loss is this: although still involved in the controlled school that is created, you have two rather than four places, and, anyway, the maintained schools do not seem to change. In spite of all that, as Churches, we supported transformation where there was community support for it, because we felt that it needed to happen for social cohesion and reconciliation reasons.
2296. It has to be said that some transformations were panic transformations and were because of “last resort” reasons. Maybe they felt that they were not sustainable and that transformation was a way of becoming sustainable. Interestingly, there have been very few transformations in recent years.
2297. We have never been opposed to integrated education. Our main focus has been controlled schools, and defending controlled schools has been our key purpose. We have very good working relations with the integrated sector and the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE).
2298. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** As Churches, we want to be clear in saying that we affirm schools that are formally integrated, so integrated with a capital “I”, as one form of sharing. We are opposed to the more purist line that it is the only legitimate form of sharing. The integrated movement has taken things so far in a relatively small number of schools and communities, but the concept of shared education has the potential of rolling out a much better future for Northern Ireland by encouraging people to work together, where they are able to do so, and to stop saying, “We cannot do everything” and start asking, “What can we do?”. I go back to Donald’s earlier point: while we have been one of the groups advocating that shared education needs be mainstreamed and not left to voluntary groups on the fringes — we welcome the Committee and the Minister’s involvement in attempting to do that — our fear is that every Department, not just the Education Department, in case people think that we do not like the Education Department, once things are mainstreamed, will want everything regulated.
2299. Take academic league tables. We all know the farce that is there, because the level that pupils achieve in an academic table depends on the pupils who go to a school. In the system that we have, a selective grammar school will probably achieve higher GCSE results than a non-selective secondary school in the controlled sector; that is obvious. The danger is that we will have league tables in sharing: “These two schools have maximised sharing and are wonderful, but these have done very little”. However, in that community that might be wonderful. We are yet to be convinced that the inspectorate and the Department can devise a scheme that acknowledges those small steps that are absolutely brilliant for that community. However, if you put it in a league table, it looks as if it is a failing shared education enterprise.
2300. Integrated education is one form of sharing; we do not see it as the peak or the new Jerusalem to which we are all heading. It works in some places; it will not work in others. We are delighted that our colleagues in the Catholic Church have embraced shared education and are talking with us about jointly managed schools. If this enables colleagues in the Catholic Church to participate fully in sharing where, perhaps, they have some concerns about the integrated movement, we should welcome that. We would hope that those in the integrated movement would welcome sharing and not see it as a threat to their existence.
2301. **Rev Donald Ker:** May I make a quick personal comment? I have four children,

three of whom went to a school that would be perceived largely as sitting in the Protestant community while the other went to an integrated school. In terms of actual sharing and alertness cross-community, both schools delivered what I considered to be a high degree of sharing in understanding.

2302. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I want to return to the jointly managed Church schools. While controlled schools have a Christian ethos, generally they are non-denominational and would not necessarily be regarded as faith schools. How, in practice, would a jointly managed Church school work and how would it differ from, say, a Roman Catholic school or, indeed, an integrated school with a capital “I”?

2303. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** I will begin and Ian might come in on some of the detail. The first thing that we want the Committee to hear very clearly is that this would be a model that communities could embrace if they wanted to. We are not going into every village and saying that their controlled school and their maintained school must come together and be jointly managed because some communities are not ready and do not want to go there. However, some communities have already said that they do. The scenario is this: a small controlled primary school and a small maintained primary school in a village are both no longer viable, so close them both and bus the kids to the big town. The other option is a joint school.

2304. For some in our community, formal integrated status is not the way they want to go. Our Catholic colleagues have worked very closely with us and the Department on this jointly managed school. It will respect ethos and will have aspects of denominational religious education in it because that is respecting the ethos of those from a Roman Catholic background. There will be some general religious education in it, and there will be well-worked-out protocols for how differences are dealt with. We have an embryonic framework document almost agreed with the Department. We have been working on

it for more than two years. As you can imagine, progress has occasionally been slow, but we have got there.

2305. We, as transferors, and our Catholic colleagues have almost signed off on that process. The Minister hopes to publish it as a guidance document for schools that might want to explore jointly managed schools. We recognise that there is potential fear of loss of identity and a fear of this being imposed on a community. That is not what we want it to be. Situations, which are not useful to name in public, have asked for this; they have asked the Churches to work together to deliver this. There are situations who will want to pilot this once the Department enables it to happen. We will want to talk to all kinds of people, political parties and the Committee about this more fully on other occasions, if you wish us to, once we get that document agreed between us.

2306. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** So, at this stage, you cannot share with us how it will work in practice.

2307. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Ian can give you some details.

2308. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** Some of the structural issues, particularly around governance, have been hammered out, as have some of the issues around ownership; we are almost there with that. We think that the nitty-gritty of the religious education aspect is likely to be resolved at a local level between trustees, for example. Each school will have trustees of the enterprise, nominated by the transferring Churches and the Catholic trustees. That group of local trustees will be charged with making the arrangements for religious education in a school. As Trevor suggests, it will be common RE that can be delivered to everyone. Specific sacramental preparation may also be made available, particularly at primary school, to Catholic children for their sacraments, which has to be part of the curriculum. That is a local arrangement. In the circular being devised at the moment, there are some

- gaps still to be filled in because local solutions will be found for them.
2309. It is about the confidence to do it. That is the point that Trevor is making. These requests are coming from the grass roots — from schools that want to do something. Perhaps they think, “The only way to preserve a school in this community is to work together with a solution”, so they have asked for this. There is a great willingness in some areas; it is not for everywhere, but some communities want to pursue this and explore it. So, it is at their request that we have been encouraged to do that.
2310. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Might this be something that could be explored for the Moy, for example, which has already made the step towards looking at a shared building?
2311. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Yes. For us, shared education at its best will always be evolutionary; it has to start somewhere, but it also has to go somewhere. We are not saying that it will all end up in a jointly managed church school, an integrated school or any particular model, but, for those schools that have begun to take steps down the road, this could offer something else on an à la carte menu that could be the option that they would choose. We would advocate the very best à la carte option that they could choose. We have had no conversation with Moy, but do not illustrate from that at all. This could be another step in the evolutionary process for schools that are already working very closely together — maybe even talking about new builds together. Internally, as Churches, we want sharing to be maximised, but we want it to work locally. This could be a good step in that.
2312. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks very much, Chair, and thanks for the presentation. I want to raise a couple of issues. Trevor, you expressed concern that you do not want shared education to overgrow itself. If I am picking you up right, you are suggesting that we should not be looking at socio-economic sharing and that it should be more community- and faith-based. I may not be taking you up right, but I take exception to the term that we hear all the time, “the super-mixed schools”. I grant that the religious mix may be better than in other schools, but the socio-economic mix in those schools is woeful. We have more affluent Catholics and Protestants sitting together in classes, but that is probably not doing a lot for community relations, especially in the areas that we need to act in. It is very important that we include socio-economic sharing. Am I picking you up right? What are your thoughts on that?
2313. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Thank you for coming back to us on that, Chris, so that we can be very clear. A major piece of work needs to be done on helping with socio-economic disadvantage in education. There is advantage in collaborating across socio-economic groups, to use that terrible technical phrase. However, we fear that lumping that in with shared education and with the definition of “shared education” produced by the Minister’s advisory group could, in some senses, harm the key principle of moving in that other aspect of shared education. Both need to move forward, but lumping them together could harm shared education.
2314. **There is an interesting phrase in the Minister’s definition:** “and socio-economic”. Ian has it here. It talks about “those of differing political belief and those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation”. Belfast is peculiar, with kids being bused in from all over the place. Take a provincial town, where the school that most Protestants go to and the school that most Catholics go to are basically the same socio-economically; there are not the huge divisions that there may be in some cities. Would those two schools be prohibited from developing shared education because they were not sharing across two different socio-economic groups? If people from a perceived Protestant background and a perceived Catholic background were going to work together in shared education were somehow inhibited

- because they did not have a socio-economic mix because they were reflecting their community, that would be crazy. That is our fear of putting it in as an “and”; if you do not have the socio-economic group, you do not tick a box and you do not access that funding. In certain communities outside Belfast, there are not the socio-economic mixes. There will always be deprivation, I am not saying that there will not, but building it in as a key requirement could damage the cross-community sharing that is so important. We do not want anything that could damage it.
2315. **Mr Hazzard:** I agree. I do not want any of this process to inhibit; that is why it is important that we look to be more inclusive. I have talked in the Committee before about the Coleman report in America following desegregation. Educational outcomes did not go up; there was no improvement whatsoever because they did not tackle socio-economic division in schools. They desegregated schools, which, of course, was right, but there was no apparent lift in educational outcomes. My worry for this process is that we will get so overlooked by the need to sit orange and green beside each other in classrooms that we do not look at the real reasons why educational outcomes are not as good as they should be.
2316. You talked a bit about the jointly managed school model, which is very interesting. How does it differ from an integrated school, for example? Are you looking at joint-faith models in England? Is that where that is coming from?
2317. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** We visited two in Liverpool: a primary and a post-primary and saw it at work. You cannot replicate what happens in Liverpool here because that was a mix of an Anglican school and a Catholic school, so it was just two identities. There were not so many Presbyterians or Methodists around.
2318. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** There is no place for Presbyterians in Liverpool.
2319. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** It is more complex here because there is a non-denominational element in the controlled sector. That is where we got the concept, and it works effectively. It is not a big player in the English economy of schools; it is a small component of their schools. There are still Church of England schools, Catholic Church schools as well as Jewish schools and Muslim schools. It is not a big player on the English scene, but we felt that it was worth exploring here. The conversations with our Catholic colleagues took us there.
2320. Your question was about the difference between “Integrated” — with a capital “I” — and this approach. The difference is that our Catholic colleagues are keen to be involved in the enterprise; they want to be there as foundation trustees. Our Catholic colleagues here are less happy with being involved in the integrated sector. I am not —
2321. **Mr Lunn:** Why do you keep looking at me? *[Laughter.]*
2322. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** — giving away any secrets. I do not know why I am looking in that direction.
2323. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We suspect that some questions might come from that end of the table.
2324. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** That is well known. I think that they feel some kind of consonance with us and what we are doing. They wish to be involved in doing that with us. If they are involved in the enterprise from the outset, it comes with the possibility of better community buy-in. I think that that is what we are looking at.
2325. **Mr Hazzard:** Again, I am thinking of going towards ownership, especially for controlled schools that did not transfer. Where does that issue take us?
2326. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** There are only a couple left. We have three Church of Ireland schools that never transferred. Trevor has one Presbyterian school.
2327. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** I have one Presbyterian school that is keen to transfer but cannot get the Department

- organised to enable that to happen. We are working on it.
2328. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** It is down to very small numbers.
2329. **Mr Hazzard:** Finally, who drives that process. Is it you?
2330. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** It is driven locally; local churches just decided not to transfer their schools.
2331. **Mr Hazzard:** I mean who drives that *[Inaudible.]*
2332. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** Oh, right. It has been driven by TRC and the bishops.
2333. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We have worked up the scheme, which will then be available for local communities to buy into if that is what works in a locally. If folk from the controlled sector and transferor governors came and talked to us, we would of course put the scheme before them. There would probably be an advocate for it if it is a local situation. It is not imposed, but, as transferors and Catholic bishops, we have worked up this scheme jointly with the Department. The Minister has facilitated us and provided officials who have been dedicated and focused on this.
2334. As one, I suppose, appendix of a shared education document, this is one way in which it might work. We also feel strongly — Ian made the point earlier — that it will fulfil every legal requirement in legislation of what an integrated school is, which, in legislation, has a small “i” — it is not a sector, but a concept — because, unlike in some other schools, which, for instance, Judge Treacy had problems with, it will be management and schooling that are shared. In every sense, we feel that, if other schools have benefited from legislation, these schools will benefit from exactly the same legislation.
2335. **Mr Hazzard:** It is an interesting development.
2336. **Mr Kinahan:** I am pleased to hear about the joint faiths. I sit here struggling with the definition. When I looked at it, what I found was that there was not enough flexibility in it. Any types of schools that felt that they could do more sharing of any type needed to be included in it. You seem to be pushing it just down the sectoral side, which worries me because schools may be in your sector, but you have different ethnic minorities and whole mixtures in there, whether you are talking about the super-mix school right the way through to one that is just a mixture of Protestant cultures. There are so many needing it.
2337. I would like to explore the sectoral side. Do you see the sectors as controlled and maintained or do you see the Governing Bodies Association as being another sector? In that case, we have to get you all to the point where you have the same powers and the same organisations. At the moment, we have difference in how each is set up. Do you see it as all the sectors or as just the main two?
2338. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** Our focus is on controlled schools and the controlled schools support body, but if other groups of schools have sectoral support bodies, we will work with them, of course, Danny. Some of us were involved in the Queen’s shared education programme and the PI programme in the North Eastern Board and the Fermanagh Trust. I have some experience of seeing that in action.
2339. What was interesting about the Queen’s one, with which we were closely involved, was that it was cross-sectoral across faiths and types of schools. You often saw little projects between a grammar school and a secondary school, a grammar school and a primary school or a secondary school and a special school. Each was interesting in itself, and there was obvious educational benefit in it. The thing that we have found from our experience is that the wider the sharing that is available, the better it can be. Particularly where there was sharing between primary and secondary or primary and grammar schools, there was sharing of expertise between staff and facilities that primary schools might not have had, which really did improve and enrich the quality of

educational experience for children. We do not see it as a narrow focus on Catholic/Protestant sectors. We need to find ways right across the educational system of developing sharing. Those programmes at Queen's and the other programmes led the way. That may be the point that Donald is making: where there have been good experiences when schools have taken part in those programmes is possibly where we need to start to build and do more.

2340. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We felt that the definition that the Minister's advisory group came up with was a good one, that shared education:

"involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration".

2341. To add other things such as socio-economic is unhelpful. We refer the Committee to that definition of shared education from an advisory group whose balance, to be honest, we had concerns about. We had a challenging meeting with them because of perceived presuppositions of some of its members. However, it came out with that agreed definition, and we do not know why the Department has chosen not to adopt it and to add bits to it.

2342. That is our main point. It referred to sectors — we did not create the sectors; it was the Minister's advisory group that used that definition.

2343. **Mr Kinahan:** If we are to amend the definition when the Bill comes forward, we need to have flexibility in it. Last week, I asked the Department who should be the body that decides on flexibility. I asked, "If you were to keep it to your definition but just allow it to be flexible to look at other areas so that you could maximise sharing, who should that body be?"

2344. Should we set up a separate body that has you all represented, or should it be the Education Authority? Last week, the Department wanted the Education Authority to do it. Do we need a body that looks at other types of sharing as

they arise so you are not stuck at always looking at set types?

2345. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** The Education Authority has a duty to consult sectoral bodies, so I would have thought that the Education Authority was the basis of it, but it has to involve the sectoral support bodies.

2346. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** The problem for us is that you can use "sharing" in its widest sense. It goes back to Chris's point: we agree with sharing between socio-economic groups, but this document has a specific definition of "shared education". We do not want that definition to be so widened that the core is lost. By all means develop and do all those other things — socio-economic, sharing with a small "s", and between other sectors and schools, whatever they might be — but do not lose the core definition of what shared education is. Do not ignore one of the core problems that we have in this community: we need to move from a segregated education system to more sharing in education. Do not lose that by adding all the other bits and pieces. That is our plea.

2347. **Mr Kinahan:** We also heard from the departmental witnesses last week that they felt that no extra resources were needed, given the difficult budget times that we are in. Yet they did at one stage say they might need a little bit of pump-priming, or words to that effect. Do you feel that there needs to be priming?

2348. We know that £500 million of capital is sitting there to be borrowed against, but do you think that there is a need, or can we just do it through the area-learning communities or yourselves? Can get away with not putting extra resources into it?

2349. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Can you do anything worthwhile without resources? The answer is no. How those resources flow is a key factor. For instance, a control sector body, if and when it ever gets up and running, will be funded. The Minister is committed to that, and we accept that commitment 100%, and we thank the Minister and the Department for it.

2350. The other sectoral bodies will also be funded. Part of their job will be to develop shared education, so some of the advisory, support, encouragement and promotion will come through sectoral bodies that will be funded, so it is indirect funding.
2351. There needs to be something to incentivise schools directly. Staff development will be important. There is no point in putting pupils together if staff are not equipped to deal with the difficult questions. We would be up-front and say clearly that there is expertise in the integrated sector that can be shared with schools that are developing shared education. We want that to be shared in the same way as the expertise of special schools in dealing with special needs children can be shared with other schools.
2352. There has to be investment. It is about how that flows. A dedicated fund called the shared education fund is probably not the best way forward. Every other sectoral body has obligations, including through staff development, for shared education through various funding pots.
2353. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you for your presentation. I was taken by Danny's comment about a little bit of pump-priming. The pump-priming is £20 million from Atlantic Philanthropies. That will certainly provide an opportunity to test the process. I wonder what happens when that runs out, but we will see; that is for another day. I want to ask you a bit more about your joint management concept. Donald, you said that it is not a case of one-size-fits-all. Frankly, does it mean two schools under one roof with joint management, or does it mean one school under one roof with joint management? What is your ideal?
2354. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** A jointly managed church school in our vision would be one school under one roof. There would be joint trustees, governance that reflected the community and the teaching staff and a common curriculum. It would effectively be a single school under one management.
2355. **Mr Lunn:** An amalgamation of the two schools, but retaining joint authority — not the Moy concept.
2356. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** In the sense of physical separation? No, it would be a single school.
2357. **Mr Lunn:** You said that you have had a lot of cooperation from the Catholic trustees, and that is good. However, when CCMS was here not too long ago, they set their face implacably against — it is all in Hansard — any attempt to amalgamate one of their maintained schools with a controlled school. They will not have it. Malachy Crudden commented that their remit is to open, close and maintain Catholic maintained schools. It was absolutely clear what they meant: before they would allow an amalgamation — I am staying away from the “I” word, whether a big “I” or a small “i” — they would close the maintained school and see the Catholic children going to the nearest maintained school. That is their attitude, so I am mildly surprised, and encouraged, that they are prepared to cooperate with you. They would not have sanctioned the Moy situation if that had meant an amalgamation of the two schools. They fought against it tooth and nail until it was obviously the solution that the community wanted. Are you satisfied with the level of cooperation that you are —
2358. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Perhaps I can put this on record: Moy is a local solution that is acceptable to the community, which we support. The Moy solution might evolve further, and we would not oppose that. We want to say that very clearly, in case there is any misunderstanding. It is a local solution that works, and we encourage that. The roles of CCMS and of the Catholic trustees are a mystery to a mere Presbyterian like me. Those people need to answer for themselves. CCMS is a statutory body with statutory functions, and it does certain things. The Catholic trustees are a different group; they effectively own the schools. We have been working with the Catholic trustees as colleagues. They are happy to

- develop a new model, but it is not there yet. If you ask the question now, there is no model called “jointly managed church schools”. There is no departmental guidance and no legislative backup if needed.
2359. Our Catholic colleagues have said that they will not go in the direction of integration with a capital “I”. We believe that this is a creative solution that can be embraced both by transferors and Catholic trustees. This could change the landscape. We do not think that it will roll out and every school in Northern Ireland will suddenly become jointly managed; we are not stupid. We believe, however, that it could be a local solution for a significant number of situations. If you ask the question now of a statutory body with certain statutory functions, you will undoubtedly get an answer. If you ask the Catholic trustees whether they are willing to continue to develop this model with transferors and the Department, you will, I assume, get a different answer, but, obviously, the Catholic trustees need to answer that themselves.
2360. **Mr Lunn:** There has been some progress in the Republic along those lines.
2361. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** There has. Education in the Republic is a totally different landscape. Donald knows much more about it than I do.
2362. **Rev Donald Ker:** We are starting from a small base. Yes, patronage of schools in the Republic is a very open question. The Department is now exploring the possibility of others being patrons. The Catholic bishops in the Republic have clearly stated that they do not necessarily want to be patron of nearly every school in the state. Changes are taking place there, and we sense that changes are taking place here as well.
2363. **Mr Lunn:** I am still thinking about joint management. If what you are proposing comes to pass and you get the right level of cooperation from the Catholic trustees or CCMS or both — I think it really has to be from both — that is fine with me. Everybody keeps looking at me when anybody says “integrated”. That would, in my opinion, be a pretty good solution.
2364. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We will write that down.
2365. **Mr Lunn:** Hansard is writing it down. As long as it means one joint school, not two schools.
2366. **Rev Donald Ker:** That is exactly the model.
2367. **Mr Lunn:** I am glad to hear that.
2368. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** “Alliance Party supports jointly managed church schools” will be the headline for the journalists at the back.
2369. **Mr Lunn:** They are around somewhere. That was the main question that I wanted to ask you but I wanted to touch on one other thing. I see in your paper that the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland passed a motion in 2014 supporting shared education. That is warmly welcomed. In the 40-odd years since the opening of the first integrated school, has either the general assembly, the general synod of the Church of Ireland or the Methodist conference ever passed a similar motion in support of integrated education?
2370. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** I am not as old as you, Trevor; I think that is an objective truth.
2371. **Mr Lunn:** I am really getting it today.
[Laughter.]
2372. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** You do that to friends. To be honest, I am not sure. I am clerk of the general assembly, but I have not been around that long. I know that the general assembly has been supportive of integrated education where that is what parents and local communities want. That has been stated in reports, whether or not we passed a specific resolution. It is not just the general assembly, although we quoted its text in the paper. Exactly the same resolution was passed in the general synod and the Methodist conference. We purposely did that in the same year so that we, as education secretaries,

- could go into the public domain as strong advocates of shared education with Church policy behind us.
2373. We wanted the general assembly, the general synod and the Methodist conference to have that debate. We had very good debates, and it was strongly welcomed, because it is evolutionary, rather than one-size-fits-all. It can work itself out in local circumstances, and we are strongly in favour of that. That is a good thing. There are lots of other things that we are strongly in favour of, but have maybe not passed resolutions about. That is a positive statement. We see integrated education with a capital "I" as part of shared education, so, by definition, we are in favour of integrated education where that is the appropriate solution.
2374. **Rev Donald Ker:** Whatever a body formally says, it is what actually happens on the ground that matters. If you look at the various schools under the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education throughout Northern Ireland, you will find support from Churches for what those schools do in governance and everyday life.
2375. **Mr Lunn:** I would not argue with that at all. I am pleased that you have passed such a resolution. I sense that there is a bit of relief out there that the emphasis has moved from the push for integrated education to what some people see as a slightly lesser way out, which is shared education. It is very difficult not to sound as if I am against shared education, because I am not; it has been going on for years. It is a perfectly natural thing to do, and it has educational benefits. I must say that the Department prefers to emphasise the educational benefit rather than the sociological benefits that you would, obviously and naturally, subscribe to. We will have to see where it all goes. I am encouraged by the joint management concept.
2376. **Mr Rogers:** Reverend gentlemen, you are very welcome. Your presentation has been very interesting, but even more telling is your response to some of the questions that have been asked. Rev Ian, one of your telling comments was when you said:
- "there is the potential for so much good."*
2377. I get the sense of frustration that, maybe, the focus of education, never mind shared education, gets a bit blurred when we try to address everything. You have an ally, Trevor, when you say that Department policy is not always as joined up as it could be. There is frustration. Are there frustrations in respect of the entitlement framework and the proposed cuts, for example, or the entitlement framework with the early learning community, which is a fantastic way of developing shared education? Are there frustrations with recent funding? Maybe shared education needs to recognise more fully when good sharing is going on within one school, rather than having to make that link with a school from a different background.
2378. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** I recently talked to colleagues over coffee about a past life as a parish minister in my first charge in south Tyrone. The youth club in the village was in our church hall. That is all there was in the village. The youth club was 60% Protestant and 40% Catholic. We could not get any grants for cross-community youth work, and we had to work with a Catholic youth club to get those grants, even though, every Tuesday night, we were doing cross-community youth work. That was a fatal flaw in the Department's funding of youth work. There is a fatal flaw in shared education if the Department does not recognise that, in some places, it is happening within schools and needs to be incentivised. Children from different perceived communities are working and learning together. That can happen within one school; it happens in an integrated school. That is a shared education school, and that should be incentivised. It happens. I do not want to name schools, but we can all name schools that are perceived to be Protestant or Catholic but which have significant numbers of the other community within them. That needs to be affirmed and incentivised, as

- should schools of one group or the other working together. It has to be all-embracing. Whilst we want shared education to be mainstreamed, our fear is of any bureaucracy that wants to make it a particular type or no type. We want to guard against that as this progresses.
2379. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** Your point about departmental policies not always being aligned is a good one. In the midst of our discussions about the jointly managed approach, it became clear that the transport policy that existed was going to count against any kind of sharing in that way. To its credit, the Department has done some work on that and is making proposals around how that might be approached. That is the case with so many different aspects of the Departments' work. They are all working in different little silos; they are not always talking to one another. It is whenever you try something new that you suddenly realise that things run up against one another rather than work with one another. That has been our experience. It is a frustration.
2380. **Mr Rogers:** This came across in our visit to Moy, but we know it from our own communities as well: local context demands a local solution. You said that ETI must take that on board. That is a very relevant point. You could have two schools that are next door to each other in an urban environment, but it is very different in a rural environment, where you may be six miles from any school. How should ETI report sharing?
2381. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** As an art, not a science. That is probably very different thinking for those who want to fill in forms and tick boxes. I am not saying that inspectors just tick boxes, but this really is an art, not a science. Therefore, those who seek to assess it must come with that mindset. That is vital. That could be rolled out by ETI in lots of areas of education. It likes to measure against tick boxes and criteria; it does not recognise lots of good things that are happening, but that is a matter for another day.
2382. **Mr Rogers:** Yes, but you raise a very relevant point. In rural areas in particular, it can be much more difficult to work that through.
2383. **Mr Newton:** I thank the witnesses for coming today. I do not really have a lot of questions; they are more comments. I agree with the teacher training comments that were made. It was sad that the blunt instrument of budget was used in such a manner. It requires a bit more thought to achieve teacher training together.
2384. You have consistently referred to integrated education with a large "I" and with a small "i". For my children, my wife and I chose integrated education with a large "I": they went to Methodist College, which is the finest example of integrated education.
2385. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** How much did you pay him, Donald?
2386. **Rev Donald Ker:** I have to declare an interest in that I am a governor thereof. Thank you.
2387. **Mr Newton:** When the Committee held a meeting in the college, we were impressed by the initiatives that Methodist College had undertaken. It undertook those when, effectively, there were no incentives whatsoever. In fact, it might sometimes have worked against it. I was not aware that Methody had been stretching out on socio-economic issues. Indeed, it recognised that, in terms of contact with other schools that may have been in less favoured areas, it needed to provide practical support as well as educational support for the encouragement and the contact between Methodist College and local primary schools, and practical support when youngsters were able to get into Methodist College. If we can achieve that kind of model to address the academic issues and the socio-economic issues, there is a model that perhaps needs to be reflected in some way in where we are coming from.
2388. I will finish by saying that the comment about ETI needing to embrace an approach to achieving shared education

- as an art rather than a science is probably very telling and relevant.
2389. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** The area learning communities are the system's way of approaching sharing, in a way. The needs of driving a curriculum with 24 to 27 subjects should encourage schools to think about more of that sharing. Good educational outcomes should be a primary reason for sharing as well as the community benefits. We would like to think that that area learning community approach could be developed. Any reduction in the funding for that is concerning. Some area learning communities work better than others. There are some good examples of that, and some that have been not just so effective. That seems to us to be a key way of doing it. Sir George Bain pointed that out a very long time ago in his report into our education and schools system. That is probably the best place for that to begin and that is now going to be within the Education Authority's remit.
2390. **Mr Craig:** It is good to see you all again. I apologise for being late this morning, but I caught most of what you said. I was listening intently to what you were saying, Trevor, about how you were going to do a joint school, instead of having almost two separate schools in the one building. I am not playing devil's advocate but I am just curious about how that would work for you. There seems to be a bit of a stumbling block when it comes to the maintained sector, and that is the Catholic certificate. How would you get around that issue, or has that been agreed?
2391. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We have not got into the detail of that. There is a fairly high-level document, which is being drawn up by the Department with our assistance, but those kinds of issues do need to be dealt with. I am sure, Jonathan, that you are not trying to take us into a contentious debate about the Catholic certificate in religious education.
2392. **Mr Craig:** No, I am not —
2393. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** Good.
2394. **Mr Craig:** — because I think I nearly gave one of the bishops a heart attack on that issue.
2395. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We feel that we would be in a better place if such certificates no longer existed, and, if they did exist, were not used as essential criteria in appointments. They may well be desirable criteria, like a football coaching certificate or whatever certificate a teacher will come to interview with. Hopefully, before we ever get to a jointly managed church school, we will be in a better place with regard to the Catholic certificate, but we have not got into the detail of those specifics yet.
2396. **Mr Craig:** Again, do not get me wrong; I have absolutely no opposition whatsoever to faith-based education. I just have a question mark in my mind about whether the state should be paying for it.
2397. The Equality Commission was here last week, and I distinctly picked up that it had a raft of issues around the faith-based sector, which is not really the controlled sector. We know that, at present, it has little or no influence over that sector because of the exemption. Would you support the exemption staying or be happy to see it lifted?
2398. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** It is good to have the easy questions towards the end.
2399. **Rev Dr Ian Ellis:** We were involved in general discussions around that a number of years ago when the Equality Commission was reviewing the certificate. At the end of that review, there was a recommendation to OFMDFM that it should cease to be a requirement post-primary. I think that the Catholic Church since then, through CCMS, has probably accepted that it would no longer be a requirement for employment in the post-primary sector, but I think that they are strongly of the view that it is an essential component of primary education.
2400. We see movement in that they have accepted that it should be seen as no longer a requirement for general

employment in the post-primary sector. I suppose what Trevor has said is where we are: in an ideal world, we really ought not to have any such barriers. However, we recognise that Catholic parents send their children to school and expect there to be preparation for a Catholic way of life and a Catholic way of being a Christian. Around that, I guess, there needs to be a recognition that the teachers providing that education meet a certain standard for the Catholic Church. I think the room for wriggle within that is around who prepares the children for the sacramental aspects and whether there is enough common ground between the Churches to say that other teachers can teach common religious education. I think that that is what the discussion is around. That is where we are with that. It is up for discussion and, as I said earlier, these things will probably be decided at a local level.

2401. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** There are exceptions in all kinds of things but, on the wider issue of legislation generally, we believe that there needs to be a lot of discussion about this before steps that could have unforeseen consequences are taken. That is why we stated, in response to the Minister's consultation, that we would have major concerns about schools being designated as public authorities and coming under all of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. As we stated earlier, we feel that one of the unforeseen consequences of that would be the sheer administrative burden placed on schools to fulfil all the criteria that public authorities have to fulfil. That does not mean that we are opposed to schools developing equality etc; we are not. However, we feel that there needs to be a lot more consultation on the blunt instrument of defining schools as public authorities and sweeping away the current framework. To slip it in as a proposal in the midst of a shared education consultation is not the best place for it. It needs to be a separate consultation. There should be thorough discussion, and all of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities

and concerns about the proposal should be looked at.

2402. **Mr Craig:** It is an interesting one, gentlemen. Forgive me for asking those awkward questions; that was me thinking out loud. I find that the devil is always in the detail with a lot of this stuff. I take it that you would look more kindly on locally based solutions for local areas. That is what I am clearly picking up from all of you. There is another aspect to this: controlled schools and sectors get everyone from all backgrounds, including the Muslim background, which brings its own challenges in how you accommodate their faith. I know of local solutions that were found in Lagan Valley, and I have no difficulty with them. I wish you all the best in the efforts that you are making around shared education.
2403. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** No other members have indicated that they wish to ask a question. Thank you for your presentation. Given your interest, you are very welcome to stay to hear the Department talk about the Education Authority. If you wish to stay in the Public Gallery, you are very welcome.
2404. **Rev Trevor Gribben:** We might stay for a little while, Chair. Thank you for your invitation and for having us today.
2405. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much.

25 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Lunn
Mr Robin Newton
Mrs Sandra Overend

Witnesses:

Ms Libby Robinson	<i>Edwards Primary School, Castlederg</i>
Mr Eamon McClean	<i>Speedwell Trust</i>
Mr Eric Reaney	
Mr Brian McGurk	<i>St Patrick's Primary School, Castlederg</i>

2406. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome the members of the Speedwell Trust to our meeting this morning. We have been joined by Mr Eamon McClean, the manager of the Speedwell Trust, Mr Eric Reaney, trustee, Ms Libby Robinson, principal of Edwards Primary School, Castlederg, and Mr Brian McGurk, principal of St Patrick's Primary School, Castlederg. Thank you for joining us. Please make your opening statement, after which, members will follow up with some questions.

2407. **Mr Eamon McClean (Speedwell Trust):** Thank you, Madam Chairperson and members of the Committee, for taking the opportunity to hear from the Speedwell Trust. We greatly welcome the Committee's decision to hold an inquiry into shared and integrated education. These two forms of education are of the utmost importance in helping to ensure that our two main communities in Northern Ireland can move forward constructively and with a greater degree of understanding than hitherto.

2408. Our comments will be confined to shared education, as our work involves supporting schools and implementing shared education but does not extend to the implementation of integrated education. We appreciate that there have been significant developments

since we made our submission in October, with the Sharing Works policy, the proposal to remove community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) funding and the significant injection of funding for the shared education project.

2409. The Speedwell Trust is a charity with 23 years' experience of delivering education programmes designed to facilitate constructive contact and greater understanding between children from different religious and cultural backgrounds. We are based near Dungannon, and we do a lot of work in the mid-Ulster area. Recently, however, we have been working in Belfast, Newry, Armagh, Craigavon, Magherafelt and as far down here as Castlederg and some places in Omagh. We have worked with well over 200 schools, and, last year, we worked with about 100 schools.

2410. We are not in receipt of any funding from the Department of Education. We get our own funding from different sources including, for example, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin and the European Peace funds. Recently, we got funding from the Tudor Trust in England, which supports the work that we are doing in Castlederg. Those funders recognise that there is a need. As we are all very aware, that need reflects the fact that the education system, comprising controlled and maintained schools, is primarily based along religious lines.

2411. Crucially, a recent Young Life and Times survey indicated that 24% of 16-year-olds do not have any friends from the other community. It also showed that 77% said that if there was a situation that allowed the facilitation of mixing and meeting, that would improve good relations. Taking those two points together, we believe that there is a huge need for more sharing of education. This evidence strongly supports the idea that there is a need. However, if shared

- education is going to form a central element of the Executive's approach to cross-community relations, as we believe it definitely should, it is essential that all involved are using the same definition of shared education and that any shared education will facilitate sustained and meaningful contact between children from the two main traditions on this island.
2412. We are, therefore, disappointed to discover that there is no clear statutory definition of shared education. The Executive seem to be using a definition that appears to allow collaboration, for example, between a Catholic grammar school and a non-grammar school, on one hand, and between a predominantly Protestant controlled voluntary grammar school and a non-grammar school, on the other, to be viewed as shared education. We appreciate that they are still working on a definition, but we believe that it should contain a line that says that sharing should be specifically between the two main traditions in Northern Ireland. We welcome the Minister of Education's commitment to introduce a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage shared education. However, as I have outlined, it is essential that this relates to a cross-community definition of shared education.
2413. The need to require and encourage schools to participate in cross-community education is underlined by the fact that, in a recent survey of 568 schools, only 306, or 54%, said that they had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis. That leaves 46% saying that they took part in shared education but it was not on a cross-community basis. Moreover, we found that only 15% of schools that had participated in shared education had done so in a way that involved the whole school. While we believe that shared education is a great concept and is very exciting, there is a danger of losing sight of the initial goal, which is central to the Speedwell Trust's ethos of bringing children together from both sides of the community.
2414. In conclusion, the Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education that makes it explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction between pupils on a sustained basis. Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis. We think that the Department should initiate an award scheme for schools. There are plenty of schools doing a brilliant job of promoting good relations and shared education, and I believe that these two schools in Castlederg are a great example of that. I will hand you over to Brian McGurk, who will say something about the work that they are doing.
2415. **Mr Brian McGurk (St Patrick's Primary School, Castlederg):** Good morning, everybody. I will give you a brief overview of our programme to give you an insight into what we do. I am the principal of St Patrick's Primary School, which is a Catholic maintained school in Castlederg, and Libby Robinson is the principal of Edwards Primary School. We have a programme of sharing. We use the Speedwell project for a large part of that. We start at nursery school, and we work through a musical pathways project. At the end of that, we bring parents together. That is like a gateway project; all the parents who come to our schools, both of which have nursery units, come in at the start of their children's schooling and see the work that is bringing the children together. Building on that, we bring P1 to P3 classes together, and they do school visits. Our kids visit Edwards Primary School, and vice versa. We look at nature and diversity in nature etc. That is really to build up friendships between the staff and the pupils.
2416. In P4 and P5, when you have all those things built up, we look at similarities and differences in people, cultures and religions. For instance, the P4s look at the issues of flags and different

traditions in their communities. In year 5, the children visit all the local churches in the community and meet all the ministers and clergy etc. Moving into P6 and P7, it is a process of getting ready. We look at sporting opportunities in the community. We look at similarities and differences again. We involve the IFA, the IRFU and the GAA. The Irish Hockey Association has been used in the past as well. We look at all the sports that are available in our locality, and the children participate fully. In year 7, we link in with the council and Speedwell to do orienteering. We will have a new orienteering course in the castle site, which the council has facilitated. That is part of our work with Speedwell. It manages that for us. We meet it, and that is how that is done. We also have links through our extended schools work in the school. That is a much narrower focus on attainment; we are looking there at resourcing together and things like literacy and numeracy projects. We are sharing experience. We work with Border Arts, which is a local cross-community group in Castlederg. We do different projects with it. We link in with Strabane District Council, and we have worked in the past with the Donegal and Strabane partnerships. We have accessed funding from the Riverine project. We also work with the PSNI, and the primary schools come together through safety projects at different stages. We also go on field trips together in years 6 and 7; we do outdoor pursuits and visits together.

2417. Libby and I are involved in the Strabane principals' cluster. We meet regularly. There is also work around area learning partnerships for the secondary schools. It is a whole sharing of expertise. It is not a perfect model, but the whole emphasis is on children visiting each other's schools and sharing. It is built right from nursery through to P7.
2418. **Ms Libby Robinson (Edwards Primary School, Castlederg):** I arrived in Castlederg seven years ago. I have wider experience of being in London and Spain. I also did some advisory work on the board. When I got the job, my friends

and family said, "You're not going to Castlederg, Libby, because it always gets negative press. There are 31 unsolved murders". There was real negativity. I arrived in the school and found all this amazing work going on. There have been lots of contentious parades in the town, and I wondered whether that would affect people's attitudes towards our programme and whether any parents would pull their kids out. There have been no abstentions on the part of any of the parents from any of the programme in our schools because it has been so effective. The parades passed off with silent protest, but everybody had the right to march and the right to protest. They all passed off peacefully. I attribute that to all the work that has been embedded and done at grass-roots level in the schools, thanks to the support of the Speedwell Trust. It is so effective because it is a whole-school approach. It is cross-curricular and diverse. It includes teacher development. It networks with the wider community, and it includes the environment as well.

2419. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** How close are the two schools geographically?
2420. **Mr McGurk:** We are within walking distance. It would not even be a mile. Would it?
2421. **Ms L Robinson:** No. It is probably half a mile.
2422. **Mr McGurk:** We often just walk across for projects. During bad weather, we bus the younger children down and up. We are both town schools.
2423. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Are both schools sustainable as regards their numbers?
2424. **Mr McGurk:** Yes.
2425. **Ms L Robinson:** We are actually oversubscribed.
2426. **Mr McGurk:** Both schools are close to maximum enrolment and growing.
2427. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** That is all very positive. Thank you. I will

- direct my questions to your comments on the definition of shared education.
2428. You were critical of the ministerial advisory group's definition, because you want it to include cross-community collaboration. Are you aware of the definition that is currently being considered by the Minister that shared education means the education together of those of different religious belief or political opinion and those who are experiencing significantly socio-economic deprivation and those who are not, which will be secured by the working together and cooperation of two or more relevant providers? What are your thoughts on that as a working definition?
2429. **Mr McClean:** That must be a more recent definition, and I would definitely welcome it. There is a danger of losing sight of the overall goal of promoting good relations between the two communities here. If that is not clear, that sharing could take place between schools from both traditions, as I mentioned earlier, it is essential to have that clarity in the definition.
2430. In a survey by the Department of Education last year, out of the 568 schools that replied, 306 or 54% replied that they took part in cross-community activities. That means that 46% did not. There needs to be a clarity of definition to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate, and if it is shared education, it needs to involve our two communities.
2431. I know that there are different socio-economic areas and areas of ethnic minorities, but we cannot lose sight of the goal. Our ethos is that our two traditions need to share. If our society is going to progress more constructively than we have done previously, that needs to be in it specifically.
2432. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** A growing number of our population would consider themselves to be other or neither. How do you think they could be incorporated within that?
2433. **Mr McClean:** That may well be, but, in the education system, they are either in controlled schools or maintained schools — well, over 90% are. So, whether they describe themselves as other, they are bracketed into one or other religious grouping. There needs to be opportunities, even for those who describe themselves as other, to meet the other and form friendships or relationships, or at least have the opportunity to do so.
2434. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** OK. In your written presentation, you recommended that:
- "The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring"*
2435. and evaluation. How do you think that that could be achieved for shared education?
2436. **Mr McClean:** I suppose that it is up to the Department of Education to do that in whatever way it will do it. All schools need to monitor exactly what they are doing and have good evidence to show what they are doing. Many schools might say that they are doing shared education, but they may not be doing the shared education that they are supposed to do.
2437. We go out to schools every day and have our monitoring forms. The schools in Castlederg do it all the time, and they are able to say what gender the children are and whether their background is Protestant, Catholic or other. They have all that evidence. They can show that they can actually do that and what backgrounds the children are from. We also look for evaluation every day to see whether it is working and, if it is not working, what we can do to improve it and to reflect on how we deliver the project. With the new shared education project, the Department, through the boards, will be looking at its own practices, and we think that it is essential that it does some effective monitoring.
2438. **Ms L Robinson:** Can I just add that it should be included at inspection level? I had an inspection last year, and there

was no mention of all the good practice going on. If it is included at inspection level, it will happen.

2439. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

You reflected that you have a cocktail of funding, but you do not receive any funding from the Department of Education. Is there a reason for that? Have you approached the Department, or have you approached it, and it had declined?

2440. **Mr McClean:** We got funding until 2007, and a lot of other organisations similar to ours got funding until 2010-11, when the schools community relations programme finished. With the ending of that, a lot of organisations like ours went to the wall, and with them went a lot of good experience. We felt that there was still an existing need, particularly when we get schools coming to us every year asking us to help them to facilitate activities, particularly those that may be sensitive. Brian talked about flags, symbols and emblems, and he talked about diversity and religion and visiting different churches and different sports. A lot of teachers do not feel very confident or comfortable in their own communities dealing with some of those issues. Yesterday, we were in Tobermore, and they have had a lot of problems recently with issues to do with different cultures and flags, and they want to address that. They are doing a project with their neighbouring school in Maghera, but they did not feel comfortable talking about contentious issues, and they were delighted that we could go in and do that. We feel that there definitely is a need for us to do that.

2441. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Can I ask everyone to check that their phone is switched off, because a phone is interfering with the recording? I apologise for that.

2442. You also listed some barriers and enablers. Do you consider the ultimate outcome of shared education to be about reconciliation or about educational benefits?

2443. **Mr McClean:** I think that it is a combination. I think that, ultimately, it is about the young person — the child — and their educational attainment. However, I think that both can complement each other. You can have adequate and very good shared education programmes that incorporate and improve educational attainment and outcomes. I believe that it is important that children get the opportunity to learn together, and through that, reconciliation outcomes will also improve. It is a combination.

2444. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I have a question for the schools. You have obviously witnessed educational and societal benefits in practice. Which of them would be a priority for you in schools?

2445. **Mr McGurk:** I think it is both. We have not mentioned the fact that part of the curriculum is personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU), so a lot of the work that we are discussing here is embedded in the curriculum. The work that we do enhances that. Whatever religious curriculum or PDMU curriculum you use, you look at diversity and equality and all those things, but then it is a work in practice, because we have the outworkings with sharing with Edwards, which is our neighbouring school. If there were other schools of different traditions or whatever, we would work with them as well.

2446. We talked about the Speedwell projects; however, we do not just take the Speedwell project down and let it facilitate for us. We pick and choose, and we remodel the programmes where we see as appropriate. I meet with Ms Robinson and discuss our projects. Aside from that, the other types of sharing that we have, such as extended schools, have a very clear focus on educational attainment. I think both things are important. Do you agree?

2447. **Ms L Robinson:** Yes, and so we extended the programme, about three years ago, to run right down to nursery. When I arrived, it ran from year 4 to year 7, so we took it on a practical level

- through topics on birds and mini-beasts, so that it was enhancing the learning as well.
2448. **Mr McGurk:** The teachers are building that into their planning and they are working on their science projects, ‘The world around us’ or whatever but, as I said, it is the added value that pupils are getting in working with children in their own community because of the way the school situation is.
2449. I would also add that we are not funded. We do not access funding from the Department at all. We either work with Speedwell or bid for money ourselves. We have approached and looked at CRED. It did not work for us; it did not do what we wanted it to do.
2450. **Ms L Robinson:** It was too narrow.
2451. **Mr McGurk:** We wanted to manage the project ourselves, and look at the curriculum that we wanted to give our children. Therefore, we just felt that CRED was not the right direction to go in. We have sent teachers out on training, etc, and one year, I think you applied?
2452. **Ms L Robinson:** We did not get it.
2453. **Mr McGurk:** We did not access funding. I would say that, yes, there have to be outcomes from what you are trying to do, but bringing people together is a skill in itself. It is a natural thing: children will generally bond. As they work through the school together, you can see real development. Border Arts did a survey; did they work with Peace III?
2454. **Mr McClean:** International Fund for Ireland (IFI).
2455. **Mr McGurk:** They said that, in Castlederg, 200 households were surveyed, and 74% of returns said that community relations were either “good” or “very good”; 68% of the households said that they would engage in cross-community activities. We do not over-publicise our work or anything; it is all quietly done, and what we are trying to do, as educators, is develop the children. That is the other thing: the responsibility as teachers comes from the teacher. It is not something that you add on. As a teacher, I look at what my children need. My school is situated in Castlederg, where there is a history of division, so, as a teacher, that is what my role and vocation is. Ms Robinson shares the same thing. Regardless of what funding is available or whatever files are on your desk, that comes from the teacher, and that is why our project is successful. It is not perfect, either; we know that there are things that we need to change in it.
2456. **Mr McClean:** I would just like to add that, in this project, I access funding through the Tudor Trust based in London. It is a two-year project. We put together a plan to work with four schools on a whole-school basis. We work with the schools to develop what they thought was the best way to deal with it, with education and reconciliation outcomes in mind. This is a work in progress, and I am delighted to report to funders that it has been very successful.
2457. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Once that funding is concluded, is there still a legacy left to the school?
2458. **Mr McClean:** There is.
2459. **Ms L Robinson:** It is in teacher development.
2460. **Mr McClean:** We are planning to do teacher development and teacher training this summer, so that teachers can take it on board and, hopefully, it can become a little more sustainable in future.
2461. **Mr McGurk:** We have been at this juncture before. For example, the schools community relations project stopped, and we continue to fund ourselves or bid for money by ourselves. If this project, funded by Tudor Trust money, runs out, we will sit down and look at what there is and, if we have to, we will generate the income from within our own schools, because we see the value in it. We are not really tied to funding, per se.

2462. **Ms L Robinson:** Yes, I think you can always access money somewhere. It is great to have the expertise and the skills of the Speedwell Trust to facilitate it.
2463. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** That is very positive. Maybe we should bring you along to a budget meeting, if you can always access money.
[Laughter.] OK. Thank you very much.
2464. **Mrs Overend:** It is good to see you this morning. You do not work just with the pupils, but you continue to work with the teachers to give them guidance to continue the shared education after a project is finished, is that correct?
2465. **Mr McClean:** In this project, that is part of the plan. In the first year, we will establish it and organise it and work with teachers to set it up. In the second year, we will act in a mentoring role to teachers so that they will take more of a lead so that, hopefully, in the future, with adequate funding, the project can move on on its own. That is how we envisage the project working.
2466. **Mrs Overend:** That sounds good. So, it is more than just one-off projects.
2467. **Mr McClean:** Definitely. This particular project is whole-school over two years. We have also delivered projects with European funding. Children came together on six occasions, and we delivered teacher training to try to embed it more in schools and to expand it a bit more to give teachers more confidence and to give the children a real opportunity to make positive relationships with their peer group from the other school.
2468. **Mrs Overend:** Do you feel that you have more opportunity going down that way, and maybe that is something that you will do more of?
2469. **Mr McClean:** We would love to do that because we feel that we have the expertise to do it, but it all depends on funding. Coming down the line, we hope that part of the Peace IV criteria will be shared education, and we hope that they will support us in that field.
2470. **Mrs Overend:** OK. Is that how you feel you will fall into the Department of Education's future plans for shared education? How do you think you will fit into its aspirations?
2471. **Mr McClean:** We are not sure about how we will fit into it, although we would love to play a role in it. In 2010, when the schools community relations programme finished, we felt that, to quote a phrase, they threw the baby out with the bath water because a lot of expertise was lost. Since then, we have been going to schools all the time, and teachers have been telling us that they would like more support, training and help in the delivery of some of their programmes because they feel ill equipped to do so. We feel that there is a role there for us to work with schools and teachers to use our expertise, knowledge and resources. We have considerable resources to help teachers to work through it. In four years' time, when the money from shared education runs out, schools will become a little bit more sustainable, but we feel that they need assistance.
2472. **Mrs Overend:** I agree. If that is a goal of the Department, you would think that it should provide support and guidance; you are the experts, so it should be bringing in the experts or taking advice.
2473. **Mr McClean:** We have a lot of experience and we work with a lot of schools. Schools will not come back to you if they do not feel any value in it. Every year, they keep coming back and asking for assistance.
2474. **Mrs Overend:** How do you target where the need is? Do schools come to you? The Department will have to figure out who needs support to enhance shared education. How do you —
2475. **Mr McClean:** For the shared education project, schools will submit a proposal to facilitate it and then access funding to deliver it. How do we do it? Every year, we hold a teachers' information workshop. Usually, between 30 and 40 teachers come along to see what is available and how they can improve what they are doing in their schools and see

- whether there is any funding or help that we can give them. Our reputation goes before us.
2476. **Mrs Overend:** So, you get the word out to all schools that you feel you can reach.
2477. **Mr McClean:** Yes. Some schools do not take part in shared education for geographical reasons or because they are not in a position to deliver it; however, most schools in the mid-Ulster area and in the areas that we work in are taking part.
2478. **Mrs Overend:** OK. Thanks very much.
2479. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks for your presentation. The work that you two are doing is terrific. You have outlined to us the whole programme and how you graduate through it. It is marvellous. That is from somebody who would, perhaps, favour more emphasis on the integrated model. You could not diminish that at all; it was terrific. Obviously, that applies to you as well, Eamon. Where do your kids go when they leave primary level? Is there any evidence that they go to the local integrated school? Is there one?
2480. **Mr McGurk:** Generally, children from the Catholic maintained sector will go the Catholic schools. The choices are grammar or secondary schools in Omagh or Strabane. We have a diverse choice, because Castlederg is between Strabane and Omagh. The issue for me is this: what happens to all that work at the next level?
2481. **Ms L Robinson:** My chair of governors also chairs a local high school. Last year, he had lots of enquiries from the Catholic community to come into the local high school, so I know that there is a proposal now for more shared and integrated at that level.
2482. **Mr Lunn:** Is that the high school in Castlederg?
2483. **Ms L Robinson:** Yes.
2484. **Mr Lunn:** I am not all that familiar with Castlederg.
2485. **Ms L Robinson:** That is the next stage of development.
2486. **Mr Lunn:** Do any of your pupils come here? I presume that it is reasonably handy.
2487. **Mr McGurk:** My average class size is 35, which is what I have at P7. One or two pupils come to Drumragh annually, but children in the maintained sector will generally follow that pathway of education. That is my experience.
2488. **Ms L Robinson:** I do not think that Drumragh's criteria lend themselves geographically to the area. There might be a problem with —
2489. **Mr Nigel Frith (Drumragh Integrated College):** There is no geographical bias in our criteria.
2490. **Ms L Robinson:** I think that it is always oversubscribed as well, so there were definitely reasons. I know that some people thought about it, and there were reasons why they did not access it.
2491. **Mr Lunn:** I am not trying to trip you up. I just think that if there is evidence that, following all your good work, some parents feel moved to follow it through and encourage their children to think about the integrated school, it is further evidence of how well it is working. That is all I am saying. Eamon, do you do any work with integrated schools?
2492. **Mr McClean:** We do; we work with integrated schools in Dungannon, Cookstown, Banbridge and Magherafelt. The primary schools are very keen to participate in projects that will help the children to mix with and meet children from another sector. We did a lot of work in Phoenix primary school in Cookstown. There is a three-way partnership there between Cookstown primary, Holy Trinity and Phoenix. That model is being driven very carefully by the three principals, and feedback from teachers, children and parents is very positive. I think that they are moving on to try to do a bigger project in Cookstown.
2493. Some of the integrated schools are very open, as you probably are, about

- diversity and flags, symbols and emblems, but they are keen to learn about our diversity as well. My child goes to an integrated school. It is not just a matter of sitting together with children from a different tradition; it is also about looking at and exploring our diversity and our community. Many integrated schools are very interested and keen to do that.
2494. **Mr Lunn:** Last year, my grandson, who has just turned 10, told me that his primary, which is controlled, had been working with a local Catholic maintained primary, St Kieran's, and that they had had a day out in Parkanaur.
2495. **Mr McClean:** That is right.
2496. **Mr Lunn:** It has only dawned on me now that it was probably something to do with you. It was St Kieran's and Ballycarrickmaddy. He said that it was "class". I do not think that the sociological benefit had entirely dawned on him at that age, but it must sink in to some extent. Fair play to you.
2497. **Mr Eric Reaney (Speedwell Trust):** I will address Trevor as "Trevor", because we have known each other over the years. One of your comments made me think that we focus very much on the work and projects that are done through the schools, but the question of what comes after that is interesting for Speedwell and its location in a superb forested area at Parkanaur.
2498. Their summer programmes, and other programmes such as Halloween activities, attract people who were there often many years before. That is quite interesting. Some of your volunteers, I think you would agree, Eamon, were with you at primary stage, but when they are in teacher training or looking at the next stage of their career plan, they come back and volunteer.
2499. To be involved in such hands-on work is very good for a young person, but it is also very good for them to be able to share with whatever experience comes after. Sometimes, it is hard to get the statistics to prove that the practice is happening on a year-by-year basis.
2500. **Mr Lunn:** You work a lot in the Dungannon area because that is where you formed. Did you work with the two Moy primary schools?
2501. **Mr McClean:** We did. We have done and still are. We find that their relationship is very good. They do a lot of work together, and we come in and facilitate programmes with them. I know about their project. Our role is to assist the schools in facilitating good relations between them.
2502. **Mr Lunn:** Some of us find the proposed outcome of the Moy situation a bit strange, to be honest: two schools under one roof, two boards of governors, two uniforms and separate classes. I hope that it is not a sustainable solution; I hope that over the years common sense will prevail.
2503. You must have been involved down the years in the coming together of those two schools. I do not want to put you on the spot, but do you not think that a more obvious solution would have been to bring those two schools together into one school?
2504. **Mr McClean:** There are different opinions on that; you highlighted that yourself. In my opinion, it is a long-term project, and I hope, as you said, that over 10 or 15 years common sense will prevail and that sharing will take place in that building.
2505. **Mr Lunn:** Sharing will take place in the building.
2506. **Mr McClean:** Yes, but more integration will take place as well over the years. Something needed to be done so that the controlled school in that town did not close and the children bussed elsewhere. It was a goodwill gesture as well to try to keep the balance right in the town and to keep both schools in the town.
2507. **Mr Lunn:** You are not funded by the Department. Do you get co-operation or encouragement from the Department?
2508. **Mr McClean:** We generally do not have much contact with the Department.

2509. **Mr Lunn:** I thought so. I wish you well. I am not being critical at all, but I am slightly discouraged by the fact that the outcome of all your good work does not translate into more. In every poll, 75% to 80% parents say that if there was an integrated solution in their area they would use it. Even after the encouragement that you give your children — I do not mean encourage them to go to an integrated school but the encouragement to see both sides and learn from each other — I am surprised that there is not a bigger impetus or momentum towards that. You say that some of your children go to play at the local high school, and that is fine but —
2510. **Ms L Robinson:** I suppose that, long term, it will probably become an integrated post-primary. The long-term vision of many people in the area is probably that it will become integrated.
2511. **Mr McClean:** Trevor may not know that the Catholic secondary closed down.
2512. **Ms L Robinson:** Right, you do not know the geography of it.
2513. **Mr Lunn:** I did not know that the Catholic secondary school had closed down.
2514. **Mr McGurk:** I am the principal of a school in the Catholic maintained sector — that is where my roots are — but that does not preclude me from developing cross-community relations. I have no control over parental choice. I sometimes feel that people try to squeeze cross-community relations into primary schools, and we do not want to face up to the fact that perhaps we need to address it at second level. I cannot talk for second-level schools, but sometimes I think that some of the things that we are asked to address at primary level are not age-appropriate. Parents have the choice of some very good schools to pick from because of our geographical location. We have Strabane and Omagh, and, every year, about 60% of our kids, maybe more, go to grammar schools. That is a big thing, and that is parental choice as well. That may preclude people from applying to integrated schools.
2515. **Mr Lunn:** Finally, is there a sector, Eamon, in Northern Ireland that you would like to see more actively engaged in what you do?
2516. **Mr McClean:** By “sector”, do you mean controlled, maintained or Irish-medium?
2517. **Mr Lunn:** I can put it another way. Do you get much encouragement from the grammar schools?
2518. **Mr McClean:** We do not have much involvement with grammar schools; most of our work is done in primary schools. We do some work at second level, but we do not have much involvement with grammar schools.
2519. **Mr Lunn:** Is that by choice or because they do not express much interest?
2520. **Mr McClean:** They do not express much interest. We work with Aughnacloy College, St Joseph’s College in Coalisland and St Ciaran’s College in Ballygawley, but the bulk of our work is done at primary level.
2521. **Mrs Overend:** In mid-Ulster, there is one grammar school, the Rainey, and it is already naturally integrated. There are no other grammar schools in mid-Ulster.
2522. **Mr Lunn:** I was not making that point at all. From what you say, the work that you are doing with the grammar sector is largely with the Catholic-maintained grammar sector.
2523. **Mr McClean:** Our work is really confined to the primary area, and, on, occasion, we work with second-level local schools, but not so much with grammars.
2524. **Mr Lunn:** Fair enough. Thanks very much.
2525. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I do think that it is difficult to draw conclusions in relation to what happens at post-primary level in the area outside of what happens in Drumragh, given the fact that we have not had any conversations with those schools. That would be difficult for us to do today.
2526. **Mr Newton:** I thank the members for coming today. I have not met the Speedwell Trust before, so it is a

- new experience for me. I will ask a couple of questions of the Speedwell Trust and then maybe one to the two principals. When the Chair was reading out the definition as being refined at this time, she indicated that a socio-economic aspect was being taken into consideration now. Indeed, you placed your emphasis on the two main traditions mixing.
2527. It is not peculiar to inner-city areas where there is underachievement; nevertheless, many schools in difficult inner-city areas have suffered much over the years. Could you see the potential in a definition that would include the socio-economic aspect of maybe a controlled school from an affluent area working with a controlled school from a difficult, challenging area? The Catholic maintained sector could do exactly the same, and that would see the benefits of shared education addressing those problems.
2528. **Mr McClean:** It is definitely not one size fits all. Considering the Speedwell Trust's ethos, mission and constitution, we wanted a specific line in the definition to allow children from both our main traditions to take part in activities. I know where you are coming from regarding underachievement, particularly in urban areas. That is a specific problem that needs to be addressed, and the Department needs to look at whether that would involve primary schools and second-level grammars working together across the economic areas.
2529. I am not sure whether it could be done through shared education. It is a serious problem that needs to be addressed, but we are looking for the definition to include reconciliation outcomes. As you know, we are a society emerging from conflict, and we would hope if there is a huge amount of money being pumped into shared education, that it involves the two main communities. I do not personally have a lot of experience working in the areas that you refer to, but we think that our two main traditions should primarily be taking part in shared education.
2530. **Mr Newton:** There is the Catholic maintained sector and the controlled sector, but we are sitting in a school that has achieved much and which has a huge amount to share with other schools that are not in the integrated sector. Why would it not be possible, within your definition, for a school such as Drumragh to become involved with a Catholic maintained school or a controlled school under shared education?
2531. **Mr McClean:** There is no reason why it cannot. It can, and I hope that there will be a possibility that schools —
2532. **Mr Newton:** That is not the two distinct traditions.
2533. **Mr McClean:** Ninety-two per cent of our schools are divided along religious lines, and 6% or 7% are in the integrated sector. However, there is nothing precluding schools, like the integrated sector, mixing and sharing with any other sector. We work with schools in Cookstown, Dungannon, Banbridge and Magherafelt. We facilitated a programme last year between the integrated and Irish-medium sectors, and they shared the experiences of the Irish-medium sector. It is possible for the four sectors to share their experiences and views. In saying that, 92% of schools are affiliated with either the controlled or the maintained sector, and that is where we would like the focus to be.
2534. **Mr Newton:** OK. Can I ask the two principals — I greatly admire what you are doing and thank you for it — about the good work that they do inside the school? Do you see any evidence of that happening outside the school? Is it influencing the communities in Castlederg to mix and to work together on projects, other than school projects?
2535. **Ms L Robinson:** We hire the Alley Theatre at the end of every term for a huge dance project. That is facilitated through Border Arts, and all the parents come together and get involved in it, so yes, there is evidence of it.
2536. **Mr McGurk:** I go back to the survey produced by Border Arts. Seventy-four

- per cent of the population of the town believe that there are good or very good relationships. A lot of things are outside our control because children traditionally meet at schools, sporting clubs and certain organisations. We do not have control over modelling that, but there is a lot of sharing between the children. Our aspiration is that children who leave our schools will have made friends, developed an opinion on people from the other side of the community and will be good citizens moving forward. Beyond that, it reflects on Northern Ireland in general. It is fair to say that the children select the activities.
2537. Ms L Robinson: I am thinking of all the activities outside school in Castlederg. There is a very successful drama club, and kids from both sides of the community go to that. They develop their confidence and self-esteem through putting on plays and go the local feis for verse-speaking. It is very successful. Parents use shared childcare facilities run by a local community group.
2538. Mr Lunn: I just want to clarify what you said about Castlederg High School and its future. Did I pick up from what you said that the ambition is that it would perhaps become — use whatever word you like — mixed, integrated or amalgamated? Are you looking towards an integrated solution in Castlederg?
2539. Ms L Robinson: I was not aware that you did not know the geography. St Eugene's closed down, leaving one high school, which I know has had lots of enquiries from the Catholic community. I think that the vision would be for that.
2540. Mr Lunn: Whose vision?
2541. Ms L Robinson: The board of governors. It had quite a few enquiries last year and this year from the Catholic community, and it is looking at addressing that.
2542. Mr McGurk: I cannot move away from the fact that most of our kids go on to Catholic maintained education. They are satisfied with it, and it is high-quality, so they opt for that. There probably was an opportunity in Castlederg 10 years ago. There have been a lot of closures there because of the sustainability issue. When I went to the town about 11 or 12 years ago, there were about 12 schools; there are maybe seven now. People are looking at solutions now, but, looking back, maybe we should have done so then. That is the reality. There are only a certain number of pupils. We share with Castlederg High School on sporting projects and so on, and I have strong links with the principal etc.
2543. Ms L Robinson: It is a natural progression.
2544. Mr Lunn: You know how an integrated solution has to come about. You seem to be quite good at surveys in Castlederg. It would be interesting to see a survey of the population's opinion on that proposed solution.
2545. Mr McGurk: I think that about 70% indicated that they would opt for an integrated solution. As I said, I am here as principal of St Patrick's, and Catholic education exists across the world. That is how I view it. It is here, and my job in the school is to meet the demands and needs of the community. I feel that we do that adequately.
2546. Mr Lunn: I am sure that you are. Absolutely.
2547. Mr McGurk: It goes back to parental choice. We encourage parents to look at all schools — in Strabane, Omagh and the integrated school here. That has been borne out in practice, but it is down to parental choice.
2548. Mr Lunn: I am with you on parental choice, and I have absolutely no hostility towards the faith schools or the Catholic maintained sector. I am encouraged by your saying that there is, perhaps, a feeling that this would be the inevitable, logical solution.
2549. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you for your written presentation and for coming to speak to us this morning. It was very interesting and an important part of our inquiry.

25 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Lunn
Mr Robin Newton
Mrs Sandra Overend

Witnesses:

Mr Caen Fahy	<i>Drumragh Integrated</i>
Mr Nigel Frith	<i>College</i>
Ms Zara Hemphill	
Ms Cara Monaghan	

2550. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome our witnesses. Nigel, will you please introduce yourself and the other witnesses? After an opening statement, members will follow up with questions.

2551. **Mr Nigel Frith (Drumragh Integrated College):** Thank you very much. First, welcome once again to Drumragh Integrated College. We are delighted that you have gone to the trouble of coming down to see us today. I am slightly disappointed at the turnout, and we would welcome an opportunity, if possible, to follow up on another occasion. Nevertheless, we are delighted that you are here. We look forward to sharing lunch with you, and there is the offer of a tour this afternoon. We hope that as many as possible will take advantage of that.

2552. The primary purpose of our presentation is to give the students a voice and to let you hear from young people directly. I am delighted to introduce to you to Zara Hemphill, who is already a politician and is campaigning to join the UK Youth Parliament. She may tell you more about that in a moment. Cara Monaghan is our head girl, and Caen Fahy is our head boy. I suggest that each of them speaks, starting with Caen, followed by Cara and then Zara. I will follow up at the end, if that is OK.

2553. **Mr Caen Fahy (Drumragh Integrated College):** Hello, and welcome to Drumragh. I have been asked to speak about integration, which has been a major influence on my life and moulded the student and individual I am today. I feel privileged to have been at integrated schools for the entirety of my education. Throughout the years, I have had friends in Catholic and Protestant schools. This, in itself, has raised my awareness of why Drumragh is different. Today, there is still hostility between schools, which I see daily. My point is that this hostility — this judgement — does not exist in Drumragh. Even today, seven years on, I may not know the religious and political beliefs of students in my year.

2554. President Obama shone the global spotlight on integration during the G8 summit. Along with others from Drumragh, I was lucky enough to attend his Waterfront Hall speech. Obama discussed how ending segregated schooling in Northern Ireland was essential for lasting peace. President Obama is not naive; nor am I. Supporters of integrated education know that, by itself, it cannot cure all our troubles, but it is a step forward that we need to take. The demand for integrated education is here, now more than ever before, and poll after poll tells us so. Yet so many students are not given the opportunity to attend an integrated school, which I do not think is fair. Integrated education was addressed in the Good Friday Agreement and described as key to peace in the future. I will leave Drumragh at the end of this year with something that other students may not have, namely a facet of understanding and open-mindedness.

2555. A recent student of ours, Shauna Mulligan, spoke at the open day last month. Shauna, who had recently graduated from university in multicultural London, discussed how integration had benefited her outside school. She

- specifically mentioned job opportunities. When asked how she would mix with different religions and cultures, her answer was simple: integration, which meant that she had mixed every day, had prepared her more than anything else could. In my opinion, the message is clear: integrated education heals division; integrated education is fair and considerate; integrated education encourages people to achieve their ambitions. The question I ask is this: can the same be said for shared education? Can it achieve what integrated education can achieve?
2556. **Ms Cara Monaghan (Drumragh Integrated College):** Good morning. I am the head girl at Drumragh and am lucky enough to have been in integrated education for my entire academic life. I describe myself as lucky because I feel that integration provides the perfect backdrop for learning, as all students are supported and allowed to prosper, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or ability.
2557. I understand the concept of shared education and admire the aim of bringing people together and breaking down the potent barriers in our education system and in our day-to-day lives here in Northern Ireland. Shared education gives two schools a chance to interact in a way that they would not otherwise do. People are judged by their character, interests and hobbies rather than by the uniform that they wear. However, I see weaknesses in shared education that do not exist in integrated education. Schools are still separated by building, religion and uniform. Schools may partake in shared education one school day a week, but what about the other four days? They still experience a segregated learning environment, mixing only with their own religion. One day a week is not enough to overcome the divide between communities. In integrated education, this divide does not exist. For five days a week, everyone works and learns together, wearing the same uniform. Segregation is a word that has no place in a school like Drumragh. Every ability is catered for, from those with special needs right through to academically highly gifted students.
2558. I believe that our community and civic leaders should be more vocal in their support for integrated education, which is, I feel, the most obvious solution to bringing our polarised communities together. When I was at primary school, the 11-plus test was compulsory, and I got an A. When this comes up in conversation, I am asked why, if I had the ability, I did not go to a grammar school instead of Drumragh. First, I am from a mixed marriage family and feel that, having experienced integrated education from the age of four, I would have found it difficult to settle in an environment made up of predominantly one religion. More importantly, I feel that the education that I have received here at Drumragh surpasses anything I could have learned in a grammar school. Drumragh has taught me to be accepting of everyone.
2559. This is my last year at Drumragh, unfortunately, but not my last year in integrated education. For many students, university is their first experience of an educational or social environment with different religions and ethnicities. I have applied for a course in London, which has been described as the most multicultural city in the world. People from segregated schools may find it difficult to settle in such a vibrant and diverse city, having never experienced anything like it before, but I feel that my time in the integrated sector has more than prepared me for this transition.
2560. Recently, a good friend of mine moved from a local grammar school to Drumragh to complete her A levels. I asked her what positive differences she saw between her old school and Drumragh. Immediately, she mentioned the atmosphere — how everyone was so friendly and welcoming — and how easy it was for her to settle in. She talked of how the year group mixed as a whole rather than separating into small groups, as was the case in her old school. She went on to say that the student-teacher relationship here, with mutual respect

- between staff and students, was a world apart from that in grammar school, where there was an “us and them” mentality. She felt that this was what made our environment so appropriate for learning. Last week, here in our school, she experienced her first ever Ash Wednesday service. She said that it was lovely that we managed to include the whole school in a traditionally Catholic day, crediting how it was explained that those who wanted to receive ashes were welcome to do so but those who did not could use the service as a time to reflect. I do not get ashes, but I use the service as a perfect example of how the whole school comes together to respect and celebrate everybody’s differences.
2561. Integration has sculpted me into the individual I am today. One day, I hope to teach the strong values that I have been taught at Drumragh to my children. Instead of clinging to the hatred and segregation of the past, we need to look forward to a brighter and more united future. I feel that quality shared and integrated education will play a key role in how successful this future could be.
2562. **Ms Zara Hemphill (Drumragh Integrated College):** I am a sixth form student. Integration has always played a major role in my life. As I was brought up in a mixed marriage family, I have always been aware of and known how to respect different cultures and beliefs.
2563. Although I was brought up a Roman Catholic and attended a Catholic maintained primary school because there was no local integrated primary school that I had access to, it was in my primary education that I became aware of and learned about different prejudices and views towards different religions and beliefs. The fact that my primary school was located in a rural village meant that few or none of the other children had ever come into contact or mixed with people from different religions or backgrounds. Looking back, I feel that this left those primary-school children at a disadvantage because they did not know how to interact with people who were in some way different from them.
2564. Even though we had shared education trips and activities with the local Protestant school, often the two schools did not mix or work with each other simply because most of the children did not want to mix with someone from a different religious faith. This often left me in a very awkward situation as I had family and friends in both schools. I did not know how to respond to the situation. It seemed as though, if I mixed with a Protestant primary school, there would be a slagging off from my classmates, and, if I did not mix with the other primary school, I would be annoyed at myself for not communicating with those whom I was friends with. This was an extremely confusing time for an 11-year-old. I did not understand why I could not mix with both schools without anything being said or any remarks being made.
2565. Fortunately, here at Drumragh, you can mix with anyone, and no one passes judgement on who you are friends with and who you are not. Everyone here is so accepting, which makes the college atmosphere so calm and relaxing and the school such an enjoyable environment to learn in. As we are all constantly mixing and working with pupils and teachers from different backgrounds, you do not pay any attention to what religion they are, the colour of their skin, how they look or what type of background they come from. Instead of paying attention to the exterior of the person, you are paying attention to the person on the inside, which is what truly matters. Drumragh is like a huge family where you can fully accept everyone, no matter what. The school’s motto, “Excellence for Everyone”, really sums up what integration means to me. It means that the same standard is for everyone, and that standard is excellence. I love how everyone is treated so equally here. That is so welcoming and refreshing as you are assured that you can truly be yourself and still be accepted.
2566. Being a pupil of Drumragh has truly benefited me and prepared me for life when I leave school. Receiving

- integrated education for the past six years has enabled me to be confident to mix with anyone from any social group and background. It does not faze me at all. The fact that I grew up in an environment where everyone is equal and treated exactly the same gives me great comfort and reassurance. I believe that integrated education is the only way forward for Northern Ireland and will bring all communities together so that we can all live in peaceful coexistence. Someone needs to take the first step forward in integrated education. Here at Drumragh, we are doing that together.
2567. **Mr Frith:** There are a few points that I would like to make, but I am uncomfortably aware that I have just been completely upstaged and that there is no effective way of following what you have just heard. However, these are the points that I would like to make. My submission to you began with a quotation from Dr Martin Luther King. Students at Drumragh know that rarely a month goes by without my quoting him from this stage in an assembly. This is the one that I would like to quote for you this morning:
- "We have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes, but have yet to learn the simple act of walking the earth like brothers."*
2568. Whether we are talking about integrated or shared education, the starting point for me is whether our education system is teaching children to walk the earth like brothers. Yes, we need academic excellence and results matter — I can talk with pride about the academic results achieved in this school — but it has to be much more than that. The point of a school and an education system is very much the young person, not just the results that they leave the school with. I am talking about seeing the wood as well as the trees — the big picture and the vision. For me, that has to be that the school that a child goes to plays a central role in transforming their mind, heart and values and that the ripple effect of that leads to a better Northern Ireland.
2569. The debate is whether that should be achieved through quality shared or quality integrated education. I think that either should be encouraged and facilitated. You will not hear me say that I think that shared education is a terrible thing. In fact, I do not particularly like the gap between the shared education lobby and the integrated education lobby. I want to be clear on this: integrated education and shared education are two distinct things. Last May, Judge Treacy made that very clear and reaffirmed the fact that the integrated sector is definitively that: the way that it is run, and even the way that the board of governors operates, is distinctively integrated. He said clearly that a school either is or is not an integrated school.
2570. Shared education, where it is of quality, should also be facilitated and encouraged. In my mind, I am moving towards a continuum. Whether it is integrated or shared education, the continuum includes, at one end, the Rolls Royce impact and, at the other end, the wheelbarrow impact. Whether you are looking at a shared education project or an integrated school, the Rolls Royce end says that whatever is happening is having a transformational impact on the lives, values and attitudes of the children experiencing the project or school. Where it is of quality, it should be encouraged and facilitated.
2571. Somewhere in all of this is my favourite academic theory, which is called the contact theory. It is my favourite because it is very simple and powerful. It simply says that the more time young people spend in contact with each other, the more likely there will be a meaningful impact. The project that Zara described to you had relatively little impact, in her opinion, because, I am guessing, there was relatively little contact. Although what happened between the children could be called shared education and thus tick a box, the limited contact involved suggests that it was perhaps down towards the wheelbarrow end. Therefore, in Zara's evaluation, it had relatively little impact

- on the lives of the children who took part.
2572. Integration achieves everything that I am describing, as Cara said, by having the children in one uniform and in one school five days a week. Everything that they go through together is together. Even the Ash Wednesday service and traditionally separated events are integrated here in one way or another. We do not have separate events for different members of the community. We never send children off to another room and say, “Forgive us, but you are not part of this particular event or ceremony.” We do it together so that mutual respect and understanding emerge very naturally.
2573. One of the most integrated environments in the entire school is the football ground at lunchtime, when children naturally decide that they want a game of football and choose for themselves who they like and who they want to be friends with. There is something very natural and organic taking place there. The youngsters here are as human as anybody else, and we occasionally have the odd manning up, rolling up of sleeves and fisticuffs, but it is never over religion or background. It might be over a bad tackle in a game of football. It might be because a row on ‘Facebook’ the previous night about whose boyfriend is whose rolls into school the next day — welcome to the world of young people — but it is not over religious difference.
2574. As we speak, they are sitting beside each other in class in this building and learning that those barriers do not matter. They are encouraged to have their own ethos, background and values. Nothing is watered down or swept under the carpet. Crucially, there is never an attempt to say that we are all the same — in fact, quite the opposite. What we are saying here through, for example, the Ash Wednesday service that was described for you, is “Yes, we are different, so respect it. Be who you are, and respect each other’s differences actively and openly”. The integrated sector does account for approximately 7% of Northern Ireland’s school population. Some people are saying, “That is not very much, is it?”. Actually, it is a phenomenal achievement bearing in mind that most of that was achieved through parent power. If, traditionally and historically, over the past 30 years, there had been the kind of backing for the integrated sector that is currently being put into shared education, I think we would be looking at a phenomenally different statistic from the 7% we are looking at today.
2575. To ensure the effectiveness and impact of shared and integrated education, I would like to explore for a moment some of the requirements that I think could make it live and real. The first is that, in my opinion, the new draft shared education Bill should sit alongside the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, and they should be seen as being equally important. The reason is that if we are achieving this transformational impact on the lives of young people either through shared or integrated education, we should be saying, through our funding, evaluation and statutory representation at every single level, that either is to be supported, encouraged and facilitated regardless, if it is achieving the impact we are looking for.
2576. I think that shared and integrated education should be placed on the continuum that I was describing earlier and supported, or not, depending on, first, whether they achieve the Rolls Royce impact and, secondly, whether the reasons for undertaking it are the right ones. In other words, we should not allow ourselves to be distracted by whether funding is available. If shared education funding is for four years, the big question, and the deep intake of breath, after the four years is going to be, “What now?” The hope of course will be that something lasting will roll forward. Brian and his colleague this morning were inspirational in saying that, without funding, they still believe in the vision of shared education. That was brilliant. My hope would be that we will see a lot more of that. The irony is that

- they deserve funding because that is their attitude and approach.
2577. We need to know that whatever is going on is sustainable. Transformation takes time. I suggest that four years will not be enough to see anything except the smallest of buds and shoots appearing above the ground. If we are talking about something to have effect, it will take more than four years. Crucially, in the world in which we live, whatever happens has to offer value for money. Ironically, in any community, integrated education is one of the cheapest and most cost-effective ways to have the impact that I am talking about on the lives of young people.
2578. Integrated schools should be able to receive funding in the same way that shared education projects can. The current approach bothers me a little bit; the requirement that it must be between at least two schools. I suggest that we should be able to bid for funding and receive it for achieving exactly the same goals under one roof as we would if we were co-operating with another school to that end.
2579. It would be a step forward if schools were offered the choice of either opting into a shared education project or considering the possibility of transforming to become an integrated school. Again, if they were to be given equal weighting, and schools were to explore choice on the basis where they were presented as equally important options, equally live, equally viable and equally supported, even down to the funding available, I think we would be taking quite a dramatic step forward. Picking up on Trevor's comments earlier, I would be interested to know which option parents would actually want within their local community.
2580. I also think that NICIE should be involved, as a vital experienced voice, which indeed should be a more statutory one, in any of these debates. It seems to me that if you are giving the balance of power in any educational debate to the education and library boards, soon to be one authority, and CCMS, you are essentially giving it to the bodies that have greased the wheels of the system that we have seen for years. I am not sure why we should expect anything particularly different if we are asking them to move forward into the future. It does seem to me that a greater bringing to the table of all the relevant bodies, including NICIE, would generate a more healthy debate and a greater chance of something changing for the better. I think that both models should be considered within area planning. Both should have clear and equal statutory voices on the new education authority. A lot more work needs to be done in each community to help parents to understand the choices available to them. I believe fundamentally that historical inertia and the status quo need to be challenged or I fear that nothing much will change.
2581. I would like to finish with the concluding paragraph of my submission to you. It reads like this:
- "In a society that is scarred and struggling toward real peace, it seems completely obvious"*
2582. — to me anyway —
- "that young people should be educated together — all day, every day. A central goal of integrated education is the transformation of young people's hearts and minds. This is achieved by actively helping them to respect difference and encouraging them to form friendships that break down barriers. This is not always easy, but it matters. And so we can shape a future that includes tolerance, peace and healing."*
2583. Thanks very much.
2584. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
Thank you very much for your presentation. Can I particularly commend your students for their words this morning? We really appreciate that and the level of passion you have brought to it. Thank you very much.
2585. Nigel, you mentioned the gap between the lobbies for shared and integrated education. They are somewhat divided over the priorities within both, whether it be educational attainment over societal

- benefits and reconciliation. What is your view with regard to the integrated sector? Is it educational attainment versus community reconciliation or are they both equally important?
2586. **Mr Frith:** I am going to say that they are equally important, but I would be interested to know what our student speakers think on that as well. Guys, which is more important: educational attainment or the more personal impact of integration?
2587. **Mr Fahy:** I agree that they are probably equal. They are both major contributors to the school as a whole.
2588. **Ms Monaghan:** I do not think that you can call yourself a success story if you come out with no qualifications, but, in coming together as one school, they are equally important.
2589. **Ms Hemphill:** I believe that they are equally important too. You need both in order to succeed. One is not more important.
2590. **Mr Frith:** We put as much work into educational attainment in this school as we do into the business of integration. I will give you a couple of examples. We have live tracking and monitoring systems. We have mentoring systems to help children achieve their best and we use the phrase “personal best”. This is not an ethos where you either achieve an A or you have failed: this is an ethos where if you were predicted to get an E in one of your GCSE courses and you come out with a D, well, that is cause for celebration because you have exceeded your personal best. We take that very seriously.
2591. We have abandoned the traditional concept of study leave. When our children finish on the Friday with their traditional timetable, the irony is that we are saying, “Excellent. Well done. We will see you on Monday”. When they come back in on Monday morning, the majority of them are coming to a whole new timetable of revision classes. Teachers work with them until the day before or even sometimes the very day of the exam and continue to teach.
2592. These are just small examples of ways in which we take educational attainment very seriously. Our results speak for themselves. They are significantly above the Northern Ireland average for non-selective schools. The grammar school results are in a different ballpark. Obviously, if you feed something in at one end, do not be surprised at what you get out at the other. For an all-ability ethos, our exam results are high. It is because we balance both priorities very clearly and very seriously.
2593. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** What collaboration do you have with other schools in the area?
2594. **Mr Frith:** First, we are an active member of the Omagh learning community and an equal partner with eight other schools in the area. The majority are within Omagh itself. St John’s Business and Enterprise College, Dromore, and Dean Maguirc College in Carrickmore are part of the community as well. At principal level, we collaborate every month. The primary goal is to ensure that students can access the courses that they need. If we cannot provide the full range of courses here, they head off to one of the other schools. At a very daily level, what that literally means is taxis pulling up at the front door, students heading off to other schools and coming back when the lesson is over. While that seems like a very simple outcome, it actually takes quite a lot of planning to get around the practicalities, as I am sure you are aware. However, we also collaborate in other ways; the careers teachers work closely together, and the special needs coordinators have a level of collaboration.
2595. I was telling Robin earlier that, in the autumn — in October — we had a joint careers day for the teachers from all of the member schools. As all the schools came together, that had tremendous pulling power for employers across Northern Ireland, who came down to join the conference. The point of the conference was to make sure that the careers advice that we give is relevant, up to date and reflects the modern world, because a school can become a

- kind of a bubble and you can be offering well-meaning advice but missing the fact that you are not aware of how the world out there is changing and shaping itself around us.
2596. A number of the contributors were employers, including local companies and PricewaterhouseCoopers. They talked about entrance requirements and the fact that they employ English graduates, which challenged my stereotypical understanding of PwC as a company.
2597. There is a range of levels of collaboration within the learning community. We also work with local primary schools. Our vision at the moment is to develop stronger links with three in particular. There is the integrated primary school here in Omagh, and the vision is that it is going to move in next door to us within the next three or four years, so that generates all sorts of new possibilities. There is also Gibson Primary School and Omagh County Primary School, so our primary liaison work at the moment is directed primarily towards those three, but we are open to working with other primary schools as well, and, indeed, we have students from other collaborative schools coming in here as well. It is not just our students going elsewhere.
2598. **Mrs Overend:** I commend you all for your presentations this morning. I was really impressed, so thank you very much. In fact, when I indicated my question, you answered it before you finished. Some previous witnesses to Committee talked about how other schools in other sectors have changed over the years and do not have just one religion in them. Are you aware of this or do you feel that the sectors need to be recast? Furthermore, what do you feel that you do differently to, say, a controlled school that already has a mix of religions in it?
2599. **Mr Frith:** It is possible that there are some schools that are so genuinely mixed that they are already three quarters of the way to being integrated, and I commend them for that.
2600. **Mrs Overend:** What do you mean three quarters of the way to integrated? Surely they are integrated then, in all but name.
2601. **Mr Frith:** Let me unpack that a little bit. It is a good question. Judge Treacy was interested in that question and it became one of the key points he ruled on in the end.
2602. To go back to the experience of being in court and listening to Judge Treacy; there was a moment during the court case when the Department's barrister said, "My Lord, we are interpreting article 64 of the 1989 Order to mean the education together at school of Protestant and Catholic children. My Lord, there are many schools across the Province that are doing just that and they are outside of the integrated sector". Judge Treacy said, "Oh yeah; I know of schools all across Northern Ireland. There are schools here in Belfast that are doing that. That is great". At that moment, I thought, "OK; well, we're going to lose the case". In his final ruling, he actually wrote, "On first appearance, it would look as though shared education can fulfil article 64 of the 1989 Order. However, upon closer inspection...", and he then went on to outline his findings.
2603. One of them was that if you are a controlled school by design you are required to have a particular ethos in the way you operate, the way you are governed and the way you run. While you may be welcoming children from another background or sector of the community into your school by design, you are not going to be as equal as one sector, which is the integrated sector. He said that the integrated sector was the only one that he could see that, by design, from the very beginning, grass-roots up, even to the way that it is governed, is set up to be completely equal to every single child and every single background.
2604. In practice, that means that we balance our intake. There is a very healthy balance of Catholic, Protestant and those who, for whatever reason, designate themselves as other. It is not

- a minority of one or the other. You are walking around in a school community where the numbers are fairly well balanced and there is that sense of equality, even if you are aware of other children's backgrounds.
2605. There is also the fact that, given the way we operate, there is a deliberate bias and emphasis on things being done with equality to all. That can extend into the religious education curriculum, and staff here are acutely aware that the delivery of the curriculum has to be in a completely balanced way because every single background and culture is represented in the classroom. It is the same with history. Brenda, our head of history, is sitting behind me, and I imagine that she wishes she could chip in at this point. History is delivered here in a very thoughtful and very strategic way, and it is deliberately designed to encourage youngsters to embrace history, learn the lessons of history and explore the questions that emerge from it, along with giving them a range of skills that will prepare them for adult life.
2606. It is the same in our assemblies. The example of Ash Wednesday was quoted. Because of the emphasis on absolute equality and choice here, we have the whole school community in the school hall and we go through those experiences together. To choose another example; Remembrance Day is often seen as being primarily a Protestant time of year. Here, we run an education programme through form teachers on personal development in the run-up to Remembrance Day, and we establish the principle that we all surely regret that life was lost through conflict and war, but the wearing of a poppy is down to individual choice. Children here either wear a poppy or do not. It is entirely their choice. There is an overriding emphasis on delivering things with absolute equality that, I think, often makes the integrated experience different. Let me say this again: if there is a shared education experience that offers the same, it is to be applauded, encouraged and supported in exactly the same way as I believe integrated education should be.
2607. **Mrs Overend:** I appreciate that. Thank you very much. There are areas where the community is not equal in numbers. In an ideal world, there will be integrated schools. If that is the ideal scenario but the population is not balanced, how would you fix that?
2608. **Mr Frith:** We have that here.
2609. **Mrs Overend:** There are other schools available. I know that you have equal numbers here, but, if all the schools were to be integrated, how would you fix that?
2610. **Mr Frith:** I will come to that. I was really saying that the community mix of Omagh and Strabane is predominantly Catholic, and so we do deal with the challenges of getting a reasonable balance in this school. The real answer to your question is that I do not think that the key defining factor in deciding whether a school is integrated or not should be its religious balance.
2611. **Mrs Overend:** You said that you start off with —
2612. **Mr Frith:** You aim for it, and we do that year-on-year. Let us say that we are talking about a rural area; we could use Castlederg as an example. People there are talking about their one remaining post-primary school and deciding whether to transform it to integrated status. I do not think that what the community mix will be if they do that, or not, should define that decision for them. It should be about what the school will do once the children are through the door. That is what decides whether it calls itself integrated. It is about the way it operates and, as I described earlier, the practice in the classroom and beyond it. It is the practice that defines integration, not religious balance.
2613. I believe, for example, that the only post-primary school in a rural area and with a heavy bias towards one side of the community could still be legitimately and effectively integrated. I would want

- to know what that school is doing for the children who make up its population.
2614. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you; I appreciate that.
2615. **Mr Lunn:** I do not need to ask you questions; every question I might have asked, you have answered, all four of you, in your presentation. I will just say this: I was quite proud of the three pupils; you did so well. I am sure you were too, Nigel.
2616. **Mr Frith:** I was.
2617. **Mr Lunn:** You are absolutely right in saying that you were completely upstaged.
2618. **Mr Frith:** I know.
2619. **Mr Lunn:** You dealt with it manfully. Honestly, I do not have any questions. Not to be political, but I think that it is more important that others on the Committee — and it is a pity that not more of them are here — ask you questions. I am a long-term convert. I will just ask you one thing about sporting activities. Do you find that there is a reasonable crossover between the two traditions in the sports that you play?
2620. **Mr Frith:** Yes, there is.
2621. **Mr Lunn:** Am I right in thinking that you won a schools' Gaelic championship at some level in recent years?
2622. **Mr Frith:** We did.
2623. **Mr Lunn:** What was it?
2624. **Mr Frith:** It was the McKee Cup. It was an integrated schools split. Yes, we are proud to say that we are the winners, and I am grateful to you for bringing it up. Thank you.
2625. **Mr Lunn:** I bring it up at every opportunity. It was relayed to me by a Sinn Féin Member during a debate in Stormont. I was challenged to disavow the notion that integrated schools played only football and rugby, and somebody passed me a note saying that Drumragh was the holder of that Gaelic cup. Fair play to you. I do not know if you played in it, Caen.
2626. **Mr Fahy:** Yes, I did. I play a number of sports.
2627. **Mr Lunn:** I have nothing but praise for you. Keep up the good work.
2628. **Mr Frith:** I wonder if we could put your question to our three student speakers. What have you seen of sport and the balance of sports in the school?
2629. **Ms Monaghan:** Up until fifth year, PE is a compulsory subject. You do at least two periods of PE a week. Throughout the year we took part in netball, hockey, Gaelic and gymnastics. I was part of a good few school teams. There are integrated competitions for a range of sports, and we are quite successful. I did not hear any uproar about, say, hockey being a predominantly Protestant sport, or Gaelic being a Catholic sport. Everybody participated, and there were no problems. That is probably down to the ethos of the school. Nobody has a problem with people of different religions and political views playing together.
2630. **Ms Hemphill:** I agree with Cara. PE was more exciting, because you got to try different sports. I went to a Catholic primary school, so I would never have been introduced to the likes of hockey or rugby. It was through PE that I learnt how to play those different sports. It was exciting to experience sports that I would not normally have been able to experience.
2631. **Mr Lunn:** Do you play rugby?
2632. **Ms Hemphill:** The girls play tag-rugby.
2633. **Mr Fahy:** In my year, and probably in many other years, the goal is to win. We formed the best team for every sport; Catholic or Protestant does not matter. Maybe Catholics are better at Gaelic, but then some are better at hockey, and each team had their best players. It was always about getting the best team to win whatever the sport. It is really good to play loads of different sports throughout the year, rather than playing

the same one all year. You get to use different skills.

2634. **Mr Frith:** That answers it. We deliberately run a wide range of sports and make sure that sports that could be construed as being linked to one community are included in the school experience. Personally, I love it when I see a little chap pottering on his way home in the afternoon. The parents ask: “What have you been doing today?”. If he says, “I do Gaelic on a Tuesday and rugby on a Thursday”, that is beautiful. That answers the question, I think.
2635. **Mr Newton:** Like Trevor, I do not have any specific questions on integrated education, but I would like to pay tribute to the students for the presentation. I fear for our political futures if Zara is elected to the UK Youth Parliament and embraces politics as a career. I wish you every success in whatever academic route you take.
2636. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
I thank you for your presentation and echo the comments of members. You did extremely well this morning. Thank you for sharing your experiences with us.
2637. **Mr Frith:** Thank you for the opportunity.

3 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mrs Teresa Graham	<i>National Association</i>
Mr Justin McCamphill	<i>of Schoolmasters</i>
	<i>Union of Women</i>
	<i>Teachers</i>
Ms Gillian Dunlop	<i>Ulster Teachers' Union</i>
Ms Diane Nugent	

2638. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome Teresa Graham, Northern Ireland president of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT); Justin McCamphill, the national official from NASUWT; Gillian Dunlop, past president of the Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU), and Diane Nugent, past president of the UTU. You are very welcome. Thank you for coming. You may make an opening statement, and members will follow up with questions.

2639. **Ms Gillian Dunlop (Ulster Teachers' Union):** We have come as two separate unions, so, with your permission, representatives from each of the unions will speak. I teach at a controlled primary school in Lisburn.

2640. **Ms Diane Nugent (Ulster Teachers' Union):** I am from Park School, special educational needs.

2641. **Ms Dunlop:** The Ulster Teachers' Union represents 6,000 teachers in all sectors. We feel that the funding

by DE of two separate management systems — the new Education Authority and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) — is not conducive to shared education or, indeed, a shared future. Shared education can go forward only on the premise that both sides are willing to engage in a process where there could be common ground and understanding of the purpose of shared education. The Education Authority and the CCMS do not appear to have a consensual understanding or demonstrate a shared structural system that models the Department's vision for education. These apparent barriers in the management system inhibit shared learning and need to be addressed urgently if progress is to be made. In this respect, UTU still believes in a single education authority. Recently, there was also the contentious proposal to merge the teacher training colleges, and UTU believes that this is a missed opportunity in the Province.

2642. In the interim, where there is a significant political impasse, shared education has to be a conscious part of the political discourse, and there has to be genuine systemic change. The membership of UTU support the policy and the proposed legislation to advance shared education; and we will reply before the deadline next week. UTU is willing to engage and provide examples of cost-effective practice that already exist — we are not recreating things — and that work for the communities we serve.

2643. The main mechanism for enabling shared education is sound investment. UTU believes that failure to provide this investment is a false economy. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has stipulated in many reports that countries that invest in education programmes recover from austerity much more quickly. In Northern Ireland, such investment also

- helps to secure a shared future for us all. Over the past few years, a lot of the funding has come, as we are all aware, from Atlantic Philanthropies. Schools also draw down a lot of EU Peace money, and the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) has provided much needed support for all shared education practices. We acknowledge that Queen's University Belfast has taken a lead role in much of the work.
2644. The community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) policy and 'Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers' (CREDIT) courses for our teachers have been welcomed by UTU and schools. Unfortunately, not all schools have been able to avail of this because of funding. We were horrified to hear, after the consultation ended, that funding is being withdrawn from CRED. If funding can be drawn down from Atlantic Philanthropies, we certainly feel that the CREDIT training and CRED programme should stay.
2645. **Ms Nugent:** We also believe that this Committee should recognise that cohorts of schools have been involved in the Queen's University Belfast shared education programme since 2007. In my own experience of leading a shared education programme, which involved two special needs schools and a university, the pupils benefited greatly from their experience of sharing. Now that the three years of funding and the effective work have finished, the momentum gained by pupils, staff and the communities in each school has stopped. Due to lack of funding for the ongoing projects, the schools are back at square one. Unfortunately, no one in DE had the foresight to continue the funding and fulfil the vision.
2646. Some examples of shared education practice are as follows: the enhanced qualifications framework; science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects in rural primary schools, and shared teacher initiatives, which were evaluated and found to be successful, with benefits for the economy, education and for reconciliation. 'How to Create and Maintain Primary Partnerships' was an excellent publication, but the project was never rolled out across the Province, and, sadly, as for all the effective initiatives, the funding has all but ended, with the result that the good work is now operating on a skeleton budget or not at all. The momentum gained from sharing has been dissipated, and if funding is not provided to ignite the successful transformational work that was being carried out then it has been all but lost.
2647. DE needs to make shared education mainstream as soon as possible: there have been enough pilots and research to show that it works. There is a wealth of evidence highlighting that, where clustering occurs, neighbouring schools that work cooperatively are able to make more effective use of the resources available, whether it is through, as Gillian said, CRED, the social investment fund (SIF), or the entitlement framework. Indeed, at the UTU/Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) joint leadership conference in November 2013, each of the primary and post-primary schools from across the Province highlighted, in their presentations about shared education, the great impact of sharing not only on their schools but on the local community. These examples were not contrived, but were real, verbatim accounts of the success of shared education and the pride those communities had in their creativity, innovation and imagination. The Education Minister stated that this is what is needed to advance shared education.
2648. Such advancement was made possible by the autonomy of schools to find ways to support the most vulnerable children in their localities. As a result, shared education leaders have demonstrated the capacity to take risks and break vicious cycles of hatred, ignorance and single-mindedness in many of their communities. It is those negative views that continue to blight much of the work in our education system; and shared education, we believe, can help to address or, indeed, eradicate that.

2649. New buildings can also help to create a good working environment on neutral territory, and UTU welcomes the ongoing commitment to the shared education campuses programme. However, if we are to create a culture of shared education, we are dependent on the quality of our teachers, and the same investment has to be made in continuing professional development of teachers, as in the CREDIT modules at Stranmillis and shared education at Queen's University that is available to teachers in all sectors. Teachers need support on how to enable collaboration, and schools need coordinators to lead shared education, with roles recognised and teachers remunerated for their leadership skills and expertise.
2650. **Ms Dunlop:** How can we ensure that all schools in Northern Ireland engage in shared education? UTU believes that the current funding model of bums on seats and the selective system militates against sharing, as it puts schools in competition with one another. Schools need to be supported to become innovative in their approach to enrolment, and that means addressing the detrimental competition between schools and sectors and, instead, promoting Every School a Good School.
2651. Unfortunately, this Committee and the Assembly continue to demand league tables and school results from the Department, the publication of which creates turmoil and competition for us. Schools and communities are very apprehensive about sharing. As trust is the social glue of any community, these actions erode the bedrock on which shared education must advance.
2652. There are already workable models across Northern Ireland, such as in Ballycastle and in the west of the Province; and school leaders and boards of governors should be afforded the autonomy to decide what model best suits the needs of the pupils, staff and school communities.
2653. **Ms Nugent:** To return to finance; one example of how all pupils could benefit is through a shared education premium that would be incorporated into the funding formula. The Minister, as I am sure you are aware, announced a £58 million budget for the next four years. If we take it that there are 335,366 pupils in Northern Ireland, according to the October census, then we can do a calculation. If we divide the £58 million by that number of pupils, it gives £172.95 per pupil that could be spent on education within the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU). We believe that this would ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to have shared experiences in their education. Furthermore, ring-fencing the money would ensure that shared activities are carried out in every school in Northern Ireland and would give shared education the status it deserves.
2654. UTU believes that seven years of pilots is enough, and that now it is time for shared education to be rolled out universally. Schools and communities could still apply for additional funding to enhance the experiences of pupils as they saw fit.
2655. Furthermore, UTU believes that while funding should support continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers, other outside agency professionals should also be funded to deal with the communities. We also believe that parents play an integral part in ensuring that shared activities take place, and their voices also need to be heard and fully supported by schools and outside agencies. Furthermore, UTU believes that boards of governors should be given training on shared education and should fully support the shared views and activities taking place in schools. The new Education Authority and CCMS need to provide support and advice for realistic, feasible, long-term, workable arrangements for schools. The Education Authority must be cognisant of the views of all school stakeholders and facilitate realistic consultation time frames that enable everyone to respond to transformational changes suggested for schools.
2656. Finally, UTU believes that the introduction of a Shared Education

- Bill will go far to advancing the work of shared education and ensuring that all schools develop a positive ethos towards sharing. This will enable schools to contribute towards the Programme for Government's shared future agenda.
2657. **Mr Justin McCamphill (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers):** I am the national official for Northern Ireland. Before taking up my role with the union, I spent 19 years in the classroom. My colleague Teresa Graham is president of the NASUWT in Northern Ireland. You received our submission back in October. We will also be submitting a draft response to the Department of Education's consultation on shared education before the end of the week. I will speak on the nature and definition of shared and integrated education, the key barriers and enablers, and the models of good practice we have identified from other jurisdictions.
2658. Teresa will outline what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration, why the CRED policy should remain in place and the need to engage more effectively with parents, carers and the role of special schools.
2659. I believe that the NASUWT brings a unique perspective to the debate on shared and integrated education. Although we were established here only in the 1960s, we have worked assiduously to recruit from both sides of the community to become the largest teachers' union in Northern Ireland. Our team of elected officials and staff reflect the composition of the teaching workforce. We are the largest teaching union in east Belfast, west Belfast, south Armagh and north Down.
2660. Despite the divisions in our education system, NASUWT members choose to work together regardless of the sectors they teach in. It is our belief that education has a critical role to play promoting the reconciliation of our people and the development of safe, just, inclusive and tolerant communities. Like the ministerial advisory group, we believe that shared education has to be about more than just the religious beliefs of pupils, parents and wider communities but also their socio-economic status. Our schools are divided on class lines as well as on religious lines. To have real shared education, we must address all divisions in education. We agree that there should be a commonly recognised working definition of shared education and agree with the definition put forward by the ministerial advisory group. Given the acceptance by the Minister and the ministerial advisory group of that definition, it is not clear why it has not been incorporated into the draft Shared Education Bill published by the Department of Education. Maybe someone around this table knows the answer to that.
2661. If shared education is to be established on a statutory basis, it is important that the Department sets out its reasons for departing from the definition of shared education contained in its remit to the ministerial advisory group.
2662. While the definition of shared education may still be under consideration, we all have a common understanding of integrated education already, which is quite distinct from shared education. Integrated schools have an important and legitimate role to play in the education system in Northern Ireland and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. As a union, we are concerned by the perception that DE has failed to discharge its statutory responsibility to encourage and facilitate integrated education. We hope that the Committee holds the Department to account for that failure.
2663. The NASUWT will continue to offer its full support to the integrated sector, in light of the critical contribution it is able to make to advancing shared education across Northern Ireland. The union is clear that, in viable circumstances, active consideration should continue to be given to establishing education provision on an integrated basis. However, the NASUWT recognises that,

- as currently constituted, integrated skills in education provision are in settings with a Christian character. Given the increasingly diverse nature of Northern Irish society, it must be recognised that many parents would prefer, if given the choice, to express a preference for education that is provided on an entirely non-denominational basis for their children. Where there is not the demand for integrated education in a particular locality, there should be no barrier to the establishment of other approaches to shared education that are tailored to the needs and circumstances of local communities.
2664. We believe that the promotion of shared education should not be a statutory duty on the basis proposed by DE until a clear and coherent implementation framework is introduced. If not, it would lead to the imposition of duties on DE schools and other public bodies, including the Education Authority, that they may not be in a position to discharge effectively.
2665. We cannot discuss shared education without addressing what I believe to be the elephant in the room; academic selection. As a union, we are opposed to the current system of academic selection in Northern Ireland. However, given that the issue of academic selection will not be resolved to everyone's satisfaction any time soon, shared education draws attention to the ways in which academically selective schools might contribute effectively to the learning of all children and young people. The Committee should be giving consideration to the ways in which academically selective schools can be integrated into genuinely collaborative arrangements with non-selective schools. This collaboration, if it is to be meaningful, would need to include provision, where appropriate, for selective pupils to take an active and direct role in the education of pupils enrolled at other schools as part of their contribution to local learning partnerships.
2666. One of the barriers to shared education is the accountability regime. The NASUWT is clear that a fit-for-purpose framework of accountability is critical to ensuring that public trust and confidence in the education system can continue to be secured. Those responsible for the accountability system must ensure that it does not operate in ways that contradict or undermine shared education. The increasingly high stakes nature of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) establishes powerful incentives for schools and other learning providers to focus on their own pupil performance indicators rather than on addressing, through collaboration, the needs of all learners in the communities they serve. It is evident that, at present, the current framework for holding schools to account in Northern Ireland works against the establishment of effective, collaborative arrangements between schools.
2667. We need to address, in a context where greater emphasis is placed on shared education, that a growing number of pupils, although remaining formally enrolled in one school, would receive education in more than one setting. In such circumstances, we believe that it would be inappropriate to continue to attempt to hold schools to account for their performances solely on the basis of the progress and achievement of the pupils on their rolls. It is therefore evident that building effective collaboration between institutions would require a fundamental review of the way in which schools are held to account for the work that they undertake collectively with other settings.
2668. Schools need to be incentivised to focus to a greater extent on the work they undertake in collaboration with other settings, including their contribution to the education of pupils enrolled in other schools. There is now an opportunity to explore alternative policy options for school accountability in Northern Ireland. We need to learn from those countries that are often cited as high performing or fast improving as to how they are able to establish and sustain accountability rated processes that

- maintain high levels of public confidence and support system development improvement without use of the high stakes approaches to school accountability that characterised the arrangements in Northern Ireland.
2669. There are great stories of shared education that we can all share, but it is evident that more attention needs to be paid to developing the capacity of institutions to embed collaborative arrangements in areas where there is no history of partnership working. Schools need time, additional resources and support to be able to develop and implement effective partnerships.
2670. We believe that the primary responsibility for shared education should be with the Department of Education and not with the new Education Authority. Until the Education Authority is established, it is not clear whether it will have the capacity to deploy staff effectively or would commit to do so in a way that is consistent with DE's policy objectives in relation to shared education. Given the system-wide level importance of the shared education agenda, the NASUWT believes that giving responsibility for the deployment of support staff to the Education Authority would create unacceptable risks to the successful implementation of that policy. The union can therefore identify no reason why staff who are appointed to work in shared education partnerships should not fall within the direct remit and direction of DE.
2671. We also need to address issues relating to the training and development of teachers and school leaders working within a shared education context. The effective development of shared education will not be possible without a credible professional training and development strategy.
2672. It is critical that clarity is provided in the models of funding as a matter of urgency before any attempt is made to begin the implementation of shared education on a wider scale. We seek clarity on how the Department intends to secure the extra £25 million of funding that was identified in its consultation document and the basis upon which it will be distributed. It also needs to clarify what relationship, if any, that funding has to the £500 million capital funds that were referenced in the Stormont House Agreement or to the existing shared educational campuses programme.
2673. The union is clear that collaborative arrangements between schools can secure the more effective use of finite resources through the generation of economies of scale and by minimising unnecessary duplication. However, it is essential that any proposals for the development of local shared education arrangements are not used as a pretext for attempts to reduce overall levels of current spending in the schools sector or undermine the job security of members of the school workforce through the imposition of inappropriate approaches to school rationalisation.
2674. As a union, we represent teachers who are already trying to juggle a massive workload while delivering one of the best education systems in the world. Inter-school partnership arrangements must be properly assessed in their impact on teacher workload. That assessment must examine the capacity for institutions to cope with the changes and the capacity of the workforce in the areas of time, knowledge and skills. That is particularly important with the increased demands that may be made of teachers and school leaders in the future development of shared education campuses.
2675. In our annual survey of teacher opinion last year, we found that 84% of teachers and school leaders in Northern Ireland cite excessive workload as their main concern. Attempts, therefore, to progress a shared education agenda in ways that do not take meaningful account of those pressures and that would further intensify the workload demands on teachers and school leaders would be entirely unacceptable and, therefore, unsuccessful.

2676. I note with interest that the Committee is interested in evidence from other jurisdictions that could provide some support for the development of shared education. The development of education policy in Northern Ireland must acknowledge the unique post-conflict context in which the education system operates. We must therefore resist simplistic attempts to transplant approaches from other jurisdictions that do not take account of the particular circumstances that pertain in Northern Ireland. However, the NASUWT is clear that it is possible to identify some policy lessons from other jurisdictions that are relevant to the development of shared education. The main lesson I would highlight is the avoidance of the privatisation of education as happens elsewhere. The status of education as a public good means that policy and practice should not only seek to secure benefits for individual pupils and learners but should recognise the importance of education to the economic, cultural and civic well-being of wider society. I will now hand over to Teresa.
2677. **Mrs Teresa Graham (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers):** First, I will look at the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy. The NASUWT supports the stated aims of the CRED policy, which seeks to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those from different backgrounds and traditions.
2678. It is clear that CRED activities have had a positive impact in Northern Ireland. There is strong evidence from the Young Life and Times Survey 2012 that, of the majority of young people who have experienced CRED activities, it is the impact on section 75 groups that is particularly striking, with at least two thirds of such respondents feeling that CRED activities have resulted in them feeling more positive towards those groups. The section 75 groups particularly affected by CRED activities are those in the categories of religious belief, race, sexual orientation and disability. Of those, the first three are also the top three groups in the PSNI hate crime statistics tables.
2679. Therefore, it would appear to the NASUWT that, while a move towards shared education is very positive, it will also need to embrace significant groundwork both in and out of school that will lead to building a peaceful and stable Northern Ireland. We would also be of the opinion that the evidence would support an extension of CRED activities within the concept of shared education to include work on tackling sectarianism, racism, homophobia and disability.
2680. There is strong evidence that CRED programmes on those issues work. For example, the surveys show that, among those who have taken part in CRED activities on disabilities, over 80% reported more positive attitudes to people with different disabilities as a result. From such evidence, the NASUWT suggests that the CRED programme should form an effective part of shared education. Therefore, we would urge that funding for the programme should remain in place.
2681. Secondly, there is the need to engage more effectively with parents and carers. In a context in which greater emphasis is being placed on shared education, pupils are likely to be educated in more than one institution. In such circumstances, the present system for reporting or engaging with parents will have to be re-examined. It is without doubt that the introduction of effective approaches to shared education will depend very much on effective parental engagement, and it is vital that that aspect of shared education is examined. The NASUWT therefore advocates an objective and detailed review of models of school accountability to parents. The review should include considerations of the way in which accountability and reporting frameworks that are in operation elsewhere have engendered

- greater levels of parental involvement in the education system, and, if that has led the promotion of the public valuing and celebration of a shared education system, as can be seen in high-performing jurisdictions such as South Korea and Finland. Also very importantly, the role of technology in such accounting and reporting systems would need to be reviewed.
2682. The NASUWT welcomes the recognition by DE of the important role that special schools play and can play in the future in the provision of an inclusive or shared educational system. To all intents and purposes, special schools are already shared schools. The NASUWT is of the opinion that special schools are well placed to be of great benefit to all schools, with their experience of sharing across many areas of society. It might well be that special schools could be at the heart of shared education in an area and that, with enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and education support centres, the educational needs of all children, including those with disabilities, emotional troubles, behavioural issues and special needs can be met more effectively in a shared school system. However, that should not be interpreted in a way that would undermine the importance of ensuring that decisions about where pupils are educated are guided by objective and professional assessments of the settings where their needs are best met. The NASUWT is very supportive of the need for and work of our special schools. Thank you.
2683. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. A number of Committee members have had to leave to take part in a debate, hence there has been some movement while you were speaking. Mr Rogers, I understand that you also maybe have to leave.
2684. **Mr Rogers:** Yes.
2685. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I will take you first. 4.30 pm
2686. **Mr Rogers:** First, you are very welcome. Diane, when you talked about the Department needing to make shared education mainstream, there was an acknowledgement that it may be a bit of a patchwork and sporadic at the moment. You talked about the shared education premium and how it would be divided. Do you not think that, when there is £172 for rural schools versus urban schools, it can be difficult for rural schools to link up with a school from another community? A lot of money could be spent on transport for that type of thing.
2687. **Ms Nugent:** I suppose that is true, but the ideal sharing partnership is with those schools from neighbouring communities. There have been good examples of that, such as in Ballycastle, where students walk from one school to another. I think there is some ambiguity about integrated schools. Integrated schools have to share as well, so a lot of controlled and maintained schools are in those schools' locality. Basically, it is about any school in sectors that are sharing together.
2688. I understand that there are going to be transport issues, but if schools work together, the beauty of autonomy is that they could come up with ideas that would enable a workable way for them to share and maybe minimise transport costs. For example, a school could have a minibus and the other school could avail itself of it. That may be one way you could develop that kind of collaboration and partnership.
2689. The fact that the shared education pupil premium would be shared out among every pupil also links into equality. Every child has a right to shared education, and by giving each child the same amount of money and the schools an economy, it would be up to the transformational leadership of schools to come up with innovative, flexible, workable ideas that would enable the money to be spent on a value-added basis. That would be documented in the school's improvement or development plans to ensure that the money is being spent in the correct way and that there is value added to the shared education premium.

2690. **Mr Rogers:** A quick question, Justin. You commented that integrated education is quite distinct from shared education. Do you not believe that integrated education is a logical conclusion of shared education?
2691. **Mr McCamphill:** It is, but it is not something that can happen everywhere. Integrated schools are set up in such a way that means that there has to be an equal balance of pupils from different communities. To set up integrated schools as they are to be constituted in every locality will not be practical, but where it is possible, we support it as the long-term aim. In other places you have to accept the reality that people live in divided communities and that you have to plan for shared education based on where people are, not where you want them to be.
2692. **Mr Rogers:** Do you believe that faith-based schools have a key role to play in developing shared education and all that?
2693. **Mr McCamphill:** Yes, most certainly.
2694. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Just to pick up on your point about funding, there are obviously schools that have been working together for maybe 40 years, long before there were any Queen's University groups looking at shared education and before any funding packages were available. If there is a willingness for sharing, does it necessarily have to have an associated monetary incentive?
2695. **Ms Dunlop:** The monetary incentive begins the process, especially with schools that have not been involved in sharing. This goes back to the EMU programme in the 1980s and 1990s, if you remember that. That was not ideal, because we were linked with schools that were away somewhere else; they were not our neighbouring schools. Certainly, it is going to take less finance to link with some schools. For example, in Lisburn there is a maintained school less than 1 kilometre away from us. That would be our natural clustering, but we are looking at quite an overloaded curriculum at the moment, and if DE sets the priority that shared education is up there with literacy, numeracy and ICT, a coordinator to roll out a programme needs to be remunerated for.
2696. It is taking on an extra workload, unless a priority is set. That is what we mean when we talk about the league table of results and competition between schools needing to be brought down a peg. The school down the road is pulling back from sharing, and there is a big divide between our grammar and secondary schools. I know that, in Lisburn, we share through the SIF funding and try to bring in every sector. Grammar is the hardest sector to get in to the overall picture. Funding has been a way of softening that and attracting leadership to it. If that is the beginnings of it, you can look at self-sustaining programmes down the line.
2697. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Is there not, then, a duplication? We already have area learning coordinators, and we have money involved in the entitlement framework and how it is to be brought together. Are you not duplicating all the time?
2698. **Ms Dunlop:** I think they are overlapping. The problem we have at the minute is the talk of lifting the CRED and CREDIT funding, SIF and the community education initiative funding. Yes, that is promoting sharing in a learning community. It most definitely is. You have to be careful that there is no overlap. That is what we were talking about with the shared education premium, which is ring-fenced for those activities. It can be the CRED, CREDIT, SIF entitlement framework, but it is all from the one overarching funding stream for those that is pulled down from wherever, whether it be Atlantic Philanthropies or DE.
2699. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You talked about league tables. I have been on the Committee a long time, and I do not remember us calling for or promoting league tables, but I stand to be corrected on that point.

2700. Justin, you commented on the ministerial advisory group's definition. Are you in support of that?
2701. **Mr McCamphill:** We believe it is an excellent starting point. To go back to the question you asked Gillian, I will say that shared education has to be about more than just practical sharing between two schools that happen to be adjacent. The ministerial advisory group's definition also covers promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. We need to put funding into shared education, because partnerships that happen spontaneously, when two schools are built back to back, will happen anyway. This is about breaking down barriers, such as distance in some places, academic selection in others and barriers between special schools and mainstream schools. It takes planning, and money needs to be spent on it.
2702. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I really just want to compare the ministerial advisory group's definition to that which is out for consultation from the Minister and to get your views on the difference.
2703. **Mr McCamphill:** I am afraid I do not have the Minister's definition in front of me.
2704. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It is this:
- "Shared education' means the education together of —*
- (a) those of different religious belief or political opinion, and*
- (b) those who are experiencing significant socio-economic deprivation and those who are not, which is secured by the working together and co-operation of two or more relevant providers."*
2705. **Mr McCamphill:** We were just curious about why they are different. That is not to say that one is better than the other. Do you know why there is a difference?
2706. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** No.
2707. **Ms Dunlop:** The two maybe address two different things: the religion side of it and the socio-economic barriers. Any learning community will tell you that it is most difficult for grammar schools. Primaries and secondaries have very close relationships involving the toing and froing of pupils. When a relationship forms between a grammar and a secondary, it very much goes one way, with the secondary going into the grammar school for a sharing of lessons and CRED or whatever. Rarely does grammar move back the other way.
2708. I will give you an example of what happens for us in primary schools. My last school, Donaghadee Primary School, had Killard House School, a special school, on the same campus. We brought those kids together, and you might say that that was the special school coming up into the mainstream to learn, but equally our kids got such an education in the problems that those kids face and what it is like to have a disability, how they can help and what they can learn from it. It has to go both ways, and that is where a barrier exists between grammar schools and secondary schools in town areas. You are all nodding in agreement.
2709. **Mrs Graham:** That is where the socio-economic barrier is, and that is what needs to be addressed, along with everything else. If you are going to have mixed, shared education, it has to be shared across the socio-economic groupings as well.
2710. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The NASUWT submission talks about section 75 and the fact that you needed to look at the potential implications of any implementation. Are you aware at this stage of what those implications may be?
2711. **Mr McCamphill:** I have some idea of what they may be. I do not want to pre-empt that, because I might almost be predicting how people would discriminate, and I do not know whether that is something that I want to throw out to people. For example, we know at the moment that there are issues

around religious discrimination that need to be looked at. There are also issues around discrimination against people on the grounds of disability. We want everything looked at. Schools have a responsibility, and there has to be a conversation about what all the implications will be.

2712. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** At this stage, do you want to be any more specific than that?
2713. **Mr McCamphill:** No.
2714. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you very much for your presentations. I have lots of questions, but my concern with the way that the Bill is coming through is that, if we just specify those three areas, we forget community and the complex mixtures of others. Do you not feel that we should have a slightly vaguer definition that may allow a school that is doing well in sharing to apply for funding so that it is not just about two schools? Sometimes you can have one school doing phenomenally well, as an example. Do you think we should have something that is a little bit looser and more flexible? If you are going to do that, who makes the decision about sharing funding? Is it the Education Authority, or is it the Department?
2715. **Mr McCamphill:** In my view the decision should lie with the Department. I think that there are too many vested interests in the make-up of the Education Authority, and I would prefer that the strategy and its outworkings come from the Department. I am not ruling out what you are saying; I am listening to it. Whoever is assessing the project could look at it, but I do not have a strong view.
2716. **Ms Nugent:** Can I just add to that? We had also discussed the idea that the ETI should be trained in what shared education is. That would be another mechanism for looking at shared education practice to make it more realistic on the ground.
2717. You talked about religious discrimination and things like that. I was privy to a very good example of shared education in Glasgow, which, we all know, is a bit similar to Northern Ireland. There was a maintained primary school and a controlled primary school, and in the middle there was a special needs unit and a shared nursery. I thought that that was a beautiful example of shared education, because the children were coming into the school together. We know that, when kids are young, that is the best time to expose them to the realities of life and to let them learn new skills, even with things like languages. When I spoke to some of the children in that school and asked them how they shared, they told me that they loved coming together at break time and lunchtime. So, as Gillian said, sharing education is not just about lessons, academic learning or examinations. Sharing can take place in local communities and youth centres. Sport is ideal for sharing; what better way is there than that? That is how some of that pupil premium could be used.
2718. To go back to the example of the school with special needs, that facility meant that those schools could transfer the kids in and out so they could have the support base and the teacher-informed professional judgement that they needed. That is another model of good, effective continuing professional development. The teachers in each of those schools planned together. They designed opportunities throughout the school year with themes in both schools. The important thing was that both those schools could retain their own identity. The maintained school still had its symbols and things, and the controlled school had what was related to it. I think that respecting differences is what sharing education is about.
2719. In my experience of leading the shared education programme, we linked our two special schools — ours is kind of mixed but mostly controlled, and there is also the maintained — with the university. We take for granted that students or whoever know how to share. However, even their eyes were opened in the sharing engagement process. When students came into our schools, we had

- kids saying, “Miss, can we be friends with a black person?” They did not know, because they have preconceived notions.
2720. While we support coordinators being in place and their being remunerated, it takes a special kind of leadership and person to enable those collaborations. In the past, it was maybe taken for granted that sharing was happening. However, it was not real sharing. It was not having the outcomes that are perhaps being seen in the shared education programme that Queen’s University has rolled and in all the research from 2007 that proves that it works and can have long-lasting impacts on communities, as well as between and among children of different ages and abilities. That is what is important with that.
2721. **Mr Kinahan:** I will ask a second question, if I may. The NASUWT mentioned getting parents more involved. We do not really seem to have parents involved anywhere in our education system. You get it from ‘Belfast Telegraph’ polls and other things. What do you see as the mechanism for getting them involved?
2722. **Mrs Graham:** At the moment, the way that parents are involved in most schools is through an annual report and an annual visit. It is really important. I know that the Department has been stressing that school improvement really needs parental involvement. If we have shared education, we were looking at how we could use it as a vehicle to involve more parents. That would bring about not just a better understanding of sharing among parents but parents would become more proud of their schools and communities. If you go down the shared school route, you will not be able to send out a report on a child. That child might be enrolled in your school but be in that school only some of the time. Some mechanism will have to be developed whereby the progress and attitudes of the child are conveyed to parents. To get buy-in from parental support, it is going to have to be different and more dynamic. That is
- why we talked about technology and all that stuff and how it could be utilised to encourage the shared nature of any project. You might well have the added bonus that parents, by becoming involved in it, could become more involved in sharing in the community.
2723. **Mr McCamphill:** There could also be consultation with parents in the establishment of any new shared arrangements, in that they could look at the type of shared arrangement they want. Is it two schools beside each other? Is it an integrated school? Is it a faith school? There needs to be greater consultation with parents and wider communities when the decisions are made.
2724. **Ms Dunlop:** We mentioned that it is not just funding in schools that is required for parental involvement. There are organisations that we have used for the last 30 years. I was heavily involved with the Children’s Program of Northern Ireland. A lot of the parental involvement that we saw benefit communities most happened outside school hours, but some was in school hours. It was delivered through outside agencies like Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), YMCA and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. DE had funding attached to programmes that dealt with conflict resolution.
2725. We are sitting here as teachers, and we know that, when you bring parents into a room, there is a big elephant there. Who will broach the difficult topics? Who will broach the community disaster that happened last weekend? How do you go about dealing with that? I know that, all through the 1990s, when we lifted kids from the Templemore Avenue divide in east Belfast and from Ardoyne, we had the parents in the leisure centres working with their kids, and CRIS and YMCA ran conflict resolution workshops. Those people knew what they were doing and were able to tease out of those parents an open and frank discussion of prejudice, racism and all the things that we still have huge problems with in Northern Ireland. I know that you also mentioned outside

- agencies that support educators' work, but the community people are the ones who really tackle the big issues. Those communities and the parents benefited from that.
2726. **Mr Craig:** Thank you for the presentation. I gathered from some of the comments that maybe not all the unions are singing from the same hymn sheet on shared education. Is that because of a lack of definition, or is there a more fundamental disagreement between you on it?
2727. **Mr McCamphill:** I thought that we agreed with most of what the UTU said. In which areas did you detect the difference?
2728. **Mr Craig:** I thought that it was quite interesting, because one of you was pushing very heavily to get this implemented immediately, even though we do not exactly know what it is. You, in particular, were urging caution and looking for more money for it, so I am just curious.
2729. **Mr McCamphill:** I think that we both have the same vision down the line. I think that that was coming across. We are more cautious, in that we do not want to go ahead into things where, if the money is not there, because of the extra workload on teachers, people will end up not prioritising shared education and will just get on with the delivery in the classroom. If the money is not there, we will run into problems.
2730. **Mrs Graham:** Our idea is that, before you go down that line, you should look to see what problems there are. There would be nothing worse than to start off on this shared education programme and for it all to crash halfway through. What message would that give? You really need to have thought right through not just how it will work but what will make it work. I think that we all agree that, at the end of the line, we all have the same ideal of what we would like shared education to be. As I said, we do not want it to end in failure. If we do not prepare adequately, that could be the result.
2731. **Ms Nugent:** Both our unions have concern for teacher workload. It is easy to dump everything on the teachers and to say that they are the superheroes who can heal everything. That is not the case in shared education. The good thing is that, through the research that has been carried out and in engaging with teacher unions to advance the shared education agenda, there is collaboration. We need to collaborate to ensure that everybody is protected. We would all love 90 hours a day to do everything. That is why we made the point about making sure that coordinators are remunerated so that teachers are given time. It is about the time that teachers need to plan the shared education activities and to engage with communities. From being involved with shared education, I know the time and commitment that it takes. I also know, from being engaged in the ministerial advisory group, that some of the comments that were made were about the people who are coordinating getting some recognition for the work that they do. That effective work has been documented in the evidence. It needs to be ensured that, in the new shared education advancement, that is the kind of model that reflects all that and is used to advance shared education. So, I do not see that there are so many apparent differences, except for the fact that you had maybe detailed it a bit more. Those are our concerns.
2732. **Mr Craig:** I find even that answer fascinating, because I think the problem is that we have all got different interpretations of what shared education is about. You are already talking about additional resources and coordinators, and I am thinking, "Coordinators for what?" What exactly are we talking about in shared education? I see shared education as cooperation between sectors, between schools and especially between smaller schools that cannot sustain the economic model that they have. That even applies within the same sector. None of that has the additional burden that you are talking about, which is coordinators. This is not about

sharing religious experiences between children; it is about administration.

2733. **Ms Nugent:** That is not what I was talking about. With respect, I have been a shared education leader. I have done it without being remunerated. It is difficult and challenging, it takes a lot of time and not all the agencies that you contact to develop activities in schools and with parents and communities are available within a teacher's 1,265 working hours. We are not looking for remuneration for coordination of shared education because we are greedy. It would be easy for those to come back at teachers and say, "You're well enough paid". If you want something done medically and you want the best job done, you go to the best person. We need the best people in schools to enable those communities to engage, enable schools to come together and to have the time to purposefully carry out that role and engage with everybody so that there is not that element of some kind of competition, which, I think you are hinting at. It is not about competition. That is why it needs people who are creative, people who can take risks and people who fully understand shared education and have the time to commit and devote to that role to enable it to be done purposefully. That will ensure that those schools are not in competition and that the pupils and communities will benefit. That is what the coordination role is about. Does that clarify it for you?

2734. **Mr Craig:** I get what you are saying, and I do not doubt that, at a higher level, probably within the Education Authority, there will be a need for people like that to promote shared education ideas between schools and sectors. I do not doubt that for one second. The difficulty I see with all this is that, if shared education is to work — we have seen this — it needs to be a bottom-up approach, not a top-down approach. Top-down does not work. We have sat with an integrated sector for 30 years. It reflects 7% of the pupils of Northern Ireland. So, the forced approach did not work. Parents did not vote with their feet. That is the difficulty with it.

If we are going to make this work, it should be a bottom-up approach, where schools and the authority are bringing solutions to the table that mean sharing between schools and sectors. That will be a completely new kettle of fish, and I would like to think that the unions will support that approach.

2735. **Mr McCamphill:** It is difficult. There are learning partnerships, for example, that have only one community in them. There are some like that, so it is probably a matter of looking at those partnerships and considering how you then put a shared model on top of them. That will have to be worked out. You made the comment that there has to be a bottom-up approach, but there has to be a structure from the top. That is why the Department is bringing forward legislation. There have to be incentives for people at the bottom to aim for. When the European Community gives out grants to farmers, those grants are there at the top but somebody at the bottom has to say, "This is what I'm going to do so that I can apply to get that". It is no different in education.

2736. **Mr Craig:** Will the unions actively promote that approach? I have seen ideas for schools to come together — there would have been a fantastic opportunity — yet, because of competition between them, it all fell apart.

2737. **Mr McCamphill:** In my view, that competition does not come from teacher unions; it comes from principals and governors. It comes from teachers as well, but it has to be worked around. That is why I talked about the accountability mechanism. People worry that their school will end up in intervention, and that can drive schools more than anything else.

2738. **Mrs Graham:** I mentioned earlier that it is absolutely vital that the parents are involved from a bottom-up point of view. It will not succeed unless the parents buy into it, as well as everyone else. Before you go any further, you have to develop a mechanism by which the parents will be brought into the planning

- and running of the shared education experience.
2739. **Mr Craig:** I wish that we could get them into the existing system, never mind the shared one.
2740. **Mrs Graham:** Perhaps this is the new start for them.
2741. **Mr Newton:** I thank the members for coming this evening. I think that Diane said that teachers are not superheroes. I think that they are superheroes.
2742. **Mrs Graham:** Thanks. *[Laughter.]*
2743. **Mr Newton:** In many ways, they contributed to tackling the difficulties that we had over the years of what we call the Troubles; they played a fantastic role in that.
2744. I would like a succinct answer to a few questions. Grammar schools that share at the moment — there are a number of examples across Northern Ireland — have done so without any incentive whatsoever. They are reaping the benefits of that, so why do we not ensure that the other schools employ the same methods as some of those grammar schools?
2745. **Ms Nugent:** I am thinking about the kinds of behaviours and disciplines in schools. There are different challenges. Speaking as a special needs teacher, there are challenges in that environment compared with secondary, primary and grammar schools. I have to be careful about how I say this, but children who attend grammar school generally have the wherewithal to go between schools; behaviour is not an issue.
2746. Shared education works for areas in which you may see a higher incidence of behavioural problems and even special needs and things like that; those are the low socio-economic areas. Mention was made of working with parents. You have to bear in mind that a lot of parents do not want even to go near the gates of schools. I have had children going through school for five years without ever once seeing a parent. Through the shared education programme, the interesting thing for me was that we had parent/child workshops. No one ever wants to be seen as a bad parent. That was an innovative way of getting our parents into the schools. Interestingly enough, the parents who never darkened the door were the ones who brought their child to school to do things like cookery, jewellery-making and art; not English, maths and things like that. It was creating a new kind of culture so they could see that education is not maybe the same as when they were in school. That was one way of getting parents engaged with the schools.
2747. It is great that some schools have been able to collaborate, as you mentioned, but I think that there are different challenges in different areas. Perhaps it is a little easier in a sector where there are not so many apparent challenges, although that is not to say that there are not special needs and other issues in those schools. The grammar school sector will have different challenges, which might be accreditation based.
2748. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Perhaps your question was more about the fact that schools are mixed. Is that what you were referring to?
2749. **Mr Newton:** Yes.
2750. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Of course, special schools are naturally mixed, so sharing is already taking place as a natural consequence of the population that is at the school.
2751. **Ms Dunlop:** Looking at the school population, the current DE policy is forcing integration without purposely going out and doing it. We have the policy of going to the neighbouring school. The transport issue that has come in recently will force people to their neighbouring school. I speak from experience. Where I sit in Lisburn, in a controlled primary school, 12% of my enrolment is children from what normally would have been the Catholic maintained sector. That was down to the population explosion in Lisburn and the number of places available in the schools available. As we are going down

- that route, there is forced integration happening. I have not put my hands up, and my board of governors has not said, “We want to go down the transformation route and become an integrated school.”
2752. We are quite happy to be a controlled primary school but to accept newcomer pupils from, for example, the Polish community. Integration is being forced upon us. Look at the number of newcomer pupils in our system currently. They bring with them their own challenges of other prejudices as well. So, if the DE continues on that route, we will, slowly but surely, have a shared system without going out of our way to achieve it. Our children are educated together in nursery provision and, at the other end, they are educated together in further education. We have lots of special education. We still have our two sectors but, certainly, the controlled sector is becoming more integrated without going out of its way to do so.
2753. **Mr McCamphill:** To come back to Mr Newton, there could be lessons to learn, but that would involve looking at why some grammar schools end up with a different intake than others. There needs to be a study to look at why parents are choosing a grammar school from what could be perceived as the other side. Are they choosing it because it is the grammar school they want to send their children to? Are they choosing it because there was not a place available in the grammar school they wanted to send their children to? Different parents will have different motivations. If it is working at the grammar sector level, at least in some grammar schools, we should ask what is good about what they are doing. What lessons are there? What does not work well? There will be issues within those schools about the respect for diversity and identity. Those issues exist in all schools, regardless of sector. Somebody needs to take a look at that.
2754. The other thing we have to look at is that pupils in grammar schools are travelling greater distances, they have different motivations, and there are non-selective schools in some areas, which serve the local communities and reflect the composition of those communities. If we want to build a more cohesive and diverse society, we need to have shared projects to bring together children who would not otherwise meet across, maybe, five or six miles.
2755. **Mr Newton:** What do you think will be the impact of effective area planning?
2756. **Ms Dunlop:** Effective area planning will happen where the community can decide what it wishes its schools to become. We have had a few contentious cases over the past while where maintained schools have looked to go integrated simply because the village would send their children to that school if it was integrated. They have had a certain amount of input into area planning. Certainly, CCMS has looked at planning, and the controlled sector has started and is some way into it. As I touched on earlier, I believe that the way forward for our communities is for schools to come together and educate children together, and then let the community decide whether to go integrated. That is a personal opinion. We have villages and towns that are further down the line than others. If a community is ready for it, let it happen.
2757. There are CRED programmes that encounter, shall we say — “a hard line” is the wrong thing to say — but there are towns in which we know there is a divide that will never be crossed. The schools there need the CRED programmes and outside organisations brought in. There are some schools that could not link with others at the minute, but they need the education in their own school. Every school is on a different journey. Some are ready, some are not, and some will not be ready for a long time. That is where there is still the necessity for funding for the CRED and CREDIT programmes.
2758. **Mr Newton:** That is not effective area planning.
2759. **Ms Dunlop:** No. As far as area-based planning is concerned, the community is willing. In education, we only see people

- wanting the best for their communities. Transformational leadership is required. For example, at Lisanelly, it took the leaders in that community to sell a programme to their stakeholders. In education, we are always in the business of looking to sell something to the stakeholders and saying, “This is the best route for your children. This is the best thing for your kids.” It is a huge job. It is about the winning of hearts and minds.
2760. **Mr McCamphill:** We in the NASUWT are of the view that there should be more cross-sectoral area planning. There is a perception out there that one sector is moving on with its area planning and maybe not taking it across and asking, “What is happening in the sector neighbouring us, and what do we need to do to plan together?” We would like to see more evidence of joint planning between the controlled and maintained sectors.
2761. **Mr Newton:** Finally, can I ask about your attitude towards a school working with similar schools across socio-economic barriers?
2762. **Mr McCamphill:** Do you mean one school that has lots of socio-economic differences within it?
2763. **Mr Newton:** No. I am thinking of a school from the controlled or maintained sector, or whatever, instead of working across a divide or with a different sector, that wants to work with schools in its area that would be less well off — socio-economically deprived.
2764. **Mr McCamphill:** That in itself is a good thing, but why not take it out to make it shared with the other community as well? That may be difficult in some areas but, if it is possible, I think it should happen.
2765. **Mrs Graham:** We believe that sharing on socio-economic grounds is as important for the good of society in Northern Ireland, and for its development, as any kind of sharing. The way it is at the moment, that type of sharing is not going on, and it is very difficult to get it happening because the grammar school sector is not, by and large, buying into —
2766. **Mr Newton:** It does not have to be a grammar school.
2767. **Mrs Graham:** Yes. I said, “by and large”.
2768. **Ms Dunlop:** I have a wee example that might illustrate this. Early Intervention Lisburn took only the schools across the bottom free-school-meals band in targeting social need. It was across sectors, so we had Catholic maintained schools, controlled schools, special schools and nursery schools. When the work started, the question was asked, “Why can the next schools up in the other free-school-meals bands, even up to well-off schools, not be a part of this?” And they were. It was opened up because we realised that the gap was there and that we have a lot to learn from each other’s schools. We opened it up, but it took two years for somebody to ask the question: why are we not sharing this with the next band? Dare I mention the class system in Northern Ireland; we have middle-class schools and prep schools. They have all been included now, but it took somebody in the leadership of the community to invite them into it. That is where leaders in each community are key to the success of sharing, even in the learning community.
2769. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You talk very much about community reconciliation rather than the educational benefits and outcomes that can and are being realised through sharing.
2770. **Ms Dunlop:** Early Intervention Lisburn is about educational outcomes. It was looking at barriers to learning and transitional programmes between primary and post-primaries to achieve better outcomes for our 16-year-olds. They are being tracked through to see whether the transitional programmes will work. So there are educational outcomes for our kids as well as social outcomes. We would not say that we have touched on any religious or CRED activities, but we have opened

- equality as an educational outcome for the children we serve. So, even in the secondary sector, the post-primaries in Lisburn work like other towns. Through SIF funding, the learning partnerships meet as a committee and then they meet some link person who would come from post-primary to primary, and we organise programmes within our schools.
2771. **Mr Craig:** On that point, Gillian, you know that I know that sector. The simple truth about the whole area learning community is that it is simply based on needs. I think that that applies to shared education unless, as you say, there is some forced method. I notice that, especially in the secondary sector, schools that need to share resources, especially at A level, have done so and have done incredibly well in that. They have crossed barriers we never thought would be crossed. However, there are examples in Lisburn of schools that did not need to do that and therefore did not bother.
2772. **Ms Dunlop:** I agree with you. It happens when the need is there.
2773. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Thank you all for your presentation. A lot of the points have been covered. By way of commentary, I see the issue of definition as critical. What I am hearing is that shared education is not going to be truly shared unless it starts crossing all divisions. James, you pointed out that you cannot address shared education without reflection on academic selection.
2774. **Mr McCamphill:** Yes.
2775. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** How do you do that?
2776. **Mr McCamphill:** I cannot tell you how to get rid of academic selection. We have to work with what we have. A lot of academically successful schools now have a wider intake and are looking at how they will deliver the entitlement framework, so they will be sharing with neighbouring secondary schools. There will be people in some non-selective schools who will want to access subjects that are only available at the grammar school. In the absence of being able to remove academic selection, that is a good thing to do. If academic selection were to change, educational campuses with several schools built in one area will make it easier to make future changes.
2777. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** That leads to another point that I have picked up about barriers. You were very specific about the barrier to shared education being the accountability regime: can you expand on that?
2778. **Mr McCamphill:** Yes. If schools are basically in competition for children all the time, that drive can sometimes stop people wanting to share with a neighbouring school. We have all experienced other teachers in other schools who want to share. However, you also get those teachers who think, "Maybe not". They are worried about being compared with other schools. There was mention of league tables. The Department does not publish league tables, but the information is released on a spreadsheet and the newspapers can sort out schools into rank order. We know that that is what happens. I know that ETI does not do that, but people are always looking over their shoulder at someone.
2779. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Is there is specific issue with the ETI? You referred to it, and so did Diane.
2780. **Mr McCamphill:** It comes down to who is ultimately responsible for the progress of pupils. When ETI looks at a school's exam results, it is going to have to somehow factor in where these children were educated and be able to make a judgement that is reflective of the education that took place.
2781. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Does that come back to Diane's point about the need for more training?
2782. **Ms Nugent:** Yes.
2783. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** You also talked about ETI training.

2784. **Ms Nugent:** Yes. As we mentioned, parents are important too. They may not need training but information sessions and a realisation of what they are looking for. Often, we hear from members — I am sure that NASUWT can say the same — that inspectors come in, and it is perhaps someone from a completely different sector telling you what you should or should not be doing. That leaves teachers very demoralised and wanting to leave the profession.
2785. Interestingly, burnout, depression and things like that are quite commonplace within the teaching profession, more so now than ever. That is due to the additional pressures and workload put upon the role of the teacher. That is why we suggest that a teacher who is going to take on the role of shared education coordinator needs to be given the recognition for that.
2786. I would also like to add that, although we have talked about the grammar sector, a lot of the barriers to learning for our children, particularly in low socio-economic areas, is their self-esteem. One thing that I certainly noted was that, when children from my school engaged with university students, it gave them aspirations of what they could be. For example, working together can help, even should it be a piece of art or something that is communicating who they are and where they want to be. Children from low socio-economic backgrounds and those who have the most learning barriers are going to cost society most in the long term. I also believe that those children — all children — need to become more mentally tough so that they are able to cope with challenges and changes. That gives them a more realistic experience of what life is. When you go into a job, especially for special children or children for whom school is not the most favourite place in the world, they have to see that there are other things out there.
2787. It is useful to remember that teachers are also “teacherpreneurs”. We talk a lot about entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland. If you look at the likes of Richard Branson, there is a man who is an entrepreneur and who everyone can look up to. One thing I tell the kids in my school is, “He was dyslexic, just like you.” That breaks down preconceived notions that children have and raises their self-esteem so that they can have aspirations, and look to the school up the road and say, “I am as good as them”, or, “We can work together. Look at what we have done together.” It is about being able to see the vision for the future as well as looking for accreditation. Accreditation is not for everybody, and perhaps the children who have the most barriers are those who are not going to be coming out with 10 A*s and go to university. However, it is about creating an education that is for all, and I think that that is what shared education does; it creates life chances for all our children.
2788. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** I get that completely but my question was not about barriers to individual children, families or communities; it was about barriers in the system to shared education. James, in fairness, you have answered that.
2789. **Mr McCamphill:** Sorry, my name is Justin.
2790. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** OK. Thank you.
2791. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you for your time this afternoon and for presenting together. I know that it is often not easy to do that, but you did it well. Thank you very much for that, and no doubt we will be in touch again. We have quite a number of other consultations and pieces of legislation that we will look at over the next number of months, so I am sure that our paths will meet again. Thank you very much.

4 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Ms Siobhán Fitzpatrick *Early Years*
 Ms Pauline Walmsley

2792. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):**

I welcome the witnesses, Siobhán Fitzpatrick, the chief executive officer of Early Years; and Pauline Walmsley, its director of knowledge exchange. It is very good to see you. I invite you to make an opening statement.

2793. **Ms Siobhán Fitzpatrick (Early Years):**

Thank you very much. We had an opportunity to listen to the previous discussion on the budget and were absolutely horrified to learn that, without any consultation, £2 million has been cut from the Department of Education's early years fund, which will have an enormous impact on the delivery of early years services. We have just heard about that, and we will analyse the impact, but we feel that it is important to make our point.

2794. We have submitted a paper on shared education that I will speak to, and we welcome any questions. Early Years, the organisation for young children, has been operating in Northern Ireland for 50 years, since 1965. When we started, one of our key objectives was to establish high-quality, inclusive early years services on a cross-community, shared basis. That has been the case from the inception of the organisation.

Thousands of communities across Northern Ireland operate early years services that are shared and that operate on a cross-community basis.

2795. Despite the nature of and commitment to sharing in Early Years, we discovered — I think that it has been an impact of the nature of the society that these services have operated in over the past 50 years — that, to embrace fully an inclusive, anti-sectarian approach to early years care and education, staff in settings, parents attending settings and management committees also needed access to high-quality support, capacity building and training to make the services truly shared. That led us to the introduction of a flagship project that has been used in preschool services, and latterly in primary schools. The Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference programme supports staff, management committees, parents and children to embrace fully an approach to sharing that respects the religious, cultural and ethnic identities of all children and all communities represented in those services. The programme has been subject to a large randomised control trial and a number of qualitative and process evaluations. It has been highlighted as a very successful programme for enabling parents, teachers and children to move away from a situation of mistrust and lack of knowledge of other to implementing with confidence, in both preschool and primary school settings, curricula that really reflect the nature of the society in which children, families, schools and preschools operate.

2796. We welcome the attention being paid to shared education. We were very much involved on the ministerial advisory group and had the opportunity to bring representatives from that group to see services in practice. However, if we are to support fully an agenda of shared education, we feel that it is not

- appropriate just to provide money to schools and ask them to get on with it. We believe that there has to be attention paid to capacity building for preschools and schools. There has to be attention paid to the current preschool and foundation curriculum that really embraces an approach to respecting difference and sharing in the curriculum, not just an expectation that teachers and children will come together to achieve narrow educational outcomes. We believe that, if teachers and those associated with supporting children, such as management committees and ancillary staff, are to embrace fully a shared education agenda, initial and ongoing teacher training also needs to be reformed to ensure that teachers in particular have an opportunity to explore their experience of difference in the past and to be given the skills and strategies necessary to embrace fully a shared approach to education. We know that the work that we are doing in the preschool sector — the informal sector — has not been trammelled by many of the controls that have perhaps affected the formal sector in the past and that that work is viewed internationally in other areas of division as an exemplar of practice. We would welcome an opportunity for the approach that has been developed in preschool to roll up the system as opposed to what often happens, which is that initiatives in the formal sector roll down to preschool. There is an opportunity to create strategies and structures that will allow young children, older children and the youth sector in Northern Ireland to begin to experience a very different educational experience than children here experienced in the past.
2797. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** Thank you very much. I think that your organisation is a beacon for, and an example to, us all. We are very keen to push that.
2798. The Bill that is coming in focuses mainly on the definition, and I wonder whether you have any comments on how it seems to be defining “shared education” as controlled and maintained, socio-economic and political. Do you have any comments on that?
2799. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** We welcome an all-embracing approach to sharing, but it is critically important that it does not ignore the particular issue that divides us, which is religious and class divisions in Northern Ireland, especially given our context. That must be recognised as being particularly important. We welcome an all-embracing approach that allows schools and preschools from differing sectors to have an opportunity to begin to create shared experiences. We have had a very good example in rural County Fermanagh through the Fermanagh Trust and the shared education programme funded by the International Fund for Ireland. There, we have been able to develop a truly embracing approach to sharing in a rural context. That embraced a variety of forms of education provider, but there was a strong focus on ensuring that the key issues of identity and religion were fully embraced.
2800. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** You are happy with people being specified, but it may make them have to be put into boxes where they are not in boxes. I like and very much take on board the all-embracing aspect, but it is a concern that runs through the Committee.
2801. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Yes.
2802. **Mr Newton:** I thank you for coming and for your obvious enthusiasm, commitment and passion. I agree with the Chair that, in many ways, you have been a beacon.
2803. I know that you will be well used to measuring the outcome, given all your projects and history, and so on. I am struggling with something at the minute. If you were making proposals to DE on shared education, how would you measure the outcomes — I was going to say “value for money”, but it is a bit wider than that — and whether shared education is delivering for our folk?

2804. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** That is a very important question. Given the austere financial environment, it is even more important, but it is also very important in policy terms. From the very beginning of our work on developing the Respecting Difference programme for young children, that very issue was at the core of what we were doing right. Therefore, we began by thinking about the outcomes that we wanted to improve, and we developed those outcomes from Professor Paul Connolly's evidence base, which showed that children in Northern Ireland were, importantly, developing very strong and positive senses of identity but also very negative attitudes to others whom they perceived to be different, mainly on religious grounds but also on grounds of race, ethnicity, physical disability — the whole range of differences. That led us to thinking about the types of outcomes. We then set an outcomes framework that we would work to, through which we aimed to achieve a situation in which all children in Northern Ireland, regardless of their background, could grow up and become inclusive in inclusive communities. We measured their confidence in their own identity and also their understanding, respect for others, willingness to engage with others, understanding and respect for other traditions and cultures, and the removal of fear of others.
2805. We also set indicators and outcomes for teachers and parents. Before we commenced our work, the baseline analysis indicated that, in the main, teachers here had neither the confidence nor the inputs through their initial and ongoing professional development to address issues of difference and sharing adequately. It was very important for us to be able to measure the degree of competence and confidence in teachers. Then, for parents, it was also very important that there were opportunities to measure their confidence and their willingness to be engaged in activities for sharing and also to support their own young children. Therefore, setting an agreed outcome framework is critical for the policy.
2806. **Mr Newton:** Yesterday, the Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU) made the point about the need for investment in teachers to be delivered. Perhaps I took the UTU up wrong, but it is less clear how you get parents to become involved. If teachers are involved and parents are not, or vice versa, how do you encourage teachers and parents to work together? What strategy is needed?
2807. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** That is a critical factor. We know from evidence and research that 80% of what children know and understand does not happen in the school; rather, it happens in the family. Creating a real strategy and partnership between schools and families is critical. We have found that a first step is to support the board of management to develop a strategy for parental engagement around that type of work. The programme that we have developed has, as an intricate part of the service design, a number of parent workshops over the year. If it is a single-identity school, the workshops happen with parents first in their own identity grouping, and, if it is a shared environment, they happen on a shared basis. It is critical that identical support to what is happening in the classroom be given to parents to support the work in the home environment. We have found that to be a very successful strategy. Indeed, we have found that parents very much want the opportunity to have a different experience for themselves and their children from the one that they had.
2808. **Ms Pauline Walmsley (Early Years):** What has also been important, particularly in interface areas where we have been working, is the whole idea of clustering schools, preschools and Sure Starts so that you are really working with children and their families from age two to age eight; so that, throughout that period, the whole involvement and engagement of parents is deepening; and so that their understanding and confidence around the issue and their willingness to address it is really evolving. That has proved to be very positive.

2809. **Mr Newton:** Give me just one example of how the schools' management teams have engaged with parents that had a successful outcome.
2810. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Schools approach us. The County Fermanagh example is a good example of sharing. The management boards in primary schools in County Fermanagh agreed that they wanted to embrace that type of approach.
2811. The first step is that management boards have an opportunity for training and reflection and the development of a shared policy in the school. The management committees, some of whose members are parents, then engage with the parent workshops. The first element of the workshops is to provide parents with an opportunity to reflect on their experience of living in a divided society and of being educated separately and what that has meant for them.
2812. There is then an introduction to what the Respecting Difference curriculum will look like for their children. That is used as a way of embracing a whole-school approach to sharing around other curricular content areas. Activities and other events engage parents outside the school environment. As Pauline said, it is a whole-community-based approach to shared education.
2813. **Ms Walmsley:** On a shared basis.
2814. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome, Siobhán and Pauline. You put it very well when you said that developing shared education is not a matter of giving money to schools and letting them get on with it but a matter of capacity building. Can you tell me a wee bit more about how you built capacity in your organisation for sharing education?
2815. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Absolutely, Seán. That is a critical point. Teachers and preschool teachers are very willing, but they need the support and the strategies. We started by developing training for teachers so that they can implement the curriculum in preschool, primary school or further up the system.
2816. We have also developed a range of culturally and contextually appropriate resources that support teachers in delivering a new curriculum. You may not be surprised to hear this, but, when we started the work, there was very little in curriculum resources that reflected the reality of a Northern Ireland context. There were lots of resources about ethnic minorities from other environments but not anything that reflected the tensions in Northern Ireland's divided past. We firmly believe that the preschool and primary-school curriculum needs changing to reflect that greater focus on sharing.
2817. We know from our practice and from international evidence that as much focus and support for teachers needs to be centred on the emotional development of children. There is the issue of respect for their own identity, understanding that and then a growing of the emotional intelligence as well as the knowledge intelligence around understanding and respect for other identities and cultures.
2818. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** I need to nip out for 15 minutes. Apologies.
- (The Acting Chairperson
[Mr McCausland] in the Chair)*
2819. **Mr Lunn:** You do know that it is unpaid, Nelson.
2820. **Mr Craig:** We went for the oldest. *[Laughter.]*
2821. **Mr Lunn:** Siobhán, you are welcome. The Deputy Chair already said this, but I admire the work that you do, and long may you do it.
2822. You are heavily into understanding, respect, identity and the Respecting Difference programme. That is grand. Our inquiry is about shared and integrated education. I do not think that the word "integrated" has been mentioned yet this morning. Do you find it necessary to do much work with integrated schools? Do you not think that an integrated school is a perfect

- example of the type of instruction that you would like to see in our schools?
2823. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Apologies for not using “integrated”. We would use “integrated” for the integrated sector, because we believe that everything that we do in our organisation and in our sector is fully integrated. It is interesting that, when we began to be more proactive in this type of work — creating shared and inclusive spaces — we assumed that a lot of it would have been carried out by the integrated education organisation, but it actually came to us for some of the training that we have since developed, so we have a very positive relationship with the integrated sector. Yes, we would love to see schools fully integrated in the broadest sense, but I suppose that we have had to deal with the reality of the Northern Ireland situation. Our latest estimate was that only 5% of children are formally educated in the integrated sector. We had to make sure that our approaches were reflective of where children were in the informal preschool environment and where they would be when they entered the formal system.
2824. **Mr Lunn:** It is actually 7%, but we will not —
2825. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** It is 7% now.
2826. **Mr Lunn:** It is slightly over 7%.
2827. Fair enough. When the Department talks to us about the shared education programme, its emphasis is unashamedly on educational attainment. If you forget about trying to define it, shared education was going on long before the term “shared education” was ever invented. It has been a necessity and an invaluable thing down the years in a quiet way, and Fermanagh is perhaps the best example that we have of it. I do not think that there is any conflict between what you are trying to do and what the Department is trying to do, but there is a different emphasis.
2828. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** I worry that the Department will have a focus on narrow cognitive educational gains, when we know that, especially in the context of a divided society, children and young people also have to have outcomes that reflect their ability to be citizens in an inclusive society. Unfortunately, we know from all the evidence, and there is increasing evidence of this, that young people are growing up with prejudicial attitudes formed when they are between three and six. If only the educational focus on outcomes is addressed, with the other issues — inclusion, respect and citizenship — not being addressed, we will continue to have some of the problems that we have.
2829. **Mr Lunn:** Those aspects are more likely to be addressed in a school in which there are pupils from all sides of the community. I am deliberately not saying “in an integrated school”, but they are more likely to be addressed in a mixed or amalgamated school. It perhaps happens more at secondary level. Obviously, the grammar schools are quite well mixed and integrated these days.
2830. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** One would assume that, but unless there are intentional strategies around the issue and a move away from neutralising the environment to recognising, celebrating and respecting the environments that children come from —
2831. **Mr Lunn:** I do not think that you are saying that integrated schools neutralise the environment.
2832. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** No.
2833. **Mr Lunn:** They confront the situation head-on.
2834. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** In other environments, it can be ignored.
2835. **Mr Lunn:** OK. Thank you.
2836. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** That was an interesting exchange from the oldest member of the Committee. I just thought that I would say that since he had a go at me.
2837. **Mr Lunn:** I have not had a go at you yet.
2838. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** I want to pick up on the issue. In paragraph 3.2.7 of your

submission, there is an important statement, which is:

"It is vital therefore that children's identity is validated in the school or pre-school setting."

2839. I agree with that absolutely. You have set out already this morning the important role that that plays. In the next paragraph, you talk about the dangers and pitfalls around colour blindness and tokenism. What are the examples of good practice or of how the children's identity can and should be validated in the school?

2840. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** I will give you a couple of examples. We have taken a very intentional integrated approach to the development of what we are doing. Using curriculum resources, particularly with young children and primary-school children, we have persona dolls, which have been developed by the local context. Therefore, there are personas representing the Protestant loyalist community, the Catholic nationalist community, Traveller children, children with disabilities and ethnic minority children. That is one example. We are helping children from across the various identities to identify with those personas and understand and develop respect for the other personas.

2841. We have also taken a very intentional and sensitive approach to many of the cultural and sporting symbols that divide us in Northern Ireland. When we started our work, we were really surprised that there were very few resources for children in classrooms celebrating the Orange Twelfth of July march, St Patrick's Day, Gaelic games or other games, Irish dancing or Scottish dancing. Therefore, we have found that introducing all those traditions in a developmentally appropriate way has been very important to growing, and continuing to grow, a confidence in one's own identity and beliefs, while, at the same time, growing a confidence of and respect for others. The outworkings and implementation of that in many of our settings have been parents being able to celebrate other traditional events with children and families from different communities in a

community context. We feel that that is very positive.

2842. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** I was interested in what you said at one point about very young children developing a strong sense of identity. What was in my mind then was how and where you learn about that identity can shape the child's appreciation of the identity. Therefore, to be Irish, British or whatever will be influenced by how that is transmitted, because children from different backgrounds and with different experiences will have different understandings of each. Does that suggest that it is important that these things be explored in schools and in early years provision so that children get an authentic, accurate, comprehensive experience and understanding of what the identity is and so that it is not very sharp-edged or abrasive?

2843. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Absolutely. We began this work in 2001, after the Good Friday Agreement, when a lot of people were thinking that the generation of children aged three to six would not have been affected by the past. However, when we looked at the murals, flags etc and heard the voices of the adults, parents and others whom those young children are constantly influenced by, it is no wonder that positive identity is skewed one way or the other. This leads, unfortunately, to negative attitudes and beliefs about others. For us, this is extremely important.

2844. We have also found that adults, teachers and parents may have an emotional dislike or perception of the other that, when examined, was often based on a total lack of understanding. As part of some of the experiential elements of the training, some teachers and parents were saying, "We don't like the green Hibernian marches", but they did not understand what those were about, and vice versa for the 12 July marches. There needs to be a real approach to deconstructing history, culture and identity before you can reconstruct it in a very positive way. That is critical.

2845. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** In that area, do the teachers whom you come across and talk to about this come with their own perceptions about the other culture and maybe even about the culture of the community from whom they come?
2846. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Absolutely. I think we are all products of our past and our history. One of the first things we do is help teachers to explore in a very experiential, positive and safe way their understanding of the other. It is very interesting when you get a teacher to write 10 very positive things about a Traveller family. When they see what that looks like, it begins to help them to reflect on where they got their beliefs. It is the same if they write 10 positive things about the Catholic community. This is the starting point for us. We have found that teachers want support to develop strategies and curriculums to create shared environments.
2847. **Mr Newton:** I think that Trevor covered my question, Chair, so I will forgo it.
2848. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** Is everyone content? Thank you very much indeed, Siobhán and Pauline.
2849. **Ms Fitzpatrick:** Thank you very much.
2850. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** We appreciate your presentation.

4 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr David Guilfoyle OBE *Youth Council for*
 Ms Norma Rea *Northern Ireland*
 Ms Joanne Stainsby

2851. **The Acting Chairperson (Mr McCausland):** I welcome to the meeting David Guilfoyle, the chief executive; Norma Rea, the development officer who deals with equality principles; and Joanne Stainsby, the project officer. I invite the representatives from the Youth Council to make a presentation.

2852. **Mr David Guilfoyle OBE (Youth Council for Northern Ireland):** Thank you, Chair. On behalf of the Youth Council, I welcome the opportunity to speak to the Committee today. You have already heard the introduction of my two colleagues, so I will refrain from repeating that.

2853. I am confident that we will be the only organisation presenting to the Committee whose focus is on the Northern Ireland Youth Service. We believe it is important that, when we comment on shared and integrated education, we do so through a Youth Service lens. This will be the key focus of our input today. The Youth Service is often a forgotten member of the education sector family, yet it engages on a regular basis with 150,000 young people annually. It is also recognised — indeed, the Minister has recognised this — that 70% of a young person's learning takes place outside the school, and it is

therefore evident that the Youth Service is the key player in impacting that 70%.

2854. We all believe that youth work is a very important part of education. Indeed, the Minister flagged this up in his key policy document 'Priorities for Youth'. He said:

"Youth work has an important contribution to make to the development of young people within the context of the education service".

2855. He also said that it contributed to educational and lifelong learning outcomes. Indeed, in the 'Priorities for Youth' document, he goes on to say that we have a very important role to play in building a new and shared society. He also said that we equip young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours that they need, and that those, in turn, work towards addressing the legacy of conflict and moving towards a shared and inclusive society.

(The Deputy Chairperson [Mr Kinahan] in the Chair)

2856. I know that you have heard a little bit about us this morning, but the Youth Council was established in 1990 with statutory functions including advising Departments on the development of the Youth Service and encouraging and developing community relations work. For a number of years, we have been involved in coordinating a wide range of initiatives on behalf of the sector, and, through many of those, the sector has been recognised for its contribution to a shared and peaceful society.

2857. I know that you are also aware that the Youth Council provides core funding to around 40 regional voluntary youth organisations. These provide crucial support to front-line youth work and, indeed, work with 112,000 young people. In fact, that is about 75% of the total young people involved in youth groups. However, it would be pertinent for me to point out that the majority of

- Youth Council staff are not involved in the administration of such funding. They are involved in discharging the Youth Council's statutory responsibilities in areas such as training, international North/South work and community relations.
2858. Since we submitted our initial response to the Committee, there have been four very significant developments that we want to flag up today. The first was the draft policy on shared education. The second was the draft Shared Education Bill. The third was the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) evaluation of the community relations, equality and diversity (CRED) policy in schools and youth organisations. Finally, the Minister has now submitted in his draft budget to end all CRED funding. Our presentation today will concentrate on these.
2859. I want to touch on the four items very briefly, Chair. First, the policy on shared education evolved from the ministerial advisory group and was written at a time when we all envisaged an Education and Skills Authority being formed that would have subsumed Youth Council functions. The new Education Authority is obviously a new animal, so we wait to see how the Youth Council's current functions will be taken on board. There is also a need for the key actions on shared education to be developed in consultation with our sector, and we believe that we have a major role to play in assisting our sector to comment on those.
2860. The second point is the issue of the Shared Education Bill. We recognise the inclusion of youth work in the Bill and the recognition of the role that youth work can play in encouraging shared education. We note that we are cited as the Youth Council in the Bill, with the power that we may encourage and facilitate shared education, but we contrast that with our existing statutory functions, which actually require us to address the issue of community relations work in society. In actual fact, our current statutory functions are not weaker than that which is actually included in the draft Bill.
2861. Thirdly, I want to touch on the Education and Training Inspectorate. Its policy review came out last week, which was very timely because it noted, amongst other things, that voluntary youth organisations need support to expand and embed CRED through the dissemination of good practice events, training and increased access for young people to programmes. Those young people react very favourably to the safe places that these organisations were able to provide for them. The report also went on to commend the Youth Council setting up the CRED reference group, comprising organisations that we fund who support us in these roles. It went on to commend the Youth Council in providing appropriate support and guidance to challenge voluntary youth organisations to develop CRED and embed CRED in their own organisations. I will step aside briefly to say that, in our initial response, we noted that shared education must not diminish the valuable role and place of CRED. In fact, shared education is something we see living within the CRED umbrella.
2862. The fourth point is on the announcement that the Minister made before Christmas to remove the entire CRED budget, followed by his announcement for funding shared education. We believe that the removal of the CRED budget poses a very major threat to youth work moving forward. In summary, we will attempt to highlight several key points this morning. First, there needs to be clarity on the role and place of the Youth Service and, indeed, the future role of the Youth Council in all these matters. Secondly, to remove the CRED budget in light of shared education is to seriously erode the valuable contribution that youth work has to make in this area and will jeopardise the legacy of the valuable work supported by CRED over the last few years.
2863. Thank you, Chair. I will now hand over to my colleague Norma Rea.
2864. **Ms Norma Rea (Youth Council for Northern Ireland):** I thank everyone for the opportunity to speak today. I will take a moment to look over the

- proposed policy from a youth work lens. It is good that it is out before we came here today, and we feel that we have very important points to make about youth work in general in terms of that policy.
2865. The Youth Council very much welcomes the Minister's reference in his foreword to the long history of community relations work in youth work organisations. However, although he goes on to make specific reference to teachers benefiting from improved professional development, senior leaders and governors working more closely together and collaboration becoming a vehicle for school improvement, he makes no reference to a vision for youth work. The introduction to the shared education policy states that it is intended that all children and young people should have an opportunity to be involved, and it notes that the policy is aimed at early years, schools and non-formal education environments such as youth work. We very much welcome that clarity.
2866. However, the policy goes on to state that, to reflect the full educational commitment of DE, within available funding, schools and other educational environments will receive resources, acknowledgement, support and encouragement to start or continue to develop high-quality shared education opportunities for their pupils. This is an example of the confusing nature of the policy. If it is about the full educational commitment of DE, references to "pupils" throughout the policy must be reviewed to ensure that they are not being applied at the exclusion of the work of other educational environments. In many cases, including the example above, these need to be replaced with the term "children and young people".
2867. We very much welcome the vision for the shared education policy for vibrant, self-improving shared education partnerships and, in particular, the reference to promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity and respect for diversity and community cohesion. We believe strongly that this vision is strengthened when it is placed within the existing Department of Education CRED policy, and we very much endorse the Department of Education position that was presented here on 21 January that shared education forms part of the CRED policy. The CRED policy is broader. It goes beyond a focus on shared education partnerships to mandate all schools and youth organisations to contribute to improving relations between communities. It states that this is about educating children and young people to develop self-respect, respect for others, promote equality, work to eliminate discrimination and by providing formal and non-formal educational opportunities for them to build relationships with those from different backgrounds and traditions.
2868. When applied correctly, it does and should deliver whole organisational approaches to this challenging task. As Alan Smith recently noted, one of the concerns of shared education is that the Department's own plan suggests that, even after four years, only 65% of schools will actually be eligible to receive funding under shared education.
2869. Turning back to the shared education policy; its background makes no reference to the fundamental role played by youth work in this area since the 1980s. This is despite the Department's review of community relations, which was completed between 2009 and 2010, having found that work already completed in the youth sector is further ahead than that available for the teaching profession and the contribution of Youth Service having been recognised in the resulting CRED policy. Specifically, the CRED policy made reference to the work of the joined in equity, diversity and interdependence (JEDI) initiative. I should state that that was a strategic initiative funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), which brought together the lead voluntary and statutory youth work agencies across the Youth Service to develop coherent approaches to practice, training and policies in this field. The work resulting from it also

- informed the CRED training, which I will refer to later.
2870. As I said, the policy made reference to the work of the JEDI initiative, stating that, within the Youth Service, the JEDI initiative has developed a range of training programmes, support resources and practice models. That work has been recognised as good practice and, in particular, its ability to address the needs of those more marginalised young people. It is a model that could usefully be built upon. That was stated four years ago.
2871. The contribution of the Youth Service to the field has been further endorsed by the recent publication of the Education and Training Inspectorate's evaluation of CRED. David has already made reference to its recommendation on the need to expand and embed CRED, its endorsement of the safe space that youth organisations provide for young people to develop confidence around issues of diversity and inclusion and the appropriate support and challenge role that YCNI provides in the development of that practice. The ETI evaluation report went further than that. It noted that children and young people respond well to strategies that welcome and celebrate their uniqueness and diversity in youth organisations. In the most effective practice, children and young people demonstrate high levels of self-respect and respect for others. It also notes that there are too many missed opportunities for schools and youth organisations to work together to promote better learning for young people.
2872. Of the schools and youth organisations currently engaged in CRED work, the ETI report noted that most demonstrated effective CRED practice in helping children and young people build relationships with others from different backgrounds and traditions. Yet the shared education policy only briefly mentions the arrival of the Department of Education's CRED policy in 2011 and makes no consideration of the work that it has brought forward across the educational settings. That significant oversight puts existing models of good practice at risk, with the potential to damage work, which has been building up a commitment to the agenda — relationship building and sharing — across voluntary sector youth groups and the local communities in which they operate.
2873. The background to the shared education policy notes concerns as to whether the educational and social needs of young people are being met, and it makes reference to a number of groups, including those living with disabilities and those who may identify as GLBT. As part of our commitment to the CRED agenda, Youth Council funds the hub, which is a consortium arrangement that brings together all the disability focused youth organisations across the spectrum of disability, to promote the inclusion of young people with disabilities across Youth Service. Work of this nature needs to be recognised in the shared education policy and linked to a clear vision on how it will be taken alongside actions for shared education, either as part of the shared education policy or under the CRED policy.
2874. There are a number of oversights in the policy. The case for shared education makes reference to a body of research regarding the effectiveness of school collaboration but makes no attempt to consider the case for collaboration across Youth Service groups or units. The section outlining the current and future context of shared education makes no reference to the Department of Education's CRED policy, the Department's policy for youth document or the Youth Service curriculum. The policy section does note that shared education involves schools and other education providers, which we welcome, and goes on to record an expectation that it will be organised and delivered to promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion for children at school and in less formal education, which, again, Youth Council welcomes. However, it makes no attempt to elaborate on how the Department will take account of the particular needs of Youth Service.

2875. There is reference to a wide range and variety of opportunities for shared education, including adequate training for teachers, support staff and youth workers, yet there are no key actions to support funding for youth worker training. With the Minister's intention to remove the CRED budget, that matter is critical. At this point, it is important to note that the voluntary youth sector makes up over 90% of our youth service. Annually, over 22,000 volunteers contribute to that work. The young people who participate in those groups, the volunteers who support them and the communities they represent all have a role to play in delivering success in the shared education and related T:BUC agendas.
2876. Linked to that point, the CRED reference group has recently developed comprehensive CRED training for those working with young people. That is accredited training available under the qualifications and credit framework, if you are familiar with that. That training has much to offer those wishing to take forward both the shared education and the summer camps initiatives within T:BUC. It is about supporting those to engage young people in that work. Again, the removal of the CRED budget puts that at serious risk.
2877. The core principles for the delivery of shared education, the policy aim and the objectives need to be amended to be inclusive of Youth Service and the bodies that support its work. That is related to David's earlier point on how recommendations for ESA and the ministerial advisory group's research, which informed the policy, do not automatically read across to the Education Authority. That context needs to be reflected and considered within the policy.
2878. The intended outcomes for the shared education policy include increased opportunity for young people to learn in a shared environment, both formal and non-formal, and increasing the number of children and young people participating in high-quality shared education programmes. That outcome will be strengthened when placed within the CRED policy. However, that further highlights David's earlier recommendations on the need for clarity on the role of Youth Service within shared education, for key actions to be developed for shared education — in consultation with the representative bodies, including YCNI — that reflect the specific needs of youth work, and for shared education's relationship with the CRED policy to be clearly stated.
2879. The current proposal to remove the CRED budget will seriously marginalise the capacity of voluntary sector youth work organisations to deliver the shared education outcome within existing and very stretched budgets. I want to take a moment to specifically outline the work that will be lost as a result of the CRED budget being removed for regional voluntary youth organisations. It was a budget of £152,000. For example, during 2012-13, it impacted on up to 20 organisations. You have regional organisations, which then impact on local organisations, the volunteers within them and the young people. Over 500 young people and volunteers were supported to a level where they would be taking forward CRED work in their own local setting, so we are not just talking about young people engaging in CRED based-activities. It is capacity-building and the need to build that capacity. The multiplier impact of that is difficult to calculate, but if those young people and volunteers influence just five others, the investment costs about £60 per person.
2880. The following year, 2012-13, we had two streams; strategic investment in organisations working in partnership and looking at whole-organisational approaches to embedding that work, and then organisations themselves might pick up on extra activity that they would need to further embed that work within their organisation. The following year, one of those organisations picked up on short-term funding of £2,500 and developed learning opportunities on the CRED themes, which then impacted in that year — they will still exist within

- that organisation — on 360 young people and 185 volunteers.
2881. In addition, the CRED budget has contributed to approximately eight staff members — not full-time posts — who play a crucial support role across the funded and support groups. That is what we regard as a skeleton infrastructure of skills and expertise across voluntary, church, rural, community and the uniform-based youth work settings, but it provides an essential mechanism to support and enhance that work and take it forward to the volunteers. Significant investment is expected to take forward the shared education agenda across schools. However, there is no alternative investment proposed for youth services.
2882. My colleague Joanne will give you a flavour of feedback from young people and volunteers who took part in some of that work.
2883. **Ms Joanne Stainsby (Youth Council for Northern Ireland):** I also extend my thanks to Committee members for the invitation to be here. I would like to use the opportunity to give you a flavour of the impact that the CRED funding distributed by YCNI has had on youth organisations, volunteers and young people, and share with you some of what they said.
2884. CRED funding issued by YCNI is supporting a number of strategic partnership arrangements to undertake agreed programmes of work to enhance the capacity of youth work activities across four settings — uniformed, rural, Church and community/voluntary — to help deepen the experience for young people and improve understanding of the CRED policy and its themes across the wider youth work sector. The uniformed CRED partnership includes six organisations: the Boys' Brigade, Catholic Guides of Ireland, the Girls' Brigade, Girlguiding Ulster, the Scout Association and Scouting Ireland. The uniformed sector in Northern Ireland works with in excess of 55,000 young people and 12,000 volunteers.
2885. At a CRED sharing event in December 2014, a uniformed consortium member said that
- "this investment in CRED and developing these collaborative approaches resulted in the six organisations in this partnership embarking on a journey together that would not have happened without that investment."*
2886. Another uniformed organisation stated that
- "the investment was relatively small per organisation but the impact vast."*
2887. The learning from the uniformed sector partnership has resulted in a range of new training being developed for volunteers and young people across all the organisations. It is being embedded into the existing voluntary sector Youth Service infrastructure. However, as the partnership reiterated,
- "this work is still in its infancy".*
2888. Across the four partnerships and other YCNI CRED projects, the inclusion of marginalised young people is at the core of the work. This includes work to promote the inclusion of young people with disabilities, young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, and other section-75 groups, further addressing educational underachievement and contributing to raising educational standards for all.
2889. This work continues to engage young people who often have limited opportunities to engage with or meet others from communities outside their own. One young person who recently engaged with a CRED project for the first time said:
- "I was the victim of a sectarian attack not so long ago. After that happening, it would be very easy for me to feel bitter, angry, hateful. Community relations, however, is important to me and to my community. We need opportunities to engage across the divide."*
2890. Another young person said:
- "In the beginning, there were some issues to do with sectarianism within the group. We all come from areas where sectarianism is a problem. It's easy to get caught up in all*

of that. However, this project is giving us the chance to talk and we will continue to talk some more and this has really helped me to understand things a bit more."

2891. A young person from the uniformed partnership shared that an important learning outcome for them has been visiting the peace lines in Belfast:

"I have never visited them before but regularly I have heard about them. This was a great opportunity to learn about why they are there in the first place and to gain more insight from a range of different perspectives about the country that we are living in now."

2892. This work, however, supports young people not only to participate in CRED projects but to take on leadership roles and share their learning with others, for example by co-facilitating discussions with peers. In November 2014, one young person reflected on their feelings about being a peer leader and discussing CRED themes with other young people:

"At the start of the CRED project I felt slightly uneasy about being a peer leader because I wasn't sure how others would react."

2893. Another young person added to this, however:

"I want to do youth work. I want to help other young people to discuss cross-community and diversity issues. I want to represent my community in a way that no one has seen before so that, in time, people will look at me and see me as someone they are proud of. I want to provide something for young people coming behind me that I didn't have when I was growing up."

2894. As a youth worker recently expressed:

"If we are asking our young people to be brave and to lead the way, it is important that we get behind them and adequately support and resource them to do so, otherwise what message are we sending out?"

2895. YCNI staff have also been involved in developing a number of practical training resources that have involved collaborating and sharing with other sectors, for example, providing space for teachers and youth workers or for outdoors instructors and youth workers to come together to explore

CRED themes. The inCREDible Drama Toolkit training is one such example. A teacher who participated in this training concluded:

"I have been given many new ideas and fresh strategies to help me to explore citizenship themes with young people in the classroom."

2896. Another stated:

"The training has highlighted the potential of using these tools and techniques to raise awareness and look at social issues relevant to the community in my classroom. Often in schools we are focused on the end product. However, this training has reminded me of the importance of the process or the journey that a young person is on and the links that this can have with other areas."

2897. At the CRED sharing event in December, youth organisations wanted to reiterate that:

"Without this seed funding we are now concerned about what will happen to this work and how it will impact on our ability to deliver, thus decreasing the educational opportunities for many young people from a diverse range of communities, backgrounds and circumstances."

2898. The Youth Council echoes this concern.

2899. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):**

Thank you very much. I apologise for not being here at the beginning. Thank you, Nelson, for chairing the meeting in my absence. None of us doubt the massive work that you do and its strength. When the Priorities for Youth consultation was presented to the Committee 18 months ago, we suddenly realised the sheer scale of what you are influencing. Having heard about the importance of CRED, I agree with that, and as a Committee we have to find a way to make sure that we do not lose what was learned or, on the other side, to try to help you. I very much take those points on board.

2900. We are focusing on the Bill here, and the debates will all be about the definitions. You mentioned celebrating uniqueness and differences, and I have always been intrigued by the balance between teaching someone who they are and making sure that they are proud of it and then respecting someone else for

- the same. It is about balancing that against blurring the passion that can go with your identity. When we get to the definition, my concern is that, by defining maintained and controlled or socio-economic or political differences, we will force people into having to choose which they are. I wonder how you feel about that. It is that fine balance in the middle.
2901. **Ms Rea:** I completely agree; it is a very difficult one. For me, that is where, in my experience, I would go back to the debates that we were part of in the development of the CRED policy, which was about maintaining that tension between your uniqueness and your identity and its place in a diverse society and respect for others if you are to receive respect for that identity too. That underpins the learning and training with which we support teachers and youth workers primarily to deliver on and the messages for that. I think that if you start to get into defining who is in and who is not, as opposed to focusing on the outcomes, that becomes confusing, because the outcomes, for me, are around respect for each other. You are then not about excluding people, and, if this is also relating back to T:BUC, reconciliation agendas and peace-building agendas must be there, too. Focusing on the outcome can sometimes help to keep the path clear.
2902. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** Do you think that we should have a slightly broader definition rather than three tighter definitions?
2903. **Ms Rea:** I think that the emphasis needs to be on the outcome. I do think that, in some way, the CRED policy reflects that. It is an aim that the outcome is there. Then, you are not excluding groups with regard to who is in to achieve that outcome, but it is about demonstrating that the work will achieve that outcome.
2904. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** Something that I have very much got from you today, other than obviously your passion in what you do, is that CRED really is what should be leading shared education and therefore all the work that you have done. I know that one group that we have been talking to felt that the integrated sector should also be heavily involved because it has learnt so much. Maybe what we should take forward is what has been learnt from both.
2905. **Ms Rea:** I very much think that if the Department of Education's commitment to this agenda becomes only shared education as it sits at the moment, it is very narrow. That is quite risky for the outcomes that it should really be contributing towards. That is not to take away from the proposals necessarily, but, yes, you cannot do this in isolation.
2906. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks for your presentation. If I had questions, you have really answered them. That was quite a good, lengthy presentation. I admire what you do. I suppose that I say that to all the groups, but I really do mean it in your case.
2907. I am interested in what you were saying about the uniformed organisations that you work with. That wee badge is historical, but [*Inaudible.*] the Boys' Brigade. Where do you stand on what appears to be a slight conflict between the Department and various organisations about where the emphasis should be on shared education? The Department makes the point that it is basically about educational outcomes. I gather from you that you would see the other types of outcomes as being at least equally or perhaps more important.
2908. **Mr Guilfoyle:** In the Youth Service, we are very much aware that what the Department funds must be framed within educational outcomes. Indeed, we are very proud of the fact that the Youth Service is part of the youth education family. What we do is complementary to what happens in school. Indeed, a number of us up here have direct or indirect links with schools. I used to be a teacher myself, so I appreciate what happens in the classroom. I also recognise that there are things that happen outside the classroom that cannot happen in the classroom, so we can work together. We do see what

we do as being about educational outcomes. What we have done recently through a project that involves our colleagues in both the statutory and voluntary sectors is to look at how we can map youth work outcomes across to educational outcomes. We feel that it is a very easy fit. In fact, youth work outcomes certainly help educational outcomes for young people. We have recently come up with a framework for this. We have identified six areas of capabilities, such as enhanced personal capabilities, improved health and well-being, developing thinking skills, work and life skills, developing positive relationships, increased participation and active citizenship. Those are all relevant to the classroom. They are also relevant to the Youth Service. Indeed, in the Youth Service, we have the opportunities to perhaps do things that, as I say, you cannot do in the classroom. You can teach citizenship, but the Youth Service can practise active citizenship. We can provide opportunities for young people to work with others from diverse backgrounds in voluntary settings of their choice. Certainly, it seems to us that there is no contradiction or conflict here. We are in educational outcomes. Youth work outcomes map with that. With the work that we do in the CRED, we actually specialise in some aspects.

2909. **Mr Lunn:** You directly or indirectly finance youth club activity. Is that mostly cross-community?

2910. **Mr Guilfoyle:** I was personally involved with youth work as a volunteer away back in the '70s. Going back over the last number of decades, the Youth Service has always sought to work with young people of all communities. Certainly, we have become more sophisticated with that as the years have gone on. The Youth Service is something that is based in the community, and that allows us to make good links with all sections of the community. It is very challenging. Certainly, we have had to make sure that we train people and equip them to be able to cope with that. We, as the Youth Council, do not fund local groups

on the ground, but, very importantly, as I think that you have already heard this morning, we fund 40 regional voluntary youth organisations whose support for those local groups is crucial. The Boys' Brigade, and I say this as a former member and officer in it, relies very much on its headquarter body, which recently had an inspection carried out by the inspectorate. I do not think that I have read the output yet, but there is no doubt that it was very positive. Certainly, the BB would be very supportive of all its companies across Northern Ireland, ensuring that not just the badge work but NCO training and other work is carried out to the highest standards. If that support was not there, the work on the ground would suffer and the young people's educational outcomes would suffer in turn.

2911. **Ms Rea:** It is also fair to say that the Youth Service, because it is rooted in the community, will be a reflection of the community that we have, so it will be prone, in some areas, to be more representative of one community than the other. That is why we are very proud of the community relations work that has been carried out in that. In those settings, you also have parents who volunteer, so you need to bring the community with you and wider representative organisations.

2912. **Mr Lunn:** Which BB company were you in?

2913. **Mr Guilfoyle:** I was in the 22nd Woodvale.

2914. **Mr Lunn:** I was in the 73rd Finaghy.

2915. **Mr Guilfoyle:** I am sure that we *[Inaudible.]* drill anyway.

2916. **Mr Lunn:** We are talking military stuff here. *[Laughter.]*

2917. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** Robin.

2918. **Mr Newton:** I am content, Chair.

2919. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** I think that the issue around the definition is critical. You have answered that. In your paper, you talked about almost a sense of

- support for an arm's-length body around peace-building. Could you maybe elaborate on that?
2920. **Ms Rea:** I think that that was looking at the wider T:BUC agenda coming down through government and feeling that there would still be a place for challenge back to coordination for that work, but also, then, where does the challenge role come back to government? That was really what we were thinking around: where do we all have that opportunity for a critical friend to feed back and respond to decisions?
2921. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** I suppose that the challenge in that would be almost an additional tier of bureaucracy, at a time when we have just had the previous discussion about the protection of the front line and the need to be very focused in targeting social need. Has the council explored what that model would be with regard to impact or cost?
2922. **Ms Rea:** We are just familiar with the benefits that we have seen of having that; even, for example, back to us in terms of the work that we do and being able to monitor that. The Community Relations Council (CRC) does its own monitoring at the moment. It plays that role very well. We would rely on a lot of its research to help to inform where we should be going, and we have done over the past. Where does that then lie in future arrangements? It is a very important function. It is about the placing of that.
2923. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** It is more about a challenge function, but it is not, in your view, I suppose, detailed with regard to cost or impact.
2924. **Ms Rea:** No.
2925. **Mr Guilfoyle:** Your question could be interpreted in a number of ways. Certainly, over the years, the Youth Service in Northern Ireland has been very much a mix of voluntary and statutory. As my colleague Norma said, the voluntary sector is, by far, the biggest provider. The statutory sector plays a big role as well. Since 1990 — I have been there right from the outset — when the Youth Council was formed, it was formed with specific functions in mind. One of its statutory functions was to assist the coordination and efficient use of the resources of the service. We have interpreted that as actually trying to get all of the players together to make more efficient use of what money is on the table and to bring forward various initiatives. Certainly, if you have seen any of our stories of our 25-year history, you will have seen many examples of initiatives that we have facilitated — not our initiatives, but ones that were brought by the sector — that have produced real products and impact on the ground. The challenge for the future is about who will provide that coordinating function. The voluntary sector needs to work with the statutory sector. The statutory sector needs the voluntary sector to deliver, primarily. That has to be coordinated, so there is an important coordinating function. I do not interpret that as administration; I interpret some of that as being developmental that has good impact on the ground.
2926. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Is that not something that comes within the remit of the new Education Authority?
2927. **Mr Guilfoyle:** As I understand it, the Education Authority was meant to subsume the functions of the five education and library boards; I have read nothing contrary to that to date. I speak as someone with some background in the education and library boards; I used to be the head of service in the Southern Education and Library Board. Education and library boards are responsible for funding local youth groups. They try to facilitate and support good work in the board areas. That is very much a role that the Education Authority will take on board for Northern Ireland as a whole, but we need to have a conversation about how other aspects of what is essential for good delivery on the ground are managed in a way that works within existing resources. Obviously, everything is resource-capped. How do we work out the best division of labour between the statutory sector, the

Education Authority, the Youth Council and the voluntary sector, which is the key deliverer in all this?

2928. **Mr McCausland:** Thanks for the presentation. If I have it right, there was mention of six uniformed organisations — ranging from the Girls' Brigade to the Catholic Guides and everything in between — 55,000 young people and 12,000 volunteers. That is a very big sector. It is important that the needs of that sector are not overlooked.
2929. I pose two questions. The question around shared education currently references religious belief and political affiliation. The other element in our society is around cultural distinctiveness. That has been identified even by CnaG in terms of the cultural dimension of the Irish-medium sector. Do you think that there is merit in broadening that out to include not merely religious belief and political affiliation but cultural identity?
2930. **Ms Rea:** Sorry to go back to the CRED one, but I found that the different backgrounds and traditions worked quite well for us. I reiterate what I said: you cannot have in and out; it is about the end game and the outcomes. Once you start to define who is going to be in there and who is not, it is going to be quite difficult. It is quite complex.
2931. **Mr McCausland:** I have no difficulty at all. The point that you made earlier around equity, diversity and interdependence is the fundamental of the whole thing. It is a three-legged stool. It takes three legs to hold it up; you need all of them to be there. A two-legged stool does not stand up. That combination recognises difference on the basis of equality, but it also recognises interdependence, good relations and community relations — however you describe it. That is hugely important, and it needs to be acknowledged. Otherwise, you could have a dysfunctional situation moving forward.
2932. It is a pity in some ways that we did not have the sequencing this morning

in a slightly different order. The paper that we got from the Committee Clerk mentions budgets. Your budget in 2013-14 was nearly £6 million. Staff costs were £700,000. There was £5 million from the Department and £1 million from whatever other source. Half of the spending was on regional voluntary organisations and infrastructure funding, and there was £200,000 on CRED policy activities. How much of your budget from the Department would be pure administration, as opposed to developmental work, support or whatever?

2933. **Mr Guilfoyle:** As I understand it, the figure is £5.1 million rather than £6 million. Of that, the council distributes £4.9 million. The vast bulk of the funding received is from the Department. We try to draw down European funding as well, and we help many other youth organisations to draw down about half a million pounds a year in European funding; but that is another story. As an arm's-length body, the Council has the discretion to decide how best to split that funding up, consistent with our statutory functions. The council has always, historically, put the vast bulk of that in the hands of voluntary organisations in a variety of funding schemes. The £900,000 that seems to be held back for the Council is certainly not an administration budget. I have had this argument with the Department for decades now. Administration, to my mind, is when someone passes a piece of paper across a table and is not actually engaging with the youth organisation receiving that funding; they are basically a paper passer. There is a certain percentage of our staff's time spent on that. We do administer funding, and obviously we are accountable for that funding, so there has to be a certain amount of paper associated with that. However, the vast majority of our staff's time, myself included, is spent engaging with the sector and with those outside the sector that may be good allies for the sector, which could be another Department such as DSD, DHSSPS, DOJ, DEL etc. It is also spent advising others on how best to utilise

- the expertise of the Youth Service and to take forward initiatives such as the United Youth programme, T:BUC summer camps etc.
2934. I would challenge the Department to demonstrate how much of the £800,000 is actual administration. I would be very happy to sit down and have a discussion to show exactly where staff time goes. The Department has our business plan; it knows what the staff do. I would have thought that it was quite obvious to them, from our business plan, that the majority of our staff are not pen-pushers but are actually doing developmental work, supporting those on the ground by doing work that is moving the sector forward. We are doing work in areas such as the North/South context. International work is also referred to, and, as Norma was saying, we are developing accredited training for CRED work and for youth work. We are developing youth work apprenticeships in liaison with DEL. There is a lot of work that goes on that I would not personally say could be construed as administration.
2935. **Mr McCausland:** It might be helpful to inform our correspondence with the Department —
2936. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** I have made a note of that. I think that that is exactly what we should be doing.
2937. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation. The vast majority of my questions have been answered, but I just want to pick up on a couple of points that Nelson was talking about. You would obviously contradict the Minister and Department's assertion, made this morning, that £800,000 was spent on administration. How much do you spend on administration?
2938. **Mr Guilfoyle:** I would not like to give a specific figure because it depends what one is counting. Certainly we have become aware — I have been chief executive for almost 25 years — that the level of public accountability has greatly extended over the years. Obviously we have no problem with that. We have to abide by that, and we have no problem doing so. There is certainly a lot of money, time and effort taken by staff looking at how we give out the funding. In fact, we have just had an internal audit report carried out, and we will have our external auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers, in in a few months' time. I am delighted to say that we have always had very good reports on how well money is administered. You will appreciate that, giving out that money in public funding, we have to carry it out very carefully. We have people going out on the ground carrying out financial verification visits to groups we fund. I am sure that no one is suggesting that that is not essential.
2939. I would not like to give you a figure today, but I am happy to go back to base, speak to colleagues and come back to the Committee with a figure in due course. What I can say assuredly now is that the vast majority of our staff time is not involved in funding. Funding is important; it is the lifeblood for the many organisations we fund, and, if some of them were sitting here today, they would say to you that, without their core funding, they would go out of business, because very few funders nowadays will fund core or infrastructure. They will fund short-term project funding. That is relatively easier to get. However, we do know that, sadly, a couple of the organisations we fund have gone out of business in recent years because of problems with funding. A couple more, I know, are on the brink, and certainly if the council is forced to impose a further cut in funding, that could be prejudicial to their future survival.
2940. The only occasion, in my memory, when we had a cut, about 10 or 12 years ago, Youth Council itself took a bigger percentage cut from its own running costs, as it were, to try to cushion the regional voluntary organisations. With the £1 million cut, no matter how hard we hit ourselves and yet maintain our statutory functions, it would be very hard to cushion much of the impact on those organisations. I feel for them,

- having personally worked not just in the education and library boards but as a voluntary worker at a local club and a regional voluntary organisation. We empathise very strongly with our colleagues.
2941. **Mr Hazzard:** I think that this warrants further investigation. I was alarmed this morning when the Minister mentioned £800,000 on what could technically be looked at as another layer of bureaucracy that we do not need. A bit of clarity around this would be useful.
2942. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** It has also made me think about whether there is duplication in the authority. We should investigate that as well.
2943. **Mr Hazzard:** It may not be the Youth Council but the authority that has the duplication. It is worth checking it out.
2944. **Mr Guilfoyle:** My colleague would like to make a comment that is relevant to your point.
2945. **Ms Rea:** The Minister will be familiar with the Irish-medium work and youth work. Although I look after the funding that goes out to support regional development of that and its coordination across the voluntary organisations, a huge amount of my time is spent — this is an emerging area of work — on supporting those who are involved in that work, so that they are aware of training opportunities, and working with my board colleagues to bring everything together to try to develop that area more coherently and, in some ways, protect the voice of the voluntary sector. I think that the Youth Council has been very good at protecting that. We are not a huge organisation, and perhaps that will be our downfall. A lot has been about where the voluntary sector can take it forward.
2946. **Mr Hazzard:** I certainly empathise with what you are saying, but we have a duty to look at that, given the very harsh economic climate and some of the budgetary decisions. If we did not examine that issue, questions would be asked of us as a Committee.
2947. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** We will look at it.
2948. Thanks very much for a very good presentation. We know how valuable you are, and you should hold your heads high and know that you are incredibly important to us.
2949. **Mr Guilfoyle:** Can I make two brief comments? I have two good colleagues here without whose work a lot of the work that we have described would not happen. I do not take the plaudits; I applaud my two colleagues Norma and Joanne. I thank you for the appreciation that you have shown today not just for the work of the Youth Council but for the work on CRED, which is crucial. As we understand it, the Minister is yet to make a final decision on that because the equality impact assessment consultation on CRED is not yet finished. That is a live issue. On behalf of all the youth organisations that we work with and fund, I thank you for your interest in this. Hopefully we will get a better settlement while still recognising Mr Hazzard's point that we all live with restricted resources. We certainly respect that.
2950. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Kinahan):** Norma, Joanne and David, thank you very much.

11 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Chris Hazzard
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Sir Robert Salisbury Other

2951. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I welcome Sir Robert Salisbury. You are no stranger to the Education Committee.

2952. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Yes, I seem to have been grilled a few times.
[Laughter.]

2953. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you for your submission. I ask you to make an opening statement, and members will follow that up with some questions.

2954. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Good morning, everyone, and thank you for the invitation to come along. I had expected to look at the view at Shimna this morning, but it is not easy to see it today.

2955. I made my submission as a private citizen. I have lived in Northern Ireland since 2001. Before that, I was a professor in the school of education at the University of Nottingham. Before that, I was a vice-principal of a prestigious school in England, and I then took over the Garibaldi School, which, at the time, was the seventh worst school in the whole country. I did that to see if you could apply a different way of running a school to raise standards, and it was a fascinating experience.

2956. I am firmly based in education and, since moving here in 2001, I have been asked to chair the literacy and numeracy task force, the review of funding for

all schools and a review of further education colleges. I have had the absolute privilege of looking at hundreds of schools over the years I have lived in Northern Ireland and meeting thousands of teachers, head teachers and so on. That has given me a unique chance to look right across the board from nursery schools to universities that I appreciate greatly.

2957. Some of the points that I raise in the paper are peripheral to the review that you are conducting into shared and integrated education. However, I think that they have a bearing, and that is why I put them into the short, bullet-point submission. As an independent individual, I have no vested interest whatsoever, and I do not come, as many of the other submissions do, with an agenda to say what you should hear from me. My paper is independent; I do not have any axes to grind one way or the other. These are just my observations, some of which relate to the subject under discussion.

2958. The first point is that it strikes me that virtually all world leaders from outside Northern Ireland repeatedly say to us that we should look at an integrated system of some sort. That message has come over very clearly. As a relative newcomer to Northern Ireland — as I said, I first came over in 2001 — I really could not believe that division was so entrenched in the system from the age of three and that there were separate routes through education. Some research that I read about said that only a tiny percentage of 16-year-olds had ever had a meaningful conversation with somebody from the other tradition. It seems to me that the first major point is that integration and shared education both have virtues, and it is about whether that is the pointed issue or whether the whole system should be reviewed and looked at. To most outsiders, separating children from the age of

- three seems incompatible with 21st-century education.
2959. The second point is one that you have heard from me many times before. It was brought home again only last week when a business leader said on the radio that we educate for too many teachers, pharmacists and lawyers and cannot get enough people for modern technological industries. A point that you have heard me make before is whether we still steer our schools through our rear-view mirrors and educate for a world that is no longer with us. Are we underpinning our education with the right core skills for our young people? What will make them marketable in the next 10 or 15 years? What will make them successful citizens worldwide? Are our schools doing the right things in that area?
2960. When I look at schools — as I said, I have looked at a lot of them — I ask whether we are teaching flexibility and adaptability. One thing that I am certain of is that the rate of change in the world will increase, not decrease, and that its direction is fairly unpredictable. We want flexible and adaptable young people, not prescription. It seems to me that many schools still drip-feed a prescriptive way to pass examinations, and the world is not like that.
2961. Are we teaching enough about global opportunities? Angling is one of my passions, and I write about it for four magazines. I was sitting at my desk in Seskinore writing something, and an email came in from an editor in Australia. I have never been to Australia, but the editor said, “We have read some of your writing. Would you like to write for our magazine?”. I sent an email back saying, “I have never been to Australia. I have attached a couple of pieces”. Ten minutes later, she replied saying, “I love them. I have attached a contract. Will you sign it?”. I was still sitting at the same desk, and only 15 minutes had gone by. The world is shrinking. What I am trying to say to schools is “Start having a global view of the world, not just of Northern Ireland”.
2962. That view has its pitfalls. Every notice in the school that I ran was in seven languages to give the view that the world is out there, and the bottom one was Arabic. It said “head teacher” on my door in seven languages, the bottom one being Arabic. Every Arabic-speaking family who came into the school and passed by my door always looked at it and smiled. It was only after I retired from that school that I wondered if it really did say “head teacher”. Sorry, I am being flippant, but I was just reminded of that.
2963. Cooperation, networking and confidence in meeting ever-changing circumstances are crucial. I go round school after school where youngsters are sitting in rows, saying nothing. If we are teaching communication skills and the ability to meet new circumstances with confidence, are we doing that in our schools? Those are crucial things that business leaders say to me that we should be trying to teach: technological competence, communication skills and so on. Have we looked hard enough at the underpinning skills that are taught in our schools?
2964. The third, almost peripheral, point is that, if we were the best in Europe in our schools and our achievements were the highest in Europe and could compete with the world’s best, there would be great virtue in sticking with what we have. Some of our top students achieve good results — we know that — but we have a huge, long tail of underachievement. I was staggered to learn that the achievement of some of our poorest performers in our inner cities was one click above Roma children. Some of the Protestant boys in Belfast are one click in achievement above Roma children who do not attend schools. However we look at that, it is pretty disgraceful for a country like this. This is a country that has superb youngsters, good teachers and a culture that values education. It does not have many of the major issues that we had to contend with in England, such as migration, shifts of population and ethnic groups. We have nothing like

- that, yet the results in some parts of Northern Ireland are very poor.
2965. The next point that I would like to make is that, whatever we think about the future of education, it has to address the achievements of all children. That ought to be a fundamental point that we take on. It has to be about raising achievements for all children.
2966. The fourth peripheral thing is that, when I was doing the funding review, it struck me that, overall, there was enough money in the system. It was spread so thinly because we had too many small schools and too many types of schools. To give you an example, Omagh, where I live, has six post-primary schools. That means six principals' salaries and six buildings to run, with caretaking and everything else that goes with that. Retford in north Nottinghamshire, with a bigger but similar population, has two schools. If you replicate that across Northern Ireland, you can see why we do have not enough money in the system. There are all sorts of hurdles in the way of addressing that in Northern Ireland, but doing so is a goal that we should be looking towards. There are too many small schools and too many types of schools.
2967. The fifth point is that amalgamation and the closure of some schools is inevitable. Some of the smaller primaries that I looked at in the funding review could not really offer a proper educational entitlement to youngsters. For example, there were not enough pupils to form sporting teams. Amalgamations are inevitable, and we have not made nearly enough of the positive things that parents said to me about moving their youngsters to bigger schools. I have not heard that said by anybody, but parents have said to me, when schools were amalgamated and became bigger, suddenly the whole thing was better. There was a wider range in the curriculum and more sporting and cultural events; there was more that you could do. So, working out how you can amalgamate schools is a further thing to think about.
2968. I was disappointed that the area-planning process was based again on a divided school system. If you remove a school totally from an area because it is either Catholic or Protestant, you have bigger transport bills, less convenience and all the rest of it. It struck me, particularly in Fermanagh, where there are many small rural schools, that the first thing you should offer to communities is the chance to amalgamate before you close a school. That way, at least you retain a presence in the area.
2969. It may be that you have to offer some sort of inducement to some principals to retire early. It struck me, again in rural Fermanagh, what block development can mean. You have two principals who are, obviously, interested in their own career and do not want to come together if one of them is going to lose their job. There may be some merit in looking at systems that make that easier.
2970. Lastly, there is a cost in transport and financial support for small schools. We hear a lot about the right of parents to choose a school, and that is quite right. However, my school — Drumragh Integrated College — was limited in the number of youngsters it could have. It seems to me that there is a clash between saying that parents have that right and saying that you can limit that to a number of pupils. Why not let popular schools expand and let the unpopular ones — I will not say "wither on the vine" because that was tried in New Zealand and it failed — but close them if they are not — *[Interruption.]* Does the school bell mean my time is up? *[Laughter.]* Moving on to the main point of your review, the integrated school movement has made strides over the last few years. I was involved with the Integrated Education Fund when I first came to live here. There was more emphasis then on building new schools than on trying to draw existing schools into transition. The whole thrust of the integrated movement in the early days was simply to build new schools, and I made the point that, if you are adding to the problems that I have just outlined,

- there must be a finite limit to how many new schools you can build. You ought to be thinking about that.
2971. I felt that, in the early days, the integration movement was less encouraging to heads and governors who wanted to transform their schools into integrated ones. One said to me at a conference that I was speaking at, "I feel a bit like a pariah here. Nobody wants to speak to me because I am not for pure integration; I want to transform my school." There was that kind of feeling in the early days. I also felt, in the early days, that the idea of integration alone was enough to promote a school. I always felt that integration had to go along with very high standards. Integration on its own is not enough; you still have to compete and have the highest standards you can.
2972. I also felt, as an educationalist who had worked in education for a long time, that some of the earlier integrated schools aped the selective schools and did not create a true integrated ethos. One principal who did do that put it to me very clearly when she said, "I want a school where everybody is equal and where we can cater totally for youngsters with special needs and youngsters who want to go to Oxbridge." In the end, she had a school like that; it catered for everybody. Schools that have streams, so you have a grammar school within a school, have missed something about how you truly create a proper integrated school.
2973. This sounds a bit critical, but it is not because the movement's intentions were in the right place. We have not had strong enough or committed enough political support for integration either. We have characters like May Blood who do a great job in promoting integration all over the place, but there has not been a real commitment to push it forward and maybe there should be. There has been some covert pressure to block it too. My wife was head of an integrated college in Omagh until 2004, and she was blocked consistently from going into any Catholic primary schools to talk about the possibility of integration. The heads were told, "No, they can't come in." There was covert blocking, which seemed a little bit sad. I do not know whether that still goes on because it is a long time since she was the head of a school. I was speaking at a conference and one head said to me, "The shared education lot have stolen our thunder." I said, "Surely it's all about the same thing: bringing youngsters to be educated together." That resistance was a little bit sad, I thought.
2974. Shared education is believed to be a step in the right direction, but there are some serious flaws in the way it is being viewed at the moment. You might not like some of the things I am about to say but I am going to say them anyway; it was a long journey from Omagh. The shared education movement is fashionable, partly because it has got a lot of funding. However, when I was doing the funding review, I found that some of the schemes were clearly designed to protect schools that were under threat of closure. They had no other educational virtue than that. It was simply a way of saying, "Let's come together to try to ward off the possibility of being closed." That seems to me to be the wrong sort of thought to underpin a new education system.
2975. In nearly all the submissions to the Committee that I read, educational outcomes were viewed as really positive: this is happening, that is happening, everything is possible and everything is positive. It struck me that, if it is so good on such a limited interaction, how much better would it be if you fully integrated? That is the question that I ask everybody. If it is so good when you come together a couple of times a week, would it not be a hundred times better if you were together all the time?
2976. Years ago, when I was a vice-principal, I was asked to timetable for five schools in England that were trying to amalgamate sixth forms. They were five large schools, and I had the lovely job of timetabling them together. Anybody who has ever worked in schools will be smiling now, thinking of the difficulty of doing that. I have to tell you that,

- logistically, there is a limit to how much shared education you can have. If you start to share with more than one school, it will soon impact on your own curriculum. Trying to put those five schools together made a shambles of the internal timetabling lower down the school. A classic example was one French class having three different teachers because you had used all your teachers in the combined scheme between the other schools. Those five schools have all amalgamated now and so the problem is over, but there is a limit to joint timetables, arranging transport and moving staff and students around.
2977. When I was doing the funding review, I met people from almost all the shared education schemes and said, "If your funding stops or you can't get any funding for transport, what will happen to your shared education scheme?". Without exception, they said that it would fall. That is a key point for you to consider. The scheme might be running now with funding, but what happens if the funding stops?
2978. There is one scheme — I think it is the Moy programme — where young people share the same building but come in different uniforms through different doors. That is unbelievably absurd. I thought that it was a joke when I first read about it. I could not think of a better scheme to distance and divide youngsters than having them like that. I wondered what happens to all the non-believers and the Muslims who are milling about outside saying, "Which door do we go in?". It seems an absurd scheme to me. I am sorry to be so brutal about that but, when I read about it, I did not know where people were coming from in having youngsters coming through different doors wearing different uniforms.
2979. I would like all shared education schemes to be time-bound, because there may be a feeling that you are doing something and moving in the right direction but wondering where it will be a few years down the line and how it will develop. If things are working and there is positive benefit, how do we push it to something else? Having a time-bound scheme would, I think, work better.
2980. I also think that, in the long run, if shared education schemes are to develop, you have to look at the whole notion of how you govern schools, how you recruit teachers, how you share teachers, how their contracts come together and how governing bodies work. That is a whole new area of development for somebody. This will sound awful, but I feel that, in some ways, the movement of shared education is lip service to something that we should be doing. If the whole world is saying, "Do something about bringing youngsters together", this is a way of saying, "Well, we are doing it through shared education", but it seems to me that it will make little impact further down the line. We might, 10 years from now, still have those smaller schemes rather than doing the overall picture that I have been talking about. It is a bit like somebody who is overweight eating a five-course meal, then going afterwards for a gin and tonic and saying that it has to be slimline tonic. It might give you a bit of satisfaction and pleasure, but it will not make a jot of difference to the overall picture. Do you see what I am talking about? OK.
2981. There are things that we can do straight away. When we were looking at the funding review, I wondered why you did not have fully integrated preschool and nursery school places. That would seem straightforward and easy. I was truly disappointed that the teacher training thing wobbled. I was astonished when I first came to live here that you have separate training for teachers. That seems to me to be something that could and should be done pretty quickly. It is nonsense.
2982. Lastly, it struck me in the FE college review was that there is a golden opportunity for bringing together sixth forms because, at the moment, school sixth forms are very limited towards medicine, pharmacy, law and so on. The sign of a small sixth form is, "You can take this subject, but you can't take

- this. If you take this, you've got to take that subject". I have three sons. Two of them stayed in a school sixth form. They had a choice of French or German in languages. My third son went to a joint sixth-form college and had a choice of 11 languages in any combination, from Mandarin Chinese to Russian or whatever. There is a whole world there that we could easily bring together and integrate. It would be cost-effective, but, more to the point, it would give the youngsters going through the system the pointers that I was talking about earlier. That would be very easy to integrate. It struck me in the FE review that you have school sixth forms and FE colleges vying for the same people. There is a massive saving to be had in that area.
2983. I am getting to the end of this, you will be pleased to know. We have moved forward. I sincerely think that, when I meet youngsters in Northern Ireland — my wife is currently working at a school that is doing cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) with youngsters, and I meet quite a lot of them — they are superb young people. We definitely have some of the best young students I have met anywhere, including in the school that I ran. With a few tweaks and some major changes, we could easily have the best system in Europe for all of our children.
2984. The reason why I stay passionate about education and I am prepared to drive over here this morning is that I believe there is a much better future for our children if we take bigger steps and move in the right direction. Long term, it seems to me that educating our children all together is the way forward. Of the submissions that I read, the only one to say that integration was the way forward, full stop, was from the National Union of Students. It might be a good start to forget some of the vested interests and ask young people, "What do you think ought to happen in the future?". In all the different schools, I have asked youngsters this same question: what sort of schools do you think we should have in the future? They all said that some sort of integration is the way forward. A good starting point would be simply to ask youngsters, "What do you think?". We have to try to equip youngsters for the next 10 or 15 years, not the last 30.
2985. Thank you for the invitation, I hope that it has not been too drastic.
2986. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. You referred to vested interests and said that perhaps they should begin to soften their traditional resistance to change. How do you think that could and should be encouraged? Do you not see shared education as starting to do that?
2987. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I did when I first looked at it. However, I started to think that, unless you have progressive development of it, with — as I said earlier — some time-bound scheme, I can see us sitting on these minor schemes or small schemes indefinitely, because it placates the wider interests. It needs fairly root-and-branch change; we need to challenge some of the vested interests. As, I hope, you have understood, I do not think that we can afford the number of types of school that we have. Year by year, finance gets tighter. I talk to many head teachers who can barely manage and are talking about redundancies etc. That is because you have too many schools. There is an economic argument and an educational one. The vested interests have to be challenged, but it will take a major decision by somebody to do that.
2988. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The fact is that we have parental choice. You have said that it is right that we have that, but it comes at a cost. While parents still choose to send their children to whatever type of school they want, that obviously, in some ways, creates or adds to the problem.
2989. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** There is pressure on sending children to certain schools, but, at the moment, there is no transport. I do not know where the transport review has got to, but it has some serious considerations to come up with. The transport bill is huge. The

- cost that I refer to is that parents may have to pay for transport if they choose a different sort of school. The key point for me is whether parents really want to make that choice, or do they have another choice? Let me put it another way: if you had an integrated school in a village, would they choose that or choose going further afield and losing the convenience of having a school in the area? That is the question that I would like to ask parents.
2990. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Are you removing choice?
2991. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** In some ways, yes; but then you remove it, as I said, by having a restriction on the number of pupils that a school can take in. That, too, restricts choice.
2992. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** We go back to the view that there is also a vested interest in integrated education, and there is a view that that model is the right one. Not everyone agrees with that.
2993. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I just think that there is probably less resistance than we think in choosing schools. I think that it should always be put to communities that, in the area-planning exercise, it is scheduled that a school might have to close and move out, but, if you had the opportunity of amalgamating two schools and keeping that presence in the area, would you choose that? You might not be pushing at the closed door that you think you are.
2994. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Change is not going to happen overnight; there will have to be a process. Do you consider that shared education is a road in the right direction to that change?
2995. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I like to think that. I am always an advocate of trying out new schemes to bring schools together, as long as it is not something that you do and do not develop. As I said, if it is lip service to integration, I would not like it. I think it should be a case of, "OK. Try something small; next year, enlarge it, enlarge it and keep moving forward", but it ought to be time-bound and challenged.
2996. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Often, when we look at this, there is, I suppose, a misconception that all schools are — I do not like to use the word — segregated, but that is not necessarily the case. There are very good examples of schools that have a natural integration without being called "integrated". Is that something that should, perhaps, be more encouraged?
2997. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Absolutely. As I said at the beginning, my reservation about the integrated movement in the early days was that it did not take on the notion of transition schools. We should absolutely promote the notion of integration through the ordinary channels. I do not think it is necessary to change the name of it, but if you can encourage parents into integration in that way, I would be absolutely fully supportive.
2998. Despite what you were hinting at earlier on the choices that parents make, they usually base their choice on where they think there is a good school. You can go and look at Methody; it has all sorts of youngsters. It is almost an integrated school. That is what I thought when I had a look around it. Why? Because it has a good reputation. If you have a good reputation, people will come, whatever its traditional background. St Dominic's is another one; it is a girls' school in Belfast. It has a very mixed catchment area, but, in many senses, is an integrated school.
2999. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Many of the choices that are being made by schools around shared education are also linked to delivery of the entitlement framework, academic outcomes and educational outcomes, as opposed, perhaps, to the societal outcomes. In your view, would or should the educational outcomes come first over the societal outcomes?
3000. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I think that you can have both together, but remember that I said that there is a limit,

- logistically, to how far you can go with that. I think that you would have to do both. It is no use having groups coming together and fostering integration if you do not have some educational outcomes from it. That is why I said in the paper that sometimes the outcomes were vague and hard to quantify. I definitely think you have to have that harder edge to making sure that integration or shared education is working. What are your objectives? How do you manage them? Are they really worth the money that you are putting into them and the disruption they are causing in transport and moving people around? Are you getting something out of that? So, the answer to your question is yes, if you get society working better together, that is great, but you also have to have some educational outcomes at the other end of it. I think that you can do both though. Some of the schemes I looked at were warm, sort of fuzzy, schemes. They felt right, but when I asked, "Tell me what the harder educational outcomes of your scheme are?", it was harder to quantify. I think that you do have to have both.
3001. **Mr Lunn:** Sir Bob, I have a problem with you, because —
3002. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I know you have.
3003. **Mr Lunn:** I cannot disagree —
3004. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** He is being honest. *[Laughter.]*
3005. **Mr Lunn:** I cannot disagree with a single word that you say *[Laughter.]* It is heartening to hear a senior academic with your experience express an honest view about something like the Moy situation. I completely agree with you.
3006. I really am a bit lost for questions, because you keep answering them before I have asked them. You are an Omagh man: what is your view of the expense of the Lisanelly project, which will build new schools for schools that already exist on a site that just happened to become available? There is no sense of integration or amalgamation between those schools, and it would not have happened if the Lisanelly site had not been available. What is your view of that?
3007. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I have to be a bit delicate with my answer, Trevor. When I first came to live in Omagh in 2001, the council asked me to talk about education in Omagh. I went and talked about pupil numbers, the number of schools and the usual stuff that I have been talking about here. When I was presenting my second-to-last slide, I asked why they did not do something innovative with the army site and create an integrated campus. I was shot to ribbons. I told my wife that I had suggested an educational village, that they shot me to ribbons and that you lose some and you win some. That has been resurrected, but I still fully endorse the notion of doing it. It is potentially a huge step forward, except that what I had in mind when I first suggested it to the council was a truly integrated educational campus in which all the youngsters would come together with all the notions that I outlined earlier of huge opportunities for sixth forms and across drama, sports and all the rest, which, potentially, it still has. The idea of having totally separate schools just seems to be a wasted opportunity. I had it in mind that the schools would come together and interact fully in all the art, design and music and all of that. It would be fairly easy to interact in those areas. If the project is built in the end, I am hopeful that, as things develop, they will see those opportunities and how silly it is to have totally separate schools. It is expensive, but if it works in the way that I tried to outline in the early days, it could be a tremendously exciting project. If you have five schools that still retain their boundaries and their separate entities, it will be an opportunity lost.
3008. **Mr Lunn:** OK. You obviously talked a lot about the shared education projects. Four years down the line, when Atlantic Philanthropies has gone home and we start to hit funding problems with the shared education projects, it will be quite hard to assess their success, either in educational or societal terms.

- What do you think is the mark of success of a good shared education project?
3009. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** If it continues when the funding stops. If the teachers, the governors, the parents and the youngsters see it as a really valuable part of school life and the powers that be generate funding to make sure that it runs, it will be a success. If it folds, you can draw your own conclusions. I would see it as a success as well if it goes on to develop into other things. If these small steps suddenly start to say to people, “Let us think about wider integration because it is working”, I would deem that to be real success. If, eventually, the fear factor that exists in some schools was eroded and we moved on to a bigger project, that would seem to me to be working. As I said earlier, when I said to most people, “If the funding stops, will the scheme stop?”, they said, “Yes”. That was in the early days, and I am optimistic to say that they may see virtue in it and see the wisdom of raising the money from somewhere else.
3010. **Mr Lunn:** I would have thought that the main measure of success would probably be the acceptance of an integrated solution. It might take longer than four years, but, if the shared project as a whole has a virtue and is something that we could cling to as being a genuine ambition, it would be that schools, such as that in the Moy, see the virtue of it and make a decision to come together. The parental decision in the Moy was taken by a relatively slim margin. You said that you thought that most parents would accept an integrated solution if one were available. In the Moy — I keep repeating these figures — the 85 responses to its consultation were in favour of the solution that was on the table, but 70 responses were in favour of the integrated model. It is close. You talked about vested interests. The main barrier to progress in the whole area is CCMS; let us be honest about it. Its attitude to all this is completely destructive.
3011. I am inviting a comment.
3012. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** One question that I have been asking regularly for 10 years is this: what do you actually lose out of a school if you become integrated? What is it that you lose from one sector or the other? Nobody will give me a straight answer to that.
3013. **Mr Lunn:** I see it like this: what do you gain? We heard young Gabriel — I think that you were not in the room at the time —
3014. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I asked him what he said outside.
3015. **Mr Lunn:** I have heard it twice. He and any of the pupils that are here from an integrated school — we heard from some of them at Drumragh a couple of weeks ago — could tell you in 10 minutes what they gain from an integrated process. The others from the dedicated sectors that we have at the moment cannot tell me, as they cannot tell you, what they would lose. I am sorry; I am not asking you questions. However, I said at the start that I agreed with everything that you said. Thank you very much for your presentation.
3016. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I would like to say one thing to CCMS. My wife ran an integrated school, and she was taken away to be a troubleshooter of schools in England after that. However, one thing that she said that stuck in my mind was that, when she was in Drumragh College, children who had the Catholic faith, Presbyterian faith or whatever, tended to maintain it in the integrated sector simply because all faiths were taught. At the end of it, they still maintained their faith. I talked to a lot of youngsters at CBS in Omagh, and they said that their faith had gone because they have been through that school. CCMS should consider this question: why is it that a lot of youngsters who go through the system do not finish up with the faith at the other end? That is a very good question for somebody — not for me.
3017. **Mr Hazzard:** Thank you, Bob, for a fairly thought-provoking presentation. Like Trevor, I find myself agreeing with

- much of what you say. I may just have thoughts rather than questions.
3018. The Chair touched on the question of vested interests. How do we smash through vested interests? It seems to be very, very difficult. Vested interests seem to be entrenched in every walk of life, be it politics or the schools themselves. I would like to hear a few thoughts about how we could smash through vested interests, as that is exactly what we need to do.
3019. Another question goes back to a reference you made to world leaders. If I just touch on Obama and Cameron, when they came here, and the stuff around visiting an integrated school. The two of them oversee education system divided between those who can afford a good, private education, and the less well off who cannot and perhaps suffer. Is there a risk that, by tackling religious or ethnic division, that we open up massive fault lines in socio-economic division, and that we need to ensure that bringing together — integrating — is also socio-economic. For example, Shimna does it very well, but we have made reference to Methody and some of these big, super grammar schools in Belfast that consider themselves to be super-mixed. If you look at the impact that they might have on the same inner-east Belfast Protestant boys we talked about earlier, is there not a danger that we lose that? Maybe you could give a few thoughts on that.
3020. Finally, then, there is the need to facilitate the growth of popular schools. Say there was a development proposal, hypothetically, for an integrated school, but it was going to have a massive impact on a controlled school, perhaps closing it. That controlled school will, rightly, say, “We are going to take that decision to judicial review. We are going to take you to court because you are having a detrimental impact upon our school, and that could lead to the closure of our school”. Would they not have a right to do that? In my own head I am not sure, so this is just a few thoughts around what I have heard this morning. I would love to hear the —
3021. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I will take the third point first. In New Zealand there was a scheme which just let popular schools expand, and the unpopular ones withered on the vine. They have stopped doing that now because that is the worst of all worlds. You need leadership there. You cannot just let a popular school expand. You have to say to the unpopular one, to be fair to the pupils and the students and the parents, “This is going to close; you have not enough numbers” or whatever. Then the popular one can expand. The point that I am making is that you cannot just let market forces dictate; you have to have planning.
3022. It seems to me that, if a school is really working and the parents want to get there and you have a limited budget to expand schools or new build, you have to plan that. Keeping open schools that nobody wants to attend by propping them up with huge finances seems to me to be going nowhere. That is the first point.
3023. The integrated comprehensive system in England often gets a bad press. It is linked to private education. There are some good private schools and some awful private schools; there are some poor comprehensive schools in England, and there are some brilliant ones that never seem to get the headlines. I could take you to half a dozen schools across England that cater for all abilities and all religions and perform as well as any grammar school in Northern Ireland. Sweeping generalisations about what happens are not helpful.
3024. If you look at London schools where the London Challenge is in place, you will see that they have made massive strides forward in all schools. It can be done if heads and governors are challenged and targets are set. It sounds like a hard economic world, but it can work.
3025. **You are right:** it is difficult to use a system in one country and lift that entirely into a new one. Often we hear about Finland and how well it is doing, which it is, but there are so many

- differences in the Finnish system that you could not lift that and pop it into Northern Ireland. For instance, teachers are taken away every three months and given another month of training in Finland. Nobody could afford that in the UK. All the teachers have second degrees. It is different. I worked in Finland; I know what it is like. It is dark for six months of the year anyway; you have nothing else to do, so you might as well read. *[Laughter.]* There was a third part to your first question.
3026. **Mr Hazzard:** It was on vested interests.
3027. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Vested interests: that really is a tough one to crack, is it not? The teacher training issue has proved that. You can do it only by persuasion and funding, but it takes hard, strong leadership to do that. I often think that of Liverpool Hope University. There were two colleges in Liverpool. They messed about for years trying to come together. In the end, the Government got fed up with them and simply said that they would stop the funding to both of them unless they came up with a solution. Three months later, there was a solution, and Hope University was formed. It sometimes takes tough decisions. It is so difficult in Northern Ireland in that a lot of it is sort of covert, and what people say publicly is not quite what they do in practice. You get returns that say that 80% of parents want integrated education, but they do not opt for it when it comes to it. It is that kind of thing.
3028. **Mr Hazzard:** I have one final question touching on the patronage process in the South and Educate Together. We met just after Christmas. It was very thought-provoking. What seemed as though it would be a very worthwhile process when it started off has stalled. It seems to have stalled big time. I think that, in the past few days, it has picked up again. Even there, where I think that well over 90% of schools were in the control of the Catholic Church and even it wanted to free up a few of them, it was becoming very difficult. Can we take any lessons from that process in the South?
- Again, I am presuming that you know something about it; you might not.
3029. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** The South of Ireland is doing quite well in the OECD score. What they have there is not quite the same. They do not have some of the challenges that I have been pointing to today. It is strange in the South in that, daily, it is becoming more secular. It is changing as a country. It will be hard to predict where it goes. I worked on a scheme to put in a policy of entrepreneurial and enterprise skills. I have been working with the Dublin Government on that. They had agreed that it was vital for the future of Ireland, but they had no money to do it. Change there is hog-tied by the money that is available.
3030. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome to south Down. Hopefully, you will come back some time and try out some of the fishing in our rivers as well.
3031. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I will do, yes.
3032. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you for being, let us say, controversial, because that challenges us and makes us think about things. When I say “controversial”, I am talking about when you said that the Moy situation was absurd. Have you visited the Moy and spoken to the parents or principals of the two schools?
3033. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** No, I have not. I read all the details of it. I visited a school in Scotland that had a similar process. It just struck me — maybe I am being too harsh on the scheme; I have not spoken to the two principals — that, with a little bit more movement, youngsters coming in through the same doors and a little bit more tolerance on both sides, you could have had a better scheme. I cannot envisage what it must be like for a youngster to have a separate uniform, come through a different door to the same school and meet for some things and not others. It seems odd, to say the least.
3034. **Mr Rogers:** I see it not as ideal but as an important step in the journey. When you listen to some of those people from Moy, particularly from the preschool,

- which was originally in a GAA club and was then moved into the controlled school as it had free classrooms and so on, you know that they have come a long way on the journey. I also have experience as a former head. I come from a town that, 30 years ago, was very divided. Thirty years ago, the only cross-community experience that my students had was the annual football match, but today there are really good joint curriculum experiences as well. What I got out of listening to the people in Moy is that we need to actively bring our community along with us. Moy is on that journey but has a long way to go.
3035. **You talked about area planning:** do you believe that we could amend the area planning process to better facilitate shared or integrated education, or do we need to start again from the beginning?
3036. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** There are two points on that. If the Moy arrangement is time bound and moves pretty quickly to something else, I will applaud it. It is my dream that, within a year, they will suddenly say, "It is crazy having any difference here. Let us move to having an integrated school." I would then give the people there a real pat on the back, as it would have been proven to have worked. If, 10 years from now, they remain as separate schools, that will be disappointing.
3037. I was disappointed with area planning in that the CCMS came up with a plan early, and that was imposed on the rest. I asked the guy at the Western Board, "Why did you not have an area plan that looked at all schools, particularly in the Fermanagh area, where, in some cases, you have only one school in a massive area and closing it would have a tremendous impact in terms of inconvenience, extra travel and so on?" I felt that a more radical view would have sufficed. In Tempo, for instance, there are two schools, and fairly limited shared education is going on. I asked the two heads, "How will this develop in the future?" They both said, "It will more or less stay as it is." It seemed to me that there was no vision to bring those two schools together. They are only a few hundred yards apart, and it seemed to me that neither had quite the funding, the curriculum width or the cultural or sporting capacity to offer the very best to the youngsters. Coming together, they would have had a much better school. However, you have two heads who are not likely to do that because of careers. That is why I suggested a scheme that says to one of them to take redundancy or whatever and then amalgamates the two schools. There is no doubt that the concept in Tempo is right in that they are talking to one another and working together. However, the next step would be so much more massive in its impact on society and in its achievement. Do you see what I am getting at? That is the first stage, but the next stage would jump them forward massively.
3038. **Mr Rogers:** I liked what you said about technology and communication, which applies to this as well. We are really steering our schools through a rear-view mirror in all of this.
3039. You talked briefly about the fact that we tend to be exam-driven and whatever else. Do you believe that, if we could scrap these league tables altogether and look at the value that we get out of education, we would be in a much better place?
3040. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I have always been a supporter of league tables in that you need some objective measure to see how well a school is doing. Maybe you do not need to publish the league tables as a league, but you do need to measure the performance of a school. We have not looked enough at the sort of outcomes that we get. The private schools in England were recently accused by their own inspectors of spoon-feeding their youngsters, with a predictable outcome; "If you do this, you will pass this. You will get an A* grade". Everything is spoon-fed in order to get them over that hurdle. Their achievements are good, but are they any good long term? Look at the dropout rates in many of the universities, particularly Queen's. Youngsters get there, and suddenly they are not being spoon-fed. There is a flaw there

- somewhere because, as I said, the world is not predictable and the rate of change will be even greater. We should be trying to say to youngsters, “You need to be adaptable and flexible in your studies”.
3041. Looking back, I do not think that spoon-feeding them to get them through exams is the way forward. We have to have a lot more. It is not difficult to do. A teacher challenged me on that and said, “It is all right you saying, ‘Teach communication skills’, but I have this examination to get through.” I asked, “How do they hand their homework in?” She said, “Just in books.” I said, “Every day, get three of them to read it out and tell you and the rest of the group what they have done. It will not cost you any more time, yet you will be practising communication.”
3042. A long time ago now, when I was head of a school, once it was developing and moving forward, we published a paper for the ‘Nottingham Evening Post’. The editor said to me, “Why don’t you bring the team that did it down to see it roll off the press?”. I took seven or eight youngsters, and we got out of the bus at a big, glassy, flash office in the middle of Nottingham. We went through the door, and those seven youngsters were dumbstruck. A young reporter came up to one of them and said, “Do you fancy getting into the newspaper business?”. She could barely answer. All the way through, it was embarrassing how tough they found it meeting this new circumstance. On the bus on the way home I said to the teachers, “Whatever else we do in this school, we are going to teach youngsters how to meet new circumstances with confidence”. The whole of the school has moved towards trying to teach that and to get people to speak. That is what I am getting at.
3043. **Last year, I did a pupil pursuit in a school. You will know what that is:** it is when you follow one pupil around for a whole day and they think that you are stalking them. Wherever they go, you stay in the background and watch. This girl, who was 13 or 14, did not ask one question all day and was not asked a question all day. The only times that I saw her speak were at break and lunchtime, and I suspect that it was like that for the rest of the week. If our school systems are aiming to teach communication skills, what are we doing?
3044. **One last thing:** I noticed you smile when I mention timetabling. That is how I knew that you had been a head. *[Laughter.]*
3045. **Mr Rogers:** A nightmare.
3046. **Mr Newton:** Thank you for making the journey down from Omagh this morning.
3047. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** It is a pleasure.
3048. **Mr Newton:** Thank you, too, for being challenging. I want to be a wee bit challenging as well. I think that the two principals in Moy deserve a lot of credit for what they have done, particularly the principal of St John’s, who showed us the whole case study of what he had to go through to get to the decision. They deserve credit. Getting to where we are going in education, shared education, integrated education and the various sectors of education is a marathon, not a sprint. I believe that, eventually, we will get there.
3049. On teacher education, when I first joined the Committee for Employment and Learning I was surprised at the divisions in teacher education. Particularly at this time, had we not used the Budget as a blunt instrument, we might have made more progress on the matter.
3050. Like you, I have some concerns about area planning. As it was described to us by another witness, they did not believe that it was area planning and that it was a cut-and-paste exercise. Having amalgamated the five education and library boards, we have an opportunity now to look at area planning in a much more effective manner. If you were offering some advice or support, what would that advice be? How should the views of parents and young people, which you have stressed are so vital — I agree with you on that — specifically in that area planning process be sought on a way forward on education provision?

3051. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** First of all, with the Moy, I think that my strong words were about impatience with moving forward. I am not going to decry the work that is already being done by those two heads, because I do not know them and that would be unfair. It is impatient of me to say, "Let us get to the next stage as quickly as we can". That is what was behind that, because it seems that the long-term view of that is well worth doing.
3052. With area planning, it struck me that it was not a wide enough exercise to have a look at where you needed schools and what the best pattern of schools should be. It was one system imposed on another system. I asked the chap at the Western Board why that was so, and he said that that kind of challenge just seemed too much to take on, and I do not like the thought of that. I do not think that it is too late to have a fresh look at it under the new regime, because I think that you can definitely get a better plan, and there will be some natural places where integration will be the right way forward and can be done quite easily and be acceptable to all communities.
3053. Convenience was a major consideration with all the people that I spoke to in Fermanagh. Having a convenient school in an area almost overrode what kind of school it was. That is why I made much of saying, "Ask people first whether they want to retain a school in the area". It seems to me that we should try to get out to as many schools as we can to probe youngsters about what they think schools should be. I have done that, and it seems to me that there is nowhere near the resistance to working with other schools or integrated that we often perceive it to be. Yes, there are traditional routes that people take into different schools and there is great pressure on that. When my wife was head of an integrated school a long time ago, in 2004, many of the parents said that they had great pressure from their peers and from religious leaders on both sides not to send their children to an integrated school. That existed in 2004, but I do not know whether it still does.
3054. It takes a fairly determined parent to go against that kind of pressure. If you are asked, "Why on earth are you sending them to an integrated school when it is not the tradition?", it takes a fairly strong parent to come up with an answer to that. I would definitely devise some scheme of asking youngsters whether what they are getting from education is what they want. I just think that it is sad. I have lived all the time in England, and I find, as I said, youngsters who are 16 and 17 and have never had any contact at all with anyone from the other tradition, whether in entertainment, sport, education or whatever. I would have been pretty miffed if I had been brought up in Northern Ireland, mainly because I played rugby at school and I would have liked to have played Gaelic — it looks like a good game to me. The musical traditions that I have found in Ireland are tremendous. They were missing in my school. I think that, living here, you have only half a culture. Do you know what I mean by that? Whatever side you are on, there is a tremendously rich culture on the other. I would have been pretty miffed to have been exposed to only half a culture.
3055. **Mr Newton:** You would need to get the grammar schools to embrace soccer, then. The other area that you have missed out, perhaps, is the role of the transferors. You have referred to vested interests, and they are one. You referred to the Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Church of Ireland and so on. What do you see as a consultative role for them?
3056. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** That is a hard one for me. When I was doing the funding review, I met all the religious leaders. The question of integration was raised. I asked whether they would be prepared to relinquish their automatic positions on the governing bodies of schools, and the answer was clearly that they would not. So there is an influence — well, I am hesitating here. You can see where I come from. I would always have the governance of schools at a wider cross-section. I would not have automatic positions on governing bodies. When I ran a school I recruited

- my own governors, depending on what the school needed. Sometimes you had a group of politicians, business leaders, finance consultants or insurance people — people that I needed to support me as a head — and that was a very effective governing body. Where there are fixed positions, obviously they are going to try to defend their vested positions. That is why I made the reference to looking afresh at the whole notion of governance and how you put it together. I think that we just need a fresher sort of governing body on schools. Chris here made the point about private schools in England, which have a different sort of governance. They have people from the community who are going to assist the school in one thing or another. That is what I tried to copy from them in the structure of the governors. I needed a group of people — parents, business leaders, politicians, media — all of them around to support me and what I was doing. I think that that is the way that we should work — religious leaders if they have something to offer.
3057. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you indeed for your presentation to us this morning. I have a number of questions. One is around the issue of the size of a school. We have around 1,100 schools in Northern Ireland, for a population of 1.8 million or thereabouts. What do you think is small for a primary school?
3058. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Anything below 80 is very small; I think 100 is more likely. If you can go up to 150, the opportunities suddenly become greater. Where you have schools that still exist with 20 or 25 pupils in them, the educational experience, by definition, must be limited. When I was doing the literacy and numeracy review, I asked, “How many small schools have a maths specialist?”. It was surprisingly few. There was usually an English specialist in the school, but, if you have got a primary school with nobody leading mathematics and helping to support the other teachers in the school, it is difficult. There are quite severe limitations once you drop below 100. If you have not got enough youngsters to run a football team, Gaelic team or hockey team or to run a proper school play or a choir, a whole chunk of stuff is being missed.
3059. **Mr McCausland:** In urban areas, I suppose you are talking of 140 being the figure set by the Department. Most schools in urban areas are above that, but there are issues with a few. This is obviously more a rural issue.
3060. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I was talking about a rural school. It definitely becomes easier to run and organise a school once you are up into 200 or 300 youngsters, because you have a range of staff and more money.
3061. **Mr McCausland:** At one stage, you mentioned schools that are not officially integrated education schools but which have an integrated intake. You mentioned Methody as an example.
3062. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I am only quoting Methody because, when I looked around it, the head said it was integrated. I have no hard evidence that it is.
3063. **Mr McCausland:** OK. When you look at the figures for Methody and Belfast Royal Academy, you will see that there are a number of schools where there is a very mixed intake. I was interested in your reference to St Dominic's; I assume that that is the Dominican College at Fortwilliam. Has it a significant intake from —
3064. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Again, I have no idea. My wife does CBT there. She says that it seems to be a school that is working extremely well with a mixed intake. I do not know whether that mixed intake means different denominations or socio-economic backgrounds. It is a successful school, but whether — I do not know.
3065. **Mr McCausland:** I think it is probably more a case of socio-economic. I am going to an event at the Dominican College on Friday, so I must ask.
3066. How do you see the Irish-medium sector, which is one of the sectors we have here, fitting into a single integrated system?

3067. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** That is another huge question. When we were looking at literacy and numeracy, I felt that Irish-medium units at schools were more practical than a straight Irish. I have no basis or hard facts, but, when I first looked at it, I could not see that you would have a huge demand for totally Irish-medium schools. I visited a post-primary school in Belfast and several primary schools. They were all vibrant schools; I liked them. They had a lot going for them, but, long term, I could not see that there would be a huge demand for Irish-medium schools across the Province. Having Irish-medium school units fixed to other schools would be a practical way. It is a vague answer, but I am vague about that. It is part of the initial agreement in Northern Ireland, so you have it anyway.
3068. **Mr McCausland:** If we are looking at challenging vested interests of all sorts, is everything on the table?
3069. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** Personally, I would put everything on the table.
3070. **Mr McCausland:** Following on from that, you mentioned at one stage the cultural diversity of Northern Ireland. Chris Hazzard talked about not just religious division but ethnic division, which is a reality. In some ways in Northern Ireland, religion is a synonym for a deeper ethnic division, of which religion is one element.
3071. Bringing together cultural identity, cultural expressions and ethnicity, and bearing in mind the different cultural traditions we have here, how do you see those being worked out in integrated schools? The chairwoman of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, whose name I have forgotten, was in Belfast the other week to give a lecture at the Children's Law Centre, and she talked about education rights, so some thought is being given to this. How do you see the rights of children, integrated schools and the cultural mix we have here playing out?
3072. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** The cultural mix in many schools in England is huge. A school I worked closely with in north London has 30 languages and people from all over the world. You just celebrate cultures in the school, and it happens easily and smoothly. There is no dominant culture and, where anything is worth celebrating, it is done.
3073. If you look around the schools, there is a clear mix of all kinds of cultures. It is just encompassing, and I think that can be done. It is done very well in integrated schools. Look around this one. I do not think it is a difficulty if you have the initial concept that all youngsters and cultures are equal and you celebrate the lot. There were a lot of youngsters from Asian backgrounds in the school I worked in, and we celebrated their ceremonies like everything else. It was just accepted. It is hard for me, coming from that background, to even consider that as a difficulty.
3074. **Mr Hazzard:** My question is around secular education. To a large extent, our integrated movement here in the North is still a non-denominational Christian-based schooling. Is there a space for secular schooling in the North? How does that fit in with the view of where we need to go?
3075. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** I took the view in the school that I ran that the culture was humanitarian. You had a moral base to the school, but religion was taught in religious studies classes. I took morning assembly, and I do not think I mentioned religion once. There was always a moral view, and you get to that if you have a very diverse population. If you have a diverse audience, you cannot start to say the Muslims do not attend, the Hindus do not attend, the Buddhists cannot attend. You have more outside than you have in the assembly. I wish all education was secular, but there we are.
3076. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much for attending and for supplying us with a written briefing.
3077. **Sir Robert Salisbury:** It is a pleasure.

18 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mr Robin Newton
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Jim Clarke	<i>Council for Catholic</i>
Mr Malachy Crudden	<i>Maintained Schools</i>
Father Tim Bartlett	<i>Northern Ireland</i>
	<i>Commission for</i>
	<i>Catholic Education</i>

3078. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome Jim Clarke, chief executive of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), Malachy Crudden, head of educational standards in CCMS, and Father Tim Bartlett from the Catholic commission. Thank you for coming to meet us this morning. I invite you to make an opening statement, and members will follow up with some questions.

3079. **Father Tim Bartlett (Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education):**

Thank you very much for your welcome. I will begin by thanking the Committee for its generosity in facilitating the earlier start to our discussion today. As you know, we have to leave as close as possible to 11.00 am to attend the funeral of the late Sheila Lundy, the mother of our colleague Mr Gerry Lundy of CCMS, who would otherwise have been with us this morning in some capacity. I also thank the Committee staff for helping to facilitate that.

3080. I am here on behalf of the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education (NICCE) as a member of that

commission. NICCE represents the Catholic bishops and the leaders of religious congregations in their role as the trustees of the family of over 500 Catholic maintained schools and Catholic grammar schools in Northern Ireland. In other words, we are the trustees of the largest sector of education in Northern Ireland. On behalf of NICCE, I welcome the opportunity to engage directly with the Education Committee this morning in respect of our written submission on the theme of shared and integrated education, which, I understand, you have received copies of.

3081. The most important point that I would like to highlight from that written submission is the one made in paragraph 3, which is, in essence, that commitment to promoting respect, tolerance and understanding and, indeed — I do not shy away from using the term as a Christian — promoting love of every person in society is precisely what defines the very purpose and aim of a Catholic school and, for the Catholic Church, the whole mission of the Church in education. This is because Catholic schools are based on the gospel of Jesus Christ, which, as you all know, has at its very heart the message of love of God, of neighbour and of self. This includes a profound duty to love and care for especially those who are most vulnerable, the marginalised and those most in need in any society. A lot of the religious congregations in particular on this island that have involved themselves in education grew out of that interest or concern for the most marginalised and those most in need.

3082. Catholic education also, therefore, implicitly includes a commitment to forming citizens who contribute positively and constructively to the common good of society. Commitment to the common good is a fundamental tenet of Catholic social teaching and doctrine. Essential to that, again, is a

- commitment to building peace, mutual understanding and reconciliation. If I may be so bold as to suggest it this morning, it is sometimes forgotten in political commentary and, indeed, in general debate in Northern Ireland that these are fundamentally Christian concepts that have been promoted, supported and articulated by Catholic and other Christian Church leaders over the years, not least at times when they were not as popular and as claimed by politicians or secular commentators and groups as they are today. I just want to put it on the table that those themes, which are at the heart of the whole concept of sharing and integration and, ultimately, the task of peacemaking, the common good, mutual understanding and reconciliation, are all the very essence of the Christian message and the Christian Churches' mission. I am not claiming that we have always lived up to them, but they are what drives and sustains us fundamentally. In the case of the Catholic Church, that is also fundamental to the mission and purpose of Catholic schools. Commitment to these values is fundamental to our schools.
3083. Our Catholic schools continue to be in high demand here in the North of Ireland and throughout the world among parents from a very wide range of backgrounds. Indeed, Catholic schools on this island and elsewhere have a very proud record of openness and inclusion, in particular to newcomers to our shores here. I am also mindful, for example, at the international level of the time I visited Gaza in 2008, where the largest primary and secondary school in Gaza City is the Holy Family Catholic School. It is 96% Muslim. The day I was there was the day of their graduation ceremony, which went on for hours. The Muslim children put on a great show on the theme of the prodigal son as a play that was written and developed from the Gospel story by the then parish priest Monsignor Musallam, who, although he grew up and lived only 40 miles away from Gaza, had never been able to get out of Gaza for 20-odd years to see his mother 40 miles away. That was his commitment to peace and reconciliation. I cite that as just one of many international examples of the consistency of a Catholic view and mission of education with the values of inclusion, reconciliation and peace building.
3084. The commitment of Catholic schools to peace, reconciliation and the common good was set out by the Catholic bishops in their nodal document, 'Building Peace: Shaping the Future', which I commend to the attention of members of the Committee. We have copies here to leave with you. In that document, we point out not only the commitment of the Church to the value of sharing and reconciliation in our society and the role of our schools in that but that any such effort on the part of schools involves a wide range of strategies, partnerships, shared activities and curricular initiatives and so on. We are and have always been very committed to engaging with any of those initiatives as part of the fundamental mission of our schools and our commitment to peace and reconciliation.
3085. More recently, we have engaged with the Transferor Representatives' Council and the Department of Education to look at a whole new concept of joint church schools in Northern Ireland. These already exist in GB, and we have always been enthusiastic about the concept of joint church schools. However, what is not always appreciated is the particular development of the systems here in Northern Ireland where, in fact, the Protestant Churches, as you know, handed their schools over to the state. Therefore, it was difficult to engage in a model of trusteeship of a new type of joint church school in a way similar to what has been done in Britain with Anglican and other Christian denominations to have joint faith-based schools. Happily, we have had a very constructive conversation with the Department and the transferors about that, and I think that the transferors mentioned it at their last meeting with you.
3086. I will conclude by saying that Sir George Bain, in his 2006 report — this is in paragraph 8 of our submission — pointed out what I am saying about our commitment:

“all schools, and all the educational interests, need to, and wish to, play their part in the journey towards the goal of A Shared Future”.

3087. He then concluded:

“We advocate, therefore, not a single approach to integration, but a more pervasive and inclusive strategy, focused on the dynamic process of integrating education across the school system.”

3088. As I say in our submission, NICCE supports the general principle underlining that approach. That is a good summary of our disposition and our commitment.

3089. At the heart of this debate, as we suggest in our submission — it might be something we want to pick up in our conversation this morning — there is a wider conversation about what we mean by a diverse and pluralist society. Do we see integration in the narrow sense as some form of homogenisation of diversity, which is essential to a pluralist democracy? We would wish to claim, citing not least the European Convention on Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, that parents have the right to have their children brought up in accordance with their religious and philosophical convictions. The two established conditions on that are, first, that there is a duty on all parents and providers to the common good. I am making the argument that the trustees of Catholic schools are fully committed to the common good of this society through their schools and that we have consistently demonstrated that. The second caveat or parameter is available resources. That is something that, again, the Catholic trustees and CCMS have demonstrated that they are incredibly responsible administrators of, in terms of efficiencies in the Catholic education system. We are at the forefront of area planning at the moment, finding greater efficiencies across the systems as well as opportunities for sharing in new and creative ways.

3090. **I want to emphasise this point:** our challenge to the general thrust of how the debate tends to go in the

public domain is that, in any normal, democratic, pluralist, diverse society, it is totally appropriate and consistent with human rights principles that there would be diverse provision in accordance with parental rights, including provision of faith-based schools where they are chosen in significant numbers. Those schools are also, in terms of the Catholic ethos of education, completely consistent with the common good.

3091. There are a few other points that I may make as the conversation develops, but, Chair, I thank you for the invitation to be here this morning.

3092. **Mr Jim Clarke (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools):** I will pick up from the base of the philosophical backdrop that Tim has created. Recognising CCMS as a non-departmental public body (NDPB) that has to deliver on the ground, I am going to take a more operational perspective.

3093. When we made our submission to the Committee late last year, the media picked it up as a kind of attack on the integrated sector. I want to state absolutely clearly that we have the utmost respect for the integrated sector, its right to exist, its philosophy of education and, indeed, its philosophy of life. However, we recognise that, over 30-odd years, it has not achieved what people in the mid-1990s would perhaps have expected in terms of outcomes and support. Our comments were a response to the reality, not to the right. Of course, the media want to sensationalise things sometimes, and I can understand that, but it is important that that position is stated. That does not diminish our belief that there are things that need to be changed. Our commitment to shared education is a recognition that there are different routes to the same objective. That objective is a much more peaceful, settled, inclusive society where there is respect and recognition of the rights of others. Education has a role to play in that, but it is not the only player in the game.

3094. There are issues that are practical. One of them is that, anywhere in the world,

- education — particularly in the early years — is local. It is a community-based activity. If our communities are of one denomination, one class or one ethnic group, there is a likelihood that that will be replicated in schools. How we break that down is a job for schools. It is a responsibility of education, but it is not education's responsibility alone. We have to look at the society that we have, how it is shaped and framed, where it lives and how it lives to understand part of what our education system looks like at this particular moment in time.
3095. If we accept the principle of parental choice — we do — we have to accept that parents make choices for a range of reasons. In those early years, convenience is certainly one of them. If an area is predominantly one grouping or another, there is a likelihood that parents will make that choice. We are faced with what people have chosen. They also choose because they make decisions about the kind of education that they want. On that basis, the right to a faith-based education is one that exists throughout the world and one that we in Northern Ireland ought to respect. I do not think that there is any dispute about that. However, there are times when it appears — maybe this is an external view as well as an internal view for some — that the only way to move forward is to get rid of the groups that appear to be the purveyors of the past: the big sectors — the Catholic and controlled sectors. That is illogical and impractical and is not deliverable. It is on that basis that we look at the issue.
3096. What is deliverable? In our view, the shared schools agenda is a spectrum from very limited association between one school and another to, as Tim has described, jointly managed faith-based schools and, indeed, integrated schools at the apex of that. However, the reality is that that will not be achieved overnight. Indeed, the evidence is that, over the last 30-odd years, it has only been achieved to a very narrow degree. The extent to which the decision of parents to send their children to an integrated school is about integration is open to question, because there is a range of other things that may impact on their decision-making. Education undoubtedly has a role in delivering a shared future for everyone, but so does society as a whole. We have to see it in that broader picture.
3097. There are issues about school size. It is often said that, in a diverse society, we want to bring schools together that balance the community. Again, I make the point that that is achievable where people buy into it. It cannot be imposed; it is a bottom-up model. Parents have to make the decisions. It cannot be something that can be legislated for. On that basis, we have a range of policies around area planning, including the sustainable schools policy, and we have to look at the issues in the context of those policies. In some ways, sustainable schools might create circumstances that allow for a greater degree of sharing — a jointly managed school being an optimum on that strand — but we cannot force that.
3098. The Deloitte report of 2007 or thereabouts identified the issue of the costs to a divergent society in Northern Ireland. In real terms — one of the authors acknowledged this in a radio interview that I was part of — economies of scale are economies of scale. It does not matter from what background people come; it is the economy of scale to achieve the curricular output that young people are entitled to. We have to have sustainable schools that deliver an education service, not schools that are there as preservations of one community or another. If they live within the constraints of funding and the policies, there is every reason for those schools to be retained; if they do not, we have to look at alternative models. Certainly, the integrated model is one; the joint faith-based model is another; but a sharing model with a wider range of choice within the curriculum is another.
3099. If we are going to look at shared schools, we have to ask, "What is the purpose of this?". We see it very much

- as increased access to the curriculum and to curricular choice for young people in post-primary in particular. We are going through difficult financial times, as everyone on the Committee well knows, and one of the things that have suffered over the last number of years is the degree to which teachers and others have had access to professional development. The context for schools working together on that basis is very strong, and it is being promoted further now by the expansion of the principle of area learning communities (ALCs) from the post-primary into the primary and nursery sectors.
3100. The economy of scale is very important, but we always have to have it in mind that all of us have a role towards the common good and to creating a peaceful society. It is our view that legislation is not the way to do that. By that I mean reference not just to article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, which gives the requirement for the integrated sector to be facilitated and encouraged but to any legislation around sharing. As the Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Integrated Education (TACOT:IE) report, in 1998, indicated, schools will move forward according to the circumstances in which they find themselves, and not every environment is exactly the same. Therefore, it would be difficult to impose targets. The problem with targets is that you could be pushing towards them for the wrong reasons, and you could create a circumstance where you are not going to be able to deliver because, as I have said, parental choice is a key player in this game.
3101. Of course, in the area of funding, we would encourage — indeed CCMS will set out tomorrow on the first of a series of meetings with principals — interdependence, working with schools and the wider community, rather than simply seeing the delivery of an education as something that is only in that school alone. The wider issues of the school in the community need to be taken into account as well. ALCs are practical responses. We see sharing as a practical response to an educational need to a societal need, but we believe that it is one of those things that do not necessarily lend itself to a Programme for Government target or, indeed, a Department of Education target.
3102. One of the big issues, of course, when we look at sharing is that there is a tendency to see it in terms of religious difference. We have racial difference in Northern Ireland, and we have a significant class difference. Going back to the report on sharing and integrated education, the issue of selection is a key one. The right of people to access schools with equality is a key issue. When we look at sharing, we have to look at it right across the spectrum. Again, I go back to the point that it has to have a practical outcome. We are there to create the conditions and the circumstances where sharing becomes the natural response to dealing with how things move forward in our society and in our education system. In that respect, I will use an analogy that draws on my background. I grew up on a mixed street where Catholics and Protestants lived together side by side, knew each other, worked with each other and were friendly with each other. That is how I see sharing. Sometimes, the purity of the integrated model almost requires everyone to live in the same house and not the same street. The reality is that it is more achievable to live on the same street than to live in the same house.
3103. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. First of all, can I —
3104. **Mr Malachy Crudden (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools):** May I conclude by making a few brief points? The commitment of CCMS to shared education is evident in the fact that we are involved in shared education initiatives right across the country. Some of those initiatives predate the shared campus discussions and the shared education initiative coming to the fore in recent years. As Jim said, our approach is very firmly based on the educational principles and how shared education can contribute to providing greater access and greater equality of access

- to as broad a curriculum as possible, particularly in the post-primary sector.
3105. CCMS has demonstrated its commitment to the shared education initiatives and is especially supportive of them when they come from the bottom up. CCMS is not necessarily proactive in this respect. To date, we have been mostly reactive in supporting initiatives for shared campuses and shared education when those have come from the communities, because, for those to be successful, they must have full community support and full community buy-in.
3106. Where shared education has been successful in the past and where it will be successful in the future, it must be based on respecting difference. We have to accept that we live in a society where we are not all the same. Our aim is to create a mature and inclusive society. That is the goal that we all share. In that society, we must be able to respect and cherish difference. While waiting outside to come in here this morning, I noticed a plaque on the wall for the late Senator Paddy Wilson, and, at the bottom of that plaque, there are three words: equality, tolerance and respect. CCMS is fully committed to those principles, and it is our belief that we can fulfil those principles through diverse provision in our education system.
3107. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much and apologies. I pass on my sympathies to Gerry Lundy on the passing of his mother. I am sure that I speak for other members of the Committee in saying that.
3108. You outlined very well a Catholic education and what you see in your schools, particularly around peace and reconciliation and the feeling of a common good. I visit many schools, and I do not see an alternative to that. I see that in controlled schools and in integrated schools. Could you define the difference between a Christian education and a Catholic education? Is it about control?
3109. **Father Bartlett:** That is a very good question. There are two dimensions to it. A Christian school is based on the objective document of the Christian Gospel and the message of Jesus Christ. Any Christian ultimately makes the claim that that is their point of reference. We say two things. The values that are articulated there, such as the principle of love of neighbour, love of God or even love of enemy, in that very harsh sense of describing an enemy, are fundamental to what animates the values of the community gathered in that place and the mission behind that educational enterprise. We say that it is a religious vision but it is also completely consistent with human society and the principle of the common good. In other words, it affirms what is good for society.
3110. I said that this is part of a wider debate about religion, society and the whole concept of what we mean by a pluralist and diverse society. It takes us into a spectrum of issues. In relation to education in particular, what sets a Catholic school apart from a controlled school or, I would even argue, some integrated schools, as I understand it, is this: the defining purpose of that school and the legal protection of the ownership by the trustees of the enterprise and the property guarantee that that is the core driving purpose and objective. In an increasingly secular society, controlled schools cannot guarantee that, because there is no legislative protection or protection of the trusteeship of those schools. I agree that it is there — it is largely there — but that is what I see as the difference. It becomes more stark if, for example, you take Catholic education at an international level. You can see that, in many societies, whether atheistic or otherwise, that protection, that difference and that mission become more distinctive, relative to the society. I think that it is part of the good news, which we can build on, that, as you properly say, all our schools are largely committed to that vision. What makes it different and why the Catholic Church did not hand its schools over to the state is that it guarantees that. As I understand it — I stand to be corrected

- here — in some of the integrated schools it will depend on your board of governors what the commitment is to a specifically Christian ethos. If human values of peace and reconciliation are what defines them, we welcome and support that and are happy to engage and cooperate with it.
3111. The final thing I would say is that we also have a right to a specifically religious character and identity and to have that reflected in the building and in the delivery of the whole curriculum, as well as in the liturgical and pastoral life of the community. Parents who are taxpayers and even those who are not have the same right, in a publicly funded system, to choose a system that reflects their religious ethos.
3112. The first thing is that it is a response to parents to have a distinctive character to a Catholic school that is Catholic in a religious sense. Secondly, the fundamental values of shared common good, reconciliation and peace, which are central to Christianity, are protected in law by the fact that we own, manage and are trustees of the school. Thirdly, other school sectors in Northern Ireland do not have the same protection, even though I openly acknowledge that the vast majority are fully committed to the same principles, which I welcome. Does that —
3113. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It strikes me from your response that the issue is about control and that you have the ability, through having ownership of the schools, to ensure that there is a Catholic, Christian ethos in them.
3114. **Father Bartlett:** Maybe the challenge I would make is that the word “control” has a very loaded sense. It is a responsibility. The word “trustee” is important. We hold, in trust, the responsibility to ensure that the character of that particular Catholic school reflects the choice that parents make to choose a Catholic education system. There is nothing hidden in what we offer or what we do. Management, trust and responsibility: that is how we would see it, rather than maybe in the more euphemistic sense of “control”.
3115. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I appreciate that. You are working with the transferors and looking at drafting a paper on faith-based schools. Your comments suggest that perhaps the barrier is in ownership.
3116. **Father Bartlett:** No, in fact there is no barrier, in principle, in the discussions. The barrier was in law. There was no model that the Department had available to it in Northern Ireland to date to allow joint ownership and trusteeship. In fact, in the conversations, discussions and responses to the Department, the transferors and the Catholic trustees have said that they would be very willing to engage on a joint trusteeship/joint ownership model in certain circumstances where it can be arranged.
3117. **Mr J Clarke:** If I can just add to that —
3118. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Can you tell us how such a school would operate? Who would have ownership of it? Would it be equal partners? How would pupils be engaged in the school?
3119. **Mr J Clarke:** Those questions are part of the ongoing discussions. I was about to say that we have a very constrained range of governance models, and all through the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) debate, one of the things we wanted on the table was a wider range of governance models to reflect the greater diversity in our society. The questions you ask are the practical questions that the subcommittee, which the Department is managing, is addressing. I made a point about people coming from different perspectives and environments, and that will play into the discussion.
3120. The one thing that it is important for us to say is that CCMS, as a body, does not promote Catholic education. We are the advocate for what is there, if you like, for the sector. I will not go into the history of why we came about, but we came about largely because the Government perceived a need. It is important to acknowledge that, in engaging with the transferors, all of us are trying to exploit the common ground. Once we can close

- that ground to a point where there is agreement, we will move forward. I think that the willingness is there to achieve that. It is as the old phrase says, “It is a work in progress”, but we have to go back to the fact — this reflects some of the things that Tim said — that parents make choices.
3121. To ask why there are Catholic schools, you have to ask why parents want to choose Catholic schools. The same point will apply to people who choose other schools. In some instances, parents choose schools because they regard them as secular. That is a perfectly legitimate position. One of the challenges in Northern Ireland is that the controlled sector, because it is a state system in the broadest sense, has all the nuances of our society. How that is to be encapsulated in an agreement with a sector that is overtly faith-based is a challenge on the other side. We need to look at how we can exploit the possibilities on that spectrum of sharing, as I described it.
3122. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** How do you see joint faith schools differing from integrated schools?
3123. **Father Bartlett:** Precisely on this very misunderstood point in the general concept of integrated education in Northern Ireland, as opposed to joint faith schools: the legal construct guarantees the religious ethos. As I understand it, most integrated schools are controlled in that sense. In other words, there is no legal protection to a religious ethos in those schools. That is a popular misconception. People often think they are talking about joint faith schools.
3124. I go back to your earlier question. The spectrum of possible modes of implementation for a joint faith school already operates very successfully in GB — in Scotland, England and Wales. We are looking at those models and engaging with the people involved. They tend to have a bit of local variation, depending on the balance of the population and so on, but the fundamental principle is joint ownership and agreed management structures.
- That is exactly the same thing as has characterised the discussions to date with the transferors and the Department on the new model.
3125. We have actively supported the transferors in reclaiming their space in the education sector in Northern Ireland. We can work with another faith-based Christian entity. People often wondered why the Catholic Church kind of held out. We cannot do that with a secular fluid controlled sector that has no interest in faith, other than in a very general societal sense, but we can do a joint ownership model with other Christian Churches. That represents the bulk of the society in Northern Ireland. That is the difference: it is guaranteed in law.
3126. **Mr Crudden:** You asked about the difference between a joint faith-based and an integrated school. One of the key differences is that a joint faith-based school has a distinctively Christian ethos, whereas an integrated school is secular. An integrated school should not promote any particular faith.
3127. I will go back to a point that you made. This question is asked constantly: why do we have Catholic schools? I sometimes ask this question: why should we not have Catholic education in Catholic schools? If the argument against Catholic schools is based on economics, we in CCMS have demonstrated through the area planning process that we are very conscious of our obligation to the economics of the argument. Secondly, are Catholic schools exclusive? No, they are not. Catholic schools are fully inclusive and are becoming increasingly so. We also need to recognise the contribution that Catholic education makes to society in general. That contribution is recognised in over 80 countries where a Catholic education system exists. We need to ask why we should not have Catholic schools, as opposed to why we do.
3128. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You are calling for the removal of the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. Would you say that the same

duty should be removed from the Irish-medium sector?

3129. **Mr J Clarke:** Over time, all sectors that have had a start-up, if you like, have to reach the point where they are going to fly or not. Whether they are Irish-medium, integrated or even Catholic schools on a different model or whatever, there is a period when they should have the facility to have that encouragement through some form of support. However, it has to come to an end at some point; otherwise, you distort the system. If we work on the principle that parents make choices, we have to respect when they start to show over a period the trend in their choices. I come back to the point that education is a publicly funded service. It must be efficient and deliver its primary purpose, which is education. On that basis, we think that the integrated sector has had a sufficiently long gestation period. If it came to an end after 30 or 35 years, the same should apply to the Irish-medium sector and to any others. Indeed, you could argue that the legislation that is being considered for shared schools should fall into the same category. You can promote certain things for a certain length of time. As I said, I am not sure that legislation is the best way to promote a shared approach. There is a concept that promotion for a while is useful, but it must eventually stand on its own two feet. It is a pure business model.

3130. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The requirement for a Catholic certificate to teach in a primary school creates a barrier to the integration of your staffing cohort. Have you given any consideration to changing that from an essential to a desirable criterion?

3131. **Mr J Clarke:** We have, I think, said to the Committee in the past that we are moving towards increasing access to the certificate. Malachy's point is that parents' entitlement to access a faith-based education requires, by implication, that people are developed in that ethos. Our belief is that people who are committed to the Catholic ethos, whether they are Catholics or not, can make a contribution to Catholic schools.

It is not a case of whether we should take the certificate away; it is whether we should extend access to it. That is the approach that we are taking.

3132. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you very much for giving us food for thought. I congratulate you on the success of the schools and on a lot of the suggestions in your report.

3133. One of the key questions we have asked everyone is on the definition in the Bill. My concern is that, by making it maintained, controlled, unionist, nationalist or socio-economic, we define people by groups, rather than having a more community-based idea that allows us, through the Bill, to push merging everyone together and sharing through a community ethos. Could you comment on that?

3134. **Mr J Clarke:** You are talking about the Bill for shared education. Malachy, do you want to answer?

3135. **Mr Crudden:** I will take you back to the point that the focus should be on delivering better provision for children. Where shared education is proposed, it should not necessarily be stipulated that there needs to be sharing between one community and another. There will be occasions when schools will not have the opportunity to share with a school from another sector because of location. Shared education should be viewed in a much broader sense to include the opportunities that exist for schools, either across sectors or within sectors, to share so that they can provide better education for children.

3136. **Mr J Clarke:** We should caveat that by saying again what I said, which is that we do not think that this would necessarily benefit from legislation. Clearly, however, a definition of shared education is important. I cannot put my hands on this at the moment, but Joanne Hughes, I think, of Queen's proposed a definition that we are in broad agreement with. Again, it is about parents making choices; we cannot force that.

3137. **Mr Kinahan:** Thank you. Following up on that, Jim, you, specifically, said that we do not need legislation, yet Father Tim quite clearly says that the basis for Catholic education is that it needs to be legislated for. Part of the reason, as I understand it, for pushing shared education through the Bill is that everyone needs a jolly good nudge to do more. We could argue that some of the things you are now doing with joint faith and shared schools would not have happened had we not nudged and nudged heavily. I look at your excellent schools and see that they are 97% Catholic. You still have the certificate in place, which you want to enlarge, rather than reduce. In area planning, your schools merge, rather than share with others. There are some excellent examples, but they are tiny. What I am really saying is this: the Bill and the push from most of the parties for more sharing are aimed at getting this continuum or the spectrum that you talked about to happen. I am not sure where to go with a question, but do you not see why we need to break down barriers, rather than go for one system?
3138. **Mr J Clarke:** I do not agree with you that this is happening because there has been a push. One of the risks of putting something into a Programme for Government is that you set a target and fail to achieve it. That then makes the thing look —
3139. **Mr Kinahan:** If you do not set a target, no one bothers.
3140. **Mr J Clarke:** But targets are being set, and this is one of the options. It is not in legislation, but we have an objective to create 10 campuses, for instance. We can achieve these things — this is the point we keep coming back to — only if there is a willingness on the ground for people to support them and if the conditions are right. Those conditions are, in some cases, set by government. For instance, there is no point in pulling two schools together to create another unsustainable school; there has to be sustainability to it. We have to remember that education is the primary purpose, not some kind of model that shows that, as a society, we are becoming more tolerant of each other because we are going to be forced to work together.
3141. 'Building Peace, Shaping the Future', which we will leave with you, goes back to 2001. It sets out very clearly the Catholic view of sharing. It makes the case that Catholic schools are not schools for Catholics. I think that the same could be said of controlled schools: they are not schools for anyone in particular; they are down to parental choice.
3142. The reason why we do not think that legislation is helpful is that all the steps that have been taken so far have occurred without legislation and without the threat of legislation. I contend that, certainly in the post-primary sector, what has probably accelerated the process most has been the sharing education programme (SEP) through Queen's. There was a practical reason for that, which was to extend the range of curricular choice in schools. It has created an environment where children from different schools, wearing different uniforms, walk up and down corridors in all kinds of school every day and work together. It is those practical steps that will bring things forward, not legislation.
3143. **Again, I go back to TACOT:** IE from 1998. You have to look at local circumstances. In some cases, these things happen because there is a need; in other cases, you are kind of constructing a need. EMU, I suppose, is an example of constructed need. It has not led to the expansion that would have been hoped for. The point that I make is that we constantly need to change how we can move forward.
3144. The really important thing that you are hearing from all of us — I am sure that you have heard it from others who have sat in these chairs — is that there is now a willingness to work together. Indeed, if I can go back to the practical side of it, the funding situation that we face creates another practical need. We are very responsive to that. Malachy made the point that we cannot go out and promote a particular model, but we

can say that, if the circumstances are right, other models may be considered. If we and the board went to an area and said, “This is what we are going to do and there are sufficient numbers to create a school”, it is equally possible that the community will say, “Well, that is fine. If you want to do that, you go right ahead, but we are heading off this way to the nearest controlled school and that way to the nearest maintained school”. There has to be buy-in. It is not something that can be imposed, which is why we make the point that it needs a bottom-up approach. It is about hearts and minds.

3145. **Mr Crudden:** Just to go back to your point about a definition, I have found it. The Centre for Shared Education in Queen’s University said:

“Shared Education is broadly defined as any collaborative activity within or between schools or other educational institutions that can: contribute towards school improvement, provide access to opportunity, encourage more effective use of resources, and promote social cohesion”.

3146. We think that that is an excellent definition of what shared education could be.
3147. There are occasions when legislation is required to ensure conformity. With regard to the consultation at the moment on bullying in schools, we believe that there is a strong case for legislation to ensure that schools address the issue appropriately. Having legislation for something such as shared education brings me back to my point about the location of some schools. If they are not able to engage in sharing, will they be penalised in some form because it is in legislation and they are obliged to do it?
3148. Finally, you made the point that CCMS, through area planning, tends to rationalise schools in our sector first. That is our primary obligation under legislation. We are obliged under the 1989 Order to plan for the development of Catholic schools. That is our primary responsibility. If opportunities present themselves and they come from the

community, CCMS is certainly committed to exploring opportunities for sharing in those contexts.

3149. **Mr Kinahan:** They have to bring the opportunities in front of you, then.
3150. **Father Bartlett:** Could I add one further dimension to that? It is the concept of the principle of subsidiarity and incentivisation. In other words, law is not always the best way. Law can be quite a blunt instrument, as you well know. It is not always the best way, especially with the principle of subsidiarity at local level, to get communities to engage in the way that you want. Incentivisation, rather than obligation, while it may be a slower, steadier process, is still very important and valid. I suppose that we are arguing that, for the time being, incentivisation is a better way to go than legislation.
3151. **Mr Kinahan:** This is a very short question. What other groupings are on the subcommittee that you talked about? Are integrated schools, voluntary grammars and Irish-medium schools on it? Is it just the controlled sector and you?
3152. **Mr J Clarke:** I am not on it, so I do not know precisely. I think that the main thrust here is to develop the model of joint faith schools. I think that it is mainly transferors, trustees and the Department at this stage.
3153. **Mr Lunn:** You are very welcome, as usual. I had better say at the outset that I regard all three of you as friends, because, by the time that I am finished, that might be open to question. *[Laughter.]* Could you pass on my condolences to Gerry Lundy, who I think is a constituent of mine?
3154. **Mr J Clarke:** We will.
3155. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Electioneering.
3156. **Mr McCausland:** There is no limit to it.
3157. **Mr Lunn:** No, frankly, Chair —
3158. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** No, sorry; it was just —

3159. **Mr Lunn:** I am passing on condolences.
3160. Having said that, I find your whole attitude to parental choice in particular dispiriting, not to say depressing. You seem to favour the principle of parental choice when it means that parents choose a Catholic school, but you do not apply it when parents decide that they would like to send their children to an integrated school. In particular, you would not apply it if a Catholic school was to opt for transformation or amalgamation with a school from another sector. You would not allow it. That is pretty clear, Malachy, from what you have said today and in the past. Do you not feel that you are being slightly hypocritical about parental choice as a principle?
3161. **Mr J Clarke:** The parental choice that we describe is the parental choice expressed by parents when they choose a school. I think that some of what you are saying is about what you might call an area planning approach and giving an incentive —
3162. **Mr Lunn:** No, I am talking about parental choice: the clearly expressed will of a group of parents in a school or two schools on how they see the way forward.
3163. **Mr J Clarke:** You are going back now to the 1989 Order and transformation. We have always regarded that as an unfortunate piece of legislation that, as Tim has pointed out, actually diminishes the rights of the trustees. Groups of parents can be mobilised in a range of ways. What we are talking about is individuals expressing a view.
3164. I accept that, in some circumstances, how you create an integrated school may be difficult because, as has been said, there are what might be called the two big blocs there. However, that will have worked, going right back to the very inception of the integrated movement. It is perfectly legitimate for people in a community to lobby for that right, and we would support that. We do not support trying to undermine our sector for that to be achieved. I have made the point that CCMS does not have a responsibility to promote Catholic education; our responsibility is to ensure that we have high-quality Catholic schools.
3165. The other point that I would make — I will not refer to the specific circumstance — is that, if this is going to happen and there is to be transformation, it should be on the basis of the policies that exist. If we are going to create schools, we have to create sustainable schools. We should not come in behind legitimate policy proposals to unnerve a community and create a circumstance that, according to policy, is not achievable.
3166. **Mr Lunn:** If two schools in an area decide that they would like to amalgamate on an integrated basis and three quarters of the parents in your maintained school opted for that, you would still block it.
3167. **Mr J Clarke:** If they were choosing to build a school —
3168. **Mr Lunn:** Tell me yes or no. Would you or would you not?
3169. **Mr J Clarke:** If they were choosing to build a school, that is a matter for the community to decide. If they want to take over a Catholic school, there is an issue that we would have to address.
3170. **Mr Lunn:** No, if that were the preferred solution amongst the parents, you would still prefer to close the Catholic maintained school if it was not viable and move the children to the nearest Catholic maintained school, whatever distance away it was.
3171. **Mr J Clarke:** Malachy has made the point that —
3172. **Mr Lunn:** That is a genuine position to hold. I just want to clarify that that is your position.
3173. **Mr J Clarke:** That is our legislative position but —
3174. **Mr Lunn:** There are no circumstances in which you will countenance the transformation of a Catholic maintained school to integrated status.
3175. **Mr Crudden:** Could I ask —

3176. **Mr Lunn:** Do not ask me; I am asking you.
3177. **Mr Crudden:** I am not aware of any circumstances where CCMS has actually stood in the way of a Catholic maintained school transforming.
3178. **Father Bartlett:** Can you evidence the claim that you are applying to us?
3179. **Mr Lunn:** I am asking —
3180. **Father Bartlett:** You are making a claim, Trevor; you are not asking. You are making a claim. You have said what we would do and what we would not do. Evidence the claim.
3181. **Mr Lunn:** I am putting it to you. Let us go to the Moy situation; this will be an interesting one. The vote amongst the parents there was actually quite close. Very nearly half the parents across the two schools preferred an integrated option, but it went in favour of the rather bizarre arrangement that we will be stuck with in a few years' time. What would you have done, had the parents opted the other way and said that they would like to see an integrated solution there?
3182. **Father Bartlett:** So you cannot evidence your claim.
3183. **Mr Lunn:** I am not making a claim.
3184. **Father Bartlett:** You did make a claim.
3185. **Mr Lunn:** I am asking you what you would have done.
3186. **Father Bartlett:** You told us what we would do in your earlier statements.
3187. **Mr Crudden:** I am not aware of any vote taking place in the Moy, certainly in our school.
3188. **Mr Lunn:** The votes that were cast are on the file of the two headmasters in the Moy. Also on the file is your complete opposition to the whole principle until it became obvious that something had to be done.
3189. **Mr Crudden:** Our opposition to it?
3190. **Mr Lunn:** Yes.
3191. **Mr Crudden:** I would be very interested in seeing that documentation.
3192. **Mr Lunn:** I think that you should. You can read it for yourselves.
3193. **Father Bartlett:** With respect, Trevor, I would have expected that, if we had come here to respond to something like that, you would have presented us with the detailed evidence, papers and so on to sustain it. You are asking us to deal with very hypothetical situations. We have clearly affirmed our respect for the principle of parental choice. How that works out in a particular local circumstance will be an incredibly complex question. It will also involve responsibility to answer questions such as, to use the scenario that you suggested, if 50% of parents want to go for a particular integrated model, what will happen with the other 50%? Are they going to support that? Will that lead to a sustainable school? A range of complex questions arise in that regard.
3194. We have affirmed consistently our respect for the right of parents to choose and our respect for the integrated sector. We have also indicated our willingness to look at new models where faith-based education can be sustained. There will be new options emerging for communities to consider in those situations. I do not appreciate coming here and being told what we would do when you do not have evidence to sustain it that you are willing to present here in detail.
3195. **Mr Lunn:** I have asked you what you would do.
3196. **Father Bartlett:** I would expect a more responsible approach from a public representative.
3197. **Mr Lunn:** Let me just —
3198. **Mr Crudden:** May I just make one point before you ask again, Trevor?
3199. **Mr Lunn:** I am looking at the clock.
3200. **Mr Crudden:** In the one instance of that situation arising that I am aware of, CCMS advised the governors of the schools concerned of the process that

- they would need to undertake in order to explore the possibility of becoming an integrated school. We have never stood in the way of any developments in the integrated sector.
3201. **Mr J Clarke:** May I just make a point, Trevor? These last few minutes have encapsulated the issue that there are difficulties for those who want purity of a model. What we are talking about is how we can take steps forward that our communities will support. There is a range of these emerging. They do not have to be about changing governance or anything like it. It can simply be that you exploit the facilities of a community together to achieve the best outcomes for young people in that community.
3202. **Mr Lunn:** I am not interested in the purity of the model; I would like to see our children being educated together on a much greater scale. It is not happening in your schools.
3203. **Mr J Clarke:** Trevor, I have to disagree with you on that —
3204. **Mr Lunn:** Hold on a minute, I will get to the question.
3205. **Mr J Clarke:** You cannot have sharing in this society without the Catholic sector and, indeed, the controlled sector, being intimately involved in it.
3206. **Mr Lunn:** Let me move on just slightly. I am sure that you will tell me that you have all been in an integrated school.
3207. **Mr J Clarke:** Yes.
3208. **Mr Crudden:** My first teaching post was in Hazelwood College.
3209. **Mr Lunn:** You seem to have a problem with the quality of faith education in integrated schools. I must say that that is completely at odds with anything that I have seen in extensive visits to integrated schools. It just is not the case. They deal with religion and faith in a very balanced way. They also prepare your sector's children for the sacraments in a way to which, as far as I understand, there is no objection from the Catholic Church. Is that the case? What is your problem with allowing Catholic children to be educated in an integrated setting?
3210. **Mr Crudden:** We do not have a problem.
3211. **Mr J Clarke:** We do not have a problem. Parents make the choice. I will let Tim speak for himself, but the point that he was making is that the commitment to ethos in a Catholic school is very clear. It cannot be quite so clear when — this applies to all other sectors as well — you are dealing with a much broader range of backgrounds, including people from ethnic backgrounds that are not Christian at all.
3212. **Father Bartlett:** I would challenge your fundamental assumption that integrated schools are religious schools in law: they are not.
3213. **Mr Lunn:** They are not religious schools in law; of course they are not.
3214. **Father Bartlett:** That is the point. May I finish?
3215. **Mr Lunn:** Yes.
3216. **Father Bartlett:** A Catholic school is a school that is defined, founded and based on the religious mission of that school. It is the fundamental and founding characteristic and principle of that school. There is a fundamental qualitative difference that parents are free to choose between when they make a choice between an integrated school and a Catholic school.
3217. As a person of faith, if I had children and was considering where to place them on that spectrum, a question in my mind would be this: in an integrated school as currently constituted, as opposed to the alternative of a joint Church school, for example, could I rely on the stability of the approach of that integrated school towards the whole issue of religion and my faith and my faith disposition? That is a movable feast in terms of what boards of governors do at any time in response to society, societal emphasis, change and all the rest of it. A Catholic school remains a Catholic school. That is a fundamental qualitative difference in terms of the religious question that

you ask. We are not casting aspersions on the quality of religious education in integrated schools.

3218. **Mr Lunn:** It sounded that way. I respect your faith schools, I respect the Catholic maintained sector and I respect the right of parents to send their children there. It is the reciprocation of that view that worries me, frankly. I do not get that from you, and I wish, Chairman, that we could have a longer discussion with these guys. It is unfortunate about the funeral; of course, you have to go. I will leave it there, but we need to talk more about this.

3219. **Mr J Clarke:** Can I make one final point? Trevor, if we are looking at the purity of an integrated school, as I have described it, at the far end of the spectrum, we say that that is not always achievable, particularly within a limited timescale. We say that the commitment to get to a more shared, inclusive, respected and respectful society is through steps that can be taken in different circumstances at different paces. We are supportive of that. We have the same long-term objective, but we believe that, along the way, we need to ensure that certain things are in place because that is what parents want.

3220. **Mr Lunn:** Yes, that is what parents want.

3221. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mindful of Trevor's comment and the fact that you need to leave and that several other members wish to ask questions, would it be possible to reschedule and come back for an additional session?

3222. **Father Bartlett:** How much longer would you like? We can arrive late to the funeral. We can accommodate that. We would rather deal with this this morning.

3223. **Mr Lunn:** I could do with another half hour. Let others have a go.

3224. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** We will see how we get on with the rest of the session.

3225. **Mr Sheehan:** Thanks, gentlemen, for coming. Tim, you mentioned in your opening statement that the maintained

sector is based on Christian values such as the love of God, neighbour and self, yet it continues the iniquitous practice of academic selection. In my view, that is the worst segregation in the education system. I understand that boards of governors are in control of schools and can set the entrance criteria, but, at the end of the day, I have spoken to many principals, former principals, teachers and former teachers, particularly from a non-selective background, and they feel that the Catholic hierarchy has let them down terribly.

3226. **Father Bartlett:** I challenge that absolutely and unequivocally. The Catholic bishops and trustees — the Catholic hierarchy, as you call it — have collectively been at the forefront of supporting the transition from academic selection. That is their formal stated position, which your party does not fail to claim and point to, so I am surprised that you make that claim this morning. I accept, however, that the trustees' ability to change that matter in law in accordance with their policy is limited because the boards of governors, as you properly say, have that responsibility. Those boards of governors include Department representatives appointed by the Minister, who is from your party, so there is an influence there. They include other representatives, legitimately and importantly, such as parents, teachers and so on. Part of this is clearly about winning hearts and minds and winning the argument, but the position of the Catholic trustees has been unequivocal and clear. Pat, no other sector has moved as much as the Catholic sector has, and we can point to any number of schools that have begun that process and are committed to it. Regrettably, there are others who will take longer on that journey, but the trustees, as trustees, are fully committed to that policy.

3227. **Mr Sheehan:** I am not going to argue with you about other sectors; our view on that is very clear. I am concerned about the sector that you represent. In spite of the honeyed words about what the Catholic bishops —

3228. **Father Bartlett:** Which your party quotes regularly.
3229. **Mr Sheehan:** In fact, you have been very unsuccessful at removing academic selection, apart from a small number of instances.
3230. **Father Bartlett:** St Killian's on the north Antrim coast in this diocese has transformed. There is also St Patrick's in Armagh and Loreto in Coleraine. There are others in the pipeline. Lurgan is another case in point. These things do not happen overnight, by their very nature.
3231. **Mr Sheehan:** What percentage is that, Tim?
3232. **Father Bartlett:** Your own Minister has a role in this.
3233. **Mr Sheehan:** What percentage is that?
3234. **Father Bartlett:** We do not have the majority on those boards.
3235. **Mr Sheehan:** What percentage is it of the overall grammar sector?
3236. **Father Bartlett:** Your Minister has been very slow in appointing his representatives to those boards.
3237. **Mr Sheehan:** Tim, what percentage of Catholic grammars have done away with academic selection?
3238. **Father Bartlett:** I cannot put a percentage on that.
3239. **Mr Sheehan:** That is the question I am asking. It is very small.
3240. **Father Bartlett:** Your words were that the Catholic hierarchy or the Catholic trustees — there are more than just the bishops involved; it is the religious orders — were not committed to it. Their repeated public position on the matter is unequivocal, so I challenge your claim.
3241. **Mr Sheehan:** The evidence is in the outcome. The Catholic bishops or the trustees can say what they wish, but people will look at the evidence of the number of schools that have changed, and it has been a tiny percentage. Some schools have even recently rolled back from commitments to reduce the number being taken into schools through academic selection, so we are moving backwards.
3242. **Father Bartlett:** Yes, the board of governors of some of those schools — not, in the words you used, the Catholic hierarchy, not the trustees.
3243. **Mr Sheehan:** Why, then, are so many people from the teaching profession disappointed in the role that the Catholic trustees and Catholic bishops have played in all of this?
3244. **Father Bartlett:** Because they may misunderstand the legislative responsibility or authority that trustees have to influence that decision.
3245. **Mr Sheehan:** We are not talking about legislative influence; we are talking about influence of the bishops with people who are on boards of governors.
3246. **Father Bartlett:** The board of governors has the responsibility, full stop. We can only encourage —
3247. **Mr Sheehan:** You have no influence.
3248. **Father Bartlett:** Of course we have influence, and we have sought to use that influence to our best endeavours, just as you do as politicians. Would you like me to litany the areas in which your Minister, your party or politicians generally fail to achieve what they want? We are all in the same boat. We are committed to it, and it would be better if we worked collaboratively, rather than using this as some political point-scoring thing about the Catholic trustees. If that is what you want to do, fair enough. Our position is unequivocal on the matter. It is clear, and we regard it as something at the essence of equality and sharing. It is interesting that the Committee has not made a big issue of it, and, indeed, in terms of educational policy, the issue is not there to the same extent as the idea of promoting integrated schools in that narrow sense. I am sorry, Pat, but I can only say that our position is unequivocal and clear, and, to our best endeavours, we are trying to influence the situation. It is a work in progress.

3249. **Mr J Clarke:** CCMS's position on this is absolutely unequivocal. I share your frustration. I may have a better understanding of some of the impediments, because we are moving the agenda forward as far as we can, but we do not have the influence over those boards of governors. One of the things we have to remember is that it is outside of policy. If it were a policy matter, you would be deliberating on it and giving us the scaffolding, if you like, to move forward on it.
3250. We have ended up in a philosophical discussion, which is not the way that the issue needs to be handled. As a society, we have to recognise that our economy is very important to us. We create a settled, peaceful society when we have people who have a place and a stake in that society. Education is very important in creating the economy that allows that to happen. My concern is that many of our very able young people are being disadvantaged in society because the view of what our economy needs is not reflected, in many cases, in the curriculum of our schools.
3251. Trevor, just to take an example of how the integrated sector works effectively with the rest of the sectors, there was a piece of work conducted about a year ago or 18 months ago in Hazelwood, where they were making a bid for a joint STEM centre.
3252. **Mr Lunn:** It is still going ahead.
3253. **Mr J Clarke:** They canvassed the curricular offer of all the schools in the wider north Belfast area, and the difference between the subject choice available in the grammar sector and that available in the non-selective sector was quite stark. We have to get an alignment between our economy, our education system and, indeed, what goes on in Nelson's former Department, DSD, to create the circumstances to ensure that young people are included in our education system the whole way through. When I talk about parental choice, I am talking about parental choice that is available to everyone. We have inequality in that some young people are excluded from certain schools. In many cases, their exclusion diminishes the range of choice available to the other young people in those schools.
3254. For educational and economic reasons, we need to put education at the heart of this issue and we need to promote the concept of inclusion and equality in our education system so that we have an economy and a society that is at peace with itself. The steps towards that are steps that the politicians primarily have responsibility for. In the Catholic sector, we are doing our damndest, against policy, to create those circumstances. So, Pat, I understand your frustration, but I would prefer that we see the steps that have been taken, rather than decrying the steps that have yet to be taken.
3255. **Mr Rogers:** Thanks, Father Tim, Jim and Malachy; you are very welcome. I want to go back to the point that was raised by the Chair and by Trevor about the Moy campus. Does CCMS support the proposals for the Moy campus as it is now?
3256. **Mr Crudden:** The proposal for Moy could not have gone ahead without the support of CCMS and the Southern Education and Library Board, so we are fully supportive. The sharing that has gone on in the Moy predates the shared campus initiative and the shared education initiative. We see that as a strength for the Moy, hence our support for it.
3257. **Mr Rogers:** I am sure that you do not have the figures today, but what percentage of post-primary schools have 10%, say, coming from the non-Catholic community?
3258. **Mr J Clarke:** We do not have the figures but there are differentials in different areas. There is one school with a very significant non-Catholic population. Our point is that the door is open; it is for parents to make that choice. It is not about counting numbers but asking whether parents are satisfied with the education that is available in the school.
3259. **Mr Rogers:** I probably should have declared an interest, having spent 30 years in the Catholic sector, which I

- fully support, and as chair of a CCMS primary school board of governors. I was surprised, Malachy, when you said that, in terms of sharing, you were more reactive than proactive. I am thinking particularly of St Columbanus' College in Bangor.
3260. **Mr Crudden:** We are reactive in terms of the latest shared education initiatives. The success of a shared education campus, for example, rests very firmly in the community's support for it. As Jim said earlier, we cannot go to a community and say that this is something that we want to impose on it. We have to react to the community coming to us and saying that there is an initiative that they would like us to support. So, in that sense, we are reactive.
3261. **Mr J Clarke:** We are very proactive in other ways. The spectrum of access to the curriculum is something that we very clearly support through area learning communities and initiatives in individual schools. In area learning communities, it is not just the religious mix but the class mix that is an issue. Many of the constraints are imposed by schools making their own decisions. One of the things that the Committee needs to be aware of, not just in relation to the sharing model but in relation to access to the curriculum, is that schools possibly have too much autonomy in the wrong areas. I am not suggesting that we handle that by legislation when it comes to shared education, but we need to look at governance models and what the rights of governors are with the belief that it is not the school that is important but the child accessing an education through schools.
3262. We do not see area planning as the planning of buildings; we see it as the planning of access to the curriculum. If that means working with sectors outside the Catholic sector, so be it, but that is what we see area planning being about.
3263. **Mr Rogers:** Finally, Father Tim, supporters of secular education say that religion should be taken out of the school context altogether. When we were in Dublin, one sector there said that, if they wanted to have religious instruction of any sort, they could use the school premises after school. Some people believe that it should be left to the parish. What is your view on that?
3264. **Father Bartlett:** Catholic schools have evolved in response to a sufficient number of parents wanting their children in a given place to be brought up in a Catholic school environment. So, the Catholic school, in that sense — in relation to the faith formation of a child, which includes its cultural and social formation — is a response, as we said, to that fundamental human right of parents and cooperates with the community of faith in a parish. It is at the service of that community of faith as well, and that is why, particularly at primary level, the link is so close between the parish and the primary school. That is something fundamental to Catholicism. We believe in a community-based vision of Christian faith that you cannot just live a Christian life in isolation; you are part of a community. In that sense, the community has a right also to a space where it can be itself.
3265. That is why I said that this is part of a wider discussion about what we mean by a pluralist and diverse society. You mentioned the secular trend. My personal experience is that, often under the guise of a claim that secularism and secularity is a neutral space, it actually becomes an incredibly intolerant space of religion and religiosity, which, itself, is a human right and fundamental to our human existence. I think that that comes through into this debate a little bit about shared and integrated education. Some secular views that want to get religion out of schools altogether do not recognise or accept the human right of parents to have their children brought up in accordance with their faith. They actually do not respect faith — they really do not — and they go further and make the claim that, uniquely, faith in our world and in our society is a source of tension and division, when we could point to many secular atheistic societies that have had their own bloodbaths on very different axes.

3266. We need to get beyond the simplistic claim that sometimes lurks behind the whole shared/integrated thing and is sometimes a cloak for anti-Catholicism in particular, although not always. It is manifested, for example, when international visitors are brought to Northern Ireland. When President Obama, for example, came to Enniskillen for the G8, they were brought to the integrated school. They passed by the controlled school and the Catholic school. Why? "Well, they are the problem". That is the message that is so often communicated. I say that they never were the problem and that they have a social responsibility that they do their best to live out in contributing to the common good, and we need to end the attitude, which is, frankly, offensive, that faith-based schools are of their very nature divisive. They are completely consistent with and contribute to and are actually a sign of authentic diversity and pluralism, and I will defend the right of those schools to exist in response to the community choice of a group of parents in sufficient numbers.
3267. **Mr Crudden:** Having taught at a Catholic school through very difficult times, I would go so far as to say that the school that I taught in made a very significant contribution to ensuring that various situations did not become worse.
3268. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you for that.
3269. **Mr Newton:** I welcome the delegation to the Committee and thank them for coming, particularly in the difficult circumstances.
3270. I have only one question, Chair, and you have partially dealt with it. You will be aware that the transferors, as represented by the three main Protestant denominations, outlined to us but did not give us any detail of what might be a faith-based initiative that they seemed quite confident was going to go ahead. You referred to it today, and I am not sure whether your confidence is as high as theirs, but you might want to add to that.
3271. You made reference to the Catholic ethos running throughout the school and permeating the operation of the school, how it delivers and, indeed, the whole ethos of the school. If you are supportive of a faith-based school amongst other faiths, that would presumably be limited to the Christian faith.
3272. **Father Bartlett:** In relation to our schools?
3273. **Mr Newton:** Yes. If you are committed to moving towards a faith-based school that will involve other denominations, it would be, presumably, a Christian faith-based school. If that is the case and it has the various denominations in it, how can the Catholic ethos run throughout every aspect of school life?
3274. **Father Bartlett:** That is an issue that we have already dealt with in the examples from GB, in Scotland, England and Wales. Obviously, there is a spectrum of provision in this regard that is permeated through the school. It is completely consistent with Catholic theology that we would share with other Christians in the enterprise of the common purpose of education built around agreed values. There is so much that we agree on, that we can build on, and that we are committed to building on together that we can do that. This goes back to what I think George Bain said. There is a dynamism in education and in faith-based education. We are not stuck in a particular form or mode of Catholic education per se. Part of being Catholic is to be ecumenical and to be involved with our sisters and brothers in the Christian Church. Part of that is also to open up our schools, as they exist as Catholic schools but also potentially as joint Christian schools, to wider society, so that the schools would be welcoming of a diversity of pupils. That is reflected in the experience in GB. The fundamental issue is a negotiated agreement about how the Christian ethos is protected, respected and present and that it is there as the defining character of the school in law.
3275. **Mr Newton:** If the Catholic ethos is dominant in CCMS schools and you make a move in partnership with others, then one Christian value or ethos cannot dominate.

3276. **Father Bartlett:** I will try to explain it more succinctly. As it is with another Christian Church with which we already share so many of the basic values that are fundamental to the educational enterprise and because we can then work on so much together and provide a common environment with particular negotiated ways and spaces — this is calibrated slightly differently in each school in the GB context — for the particular identity of the Christian tradition within that to be reflected. In other words, it is precisely because it is another Christian Church with which we share so much in common — or other Christian churches — that we can still make sure that the Christian ethos, where it is common, is the dominant ethos, pervading the whole community and mission of that school.
3277. **Mr Newton:** I know it is in an international context, but the example you provided of the school in Gaza, which obviously does not have a Catholic ethos, but yet —
3278. **Father Bartlett:** It does. This is —
3279. **Mr Newton:** The pupils are not Muslim then?
3280. **Father Bartlett:** This is why the concept of mutual respect is, as I explained at the very beginning, implicit to what a Catholic school is about. It includes respect for other religious faiths. To cite Monseigneur Musallam, on that visit, he said that they regarded it as a very serious breach if any child — Christian or Muslim — showed disrespect to the other in terms of their religious convictions. This is what people find difficult to get their head round. It is fundamental to the character of a Catholic school that it is tolerant and respectful, which is why it is so hurtful and unjust to claim that we are sectarian and a source of conflict.
3281. **Mr Newton:** I hope that all educationalists are tolerant of and respectful to children from whatever background.
3282. **Father Bartlett:** Take the school in Gaza, for example; again, there is mediation.
- Because it is there as a Catholic school, no one can challenge the idea that there would be a celebration of Mass for the Catholic children in the school or that the seasons and feasts of the Christian calendar would be celebrated and acknowledged. The same school, however, precisely because it is Catholic, will also welcome the Muslim community and give them the space to celebrate their faith and traditions, as long as it is all done with mutual respect. That is fundamental to Catholic schools everywhere. That is the point I am trying to make. Arrangements can be negotiated according to the situation.
3283. **Mr Newton:** I am then trying to get my head round, in that example — you have taken me to that example — the difference between an integrated school and a shared faith school.
3284. **Father Bartlett:** The faith dimension is protected in law; it is not a secular state school.
3285. **Mr Newton:** I am saying that not because I share Trevor's views but because I cannot see the difference from the example you gave.
3286. **Father Bartlett:** I acknowledge that many integrated schools achieve a similar thing, but that will depend on the board of governors at the time; it is not guaranteed in law. Moreover, how it is allowed for, accepted or tolerated could be subject to — we have international experience of this — the shifting sands of the state or Government of the place. Let us imagine for a moment, that you have an aggressively atheistic, communist Government coming in who did not respect religion. They would have more difficulty in their own legislative process undermining a faith school that was based in law, than they would with one that they controlled and owned. Does that make sense?
3287. **Mr Newton:** Well, it is a fairly extreme example.
3288. **Father Bartlett:** Sorry, but we are in the luxurious position, if I may say — as the Chair mentioned at the beginning — that there is actually a great symbiosis in the

- values that all our schools share. That is a great thing.
3289. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you. Just to let you know, four further members have indicated that they wish to ask questions. I am just mindful of your time.
3290. **Mr McCausland:** It has been interesting to hear the presentation this morning. It reflects something that has been obvious in other presentations on other days: once you start to look at shared education, a range of other educational issues suddenly open up, and you start to discuss them. It has therefore been stimulating in that wider regard. First, the figure was quoted that around 2.5% of children at Catholic maintained schools were from, probably, a Protestant background. I was at a Catholic maintained school on Friday that quoted around 10%. Mention was also made of a grammar school up in Portstewart —
3291. **Father Bartlett:** It is close to 40% — Dominican College Portstewart.
3292. **Mr McCausland:** The other was Dominican College, north Belfast. Is the one in Portstewart called that as well?
3293. **Father Bartlett:** Yes, that is Dominican College.
3294. **Mr McCausland:** They are both called Dominican College. I know that we have not got precise figures, but does it tend to be focused in grammar schools?
3295. **Father Bartlett:** No. It is primary, secondary and grammar. We could point to examples at every level.
3296. **Mr Crudden:** Any statistics quoted in our paper refer simply to Catholic maintained schools. They do not refer to grammar schools.
3297. **Mr McCausland:** If it is 10%, 20% or 30% in a number of grammar schools, that would skew the thing higher, obviously, and the figure must be lower in other schools. My second question relates to Catholic ethos. It is very much the governors who run the school. How
- do you ensure that the Catholic ethos plays out?
3298. **Father Bartlett:** First, it is part of the legal ownership structure. Then, it comes down to the trustee representatives and the scheme of management of the school. All members of the board of governors would be expected to respect the Catholic ethos of the school and its fundamental mission in that regard, but, in theory, the trustee representatives are there to ensure that it is presented and mediated, if you like. All members of the board of governors would have that responsibility.
3299. **Mr McCausland:** What percentage of the board of governors are trustees?
3300. **Father Bartlett:** Four out of the nine.
3301. **Mr McCausland:** The other five are —
3302. **Father Bartlett:** Department representatives.
3303. **Mr J Clarke:** In the maintained sector, the Department and the board of the Education Authority — the Education Authority does not have a seat in the voluntary sector — and, then, parents and teachers or staff.
3304. **Mr Crudden:** It is two from the Department, two from education and library boards, four trustees, and then a parent governor and a teacher governor.
3305. The importance of leadership in a school is vital. The governors have overarching responsibility for the management of the school and to ensure that the ethos is evident. The prime responsibility then comes down to the leader in the school, the principal.
3306. **Mr McCausland:** That brings me on to another question. Would there have to be a change to the current legislation to enable joint faith schools, from the GB model, to happen?
3307. **Mr J Clarke:** The only model we can use from current legislation is a maintained school model, not a Catholic maintained school model but a maintained school model, which is in legislation. It means

- jumping through hoops a little bit. I refer to my earlier comments that we want to see a much wider range of governance arrangements in our system. To do it at the present time would mean that it would be a maintained school.
3308. **Mr McCausland:** You can have a maintained school in Northern Ireland that is not a Catholic maintained school.
3309. **Mr J Clarke:** Yes, there is a number. I think there are only six or so maintained schools that are not Catholic.
3310. **Mr McCausland:** So, there would not need to be a change in legislation to create one of these.
3311. **Mr J Clarke:** No, but it is messy; we would have to jump through a few hoops.
3312. **Mr McCausland:** Without going into all the technical detail, could you give me a summary of what they are?
3313. **Mr J Clarke:** It is very technical. On that basis it would be difficult, other than to say that it is legally possible, but it is stretching the forbearance of all the partners, not to mention the law.
3314. **Mr McCausland:** Maybe we could have a conversation about that separately, because I am curious about how that would work.
3315. **My final point is this:** I have visited a number of Catholic schools recently that are extremely inclusive and welcoming in their approach, and that is good. I have been encouraged by my visits to them. Nonetheless, there have been a couple of incidents at Catholic schools that, certainly, I felt, were inappropriate. I think, in particular, of the school last year that linked an Irish language event to a hunger striker. I would have thought that, if you have four trustees out of nine, it would be possible to deal with those situations. I would be interested to hear your comment on that.
3316. **Mr J Clarke:** It is always difficult to deal with an individual situation and say that it is representative of a view. I do not think that it would be appropriate for us to go into the detail of that. The issue has to be how the decision was made and on what evidence basis it was made. I think that the intention of all our schools is to play a constructive part in society within the communities in which they exist. Sometimes, the media can create headlines. I dare say that you have been subject to that yourself, Nelson.
3317. **Mr McCausland:** Never.
3318. **Mr J Clarke:** Those headlines give a view of something. Issues become media issues that, on the ground, are actually very different. As I said, I do not think it is appropriate to go into detail, but I think that it proves that these are very exceptional events where things go wrong. The vast majority of schools that you visited — I use your language here — show inclusivity. That is our intention. We can all stumble along the way. What we need to focus on here is that which is positive, unites us and allows inclusivity and sharing to be promoted and sustained.
3319. **Father Bartlett:** I have just two points. On the wider issue of the difference in the intensity of commitment that you have experienced in schools, it comes back to the earlier point I made about incentivisation and, particularly, maybe resourcing more fully leadership training in schools, particularly but not exclusively for principals, because that is what makes the critical difference in this area. I suggest to the Committee today that it might want to recommend leadership training in schools in this area. That would be very welcome.
3320. In relation to the other matter you raised and without going into any specifics, our schools across society are located in particular communities. It is important that they deal with the reality of our historical, political and cultural issues. They cannot be apart from that. They were very anxious to maintain and did successfully maintain what I would describe as an oasis during the height of our violent conflict over the years, one that was very welcome for everybody. Everybody generally tried to respect that. However, now, in a more

- normalised political environment, they have a responsibility — I think this is your basic, fundamental thesis here — to be part of the building of a shared, cohesive society. They cannot ignore the political tensions and realities in society. The only thing that we would say then as trustees, if I may, is that it is vital that these issues are dealt with in an appropriate, professional, constructive and agreed way. No matter how localised it might be and how justified with regard to a community's tradition locally, that type of issue should always be dealt with as part of an overall process, the overall process of sharing and how we deal with the past and the future, rather than bouncing people into situations that create difficulties.
3321. **Mr Crudden:** We all aspire to an ideal. We recognise that there will be times when schools do not reach that ideal. What we try to encourage schools to do with respect to being a Catholic school is to evaluate themselves as Catholic schools in exactly the same way as they would evaluate the standard of literacy, numeracy or whatever in the school. In cases when something goes wrong, we would encourage schools to ask why it went wrong and how that situation could be changed or avoided in the future.
3322. **Mr McCausland:** I accept entirely Jim's point that we all stumble; it is human nature. The key thing is to learn from the stumble and ensure that we do not do it again.
3323. **Father Bartlett:** On that point, I would be anxious to say, if I may, that communities and their local histories across our society are part of that school community. They will have a view about their particular history, values, emphasis and so on in this area. All that I am saying is that this has to be respected and thought through. The trustees of Catholic schools would be anxious that difficult and sensitive issues would be part of the mainstream and not something that is bounced on or imposed on, in our case, a Catholic school without consultation or without being dealt with in this more mainstream way.
3324. **Mrs Overend:** It is good to see you here this morning. I want to continue with previous conversations. I really was not aware that there were many Catholic maintained schools that were welcoming to those of non-Catholic faith. I was not aware of the 40% in Dominican College, which you referred to earlier. Is that a policy direction that the CCMS is now promoting across all schools in Northern Ireland? Are you actively engaging with controlled schools outside the Catholic maintained sector? A lot of them now have a mixture of religions. Are you engaging with those schools to try to get more into them?
3325. **Mr J Clarke:** Those are two issues. First, with regard to enrolment in schools, I made the point that we do not promote the Catholic sector per se. Schools can promote themselves in their own community. On that basis, the comparative success of the Catholic sector at this moment on all the measures that we have — I am not saying that they are the right measures — shows that the Catholic sector is outperforming other sectors despite higher levels of social deprivation. Parents can respond to that and make their decisions in their own area.
3326. Collaborating with controlled schools is the thing that has moved forward substantially in the last 10 years. I was a member of the Costello group back in 2002-03. As part of the background work that we did, we commissioned the Department to go out and look for examples of good practice of sharing across schools. It actually found very few. Five is probably as many as I can recall, and many of those were quite tenuous. If you were to conduct a similar exercise today, you would see a myriad of sharing across all sectors. I think that is the move forward. That has been led by the schools, whether through such initiatives as the Queen's/Atlantic Philanthropies initiative or other local ones. There are initiatives in the North Eastern Board, for instance, which I think have been very successful. These things are characteristic of our education system as a whole, which is

- why we think that the sharing agenda is being driven by practical need in response to practical situations that may include funding.
3327. Circumstances have moved on, and we have a society which is much more open to that. Very importantly, that openness is more evident, very often, amongst the young people themselves rather than their parents, many of whom have grown up through the Troubles with concern about safety and all the rest of it. That has had an impact on our system over the years, but we are growing up through that, which is one of the reasons why we feel that we must be full partners in that spectrum of sharing at whatever level we can engage in a community.
3328. **Mrs Overend:** I take from what you are saying that your priority is to enhance shared education projects across schools in an area rather than to actually encourage people of non-Catholic faiths to come into Catholic maintained schools. Is that right?
3329. **Mr J Clarke:** Yes. It is an open door. ‘Building Peace, Shaping the Future’ said it: it is an open door. Schools are there; if people want to avail themselves of the ethos of that school, they are very welcome to do so. What the statistics do not tell us is the number of people from different ethnic backgrounds, such as the Chinese or Indian communities, who, for many years, have been part of the controlled and Catholic systems. It is about people making choices. The key thing here is that we are promoting access to education.
3330. **Mr Craig:** I apologise for being late, gentlemen. I listened with great interest to what was being said. I want to get to the fundamentals of all this, because it is an inquiry about shared education more than about integration, and I am not getting into that argument.
3331. Father Bartlett, you made that strong argument about the faith-based education that comes with the Catholic maintained sector. That is people’s choice. I have no issue with that. In a shared situation, though, that brings forth unique opportunities — I was told never to use the word “difficulties” — and there was a hint from the controlled sector representatives when they gave evidence to the Committee that one of those is the Catholic certificate. How do you operate a school that is shared by the controlled and maintained sectors if there is a need for a Catholic certificate that some teachers just do not have and do not particularly want to have? Will there be a resolution of that? That is what was hinted at.
3332. **Father Bartlett:** On the wider point, I think that the trustees of Catholic schools, supported by CCMS, in implementation, have demonstrated an openness to the creative spectrum of possibilities for sharing from shared campuses to shared enterprises and all sorts of arrangements within those.
3333. Depending on which calibration you are referring to, all those issues can be worked out at the local level. It is not reinventing the wheel in terms of concept; this already happens in Great Britain. The critical thing, as others have pointed out, is that it is a shared Christian school that we would be talking about. Within that, we argue that the reason why the RE certificate applies at all is that it is perfectly legitimate for parents who wish to choose a Catholic school to expect that the teachers in that school have a verifiable professional competence to support that ethos. The mechanism that we generally use to do that and that, we argue, fits under the concept in European law of genuine occupational requirement exceptions for teachers and so on in schools is the RE certificate. In Catholic primary schools, every teacher is an RE teacher because RE is taught by that one teacher in the curriculum, so they all have to do that. However, they do not have to be a Catholic to have achieved the verifiable professional competence that the trustees apply through having an RE certificate. The real issue is accessibility to the certificate, not the denominational adherence of the person who has it. We would argue that, across the spectrum of possibilities, parents

- have a right to expect that there is some verifiable professional level of competence in supporting the ethos or presentation of the Catholic aspect of the school and curriculum. Does that make sense, or have I confused it even further?
3334. **Mr Craig:** It is an interesting answer, because I see that as a practical obstacle in the way of reaching a shared school where you have controlled and maintained in the same classroom. I do not know how you deal with that.
3335. **Father Bartlett:** Just to be technically correct, we would not be talking about controlled and maintained in the same classroom; we would be talking about a jointly owned and managed Christian school. This is a new model that does not fit. As Jim explained, it would not be a Catholic maintained school, but the legal model would be a maintained school, not a controlled school. It would not be a state school; it would be in the ownership of the Churches collectively in some agreed way. Do you understand? In other words, it is not a mixture. It would be a school owned by the spectrum of Christian Churches: the transferors and Catholic trustees together. The discussions with the Department have been precisely about that and how that could be constituted in the representation on the boards of trustees. We are not reinventing the wheel in terms of implementation in the school environment, because there are examples in Britain. That is part of our commitment to the concept of sharing.
3336. **Mr Craig:** So, there are tentative talks going on about how you deal with those issues.
3337. **Father Bartlett:** They are more than tentative. They are formal talks with the Department about how that could be done.
3338. **Mr Craig:** That is reasonable.
3339. **Father Bartlett:** And we are committed to the concept.
3340. **Mr Craig:** There is another issue that puzzles me. I am no theologian, and
- I do not know where you get into the theology of academic selection not being acceptable. Has the Church some sort of theology that it is not acceptable, and what are the grounds for that? My experience is that all schools use academic selection. It does not matter whether they call themselves all-ability schools or grammar schools, they all do it.
3341. **Father Bartlett:** Let us be clear: there is no doctrine in the Catholic Church about academic selection or not. However, what is fundamental to the established and verifiable in writing social doctrine of the Catholic Church is that part of being Catholic is that you have, in imitation of Jesus Christ, a commitment to and concern for everyone equally and a particular concern for those who are most vulnerable, marginalised and poor. I mentioned that in my opening presentation before you came in. That is part of Catholic theology and is what is sometimes called the preferential option for the poor. It is our judgement that academic selection militates particularly against that principle and is therefore inconsistent with the ethos of a Catholic school, but that is balanced with the difficult issue of parental choice, even in that area. We are probably all struggling with that.
3342. I will go back to Pat's question about his frustration with the Catholic Church or leadership. Why is he expecting a higher level of leadership? We have achieved more on the ground than his party and Minister have. Why are you applying a higher level to our leadership as a Church? You have failed to get agreement in the Chamber about the issue. We are trying to get agreement around a spectrum of views that exist in the Catholic school community. We are committed to trying to do that. What motivates it is the fundamental concern for the principle that every child should be given the same opportunity in education with the same resources and commitment in our schools through the common curriculum that now exists.
3343. **Mr J Clarke:** Could I add something to that? You made a point, Jonathan, that there is selection everywhere. There is differentiation throughout our system,

- but that does not require people to go to different buildings, particularly when you have a common curriculum, to be differentiated. Our schools need a sufficiently large enrolment to offer a range of choice that will meet the needs of all young people. I was a teacher of English, and so one would expect that I should be reasonably good at English, but I might not be so good at maths. I could very easily be in the top set for one subject at a school and in the lowest set for another. Larger schools give you the flexibility to structure according to differentiation, but that differentiation is not absolute. It is not saying that person A is in the top band for everything and that person B is in the bottom band for everything. We have to reflect the fact that we all have different strengths, and one of the things that education does is develop those strengths.
3344. When I was before the Committee in the past, I used a phrase from the Marmot report on health. He talked about a universal entitlement but said that access was proportionate to capability to access that service by oneself or support needed to access that service. The concept of proportionate universalism is very important here in education, particularly from a Catholic perspective, in that those who have greater obstacles need additional support so that ultimately they will hopefully achieve the outcome. Selection does not facilitate that. I made the point earlier that selection inhibits even those who are selected because the option of understanding wider society, accessing a wider range of curricular choice and responding to their learning needs and motivation is easier if you have that access.
3345. I would much prefer that we got away from the philosophical discussion about selection and ask how we can best prepare all our young people to be contributors to the economy and the society in which we live. I think that the Catholic view on education has come to understand and promote that in a way that it possibly did not do in responding, back in 1947, to the introduction of the three-tier system, as it was at that time. Society has moved on. Our understanding has moved on, but, unfortunately, the legislation, which goes back, in various forms, to that time, is still pretty much in place. That is why I think that you as politicians have a responsibility to ask what the role of education is in the big picture. I actually believe that it is at the centre of the development of this society and economy.
3346. **Mr Craig:** That is a fascinating answer from both of you, because you actually believe that there is an ethos there and an ethical issue around all of it. I find that fascinating, because, from my religious background, we do not see any ethical argument on it at all. That is fascinating. Is the simple truth out there not the fact that parents have voted with their feet, despite what you believe?
3347. **Mr J Clarke:** A parent will make the best choice, as they see it, for their child from what is available. What we are saying is that, on the basis of parental choice, everyone should have the same choice. What we have at the moment is a system where not everyone has the same choice. That is the equality argument. We believe that, once that choice has been made, it is the responsibility of the school chosen to ensure that that young person has access to all the support that they need to fully benefit from the educational choices that they make.
3348. **Mr Craig:** Jim, if I get you right, you are on the same path as me. All schools should be equally good. The fundamental problem with that is that — we need to be honest with ourselves; I am honest with myself about it — all schools are not equally good. I will pay you one tribute: you have worked very hard on trying to rectify that issue, which is something that has been missing in the controlled sector and hopefully now will be rectified. Is that not the ultimate solution? Parents make the ultimate decision on where their child goes.

3349. **Mr J Clarke:** We face significant financial difficulties in our schools, but one of the things that I will say to our principals is that we are still about raising standards. We cannot give up on raising standards, and everyone is entitled to that education. I agree with you that what we should be doing is ensuring that all our schools are as good as they can be. This is the encouragement for the controlled sector. When CCMS came into being, we were behind every other sector in terms of outcomes for young people, our employment practices and our buildings. We have caught up significantly and gone ahead in some areas. Everybody can achieve it, but we need to look at the tools that need to be put in place to ensure that.
3350. **Father Bartlett:** Can I just take the opportunity to say that the Catholic trustees are as concerned about the underachievement of young Protestant males as we are about our own school system? We have said to the controlled sector and, indeed, to the transferors that we are there. Part of the sharing should be about helping each other to ensure that we achieve the ideal of every school being a good school — an excellent school.
3351. On the selection issue there is no shortage of evidence — I am sure that we do not have time to go into it; it might take a different Committee hearing to go into it — that academic selection, in pure pedagogical terms and whatever about the ethical issue that we believe is there, is not necessarily the best way to provide in our environment for the spectrum of children's abilities and needs in terms of achievement. There is also the idea that you just define educational achievement on some narrow academic base, when we have a common curriculum and a common curriculum duty on all our schools at post-primary level. It is a wider and more complicated subject, but, in so far as that gets us through the initial question that you asked, that is where we are coming from: the commitment that every school in our society should be a good school and that the sectors should cooperate to achieve that goal.
3352. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** We have deviated somewhat from the inquiry at this stage. Mr Lunn is next.
3353. **Mr Lunn:** Thanks. We do not normally get back in.
3354. **Father Bartlett:** Round 2.
3355. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You were so good the last time.
3356. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you. You mentioned the G8 situation, Tim. As far as I understand it, the president of the United States wanted to visit a Northern Ireland school.
3357. **Father Bartlett:** He is only one of many examples of this, by the way.
3358. **Mr Lunn:** He also wanted to visit an integrated school because of his open advocacy of the principle of children being educated together. That is why he went to Enniskillen Integrated Primary School. You also, almost in the same breath, used the term “anti-Catholicism”. I can only tell you that, as far as I am concerned, there is no anti-Catholicism involved here. I may well be anti some of the attitudes that you take around the protection of your school system, but that is not an attack on your faith in any way.
3359. I want to ask you a question, first of all. Your paper indicates that you would like to see the protection for integrated schools removed — the facilitation and encouragement protection. Now, that —
3360. **Father Bartlett:** The duty to favour, not to protect —
3361. **Mr Lunn:** You would like to see the duty removed. That duty is only really applicable to the setting up of a new integrated school, as with the Irish-medium sector, where certain licence is allowed to set up a very small school. They still have to prove themselves over three years, and, in the long term, if an integrated school is not viable according to the criteria that are laid down, it is

- subject to the same pressures as any other school. People often talk about the protection or superiority that integrated schools have, but, in fact, they do not have any more protection than your sector and, frankly, your organisation has, Jim. Malachy actually said that the Moy situation could not have gone ahead without the agreement of CCMS. I would like to see NICIE being able to take a similar —
3362. **Father Bartlett:** You are using a word that is not in the legislation though, Trevor. Protection is not the issue.
3363. **Mr Crudden:** In terms of shared education, there had to be a lead body, and that lead body had to be CCMS and/or the education and library board. That was part of the regulations around shared education. That was just the way it was. In order for that to be taken forward, CCMS and the local education and library board had to promote it or support it.
3364. **Mr J Clarke:** One of the things that is important here is that we acknowledge absolutely — I restate what I said at the start — the right of the integrated sector to exist, but equally, we believe that our rights and those of other sectors to exist need to be recognised. Some of the things that were said were about almost everybody else promoting integrated schools. If you look back to the history of the integrated movement, you see that it was a ground-up initiative. We have said that to achieve that spectrum, no matter how far along the track we get, still requires a ground-up initiative. The integrated sector still has the facility and the capacity to grow from the ground up, but we are saying that we, equally, have the right to exist. It is not a case of one or the other; it is a case of everybody having a space and respecting that space.
3365. **Mr Lunn:** I could not agree more.
3366. **Father Bartlett:** There are two things. On the issue of anti-Catholicism, I made that comment in the context of somebody asking me about secularism and a secular trend in education generally. I made the point that, sometimes, it can be a mask for a subtle form of anti-faith and, sometimes anti-Catholicism specifically. I was very careful to point out that that is not representative of the general sweep or, indeed, necessarily of integrated schools. However, it is as part of the wider argument that you sometimes get that. I have experienced that very clearly, consistently and directly, so I do not resile from the fundamental claim that I am making.
3367. On the specific point about the legislation, we suggest that, if there is going to be a legislative duty on the Department, it should be precisely around sharing. We have said that it may not be the best thing to put it in legislation, but, if it is going to be there, it should be a duty to sharing rather than a narrow form of the spectrum of possibilities that work and have some verifiable impact in terms of this objective. What you have at the moment is bizarre situations arising where CCMS is being asked at the moment, for example, how it intends to promote integrated education, which completely ignores the fact that it is not there to promote any sector. You get these bizarre things happening. Also, it helps to build this culture that some are more equal than others in terms of the Department's education provision.
3368. We fully support the idea that any sector that is embryonic needs to be supported, encouraged and facilitated, and there need to be honest ways of trying to establish parental views and so on in that context. We support that, but we are just saying that, at this point, we challenge the idea that that duty should still exist.
3369. **Mr Lunn:** Frankly, I cannot see the difference. The obligation to facilitate and encourage is —
3370. **Father Bartlett:** Integrated education.
3371. **Mr Lunn:** — entirely subject to parental choice. It requires the parents of children at an existing school or a group of parents, who act quite bravely at

times, to make a decision to try to set up a new integrated school. There have been precious few of them in recent years.

3372. **Father Bartlett:** Is it not the case that the integrated education movement is claiming that the Department is failing in its duty precisely on the basis of that —

3373. **Mr Lunn:** Well, absolutely. There have been many instances where the Department —

3374. **Father Bartlett:** We would prefer to see a more —

3375. **Mr J Clarke:** The purpose of having the integrated sector is that that sector should be creating the conditions, not the Department or CCMS or anybody else. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that that sector has the right to do that, but it should not necessarily be at the expense of someone else giving up their school. The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education has a much greater facility on this than we have to encourage people to want to have an integrated school in their community and to move that forward. It is entitled to do that but, as Tim has pointed out, if we interpret Judge Treacy's ruling in a particular way, CCMS and, indeed, the boards have an obligation now to promote integrated schools when we do not have an obligation to promote our own schools. We can advocate for them but not promote them.

3376. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much, gentlemen, for your time. I am perhaps more anxious about you having to leave on time than you were. Thank you very much. Members found that to be a particularly interesting session.

18 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Danny Kinahan (Deputy Chairperson)
 Mr Jonathan Craig
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Ms Iris Barker	<i>Brookeborough</i>
Mr Dermot Finlay	<i>Shared Education</i>
Ms Hazel Gardiner	<i>Partnership</i>
Ms Mary Hampsey	

3377. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

We have with us today Hazel Gardiner, the principal of Brookeborough Controlled Primary School; Dermot Finlay, the principal of St Mary's Primary School, Brookeborough; Iris Barker from the Western Education and Library Board (WELB); and Mary Hampsey from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

3378. Good afternoon. You are all very welcome. I apologise for the delay. I know that you were in the Public Gallery, so you were able to hear what was being said previously, and that might have been informative. Thank you very much for waiting. I ask to you make an opening statement. Members will then follow up with some questions.

3379. **Ms Hazel Gardiner (Brookeborough Shared Education Partnership):** Good afternoon, Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to brief you on our shared education programme. I am the principal of the controlled school, and I will talk about our school experiences of shared education to date. My colleague Dermot Finlay, the principal of St Mary's, will tell you about our current shared education programmes and our plans for the future.

3380. Our two schools, which are situated in the village of Brookeborough, serve the surrounding rural area. Brookeborough is in the most deprived 6% of super output areas (SOAs) when it comes to proximity to services. The schools are just a short walk apart — less than 10 minutes. Our current enrolment is 119 pupils — 66 in the controlled school and 53 in St Mary's — and each school has three teachers, including us. Our schools reflect the community in which we serve, with over one third of pupils qualifying for free school meals and St Mary's receiving extended schools funding. The two schools have enjoyed an excellent relationship for over 40 years, going back to the 1970s. We have participated in education for mutual understanding (EMU), cross-community contact schemes and a local cross-border, cross-community scheme with schools in County Sligo called the Riverbrooke project. Those projects involved the children working together, although mainly on trips away from the school. However, they included residencies in Magilligan Field Centre and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, and it was most unusual that schools were able to do that in the 1970s. In a sense, our schools have been working together long before the phrase "shared education" was coined. All those activities continued through challenging times. I was a young teacher in the school in 1987 when the then principal lost his mother-in-law and father-in-law in the Remembrance Day bombing. Both schools in Brookeborough have had parents, pupils and children who suffered and were personally affected. Even since then, when politically sensitive issues are reported in the media, it has the potential to affect the dynamic of the partnership, but the commitment and strength of our partnership has enabled us to overcome those challenges. The two schools maintained and developed

- linkages, and today we stand on the threshold of a shared campus for our children and the community. If Brookeborough can do that, other divided communities can do it also.
3381. In the past six years, through funding and support from the Fermanagh Trust, the children have enjoyed shared lessons across the curriculum. Those have included joint classes on respecting difference and the undertaking of a major history project where the primary 6 children from the two schools interviewed local people and looked at little country schools that were closed. They found out that those schools had been integrated all those years ago. They also performed a self-penned drama for the public called 'Racism Ruins Lives', and there are shared classes in gymnastics, ICT and art, to name but a few.
3382. One of the difference between the old community relations programmes and the Fermanagh Trust shared education programme is that all children are spending regular — indeed, weekly — time in each other's schools from P1 to P7, working and playing together. That has resulted in them being more comfortable in each other's company and being appreciative of their cultural differences and personal similarities, and it has allowed for friendships to be formed.
3383. As well as societal benefits, there are obvious educational benefits from all of that. However, we want to stress that shared education has not diluted our separate cultures: we both have a strong identity. Support from the Ulster-Scots Agency has enabled the school that I am in to work on the flagship programme, where we celebrate culture through dance, music and drama. In fact, last Friday, Trina Somerville, the director of education and language at the Ulster-Scots Agency, attended a performance of Dan Gordon's play 'The Boat Factory' in the school. St Mary's also has a strong cultural identity, which is celebrated through sport, music and language.
3384. Through shared education, we also learn about each other's cultures, and we have shared performances and activities. For example, as recently as yesterday, our schools were involved in Project St Patrick in Enniskillen. Over the past few years, we have jointly entered choral speaking in the Fermanagh Feis, winning on one occasion. The children have played rugby together, and, at one of the Project St Patrick parades in Enniskillen, they performed Scottish and Irish dancing at the same time.
3385. For our teachers, we have hosted joint training. Through the Fermanagh Trust programme, there has been training in good practice, partnership-building and the Rural Respecting Difference programme. The teachers plan together, which is particularly useful in small schools, where it is possible to feel quite isolated. We have organised our staff through shared education, which has allowed us to decompound combined year groups, which, again, has obvious educational benefits for the children. Each school now has access to the skills of six teachers. In the autumn term, our P3 children from the two schools were brought together to be taught science by one of my teachers, who is doing an ENTHUSE award at the minute and has a particular interest in science. That is making use of her skill.
3386. We organise joint training and workshops for parents; for example, Internet safety, which is done by the PSNI, the Rural Respecting Difference programme and reading strategies. Although we have separate parent-teacher associations, the two have come together and worked together, most recently to bring the parents, grandparents and children together in the village to plant bulbs to improve the environment.
3387. Our two boards of governors have had several joint meetings, and those began at the time of the first area plans. They then formed a joint subcommittee, which has met several times. The Western Board and CCMS joined that subcommittee and attended several

- meetings as we prepared to submit an application for the shared campus.
3388. I will now hand over to Dermot, who will tell you a little bit about the current plans and those for the future.
3389. **Mr Dermot Finlay (Brookeborough Shared Education Partnership):** Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to come up to talk to you. I have had the pleasure of meeting some of you on previous visits to Stormont and down in Fermanagh when you visited Enniskillen.
3390. The Committee will be aware that the WELB and CCMS have submitted a proposal to the Department of Education for a shared campus in Brookeborough. For more detail on the level of sharing that we are doing, the table in the briefing paper provides an illustration of the sharing at pupil and teacher level that we have planned through the shared education signature project. We applied for that recently.
3391. It can be seen that 100% of our children take part in shared activities, providing regular and sustained contact. Through the three-year signature project for shared education, we plan to deliver shared activities and to decompound combined year groups, both of which will have huge educational benefits for the children. We are also sharing a teacher in the project. The value of our shared education was acknowledged by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in our recent inspections in 2011 and 2013. The ETI said that the children spoke enthusiastically about their experiences and that there were many examples in the school of very good collaborative work on shared education. The synergy of sharing not only complements the joint learning and teaching but raises the individual provision of each school. The richness of our shared past and the proposal for a shared campus has developed naturally over the years owing to the high level of sharing between the two schools over four decades, which Hazel talked about.
3392. The Brookeborough shared campus has immense potential to enhance and develop a shared future for the local community. The proposal for the shared campus was a community-based decision to sustain primary education in Brookeborough for both sections of the community. It is, as the Minister of Education asked for, a bottom-up, local solution that meets local needs.
3393. A series of meetings was held with parents and governors, initially separately and then jointly. The Fermanagh Trust facilitated a community survey in March 2014, which was distributed to parents, staff, Churches and members of the wider community, and the outcome was overwhelming, with 93% of the community supporting a shared campus. The campus has the support of all political parties on Fermanagh District Council, and, at a recent meeting in February 2015 with the First Minister, the deputy First Minister and Arlene Foster, we received a tremendously positive and enthusiastic response to our proposal for the shared campus. The deputy First Minister, during Question Time at the start of March, described the Brookeborough initiative and our leadership as inspirational.
3394. The sharing that we are involved in will widen and deepen within the shared campus. Shared campuses are about building united communities, and that is what we want to do. Thank you very much.
3395. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much, and thank you for coming to meet us this afternoon.
3396. For the record, can you explain what the shared campus will look like and the practicalities that will be involved?
3397. **Mr Finlay:** If I had a fantastic diagram, I would be able to show you exactly what it will look like. The concept is that our two schools will be on the one site and in the one building. We are suggesting not two new schools but one build where —

3398. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Sorry to cut across you, but does that mean that you will have a project similar to the one in the Moy?
3399. **Ms H Gardiner:** Yes.
3400. **Mr Finlay:** It is similar, yes. There will be one building on a shared campus site, with classrooms that my school will occupy and classrooms that Hazel's school will occupy. There will be two distinct schools: St Mary's and Brookeborough Controlled. There will also be parts of the building that we will share, including the playground, the lunch hall and a classroom in which shared activities can take place.
3401. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You will no doubt be aware of some of the criticism that the Moy project has received. How do you view that criticism?
3402. **Mr Finlay:** Which criticism are you thinking of?
3403. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There are criticisms around the fact that you have two sets of children going through the front door and then being separated.
3404. **Mr Finlay:** Yes, when I first heard about the Moy through the media, which I am sure you have all been subjected to at some point, I thought that it was a strange design and pattern as well. We visited some schools in Glasgow that had the shared campus model, and, once I saw it in practice, it became clear to me that it was a reality. If you are talking about the depiction of left and right and blue and green, as you see on the television, that is oversimplified and naive and understates the whole case. I will draw on an example from my school. When the children are in the playground, the P4 and P5 pupils come and line up and the P6 and P7 pupils come and line up. They go left and right, into their classrooms. Some mornings, depending on activities, the P4 pupils go off to the left and the P5, P6 and P7 pupils go off to the right, with me. Primary 1, 2 and 3 pupils are in a totally different part of the school. That is not divisive; it is just the natural organisation of any school.
3405. In fact, the shared campus that Hazel and I will hopefully succeed in getting will increase the contact that the children have. They will be in the playground in the morning, they will have lunch together and they will have planned curricular activities, so they will see much more of each other. I worked in a large school in England where 500 pupils lined up and went through many doors. However, they were all still part of the same school. The depiction of children lining up and going off here and there is naive and oversimplified.
3406. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** From a wider community perspective, how has the proposal been received in Brookeborough and beyond?
3407. **Mr Finlay:** The proposal has received overwhelming support. I said one time at a public meeting that I did not want to take St Mary's in one direction, only to look over my shoulder and find that there was nobody else behind me. In fact, we are responding to the community, and we said so to Minister O'Dowd. We told him that the people in Brookeborough were asked whether they would consider a shared campus for the sustainability of education in the community, and that they said yes, overwhelmingly.
3408. **Ms H Gardiner:** We presented various options to parents at the beginning of area planning. We looked at integrated and shared models, and we talked about all the different possibilities. As Dermot says, the parents felt that this was the way forward in our area.
3409. **Mr Finlay:** Hazel and I said as well that the length of time in which there has been sharing in Brookeborough is unique when compared with other areas of the country. This did not happen overnight. I have been in Brookeborough for 11 years, while Hazel has been there a bit longer. We have got to know each other and work with each other. We are comfortable in each other's company, and, as a result, so too are our staff and

parents. I see Hazel's children regularly, and she is up in my school as well. It has been a long time coming and has been an organic process.

3410. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

You have to be commended for the work that you have been doing. It is a reflection on you. Those of us who do not represent areas such as yours probably do not understand the difficulties that there are in border areas in particular, and you have to be congratulated for that.

3411. **Mr Finlay:** Well, I am a blow-in, you see. I grew up in west Belfast so, for me, being in Fermanagh was an education in itself. *[Laughter.]* As Hazel commented, different parts of the country were affected by the Troubles in different ways, and, if you lived in Belfast or Derry, you thought they were happening just there. When I moved to Fermanagh, I realised that there were situations and that people were touched by the Troubles there as well. Forty years is a long time, and things have moved on. Change comes, although it comes slowly. The people of Brookeborough are on the threshold and asking the Government to consider a shared campus for the community.

3412. **Ms H Gardiner:** The community sees huge benefit as well, because there is currently no neutral venue in Brookeborough for community events. To have something like that on the shared campus would be very worthwhile.

3413. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** For you, the only barrier at this stage to moving forward with the project is financial.

3414. **Mr Finlay:** Absolutely. If the Department of Education says yes to us in June, there should be no problem at all. I am sure that it will.

3415. **Ms Iris Barker (Brookeborough Shared Education Partnership):** The outline business case was submitted to the Department of Education on 30 January this year. We expect an outcome from the Department before the end of June. We are hoping that it will be a positive

result and that we will move to the full business case, for submission later in the year.

3416. **Mr Craig:** Dermot, I listened with interest to what CCMS had to say earlier about its whole concept of shared provision, and I get the impression that, if everything goes well for you, we are going to see this worked out.

3417. What I struggle with — I struggle with this, because I do not come from a Catholic-maintained background and therefore have no idea what it means in reality — is the fact that Tim Bartlett explained that, with the Catholic teaching certificate, every teacher is basically an RE teacher. Given my background, that is a bit of a strange concept. I asked this daft question: can you not share classes if you are struggling for numbers in a particular class? That is perhaps the next logical progression of the shared model. There was a hint that something is going on between the Churches in the background to get around the Catholic teaching certificate issue. Do you foresee that ultimately coming about in this model if everything goes well and there is a fair wind?

3418. **Mr Finlay:** First, as a teacher, I always say that there is no such thing as a daft question. *[Laughter.]* The Catholic teaching certificate is, I understand, open to anyone to do. There are universities and teacher-training colleges, at which anyone can access a teacher-training certificate for religion, and that means that he or she is competent in teaching the Catholic religion.

3419. We are already teaching the children in classes together through planned delivery of the curriculum. In the outline plan in our briefing paper, we cover things such as personal development and mutual understanding (PD&MU), which is a key factor in reconciliation and getting children to learn together. We have extended that to science and maths. We are and will be two separate schools, and we will have our own subjects and teaching, but, planned

- within that, there will be time with the children. Hazel's children spent a whole day at my school last month being taught together, and they put together a DVD for the proposal. There are times when that can be done. It is fair to say that we have been doing it for a long time.
3420. We have applied for a signature project as well. Wednesday mornings are given over to shared education so that the two schools can come together. That is across the school, and 100% of the children take part, as do staff. Within the next year or two, we see that extending to the whole of Wednesday. In fact, the contact is widening and deepening. When I first met Hazel, we were involved in EMU, but we perhaps met for a day, went on a trip and then came back. The children sometimes sat on the bus. They sat on one side and we sat on the other side, and we got on the bus on the left and the others got on the bus on the right. We had lunch together over there. It was well meant and well planned, and the Speedwell Trust did great work with the children, but they then all went back to their own school. The contact has intensified and is more regular and more natural, in that the children actually now know each other. I make the old joke, and will do so again, that, when I go into Hazel's school, I make my own coffee or tea. We do not stand on ceremony any more. We know each other quite well, and the children do as well. If I see them around Brookeborough, they will wave over and say, "Hello, Master Finlay". I am not some person whom they do not really know. They have had contact with me. You talked about being in the classroom together. We are doing that already and intend to increase it.
3421. **Ms H Gardiner:** It is great to be able to use the expertise and skills of staff and to have six teachers. If somebody specialises in music, maths, science or whatever, we will be able to tap into that.
3422. **Mr Craig:** I look at it as having shared resources. When I talk about "resources", I mean teachers, because all of that reduces your overheads. You are telling me that you are already there, or are at least close to it.
3423. **Mr Finlay:** Absolutely.
3424. **Mr Rogers:** You are a breath of fresh air, and thanks for sharing your journey with us. What is the nursery or preschool provision like in the area?
3425. **Ms H Gardiner:** There is the Playstation in Brookeborough, which is cross-community. Children meet in the station house. That was initiated by the Brookeborough and District Community Development Association. The children are there for a year or two and then have been separating.
3426. **Ms Barker:** It is a voluntary playgroup and acts as a feeder for both primary schools at the moment. We hope that, as we go through the process of moving to full business case, we will engage with the playgroup. We and the schools have engaged with the playgroup with a view to moving it to the site as well. The difference is that it is a voluntary playgroup, so it has to secure funding from alternative sources. However, we are happy to engage with a view to including the playgroup on the new site.
3427. **Mr Finlay:** The playgroup has wholeheartedly asked whether it can be part of the campus. We have children in our school — in fact, Arlene Foster's child was an example — who know each other from playgroup, go off to their separate schools and then meet up during shared education. The shared education project that the Fermanagh Trust funded over the past six years was an opportunity for those children to rekindle friendships and say, "I remember you". It was a positive thing, and, according to some children in my P7 class, they are now seeing each other outside school as a direct result of shared education, because they have got to know each other.
3428. **Mr Rogers:** To go back to the beginning of the journey, was it sharing out of necessity? Did that play a part?
3429. **Mr Finlay:** Hazel's school is 50 years old, while mine is a little bit older at 75

- years. We had celebrations recently to mark those anniversaries. We did a joint play through shared education about memories at school. Some parents fed in memories, and one was of trips to the Causeway safari park. I am just about old enough to remember the Causeway safari park, and I am sure that some of you are too young to remember, so it was going on even then.
3430. It was done not out of financial necessity but for community relations. Hazel can talk more about that, because she was there before I was.
3431. **Ms H Gardiner:** The two principals at the time were very committed to it, which was amazing at that time. I sometimes accompanied them on residencies for three or four days at a time, and you could see friendships forming. That is going back to the 1980s.
3432. **Mr Rogers:** What was your biggest challenge on the journey?
3433. **Mr Finlay:** Money. It is always resources. The Fermanagh Trust's projects were invaluable, because it provided the funding. Without that, we could not have done a lot of what we did.
3434. Hazel touched on the hearts and minds of people. When things pop up in the media, you realise that sometimes you have to be aware of the sensitivities of the past, because they can still come back to haunt us. Every now and again, you think, "Oh, hang on, will what's going on elsewhere affect us?". People are at different stages on that journey and of acceptance. I am not saying it has all been a bed of roses, with everyone flying the flag for shared education. People have different opinions, but the people of Brookeborough are wholeheartedly saying to us that this makes sense. They have a pride in their community. People have said to me, "Who's going to want to live in a village with no schools?".
3435. I have seen tremendous change in Brookeborough. I am there just over 10 years. There was no pharmacy when I first came. Little restaurants and cafes have opened up, and, as I said, the pharmacy is there now. The two schools are an integral part of the village. They are pivotal. If you take those two schools out of the village, you rip the heart out of it.
3436. The people of Brookeborough are coming at this from a community point of view, not from a Protestant or Catholic point of view. Hazel and I have children and families in our schools from mixed marriages as well, who then know each other through cousins, friends and relatives. We are not talking about Hazel's school being over there and mine being here; there is a linkage that has been there for a long time.
3437. To go back to what you asked about when it started, a teacher involved in the history project told me that, many years ago, she used to give another teacher at St Mary's a lift. They shared the journey and then started sharing resources. Mary is an ex-teacher, so she will know what I mean about the resources. They were sharing resources, and you are talking about 35 or 40 years ago. It was happening even then.
3438. **Mr Rogers:** Thank you. I wish you all the best on your journey.
3439. **Mr Finlay:** Thank you, Seán.
3440. **Mr Rogers:** An important plus that you alluded to is that it is also about revitalising rural communities. Without a school, we cannot do that.
3441. **Mr Kinahan:** That is wonderful to hear. Congratulations on where you have got to. Just before you came in, we were asking CCMS and NICCE about how we can get change. The shared education Bill is coming through, and I wonder what advice you have for us at this end. We hear, all the way through, that it should be done bottom-up, and yet here we are, about to put something in top-down. What would you like to see us do with the shared education Bill to make things happen more easily for you and for those embarking on the same journey?
3442. **Mr Finlay:** Off the top of my head, funding. Hazel is whispering that to

- me. It is all about the money, isn't it? I would tell you to listen to people like us and the Moy. I have to be frank: we are not the only schools doing shared education; we are pioneers in some ways, but other schools are doing great work. The integrated sector, Trevor, has done great work over the years, and I have a lot of respect for it. You have to listen to the people who are doing it. I had my reservations about a shared campus. I was appointed to St Mary's, Brookeborough; it is my school, and I am very proud of it: "Leave me alone, please; I am happy with things. Give me back the two teachers that I had six years ago". However, things change, and I now think that a shared campus in Brookeborough is the best thing for Brookeborough, long after I am gone, looking at society and the future when these children are our age.
3443. I would honestly tell you to talk to people. There is shared education all over Fermanagh, and the Committee was talking to people in Fermanagh. It might not suit everywhere, and it might not be possible everywhere right now, but who is to say that it cannot work in future? Talk to people, including parents. Sometimes, people come to talk to people like Hazel and me, and the teachers. Talk to the parents and, ultimately, the children. Listen to their voices, because some of the children coming through our schools do not have the hang-ups; they have grown up in different times. You talk about the Troubles and they say "What?". The Troubles are on my daughter's history curriculum at secondary school. It is history, but it still has a legacy.
3444. **Ms H Gardiner:** Training is also very important for governors, staff and parents. The Fermanagh Trust ran training in partnership building, good relations and respecting difference programmes. That is very important because, as we said, everybody is coming from a different point. Some issues are difficult to deal with in a shared class, so training is very important.
3445. **Mr Finlay:** And do not rush it.
3446. **Ms Barker:** The pressures facing primary and post-primary schools, given the funding and the pressures therein with the Department of Education's sustainable schools policy, focused the minds of small rural schools, particularly in the Western Board area, where there is a very high percentage of rural schools.
3447. Where you have two primary schools, with 66 pupils and 53 pupils, those pressures help to focus minds, and the shared education campus programme was something that they could see, given their history of sharing, would be a lifeline. The work of both schools has been fundamental to that.
3448. **Mr Lunn:** I suppose, in the light of some of the unkind things that I have said about the Moy proposal, that you might expect some hostility, but there is none. I have met you both before, and the sharing that you have done beyond the curricular requirements is very impressive. I imagine that many of your pupils, between the two schools, already know one another quite well.
3449. I wanted to ask about logistics for a start, because I am ashamed to say that I have never been to Brookeborough —
3450. **Ms H Gardiner:** That is terrible.
[Laughter.]
3451. **Mr Lunn:** The sign on the road flashed past. I would like to go, so there's a hint for you. How far away is the next nearest school in each of your sectors?
3452. **Ms H Gardiner:** About five miles.
3453. **Mr Lunn:** And where is that?
3454. **Mr Finlay:** If you do not know the geography, there is Tempo, Brookeborough, Lisnaskea, Fivemiletown, which is in a different board, and Maguiresbridge.
3455. **Ms H Gardiner:** All within roughly five miles.
3456. **Mr Lunn:** I have been to all those places; I do not know how I missed Brookeborough. [Laughter.] I just wanted to get the layout.

3457. Hazel, you said that there had been a full consultation with the parents, as you would expect, and that the integrated model was one of the considerations that you put to them. Did you involve the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE)?
3458. **Ms H Gardiner:** No, not at that meeting; it was a parent meeting during area planning. One of the things that you need to remember is that there was an attempt to open an integrated school in Fivemiletown, which is five miles away, and it closed after a couple of years. Some of those children are now with us.
3459. **Mr Lunn:** Did the parents get to express an opinion about the possibility of one school rather than two joined together?
3460. **Ms H Gardiner:** The message came across at both meetings that each sector wanted to maintain its own culture and identity; they wanted to share and work together but keep a separate identity.
3461. **Mr Finlay:** To touch on what Jim Clarke from CCMS said, I am not in the business of promoting a form of education; I am the principal of a school. What Hazel and I engaged in were meetings with our parents separately in response to area planning, which was looking at a local or parish-based solution. They were given a range of options and spoken to very honestly. As Hazel said, there was an integrated school in the Clogher Valley and it closed.
3462. Parents say that they are very happy with Brookeborough controlled schools and with St Mary's; they want the two schools to carry on, and the shared campus allows for that sustainability. It is about what you have all commented on today: mutual respect and understanding. It is about being able to say, "I am this, and I am quite proud of it. You are that, and you are proud of that". The old adage from the 1970s is, "I'm OK; you're OK". It is about living together, the two schools existing on a site and sharing and increasing that sharing for the benefit of the children.
- Jonathan said that we are all coming at the same thing: it is about the education and social benefits of the children and about building a united community.
3463. **Mr Lunn:** Will you continue to have two boards of governors?
3464. **Mr Finlay:** We have our boards of governors —
3465. **Mr Lunn:** I think that you said that you had a joint committee.
3466. **Mr Finlay:** There will be a joint board of governors. There is a joint committee at the minute.
3467. **Mr Lunn:** You will obviously continue to have two principals.
3468. **Ms Mary Hampsey (Brookeborough Shared Education Partnership):** There will be two boards of governors but a joint committee with people from each board. That is the plan.
3469. **Mr Lunn:** I wish you well. That might seem odd in light of what I think about the Moy, but this sounds different to me. My hope for the Moy, which, from talking to the people there, I think will take an awful long time to materialise —
3470. **Mr Finlay:** Some of the Moy staff and governors came to Enniskillen for a public meeting at which we talked to parents from both schools about the different models and the Moy. They spoke about their experience, and I must compliment them. I found them really inspirational. The work that they have done is tremendous. When I first saw it on the news, I remember thinking, "What?". However, it goes back to what I said to Danny: you have to talk to people and listen to them, as they are living the experience. The people of the Moy have voted for that and want it to happen. I found the Moy people inspirational.
3471. **Mr Lunn:** Fair enough. They voted for it by not a very big margin, but that is OK. I think that the first point that the Moy needs to get to is where you are at the moment; you are miles ahead of them. Beyond that, my hope and expectation for both schemes is that they will end up with one school.

3472. **Mr Finlay:** Can I have that in writing, Trevor?
3473. **Mr Lunn:** It is the only logical outcome. When you have that level of sharing, cooperation, mutual respect, understanding and affection, it has to go that way. Whether it takes five years or 25 years, I certainly hope that that is what happens. In the meantime, fair play: get on with it.
3474. **Mr Finlay:** Thank you.
3475. **Ms Hampsey:** I am quite new to shared education in Northern Ireland. I was principal of a large Catholic maintained primary school in Dungannon. Mr McCausland came down on a couple of occasions, and I hope that we were one of the inclusive schools that he talked about rather than one of the others. We have, as I said, adopted two different cultures, two different faiths in that school as well.
3476. As someone who has also had experience of working with schools in the controlled sector, it amazes me how much work goes on that is not made public. I was not aware of the level of sharing anywhere until I came to Brookeborough. There is another example involving Moneynick and Duneane. I am amazed at the level of sharing there; they acted off their own bat just because they were eager to take people forward.
3477. Having worked with the board in both sectors, it amazes me how much there is in common; there is little difference, really, when you are in either school. Children are the same; teaching is the same; inspections are the same; and parents want the same thing. The only differences that I can see are faith differences to do with scripture or whatever. The only real difference is the sacramental liturgies. We had Protestant children and children from mixed marriages in our school, and there was never a problem. Some Protestant children came to watch the children make their first communion; they were at the party, too. It was just enlightening.
3478. We should focus on what people have in common not on their differences, because sometimes we create difference. No matter what the Christian religion — I am sure that the same is true of Islam and Buddhism — there are two tenets: love God and love your neighbour as yourself. That is the ethos of any school that I have been in in Northern Ireland. Treat people as you would like to be treated; respect yourself; respect God; and respect others. That is what it boils down to, so we should not get hung up on differences.
3479. I think that your role may be to encourage people who wish to do this. CCMS asked me to work as an associate for it on this topic, and I have been amazed at the example of these people, who take it to the nth degree. We had the community relations, equality and diversity programme (CRED); we had shared education; we went away together; we were in one another's schools, but not to the extent that these people share daily and weekly.
3480. I do not think that it can be imposed from above; it has to be nurtured. We worked in integrated schools, too, and there was never any problem; we all got on wonderfully well.
3481. **Mr Lunn:** It does not really solve the problem of composite classes in your two schools, does it?
3482. **Mr Finlay:** Not totally, but the shared campus and what we are doing now allows us to de-composite. To a certain degree, composite classes work; it is when you get a problem with, say, primary 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 when they cross key stages. I worked extensively in schools where they were one year group, and even in that you would have differentiation. Composite classes often raise standards, as the younger children are extended and challenged. However, the model that we have now allows us to de-composite classes — our school is only down the road. You have never been to Brookeborough, Trevor, so you do not know.

3483. **Ms Gardiner:** You will have to rectify that.
3484. **Mr Finlay:** We will have to rectify that. It is a short walk, but a short walk with children becomes a longer walk, and organisation is the problem. If we were on a campus, it would be easier to organise things so that we do not have to worry about the inclement weather in the winter and getting younger children on buses. The shared campus would allow us to de-composite further and, as Hazel said earlier, utilise the expertise of six teachers, as opposed to three and three.
3485. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Thank you. I have had the opportunity to discuss this with you. I do not think that anybody round this table, or round any other table, would question the sharing, and the enhanced sharing, that has gone on between the two schools. I am particularly interested, given the cooperation, enhanced sharing and the bottom-up approach, why the initial process for T:BUC was unsuccessful. More to the point, have lessons been learned? Are there assurances? I am interested because it is being heralded as a model, which you have described very articulately today. What happened at the first round of Together: Building a United Community?
3486. **Ms Barker:** Are you referring to the fact that it did not go through the first expression of interest?
3487. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** Yes.
3488. **Ms Barker:** There was a wee bit of confusion in the first expression of interest. Department of Education officials seemed to read into the proposal that the two schools were looking for a four-classroom school each or two separate buildings. It was for that reason that the Department asked for further clarification. It asked that the CCMS and the Western Board take forward an outline business case and met both the managing authorities and the schools and their chairs to make it clear that they had to provide value for money and that there had to be economies of scale through sharing in one building rather than two, since, because of the sustainable schools policy, both schools would not qualify for a new four-classroom school. The proposal was therefore revised, and we have made it very clear in the outline business case that it is one building to be shared by both schools, and that there are economies of scale and a number of benefits from sharing facilities.
3489. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** This is not by any stretch of the imagination a criticism of your work, but I am interested in why — I would have thought that the Department would have identified that from the get-go.
3490. **Ms Hampsey:** It just seemed to be a misinterpretation based on the way it was written.
3491. **Mr Finlay:** That is why I hesitated when Michelle asked me what this looked like. I am not sure how people misinterpreted it. I would never be daft enough to say, “Let us build two new schools.” That would not be sustainable. It is one building and one school that we share. That is why, as Iris points out, it was initially misunderstood, and we did not get through. The Department, however, has acknowledged that; it recognises that now.
3492. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** But it is absolutely pinned down now in the outline case and the developing business plan.
3493. **Mr Finlay:** Absolutely.
3494. **Ms Barker:** The very first line is that the proposal is for a shared campus, a single site, a single building for two schools.
3495. **Ms Hampsey:** We wrote it as clearly as that.
3496. **Mr Finlay:** The deputy First Minister was very surprised to hear that as well. There was no room for clarification. When the proposal went through, they took it at face value. We never got a phone call to ask if it was two

- schools; but I am not pointing the finger or placing blame: I do not know who was responsible. There was a misunderstanding.
3497. **Ms Maeve McLaughlin:** But it is absolutely clear now.
3498. **Ms Barker:** Very clear.
3499. **Mr McCausland:** What I have to say are more observations than questions. First, I think that you are taking forward a very interesting project, a very good initiative. The principle is to take things incrementally — to start with what people want, what people can cope with, what will work at this time. What might happen five years from now, or 25 years from now, goodness only knows. We deal with the thing as it is, rather than trying to force it.
3500. **Mr Finlay:** Agreed.
3501. **Mr McCausland:** The other thing was the practical sharing between the schools; that is very good. I was interested, because I have asked this question at other presentations. It is hugely important that children come together, given the cultural differences between communities, on a basis of equality, respecting other traditions and, then, seeing what can be done together. I thought of an interesting example of one school in which there is a tradition of Irish dancing, and in another, a tradition of Scottish dancing. When the two come together, they can put on a performance together, as we saw in Belfast at the musical performances involving St Patrick's and the Boys' Model. I am interested in whether you have any comments to make on the importance of cultural confidence in children as they come together.
3502. **Mr Finlay:** I totally agree. It is an absolute; we come in as equal partners. As I say, it is about mutual respect. Children go to sporting events. For example, my children have played rugby; Hazel's children have played Gaelic football. There is music, and we have had plays together. Drama is another example of how to bring children together. We had Irish dancing and Scottish dancing, and the dancers helped one another and learned from one another. We also entered the Fermanagh Feis and choral verse speaking together — they had to change the rules slightly, because they had never had a partnership enter before. Thankfully, we won that year; but we went in under Brookeborough shared partnership.
3503. There are many aspects. It is up to us, as the leaders of the school, with the parents and the governors, to make sure that it is planned and not ad hoc, and that one culture, sport or language is not promoted above the other. That is about being sensible and being pragmatic and knowing your children and your parents, and knowing each other and having a planned approach.
3504. **Mr McCausland:** I remember the visit to Mrs Hampsey's school; they do great scones. *[Laughter.]*
3505. **Ms Hampsey:** I am not there now, Nelson, so I do not know what they are like.
3506. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** You tend to find that in primary schools.
3507. **Mrs Overend:** It has been good to hear your stories. It sounds very good. I want to play devil's advocate: when you talked about doing shared education projects, you referred to the money problem. If you were to turn that on its head, and if you had a shared education campus and you had six teachers for the number of children that you had, do you think that there would be progression? Would you be forced to integrate further to reduce costs further and economies of scale?
3508. **Mr Finlay:** First, we are not integrating —
3509. **Mrs Overend:** I know that you are not; I understand completely what you are doing. I am just thinking down the line and whether you will be forced to think about that further.
3510. **Mr Finlay:** If I backtrack to what I said to Danny, it is about education and training, and Hazel talked about training as well. I have never had a negative

- comment about the shared campus from the community that I live in in the wider area. I have had people misunderstand the concept. They say, “You are amalgamating, you are all in together, sure you are integrated”. Lay people, even people in the education sector, can misunderstand the terminology. We are not integrating, but the sharing will be increased, because we are on the same site. We cannot increase it totally, because then it will end up being an integrated school, but we have to manage the level of sharing.
3511. **Mrs Overend:** That is what I was wondering. Do you think that it will come down the line and that you will be forced to look at that?
3512. **Mr Finlay:** If it happens naturally; I do not like the idea of forcing anything on any parent, teacher or board of governors. I heard the witnesses from CCMS say that it is about parental choice. If you force anything, it will not work; eventually people will go against it if it is not what they want. We are saying that, through time, the natural progression for Brookeborough has been to arrive at a shared campus. When we move into the shared campus, that can be heightened, and we have planned for that in the signatory project where we are extending the shared education from the morning to the whole day. There will be other activities, perhaps after-school activities. We already have a range of things, such as the parent association meeting. I would prefer to see it happening naturally, but I do not have a crystal ball. If you had asked me 15 years ago whether I would be talking about shared education, I would not have known, so I do not know where I will be in the next 15 years.
3513. **Ms Barker:** It is all to do with sustainability. What we hope, both from a managing authority point of view and from the schools’ point of view, is that the brand new shared campus will have state-of-the-art facilities, and we hope that it will be attractive to parents to send their children there; therefore, that will ensure sustainability in the future. We would not be pushed into any cost-cutting exercises.
3514. **Mrs Overend:** I was just trying to play devil’s advocate, but I wish you well.
3515. **Ms Hampsey:** Trevor referred to the delay in getting things up and running in Moy. That is absolutely not the fault of Moy primary or Moy controlled school. It is because of the bureaucracy and the stages that they have to go through, and a project group is working on it at the minute. It is certainly no fault of the schools or the boards or governors; it is just that it takes time. They received approval in June, and they are now putting in the full business case. It takes time; it is not that there is any delay. There is a time when things are right. Sometimes, if things stall, take time and sit, the impetus is lost. It would be a terrible tragedy if that happened.
3516. **Ms Barker:** It is not a simple matter of getting a site to build a school to accommodate all the children; governance and accountability arrangements have to be put in place, there has to be a memorandum of understanding between the two managing authorities, and a service-level agreement for the use of the facilities. As Mary said —
3517. **Ms Hampsey:** A lot of red tape is preventing them from getting together.
3518. **Mr Lunn:** In your CCMS role, has a decision been made about St Mary’s and Fivemiletown Primary School?
3519. **Ms Hampsey:** My role is only really shared education; it is to support the schools that wish to go forward with their plans at this time. That is my brief. I am a grandmother now two days a week, and I do this part-time, and I really am enjoying it. As I said, I am really impressed by the people whom I have met and their commitment.
3520. **Mr Lunn:** That was to prove that I do go to Fermanagh and that I have been to Fivemiletown.
3521. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much for presenting to us this morning. I wish you well with your project.

29 April 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
 Mr Trevor Lunn
 Mr Nelson McCausland
 Ms Maeve McLaughlin
 Mrs Sandra Overend
 Mr Seán Rogers
 Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Andrew Bell	<i>Department of</i>
Mrs Faustina Graham	<i>Education</i>
Mr Paul McAlister	<i>Education and</i>
	<i>Training Inspectorate</i>

3522. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome the following officials:
 Faustina Graham, who is the director of collaborative education and practice at the Department of Education (DE); Paul McAlister, who is the assistant chief inspector in the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI); and Andrew Bell, who is the head of the shared education and community relations team at DE. Good morning.

3523. **Mrs Faustina Graham (Department of Education):** Good morning.

3524. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

Can I ask you to make an opening statement? Members will follow with questions.

3525. **Mrs Graham:** Thank you very much, Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to brief the Committee on the review of the community relations, equality and diversity in education policy (CRED), the Minister's decision to end the CRED earmarked funding and the way forward.

3526. It may be helpful to begin by reminding members of the aim of the CRED policy, which is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect

for others. Importantly, the policy was designed to underpin and support existing curricular requirements. In particular, those are personal development and mutual understanding at primary level and learning for life and work at post-primary level, as well as the general curricular aims of developing young people as individuals and as contributors to society.

3527. Earmarked funding of almost £5 million has been provided over the four years since the policy was introduced in 2011. That funding was largely allocated to capacity building of the education workforce and also to the development and dissemination of resources for CRED and good practice in CRED-related work.

3528. As part of the normal policymaking cycle, a review of the policy commenced in September 2014. The review confirmed that significant progress has been made. Over 2,000 school leaders, governors, Youth Service managers, teachers and youth workers attended awareness-raising sessions over that period. In excess of 4,000 teachers and youth workers have been trained to improve their knowledge and skills related to CRED issues. A quarter of all principals have engaged in training on dealing with controversial issues in the classroom. Over the last two years, almost 800 schools and youth organisations received advice and support in implementing their CRED policies. During the same period, 810 programmes were delivered, involving approximately 25,000 young people. Guidance has been developed that is supported by a dedicated website that provides a one-stop shop for practitioners, including case studies, resources and support materials. A review of those CRED resources identified a significant range of good resources that cover all the section 75 groups, including teaching plans

- and materials that teachers and youth workers can access and use.
3529. Monitoring of the effectiveness of the policy included a series of focus groups with teachers, youth workers and young people, together with the commissioning of a module in the young life and times survey. The evidence indicates that the majority of young people experienced CRED activities and that good provision is effective in changing attitudes. Last year, as part of the review process, the Department commissioned the Education and Training Inspectorate to undertake a formal review of the CRED policy. Work was undertaken over the autumn term, and the report was published on 25 February 2015. That evaluation was positive and demonstrated that implementation of the policy has been largely effective. Practice in most of the schools and youth organisations that were visited was effective. Indeed, the majority of the taught sessions that were observed were evaluated as being “very good” or “better”.
3530. The report has also made a number of recommendations for further embedding CRED in the curriculum. Those include ensuring that the rights of the child underpin practice; CRED is embedded in a strategic overview of all policies and developed further through Priorities for Youth; and the development of shared education is referenced in light of emerging research and practice. The report additionally recommended that the Department continue to support the personal and professional development of staff and governors in schools and youth organisations to promote and embed CRED and also for the Department to foster more effective links with other Departments and agencies to support schools further and youth organisations in working in their local communities.
3531. The Committee will be aware that, as part of the action to address pressures on the extremely challenging 2015-16 education budget, the Minister has now ended earmarked CRED funding. Prior to making his decision, a full equality impact assessment (EQIA)
- was carried out, which was the subject of a public consultation that closed on 6 March. In publishing its equality impact assessment, the Department identified the potential impact of ending earmarked CRED funding on certain section 75 groups, specifically persons of different religious belief, racial groups, sexual orientation and persons with a disability and persons without. However, a number of mitigating factors were identified to address potential adverse effects on those groups.
3532. I will turn to the public consultation, to which 23 responses were received. Respondents identified impacts on similar groups to those that I outlined. A number of respondents were not content with the mitigations outlined by the Department. In particular, respondents expressed concern that disability, sexual orientation and race would not be the primary foci in the shared education signature project. Some responses highlighted concerns on the potential negative impact on the youth sector and, in particular, the skills capacity in the voluntary youth sector.
3533. Following consideration of the outcomes of the public consultation, the Minister decided that, on balance, there were sufficient mitigating actions to justify his proposal to end earmarked CRED funding as part of the challenging 2015-16 budget. Those mitigating factors include the focus on protecting front-line services as far as possible; the fact that earmarked funding for CRED was intended to support the initial implementation of the CRED policy; and the fact that the curriculum requires schools and youth groups to address community relations, equality, diversity and inclusion.
3534. The decision to end earmarked funding does not mean the withdrawal of the policy, which will remain in place. The advancement of shared education, including the provision of funding, will allow educational settings to continue to provide opportunities for meaningful interaction between young people from different community backgrounds. School and youth organisations continue to be required to adhere to the policy

aims and objectives, utilising their mainstream funding to deliver curricular requirements. The Department expects the Education Authority and the Youth Council to continue to support the implementation of the CRED policy and to minimise any potential negative impact on the particular needs of those of differing sexual orientation, racial group and disability.

3535. I will now turn to the way forward. Officials are working to revise the CRED policy to take particular account of the findings of the ETI evaluation and the ending of earmarked funding. It is envisaged that the core of the policy will remain unchanged but that the associated actions will be updated to reflect the mainstreaming of that work. In revising the policy, we will explore the synergies with shared education to ensure that the good work observed by inspectors is built on and continues to make a significant difference. Naturally, we will offer to brief the Committee on the revised policy once that work has progressed.
3536. I trust that that has provided the Committee with the CRED review findings, the rationale for the Minister's decision to mainstream CRED work and our plans to update the current policy to build on the successes that have already been achieved.
3537. We welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that members might have.
3538. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you for the briefing. Essentially, you are saying that the reason that it is being withdrawn is purely as a result of funding.
3539. **Mrs Graham:** Yes, it is the challenging budget. To protect front-line services, difficult decisions had to be made, and this is one of them.
3540. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It is recognised that the policy was working and benefiting a substantial number of young people in our society.
3541. **Mrs Graham:** There is no intention on the part of the Department that that should change. The point of the policy
- and the additional money that was allocated to it — the earmarked funding — was to ensure that schools and youth settings had the opportunity to look carefully at CRED requirements. It is an integral part of the curriculum, so there has been that requirement since the introduction of the curriculum in 2007. It was to enhance that at the beginning of the process, and now that it is to be embedded in the curriculum, it will continue, irrespective of funding.
3542. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** The funding gave structure to the programme, which will now be lost, so how will you ensure that there is a structure that can be measured?
3543. **Mrs Graham:** As I said, we are in the process of looking at the way forward. It is important for us to take a considered view of that. It was timely that the policy was due for review in 2014, which meant that we looked actively at the outworkings of the policy and what was successful at that point. The most important part of the review was the Education and Training Inspectorate's evaluation, because, with the ETI recommendations — I touched on some of them, but, as I am sure that you are aware, there is a great deal more detail in the report — that allows us to do exactly what you are saying: to shape how it will move forward for schools and youth organisations while making it clear to the Education Authority and the Youth Council that the expectation is there and that the fact that money was earmarked in that way does not mean that those structures should disappear or that a change or modification of those structures cannot take place, depending on what resources allow.
3544. **Mr Andrew Bell (Department of Education):** The funding was there for a very specific purpose, and it followed on from the previous review of the community relations schemes, from where the CRED policy evolved, following an ETI evaluation. That funding was specifically for capacity building and the dissemination of good practice. The previous review identified that teachers were telling us that, although they

- recognised that it was in the curriculum, they did not have the capacity or skills to deliver it, which is why we put in funding for capacity building. Over the period, the focus of the funding was on that. Faustina outlined the figures. Significant numbers of educators — teachers, principals and youth workers — have been trained and given those skills so that they can address those issues. The funding was for very specific purposes. The Minister is now mainstreaming that, in light of budget reductions. The capacity that has been built in the system, in schools and in youth organisations will mainstream that work through their existing funding.
3545. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I can see that it might be easier to mainstream in a school setting, but it might be more challenging in a youth organisation, particularly those in the uniform sector, which rely very much on volunteers. Over time, there is a large turnover of volunteers, who will also require capacity building. How will you ensure that that is not lost in that sector?
3546. **Mr A Bell:** We have asked the Youth Council in particular, through its existing funding, to make sure that it addresses that issue. It is also a key element of Priorities for Youth. It mentions that CRED is a specific issue addressed in Priorities for Youth. As regional plans are taken forward, the Department will expect associated work to be delivered.
3547. The youth sector view CRED as being integral to its work. It is delivered through the joined in equity, diversity and interdependence (JEDI) work, which very much drives how youth work is taken forward. The issue of volunteers has always been difficult to address, and, even during the period of this policy when we were funding, it was difficult to address the training needs of youth volunteers because of the way in which they operate and the fact that you are asking people to give up more time from their volunteer work to be trained. The Youth Council is looking at that, and we will continue to work with the youth sector and, indeed, the statutory youth organisations covered by the Education Authority to try to ensure that those issues are addressed.
3548. **Mr Rogers:** You are very welcome. I will go back to what you said, Faustina, about CRED largely being effective? We talk about budget implications and so on. Were there any concerns about the quality of delivery, the quality of projects, the range of provision and the level of rigorous assessment in schools and youth clubs?
3549. **Mrs Graham:** Sorry, in what way?
3550. **Mr Rogers:** In stopping the funding of the project.
3551. **Mrs Graham:** As you know, with any work in schools, there will always be variation. The evaluation was very much about looking at what was best practice and also accepting that we have not completed the journey of a uniform approach across the education system to the implementation of the CRED working. There will always be that requirement to upskill people. As schools progress in this work, once the training has been delivered, we can see increasing sophistication in the rigorous evaluation of what schools can do. However, people are at different starting points, and it often depends on the whole-school approach to evaluation generally. All those things come into play in the evaluation.
3552. **Mr Rogers:** Surely it is hard to separate the protection of front-line services from that. You said:
- “good provision is effective in changing attitudes”.*
3553. Surely meaningful interaction between our young people from different backgrounds is essential if those attitudes are to be changed. Is that not one of the front-line aims of education in Northern Ireland?
3554. **Mrs Graham:** Absolutely. As Andrew said, a difficult decision had to be made in very challenging circumstances. That is the decision that has been made. I was trying to say earlier that ETI's work

- indicates that the Department has a good basis of recommendations on which to revise the policy and point a way towards embedding it in the curriculum in a sustained way. That is important. As you know, whether it is £1.1 million, as it is in this instance, or £10 million, the money does not always make the difference. Money is very welcome, but what makes the difference are the people working and contributing who see the response and reaction of the young people whom they are working with. That will ultimately make the difference. It is incumbent on us to do the best job that we can in light of the fact that the decision has been made to end the funding. Good information is coming back from the evaluation and review, which will allow us to begin to do that. As I said, we will very happily come back to brief you on what we can do in response, but we are not at that point yet.
3555. **Mr Rogers:** One of the shames is that some great practice will possibly not now be disseminated. Is it really down to financial reasons that the Department is not able to put in place a more structured and funded support for the programme?
3556. **Mrs Graham:** As we discussed, up to now, there was quite a structured support for the programme. The money not being there does not mean that those things will all be lost. That would create a dependency culture as opposed to empowering our schools, the Education Authority and the Youth Council to do the work. We are looking generally, and certainly in teacher professional development, at empowering people to create a self-sustaining system. We cannot have a system that is entirely dependent on money — welcome as it is. I would never not want money to come into the education system, but, when people have engaged — I listed the statistics for the people who have been trained — there is a cascading effect across a school. When those leaders have been trained, and teachers and youth workers have taken forward work in their school, it allows that to grow exponentially. That was the intention of the original funding.
3557. **Mr McCausland:** Your submission references one of the ETI recommendations:
- “the rights of the child as defined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ... should be more central to the outworking of CRED in policy and practice.”*
3558. When I checked through the document on the Internet, there were no references to rights other than that recommendation. It would be helpful if you could explain to me how rights have not been more central in the past and how you envisage that they would be more central in future.
3559. **Mr Paul McAlister (Education and Training Inspectorate):** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child gives a common platform for that work right across Northern Ireland. It is important for teachers who are just starting out with that work to see it in a broader context. Some articles automatically link with article 2 on non-discrimination: article 12 relates to respect for the views of a child; article 23 relates to children with disabilities; article 28 relates to a child's right to education and what that should mean; article 29 relates to the goals of education provided for the child; and article 31 relates to leisure, play and culture. Those articles provide a very good backdrop that can be taken in common by schools in all sorts of situations across Northern Ireland that serve children from all sorts of backgrounds. It means that there is a clear understanding on the part of the teachers and management, including governors, of what CRED means for the children in their school. It also means that the parents can have confidence in what the school is providing against that backdrop.
3560. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you for that. The Department is absolutely clear, then, that, because the United Kingdom has signed up to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Education Department should follow through on that.

3561. **Mr A Bell:** The CRED policy actually references the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
3562. **Mr McCausland:** I appreciate that, but I am just asking whether, generally, it is the Department's position that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be followed through on.
3563. **Mr A Bell:** We have referenced it in the policy. Therefore, by default, we are acknowledging the fact —
3564. **Mr McCausland:** Thank you. I appreciate that very much.
3565. Secondly, you mentioned awareness-raising training for governors that has been held in the past. Do you envisage similar awareness-raising sessions for governors in future? I understand that there is a cost to such projects but an awareness-raising session for governors is not really expensive in comparative terms. Do you envisage awareness-raising for governors and others on the general area of CRED, which would include the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?
3566. **Mr A Bell:** The governor training was in response to identified needs. At that stage, we worked with the boards to identify all training needs. Governor training needs came up, and quite a number of governors received training. The way in which we envisage it going forward is that, if there are other identified needs, we will look to the Education Authority to work with governors on how those needs should be addressed. However, CRED is already specifically referenced in the governors' handbook. If there are continued needs, we will need to look to see how those should be addressed.
3567. **Mr McCausland:** Is there much in the governors' handbook about it?
3568. **Mr A Bell:** There is a section on CRED in the governors' handbook.
3569. **Mr McCausland:** Is it six lines or six pages?
3570. **Mr A Bell:** It has been a while since I looked at it, so I cannot tell you off the top of my head.
3571. **Mr McCausland:** I am sure that we can get a copy.
3572. **Mr A Bell:** It is definitely referenced; we were quite keen on that. One of the commitments made in the policy was to look at other areas that would support it. The governors' handbook was one of the areas that we looked at.
3573. **Mr McCausland:** Finally, how do you view the issue of race? When the UK Government are responding to international conventions on racial issues, they interpret that legally as relating to an ethnic group. Therefore, it does not necessarily mean colour or nationality; it could be an ethnic group within the United Kingdom. There is there a legal basis for the definition that they use. Do you have a particular definition of race that you use?
3574. **Mr P McAlister:** As a teacher many years ago, I attended a course in Corrymeela called Meeting the Other Side as a Partner in Education. One phrase that has stuck with me since then is "free to be". A key concept conveyed at that course was that, when you come through the door of a school, it does not matter who you are. If you are a girl who wants to play football, you are free to be. If you have ginger hair or no hair, you are free to be. That was continually reinforced throughout the course. In relation to race, if a person sees themselves as from Slovakia, Afghanistan, or whatever country, and sees that as their identity, that should be respected. They should be encouraged to have self-respect for that identity, how they see themselves, and other people should respect them for that.
3575. **Mr McCausland:** I appreciate that entirely. I am dealing more with the fact that different ethnicities within the United Kingdom, whether it is Welsh, Scottish, Irish, Ulster or whatever, are seen as race under the legal basis that is used. Is that how it is understood here as well?

3576. **Mr A Bell:** Do not forget that the CRED policy and, indeed, the curriculum aim to address issues that are faced by communities. We know from the PSNI hate crime statistics, for example, that it is very often the newcomer communities here who are affected by that. What schools are encouraged to do under this policy is to look at the issues that are facing the young people who they are dealing with in their communities, and address those issues. Given that the indications are that most of the issues that we face in this society are around newcomer groups, that is what schools have been addressing through us.
3577. **Mr McCausland:** I will not pursue the matter; I will just make the observation that, if we look at section 75, we see that the definition of race at a UK-wide level has a legal basis set down in the courts. It is important that that is kept in mind when looking at racial issues here, because indigenous ethnicities are also covered by it.
3578. **Mr P McAlister:** The real thrust of this is about mutual understanding. In the Key Stage 1, 2, and 3 curricula, which are available from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), mutual understanding is pointed out as a key element. Personal understanding is also part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum. It is really important that children coming into our schools from whatever countries, home or abroad, feel free to be, as they consider themselves, in terms of race or ethnicity and it should be no barrier to their education.
3579. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Mr McCausland has talked about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF has a Rights Respecting Schools programme, which a number of our schools are involved in. Can I ask for your comments on that? Are you supportive of that programme and look to help fund schools to be part of it?
3580. **Mr A Bell:** The schools that have chosen to do that have, as far as I am aware, funded it largely from their own resources. The Department is certainly content with Rights Respecting Schools. A number of schools have gone down that route, but there is not currently a specific funding stream to fund it. Schools have funded it largely through the mainstream budgets.
3581. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** How effective has that programme been? Have you given any consideration to that?
3582. **Mr A Bell:** I have not looked at that programme in enormous detail, but the feedback that we have had from working with officers from the boards who were working with schools is that it is a very effective programme in relation to CRED issues.
3583. **Mrs Graham:** The feedback that I have heard is only anecdotal in the sense of what we have picked up on in inspection; we have never done a formal evaluation of it. However, the requirement on all schools is around accessing the pupil voice. That is probably at the more sophisticated end of helping young people to look at their rights. Going back to what Mr McCausland said, the debates that our older pupils can have around definitions and what is legal is the type of thing that can happen in that situation. The direction of travel of Rights Respecting Schools is certainly something that we see positively, but there has not been any formal evaluation of that work.
3584. **Mr P McAlister:** The inspectorate does not promote one particular way of working, but we have had examples. Although, as Faustina says, we have not done a formal evaluation of it, inspectors have cited it in various situations and said that it has worked particularly effectively for the children. However, as I said, we have not taken a complete overview of it.
3585. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you. I remind members and those in the Public Gallery to ensure that your mobile phone is switched off. There seems to be some interference with the recording.
3586. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you for your presentation. It seems that it is purely a funding

- decision to terminate the programme. I appreciate the Department's difficulties at the moment; times are tight. However, a pattern seems to be developing of good programmes being terminated, and you wonder about the cost in human terms. If somebody had come along two years ago and given the opinion that the CRED programme was not working very well and that there was no need for it, the Department would have defended it as an excellent programme and so would the ETI, I think, on the basis of what I read here. Now there is no money, and it has to go. You change tack and say, "Well, there are other ways to deliver this, and all the good practice hasn't been lost; it will all cascade down through the system. In particular, we're going to involve the Youth Council", which appears to be facing the chop, frankly.
3587. I wonder where all this will end. I have seen it recently with language tuition in primary schools, if I can make that comparison. That is an excellent scheme, which is highly valued and recommended. Any authority you might speak to across Europe and beyond thinks that it is a terrific thing to encourage young children when they are capable of picking up a language easily to learn a second language, but we are not going to fund it any more. The Minister says that is OK because schools can use their surplus budgets. That is what he came out with in the House recently. I think that he was able to point to two schools that might be in a position to do that. Going back to your comment about the Youth Council, is it not a fact that it is also under threat, so it may not be valid to say that you will be able to utilise its expertise in this area?
3588. **Mr A Bell:** The Youth Council is still in existence and, under this year's funding, we have indicated that we expect it, certainly as long as it remains — it is not our side that is dealing with that — to deliver against the CRED policy. If a decision is taken at some stage that it is not to remain, we will continue to work with whoever deals with organisations in the voluntary youth sector to ensure that the policy is addressed. The Minister's position on funding is that he has taken every action to protect front-line services. He has stated that it is simply not possible to protect everything and that, when we are faced with a £97.6 million funding gap, it is inevitable that some issues will have to be addressed in a different way, which is what we are aiming to do through the CRED policy. The CRED policy will remain in place; the challenge for us is to find ways to ensure that the good work is not lost.
3589. **Mr Lunn:** That is fair enough but, looking at it in the round, it seems that some programmes are being sacrificed that are not, in the overall scheme of things, particularly expensive and that have received very good reports over the years. They are not being reduced; they are being cut out. Suddenly, from being a terrific programme that is well worth spending £1.2 million a year on, it is not needed any more. The language programme, at £600,000 not even upwards of £1 million is doing so much good for young children in the opinion of most of us, but it is not going to be cut to £400,000; it is going to be cut out. As usual, I do not have a particular question for you.
3590. **Mr A Bell:** The Minister's view on that is that he believes that there are sufficient mitigating actions to avoid losing all the good work that has taken place and that, when we are looking at reviewing and revising the policy, we will try to bring those issues to the fore through the policy. We want to build on the good experience. I know that somebody else mentioned that maybe we would lose that experience. We have tried to capture that as much as possible through the website and the case study materials. There has been really good practice and, in some cases, that good practice does not cost an awful lot; people's attitudes are the main issue. One of the schools that responded to the consultation flagged up the fact that, while the money was welcomed, it was not the driving force for doing that work. In that response, they stated that, irrespective of whether funding was provided, they would continue to

deliver this. Those attitudes really make a difference.

3591. I was involved in the consultation when we were introducing the CRED policy, and some of the respondents told us at that stage that the budget was reduced and there was a lot of concern about how much they could deliver. However, some respondents said that money was not the answer to everything and that it was about attitudes. That is what we have sought to do with the earmarked funding, which was there with a view, in the longer term, to try to mainstream this work within schools, and that is what the focus has been. Even going forward, the policy was due for review. I have been working towards this review over the last year before all the issues became clear around the current budgets, and the view was that the funding would be used in a different way moving forward, because we felt that we had addressed the capacity building and we had addressed dissemination. That was the information that was coming back through surveys.
3592. **Mr Lunn:** Their anticipation was that there would still be funding there, although you might use it in a different way.
3593. **Mr A Bell:** If funding is there, we would —
3594. **Mr Lunn:** But there is no funding.
3595. **Mr A Bell:** If funding is there, we would find a way to use it so that it would be good value for money and would drive forward the issues. The fact is that, because of the budget situation and the Minister deciding that there are sufficient mitigating factors, we do not want to lose that work. That is the key message: we do not want to lose this work, and we want to drive it forward. We have to find other ways to do that within existing funding.
3596. **Mr Lunn:** When was the review to be completed?
3597. **Mr A Bell:** We commissioned the inspectorate, and its review was to finish around Christmas, with the report coming out in January, which is what happened. We then looked to

update the policy but, in light of the budget decisions, we deferred that until we worked through those. Obviously, until the full public consultation was undertaken on the equality impact assessment, we could not make final decisions. Now that that has worked through, we are starting to look at revising the policy. As we have seen, the core of the policy does not change. The policy was a core policy, plus a number of actions. The actions that were associated with the policy at that stage took account of the fact that funding was available. We will be looking at those actions and seeing what alternative actions we can put in place to access, as far as possible, mainstream funding to make sure that we do not lose the aims of the policy. The Department has also committed to continue to monitor the work going forward, so we will continue to see whether there are factors that have not been identified either by us or through the public consultation.

3598. **Mr Lunn:** You are going to continue, without funding, work that required funding until now.
3599. **Mr A Bell:** As I said, the funding was specifically to address the capacity-building issues and the dissemination of good practice and materials, and that was largely addressed. That was the general conclusion, irrespective of the budget issues that then arose.
3600. **Mrs Overend:** Continuing on that point, the Chair referred to the uniformed organisations and the turnover of volunteers. Obviously, the same goes for schools; there needs to be continual training for existing and new teachers. Have you had discussions with the teacher training colleges, for instance, about this?
3601. **Mr A Bell:** We have worked with the teacher education institutions through some of the other programmes that we deliver, particularly the International Fund for Ireland sharing in education programmes. We worked on a couple of programmes with the teacher education institutions: one with the University of

- Ulster, and one through a combined project with Stranmillis and St Mary's. Those addressed issues around shared education, in particular. One of the aims of shared education is reconciliation. In those programmes, we have encouraged them to look at how they train new teachers to ensure that that skill continues to be addressed at that level as new teachers come through.
3602. **Mrs Overend:** OK. I want to go over what you said. You are looking at it, but it has not been implemented as yet. What stage are we at?
3603. **Mrs Graham:** Paul showed you the curriculum overview. All the things that we are talking about in CRED are contained in the curriculum. There is a statutory requirement for schools to deliver that. We would like to get to a point at which a CRED policy is not required because it is so integral to the curriculum. The same applies to our teacher education colleges. They are preparing young people to come into the system to deliver their curriculum. Therefore, the expectation is there also. The luxury of additional funding is something that is always welcomed, but good practitioners — be they in teacher education or in schools or youth organisations — will not be stopped from delivering what they see as being required of them. It is great if a teacher has 20 or 25 pupils, as opposed to 30. Your job is then easier in a sense, but it will not change what you do. We have talked to teacher-training educators about the shared education agenda and the possibility of working collaboratively and designing programmes that would address the issue.
3604. When I was working in the ETI and looking at the evaluation of the former programmes for best practice, we were seeing schools going way beyond the reconciliation issues, even in those programmes, and dealing with the broader section 75 issues. Therefore, we have developing good practice in our schools, our youth organisations and our teacher-training institutions. The difficult job that we face now is to find low-cost and no-cost ways — if that is what you want to call them — of supporting our schools and teacher trainers to continue to let that work grow. I am not underestimating the difficulty of that, but that is what we have to do. That is what we need to do, as everyone needs that support.
3605. **Mrs Overend:** Andrew said that some of the respondents said that they wanted to do the work even if there was not funding, but we can depend on the goodwill of teachers for only so long before somebody breaks down at some stage. Your paper states that it is anticipated that Peace IV funding will be available for something like this. Can you tell me more about that and about the timing of it?
3606. **Mr A Bell:** Peace IV is currently with the European Commission, so the Special EU Programmes Body is waiting for the European Commission to come back to it on that. The most recent indication that we had was that it is likely to be later in the year before it will get a response from the Commission. That was mentioned as one of the mitigating factors. Although the core funding was around capacity-building issues and the dissemination of good practice for CRED funding, we also encouraged the boards. They put in the CRED enhancement scheme, where schools could apply for funding. The policy encourages the thinking that the delivery of subjects such as learning for life and personal development and mutual understanding is not just about theory but about young people getting the opportunity to engage with other young people from different community backgrounds. I suppose that the key issue with the shared education funding, including the shared education funding to be available under the Peace thematic area, is that it will allow those types of opportunities to continue to happen. Schools will be able to bring together young people from different community backgrounds. That is the key. It is one of the mitigating factors but not the only one.
3607. **Mr P McAlister:** May I come in on teacher education? We found CRED to be most effective where that good

- practice was being modelled by the professionals — either the youth leaders or the teachers — through the ethos of respect, and so on, and the degree to which they promoted sharing.
3608. I welcome your raising teacher education. There is an opportunity for the various organisations that provide it to model that sharing for the whole education community and to increase the amount of interaction and experiential learning that student teachers have.
3609. **Mrs Overend:** I am also thinking about monitoring the success of ongoing community relations in the schools, and so on, through CRED. If that moves into the curriculum, how will it be monitored? Will there be specific monitoring of how those relationships develop?
3610. **Mr A Bell:** In the response to public consultation on the EQIA, we indicated that the inspectors will look at CRED issues in schools, which they are doing at the moment. They will continue to do that. CRED is about attitudinal change, so one key factor that we used was the young life and times survey. We commission that every other year. The latest version is due to be published in May. It was done in 2014, so we are due to repeat it in 2016. That will allow us to continue to monitor the impact of the CRED work that is happening in schools on the attitudes of young people. We will look very closely at the results, given the implications around the fact that we no longer have the earmarked funding available to make sure that schools are continuing to deliver CRED.
3611. **Mrs Graham:** One other thing in the ETI report — I say this to spare Paul's blushes — is a recommendation that the ETI made for itself, which is to look at the whole concept of self-evaluation. That is one thing that I think that we will look at in the review of the policy. There are CRED indicators that can be used for the self-evaluative process, so the ETI has recommended that those be integrated into its Together Towards Improvement self-evaluation tool. That in itself allows schools to begin to see the integration of CRED. They have had the opportunity to look at it as a separate set of indicators, but this will allow them to see it as holistic to the self-evaluation process that they will undertake.
3612. Furthermore, the ETI recommended that it become part and parcel of the inspection process, and that has already started to happen. At the minute, the ETI is looking at identifying good practice, and within shared education in particular. Rather than immediately looking at what is good and what is not so good, it is trying to cite where the practice is really good and can be built on, in order to encourage people while we are still on that developmental journey. That, again, was in the detail of that report, which I obviously would not have referred to in the briefing.
3613. **Mr P McAlister:** I am grateful to you for raising that, Faustina. One thing that we are quite adamant about is that there should be no compromise on high-quality education when bringing people together. It has to be good education that children experience, as well as the sharing. As to the good educational outcomes, what we want for the children is really the test of what is provided. We see good educational outcomes as being one element of academic outcomes, through learning, as well as the reconciliation outcomes or the mutual understanding outcomes. However, they should come together in a really good experience for the learner.
3614. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** No one else has indicated to ask a question, so, to conclude, I want to ask what your timescale for updating the policy is.
3615. **Mrs Graham:** We do not have a specific timescale as yet. We are turning our attention to that just now, so I would say probably before the end of the summer. Andrew?
3616. **Mr A Bell:** We have already given some thought to it and have looked at the core of the policy, which we know is unlikely to change. We will then look at the actions. It is a matter of trying

to balance things, because my team is also leading on all the shared education work in the legislation. Our aim is to move the policy forward as quickly as we can. The core of the policy does not change. As I said, change will be around the actions associated with it. The fact that the core of the policy is unlikely to change means that it should still apply to schools at present. As Faustina said, we do not, unfortunately, have a specific aim yet, but we will have one within the current year. I do not know whether it will be done by the end of the summer, but I do have somebody working on it at the moment.

3617. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
Will there be a further consultation?
3618. **Mrs Graham:** On foot of the ETI report — this is why I am even saying about there not being a specific aim or deadline — we have to have face-to-face conversations with practitioners, the Education Authority and the Youth Council. It is not a case of us saying, “This is what you must do” in a prescriptive way; rather, it is about working collaboratively with all the education stakeholders, taking into account that we are where we are and that the money is not there. It is also not a case of us saying, “We’re going to write all these wonderful things and require you to do them”. It is really about working in practical terms. If we can do that and build consensus on how we support each other to deliver on the CRED policy, we will be in a better place. The first step for us, before we would even look at a wider consultation, is to have those frank face-to-face discussions to see what is possible and to inform our thinking. It should not be our thinking alone that determines what the end product of the policy will be.
3619. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
Obviously, the timescale is important, because the removal of the funding means that there is now a void.
3620. **Mrs Graham:** Yes, I appreciate that.
3621. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
We look forward to hearing back from you on that.
3622. **Mrs Graham:** Absolutely.
3623. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**
Thank you very much.

29 April 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Lunn
Mr Nelson McCausland
Ms Maeve McLaughlin
Mrs Sandra Overend
Mr Seán Rogers
Mr Pat Sheehan

Witnesses:

Mr Andrew Bell	<i>Department of</i>
Mrs Faustina Graham	<i>Education</i>
Dr Suzanne Kingon	

3624. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):**

I welcome Suzanne Kingon, who joins Faustina and Andrew. I ask you to open with a statement, and Committee members will then ask questions.

3625. **Mrs Faustina Graham (Department of Education):**

We turn now to the subject of the recently published circular on jointly managed schools, about which you asked to be briefed. Suzanne has joined us because she worked closely with Andrew and me on the development of the circular.

3626. Members may recall that we spoke briefly about ongoing work to develop guidance on establishing a jointly managed school when we appeared before the Committee last July. I am pleased to say that the work has now concluded, and the jointly managed schools circular was published earlier this month.

3627. In developing the guidance, we worked closely with the Catholic trustees and Transferor Representatives' Council, which were supportive of the concept, given that some communities had already expressed an interest in exploring it further. The definition that we have agreed for a "jointly managed school" is a:

"grant-aided school, providing shared education with a Christian ethos, with Trustee

representation agreed by the Transferor churches and the Catholic Church".

3628. As set out in the guidance, such schools will be managed by a board of governors, with balanced representation from both main communities.

3629. It is most likely that a jointly managed school will be established as a result of the amalgamation of former controlled and Catholic-maintained schools. In such cases, development proposals will be required to close the existing grant-aided schools and establish a new jointly managed school. Jointly managed, however, is not a new management type. Rather, it is envisaged that those schools will develop within the existing legislative framework, having a voluntary maintained management classification. The circular outlines the development proposal process. More detailed advice is provided in the Department's recently updated development proposal guidance.

3630. The proposed school must be viable in the longer term against the criteria set out in the Department's sustainable schools policy. The development proposal will require the widespread support of the local community that the school will serve. The proposal should also take account of the area-planning context, and it should consequently be developed in consultation with the relevant planning authorities. The board of governors should be reflective of the Protestant and Catholic religious traditions and be constituted through local agreement. It is expected that the ethos will be within a Christian framework, respecting the religious ethos of both the Catholic and transferor Churches, with neither predominant. The ethos arrangement for worship and the approach to religious education must be agreed prior to bringing forward any proposal. The transferors and Catholic trustees are confident that such arrangements can be locally

- agreed and practicably implemented. For practical purposes, it is preferable that a formal body, such as a trust, be established following the approval of any development proposal. Trustees would be appointed through a deed of appointment and be the school's legal representatives. The board of governors would be the employer of teachers for such schools, while the Education Authority would be the employer for all non-teaching staff.
3631. The Department is engaged in a review of home-to-school transport. Until that work is completed, jointly managed schools will be classified as being within both controlled and other voluntary, and Catholic maintained, and, within those categories, they will reflect the origin of the original schools. That is designed to support local children attending their nearest school, while recognising parental preference. It is also reflective of the prerequisite need for widespread community support. For that reason, it will have minimal impact on the existing transport eligibility of pupils in an area, while nevertheless protecting the position of the existing integrated sector, in line with the Department's statutory duty for that sector. Similarly, arrangements for temporary variation have been designed to avoid a situation in which a jointly managed school would be considered as an alternative for a child who requested a place in any other sector. Naturally, the Department will keep those initial classifications under review as the schools are established, to ensure that any potentially negative impact is minimised.
3632. In developing the circular, we have responded to community interest as straightforwardly as possible within the existing legislative and policy framework. To conclude, a jointly managed school offers a real and viable alternative to communities, and we believe that, with the backing of local communities, the model has the significant potential to provide effective local provision for children and young people. We are happy to take questions.
3633. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Thank you very much. Why has it taken so long to get to the stage of having this model before us?
3634. **Mr Andrew Bell (Department of Education):** We have been in negotiation with the Catholic trustees and the transferors, and it was important that they were on board. There was no point in bringing it forward until all the issues were addressed. That process took time, because, as we worked through what most people thought was a relatively straightforward process, there were many anomalies around transport, temporary variation and ownership issues, all of which had to be addressed, and that took time. As we worked through them as a group, every time that we thought that we had got to a position, another issue was raised. It was important for the guidance that those issues were addressed to everybody's satisfaction, because, without the support of the transferors and trustees, it would be difficult to implement those schools.
3635. Equally, from the point of view of the schools, we wanted to make sure that we had covered as many of the issues as we were able to identify during the process. The guidance recognises that it is a new concept, that other issues may arise and that we will address them as we go forward. Certainly, we now have a pretty comprehensive set, covering all the issues identified to date.
3636. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** How do you view those schools in the light of the Drumragh judgement?
3637. **Mrs Graham:** Time will tell, in a sense. What we have tried to do in the guidance is to be as flexible and broad as possible, with the key aim being that no child is disadvantaged in any way. There are things in the Drumragh judgement that create ambiguities, leaving this open to interpretation. The important thing for us at this point is to ensure that we move the process forward. That is therefore a consideration for another time, I suppose, and we would like to think that we could build consensus

again around the issue in order to reach a resolution. One of the issues, as Andrew said, is the technicalities and the complexities, such that there are no straightforward comparisons of like with like. It really is not that way, and that leaves a degree of ambiguity. Suzanne may wish to add something on the technical side.

3638. **Dr Suzanne Kingon (Department of Education):** Obviously, these are not integrated schools in the technical sense under Part VI of and schedules 5 and 6 to the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. These are maintained schools as defined by article 2 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. There are therefore important legal differences in the composition of the board of governors, the ownership, and so on. To go back to our treatment of the schools under article 64 of the 1989 Order, there is some ambiguity, as Faustina said. What we have done in developing the guidance is to make sure that the position of existing integrated schools in the transport policy and the temporary variation (TV) policy is in no way compromised. That has been an important consideration. The transport classification and the TV categorisation for those new schools does not overlap with the existing position of established integrated schools.

3639. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Article 64(1) places a duty on the Department:

“to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils.”

3640. That is exactly what the proposal is doing, and it is under that piece of legislation that the protections are given to the integrated sector as we currently know it. Therefore, what really is the difference?

3641. **Dr Kingon:** In his judgement, Justice Treacy stated that the education of Catholics and Protestants together was not enough; it has to be at the same school, without a predominant

ethos of one religion and with a balanced representation on the board of governors. The other thing that he went on to say was:

“Article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 applies only to integrated education as a standalone concept within the confines of part VI of the 1989 Order.”

3642. Part VI of the 1989 Order spells out the constitution of grant-maintained and controlled integrated schools, so that is where a little bit of ambiguity comes into the judgement. What we are saying is that, if we were to categorically place those schools under article 64 and say that they are integrated before any are established, we may disadvantage children who are currently attending an established integrated school, which we have no desire to do through this concept. For example, if we categorised them as integrated for transport purposes, a child who lived within statutory walking distance of one of those schools who was currently getting transport assistance to an established integrated school would no longer be entitled to that. That child would be disadvantaged.

3643. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I think that we are dancing on the head of a pin here. What Faustina said in her opening remarks about a balanced board of governors, with neither the Protestant nor Catholic religion predominating, is exactly what Suzanne said when taking about integrated education.

3644. **Mrs Graham:** I think that that is why there is ambiguity there.

3645. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I am not really sure what the difference is, yet the integrated sector is still going to be regarded as having a privileged position over these schools.

3646. **Mr A Bell:** This was driven by a desire from communities. If you recall, after the ministerial advisory group report was published, the Minister had a period of civic debate, during which communities could bring forward innovative ideas for him to look at. That is where this originates. It is very much

- a bottom-up approach. It has come from communities that are aware of their options with integrated education. The big difference, I suppose, is that, in these schools, representatives of the Catholic and transferor Churches will have a formal role in the governance and, indeed, management. Therefore, that is one of the key differences. The fact that it is being driven from the communities, which, for whatever reason, felt that integrated education was not the approach that their community wanted to adopt, means that this offers an alternative option with this type of school.
3647. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** There may a key difference in the governance, but the practicalities of it are that it is still educating Protestant and Roman Catholic children together.
3648. **Dr Kington:** None of the schools has been established yet, and the Department will look at how article 64 potentially applies to these schools as development proposals come forward and the schools are established. We will keep under review how article 64 applies to these schools.
3649. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I will open the session up to members, and I will come back to some questions.
3650. **Mr Lunn:** Chair, I was interested to see you asking questions that I was going to ask. You are perfectly entitled to, but it was just a surprise. “Dancing on the head of a pin” just about describes it correctly.
3651. If a parent in any area you like was keen to send their child to an integrated school — in poll after poll, they indicate that they would like to if there was one available — and if this thing gathers legs and it works out that there will be jointly managed Church schools available, I would have thought that most parents would be happy with that option. It is Protestants and Catholics being educated together under one roof. It is not a Moy or a Brookeborough situation; it is children being educated together with a non-partisan board. Fair enough, Suzanne, you may say that it is established under different legislation and so on, but it is actually the same thing, so I could not do other than to welcome it.
3652. You talked about the Catholic trustees. Where does the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) stand on this? On the basis of what it has said in recent visits to the Committee, it would be absolutely opposed to this. What view have you had from CCMS?
3653. **Dr Kington:** Obviously, we worked closely with the trustees on this and they fed back throughout the process. CCMS formally commented on the guidance, and there was no indication from it of any objection to the content.
3654. **Mr Lunn:** The representatives of CCMS have been to see us on two occasions recently, and they have lambasted the integrated sector and the special status that they appear to think it has. I cannot work that out personally. They also laid out their remit, which is perfectly simple from their point of view. It is only one sentence: it is to open, maintain and close Catholic schools. That is it. It does not include amalgamations. In fact, CCMS set its face very strongly against amalgamations. Here, however, we have a situation that I welcome, where the Catholic trustees appear to be joining in with this with some enthusiasm.
3655. **Mr A Bell:** All I can say is that we have worked with CCMS through some of this with representatives, with the boards, at that stage, and now, obviously, with the Education Authority, and we have not encountered any problems in discussions around schools or communities that are interested in this.
3656. **Mr Lunn:** Well, maybe the light is beginning to dawn even in the dark recesses of CCMS.
3657. You talked about the Drumragh judgement, Suzanne. It probably has a bit to go yet. It was left a bit vague, but we now have the judgement on Drumragh Integrated College. It is not for me to pre-empt what might happen, but there may be further clarification.

- Whatever clarification Judge Treacy might come up with, it still points to the fact that the suggestion that has now come out of the blue and under the radar from the two Church bodies is, pretty much, an integrated solution. There you are again: find a question.
3658. **Mr A Bell:** I should clarify that we have worked with the transferors and the trustees, but the origin of this is from communities themselves. That is a key element; it has not been driven by the Churches, the transferors or the Department but by communities, and we have responded to that. To be fair, the transferors and trustees have been very open in working with us around the concept. The fact that there are communities that are keen on this, which is obviously at the upper end of shared education, as are the integrated schools, is a good thing.
3659. **Mr Lunn:** One of you mentioned shared education in your presentation, but this is not shared education. Shared education is not the coming together of Protestant and Catholic children under one roof and one school with a joint, non-partisan board. It is completely different. Some people are horrified by the word “integrated”, but this is actually what it is.
3660. **Dr Kingon:** A lot of the schools and communities that are interested in this evolved from partnership through shared education and the building and forging of those relationships within the communities. As Andrew said, this is a further form of it — the next step on the ladder. As Andrew said, communities have expressed an interest. The Department has provided the guidance in order to give that option and to give clarity around how you would go about doing that. It is for communities to decide whether they have an integrated option, a jointly managed option or the existing controlled or maintained schools. It is for communities, within the context of area planning, to come forward with those proposals.
3661. **Mr A Bell:** It was also a very specific commitment in the draft policy, which has gone to public consultation as well, that we would look at different structural issues, and that is specifically mentioned in the shared education policy.
3662. **Mr Lunn:** Sorry to labour it, Chair, but do tell me what the difference is. The concept of transformation to integrated status also comes from the bottom up. It needs the parents and the governors, who are sometimes a bit hard to convince that that is the way to go, but it is community-driven. This is going to be community-driven, and it is going to be driven to the same end solution, which is set out in the Drumragh judgement. I do not know why you are making other than a technical difference in terms of the past legislation and regulations under which certain sectors were set up.
3663. **Dr Kingon:** It is more than just a technical difference. There are quite a number of day-to-day running differences as well between those schools and a grant-maintained integrated school.
3664. **Mr Lunn:** Tell me what they are.
3665. **Dr Kingon:** I have a list of things. The employer of teachers is different; the funding authority is different; the owners of the estates are different; the responsibility for rates, for landlord maintenance, for running a non-teaching payroll and for purchasing an invoice are all different. There is a long list of practicalities in those schools that are very different to those in grant-maintained integrated schools.
3666. **Mrs Graham:** We have tried to put that together, even for ourselves, in a straightforward way, and we would be happy to send that to you, because it is quite technical in that way. You have to keep reading and re-reading it to get the logistics of it.
3667. **Mr Lunn:** Those are the words I used — “technical differences”. In terms of the classroom, if it works out the way it is conceived, it will be the same as an integrated school. It will effectively be based on an integrated model, without the particular legal status. It has a slightly different legal status, but it has the same result.

3668. **Mrs Graham:** We are trying to be cautious until a school is actually established, because that is your view, and you will be well aware that other people have a different view that may focus on the technicalities of it. What we think is most important is that we actually encourage and support the schools to work with the community to establish the school, which is something different and something new. That may have all of the elements that you have described, and, if it leads to the question that you are asking, which is whether there is any difference, I think that would be a healthy discussion for us to have as a whole community, further along the road, when a school is actually established.
3669. What we are doing here is looking at something that is not in place yet. There is no development proposal for one of those schools. It was hugely important that the transferors and the Catholic Church felt that it was a relationship of trust that was building up, that we were being very open with them, that so many of the barriers, as Andrew said, were technical, that where there was a will there was way and that we would find ways to support the guidance reaching fruition. The fact that we have got to that stage is where we are now and we cannot go any further until we actually have a development proposal to establish these schools. From our perspective, it is not being awkward. We are trying to be practical and realistic in the circumstances in which we all find ourselves while encouraging the development of schools.
3670. **Mr Lunn:** You said that it was my view and that I was entitled to it. That view has been expressed elsewhere round this table today by people who do not necessarily share my view on integrated education. I will not go on about it.
3671. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I may have slightly different concerns, and my emphasis might be slightly different, Trevor.
3672. **Mr Lunn:** OK, Chair, but you did mention, “dancing on the head of a pin”. Frankly, I will just —
3673. **Dr Kingon:** I think that it is important to recognise, though, that school ownership, for example, while it may be a technical issue, is an important issue for some key stakeholders in the process.
3674. **Mr Lunn:** We will see. If it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it is normally a duck.
3675. **Mr A Bell:** The key thing here is that communities now have a choice. For communities that wish to go for an integrated school, that choice is still open to them. To communities that, for whatever reason, do not feel that they are ready for an integrated school, this offers an alternative choice for them to bring young people together and educate them together. That is what communities have told us. That is the origin of this. We have responded to what communities are telling us.
3676. **Mrs Graham:** It is guidance, and we will keep it under review. We have tried to get to this point. We are pleased that we have got to this stage, but until we get a development proposal, we cannot really test this any further.
3677. **Mr Rogers:** Thanks again. I just want to follow on from Trevor’s point. Do you foresee the situation where jointly managed schools could transfer to integrated status?
3678. **Dr Kingon:** It would, obviously, require a further development proposal to become an integrated school under article 89, but there is nothing to preclude a maintained school from transforming to become an integrated school.
3679. **Mr Rogers:** OK. Could you clarify this for me? Is there any legal protection for the Christian ethos in controlled schools?
3680. **Dr Kingon:** The legislation that relates to controlled schools states that they must provide non-denominational Christian education. That is what controlled schools provide.
3681. **Mr Rogers:** If there is a jointly managed school, would there then be a legal protection for the Christian ethos? Faustina, you said that you would need

- the governors to work out the Christian ethos between them. Is there a legal protection for the Christian ethos in a jointly managed school?
3682. **Mrs Graham:** The development proposal would not be brought until that had been agreed. The guidance that I read for you states that that would have to be agreed by both schools before they would bring the development proposal forward. That protection would be there in the sense of consensus between both parties. That would be decided before the development proposal was actually brought to the Department. If that is done beforehand, the protection is there. If a development proposal were approved with no agreement on how that Christian ethos would operate, that would be much more complex and difficult. Again, it is a case of local agreement by the contributing parties, who would decide in advance.
3683. **Dr Kingon:** It is also important to remember that four ninths of the board of governors will be trustee representatives. The guidance stipulates that in looking at a development proposal, we expect the trustee representatives to be split between the transferring Churches and the Catholic Church. A strong Christian element would be built into the board of governors and the management of the school.
3684. **Mr Rogers:** Maybe this is a very simple question, but will a jointly managed school always be a Protestant one and a Catholic one coming together? Is there any possibility of a maintained school, a CCMS school and a grammar school with a different set of trustees coming together as a jointly managed school?
3685. **Dr Kingon:** At present, the technicalities of the guidance that we have put forward, as it is being called, are specific to controlled and maintained schools coming together. If other schools or communities were interested in working towards this type of management, obviously the Department would work with them on a case-by-case basis.
3686. **Mr McCausland:** I have just two questions. With regard to demonstrating community support, or, indeed, if someone wanted to demonstrate community opposition to a proposal, how would that be done?
3687. **Dr Kingon:** The statutory development proposal process includes a pre-consultation period and a full eight-week public consultation period, which allows all views and objections to be forwarded to the Minister and included in the submission to the Minister. In the pre-consultation — *[Interruption.]*
3688. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Can you hold for a second —
3689. **The Committee Clerk:** Sorry about that. We will just get that drilling switched off. The renovations to the Building are nearly finished. We have asked them not to do that during Committee meetings.
3690. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** It seems to have stopped.
3691. **Dr Kingon:** Obviously, there would have to be consultation at the early part of the development proposal process. Before a proposal is brought forward, there will have to be consultation with the whole school community of each of the schools involved.
3692. **Mr McCausland:** What about the wider community, for example, if someone has children but they are not at the school yet?
3693. **Dr Kingon:** As I said, there will be a full public consultation that everybody can engage with, and the proposer will have a number of meetings across the community before it is published.
3694. **Mr A Bell:** The Department will look for that wider community support, because we know that if you do not have that, parents will vote with their feet and move to other schools, and the last thing that we want to do is create schools that are unsustainable. That is why that widespread community support is —
3695. **Mr McCausland:** The second question is this: we live in a world very different today from what it was some years ago, and, in the Protestant community, there

- is a very wide range of denominations. I think that there are about six different types of Presbyterians in Northern Ireland. I am thinking of the Presbyterian tradition alone. If you have a controlled school with the transferors and the Roman Catholic school and the trustees coming together into a single school, there might be people from some of the Churches involved, where their ministers might be sitting as transferors, or others who feel that that is not the thing for them. I am just concerned to get some clarity around the arrangements. If someone's child is going to a controlled school and the decision is taken to move in this direction, would they get free transport to another controlled school some distance away if they felt that was not the choice? In other words, is that a different category for transport?
3696. **Dr Kingon:** It would depend on so many individual circumstances. If they lived within statutory walking distance of any school, obviously they would not get transport assistance to it.
3697. **Mr McCausland:** I will simplify the thing. I am thinking, for the sake of argument, of some little village somewhere, where you are quite a few miles from the next village and the next school. If the schools were to come together in a particular village, and, presumably, the children in that village at the moment can walk to the school, but if they were to go to a school four miles away —
3698. **Dr Kingon:** In a scenario where a child lives within statutory walking distance of a jointly managed school, they would not receive transport assistance to go to another controlled or maintained school outside statutory walking distance.
3699. **Mr McCausland:** So, parents who, for religious reasons, felt that that school was inappropriate for their child would not have the option of sending them to a school —
3700. **Dr Kingon:** They would have the option —
3701. **Mr McCausland:** — without having to pay for the extra transport themselves.
3702. **Dr Kingon:** They would not get transport assistance if they lived within statutory walking distance of it.
3703. **Mr A Bell:** That is why it is key that there is widespread community support for these schools.
3704. **Mr McCausland:** But if the controlled school closed in the village, they would get the transport costs to the next village four miles away.
3705. **Dr Kingon:** If there was no other controlled option within statutory walking distance.
3706. **Mr McCausland:** I am assuming that, yes.
3707. **Mr McCausland:** Has the position of parents who may not wish their children to attend a school of that type been factored in?
3708. **Dr Kingon:** Yes. We did a very detailed analysis of all the transport options for the schools and have taken into account all the different —
3709. **Mr McCausland:** If the two schools came together as a single integrated school, would the parents whose children had previously attended the controlled school get free transport to the next village?
3710. **Dr Kingon:** The two schools cannot come together as an integrated school.
3711. **Mr McCausland:** If the two schools closed or something of that nature happened and the controlled school in the village disappeared, would the pupils get free transport?
3712. **Dr Kingon:** If there was an integrated school within statutory walking distance of their home and they wanted to go to a controlled school outside statutory walking distance of their home, they would get transport assistance.
3713. **Mr McCausland:** In effect, for those parents, there could be a disadvantage in that scenario.
3714. **Dr Kingon:** For every scenario we looked at the pros and the cons and the numbers likely to be affected. We

- took that all into account. The answer to the question is, yes, if a child lives within statutory walking distance of the school, they will not receive transport assistance. You also have to consider that only 10% of primary school children receive transport entitlement. We are talking about a small group of people.
3715. **Mrs Overend:** Is there going to be a minimum enrolment level for the schools in these categories?
3716. **Dr Kingon:** All the development proposals are looked at on a case-by-case basis. They are looked at within the framework and context of the sustainable schools policy and all six viability indicators in that policy. That includes enrolment as well as quality of education, links with the community and accessibility to other provision. There is never a situation, in any school, in which the Department does not have a cut-off whereby it would not follow that. That would be the case with these schools as well. It is within the wider context of the sustainable schools policy.
3717. **Mrs Overend:** Are they assessed individually rather than together?
3718. **Dr Kingon:** The development proposal for the new school will indicate the proposed enrolment for the new school. It would be that proposed enrolment that would be taken into account for the new school, once both schools are closed.
3719. **Mrs Overend:** Would there be a level set for both schools? One might be much bigger than the other: is that taken into consideration?
3720. **Dr Kingon:** The new school will have its own approved enrolment. What we have said in the guidance is that only in exceptional circumstances would we expect that to be higher than the combined enrolment of the two existing schools. We would probably expect it to be in line with the combined enrolment. If there is a lot of surplus capacity in both schools — if both schools are only half-full — we would be looking to say, “Well, actually, in bringing forward a proposal for enrolment, you may want to look at reducing that surplus capacity”.
- The new school would be looked at as a new school, not with the attitude that one school has this enrolment and the other school has that enrolment. It is the new school and the likelihood of the school achieving that enrolment that is proposed.
3721. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** I just want to refer to the legal protection for the Christian ethos. There is no legal protection for Christian ethos in controlled schools because it must be non-denominational, is that correct?
3722. **Mr A Bell:** Well it is Christian ethos. It is undenominational Christian.
3723. **Dr Kingon:** It is undenominational Christian instruction.
3724. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Is there a legal protection on that?
3725. **Dr Kingon:** It says that a controlled school must provide it.
3726. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Is it the same provision for integrated?
3727. **Dr Kingon:** I am not sure, to be honest. We will have to come back to you about the exact legislation governing integrated schools.
3728. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** Following on from that, what would the nature of the legal protection be in relation to Christian ethos for the jointly managed schools? That clarification would be useful, as well as the differences, technical or otherwise, between jointly managed schools, church schools and integrated schools.
3729. **Mrs Graham:** We would be happy to share that with you.
3730. **The Chairperson (Miss M McIlveen):** No one else has indicated that they want to speak at this juncture. We will return to this, I imagine. Thank you very much for your time this morning.
3731. **Mrs Graham:** Thank you.
3732. **Mr A Bell:** Thank you.
- 3733.

13 May 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Peter Weir (Chairperson)
Mr Jonathan Craig
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Trevor Lunn
Mr Nelson McCausland
Mr Robin Newton
Mrs Sandra Overend
Mr Seán Rogers

Witnesses:

Mr Andrew Bell *Department of*
Mrs Faustina Graham *Education*
Dr Suzanne Kingon

3734. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** I welcome the officials who are joining us: Faustina Graham, who is director of collaborative education and practice; Andrew Bell, head of shared education and the community relations team; and Suzanne Kingon, head of the Irish-medium and integrated team. I remind you that this session is being recorded by Hansard.

3735. There will be a wide range of questions. It would be helpful to the Department if the Committee could draw its thoughts together on this, and we will have that with you reasonably soon, but I invite you to make your opening statement.

3736. **Mrs Faustina Graham (Department of Education):** Thank you, Chair. I welcome the opportunity to brief the Committee on the outcome of the public consultation on the Sharing Works policy for shared education and on the draft Bill. I hope also to provide further clarification and update members on progress made since we last briefed the Committee in January.

3737. As members are aware, the policy sets out a comprehensive framework for the future development of shared education, building on the research, consultation and recommendations of the ministerial advisory group. The policy contains 14

overarching actions that will support the advancement of shared education. It sets out plans to define, encourage and facilitate shared education through legislation and also support structures to fund, develop and embed sharing throughout the system.

3738. An eight-week consultation was undertaken on both the draft policy and Bill from 5 January to 6 March. Sixty seven organisations responded. For the most part, consultation responses were supportive and did not raise significant objections or major issues with the draft policy or Bill. Some comments that we received reflected misperceptions or incorrect assumptions as to how shared education will be advanced. We found that these proved extremely useful in directing us to where amending wording would provide clarity and avoid potential ambiguity.

3739. The most common issue raised related to the relationship between integrated and shared education. Integrated education provides for:

“the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils.”

3740. That is the wording of article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. In the context of this inquiry, I would like to record the Department’s recognition of the significant contribution of the integrated sector in educating children from different community backgrounds together over the past 30 years. The Department remains fully committed and alive to the proactive implementation of its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education under article 64.

3741. Shared education aims to improve educational outcomes, including reconciliation outcomes, through inter-school collaboration. Mutual understanding, citizenship and cultural understanding are key

- areas in our curriculum and provide explicit opportunities to address community relations, reconciliation, equality, diversity and human rights. Consequently, it is important to say that we see reconciliation outcomes as integral to and interdependent with educational outcomes and not as something separate, irrespective of the educational context or setting. Therefore, it is not a question of either/ or with regards to integrated education and shared education.
3742. Integrated and shared education will have complementary roles in contributing to the development of a more tolerant, diverse, pluralist and shared society here. Nevertheless, amendments have been made to the policy to explicitly reference and to set in context the Department's statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education and also to reinforce the opportunity to learn from the integrated sector's experience in developing and deepening an inclusive ethos.
3743. More broadly, refinements to the policy include: changes to terminology to remove any misconception that shared education is only relevant to schools and pupils and clarification that it is inclusive of youth and early years settings; explicit reference to children from different religious backgrounds in the policy description; more explicit reference to the role of sectoral support bodies; strengthening the section on the role of special schools and learning support centres; and further clarification of the role of wider communities in advancing shared education.
3744. Ensuring that practitioners have the right skills has been a common thread in evidence presented to the Committee, and we fully endorse that view. The Delivering Social Change (DSC) shared education signature project, for example, includes provision for teacher training. In the spirit of sharing, we have invited stakeholders to collaborate to bring forward proposals for a capacity-building strategy for teachers.
3745. Again, in response to feedback, reference has also been added to the section in the policy that sets the policy within the wider legislative context to reflect the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other relevant human rights legislation.
3746. The Shared Education Bill will provide a legislative definition, providing the Department and relevant arm's-length bodies with the power to encourage and facilitate shared education. As this is very much a developing area, and given its wide scope, this power will provide necessary flexibility as we seek to further develop and embed shared education. Again, the proposed legislative power is complementary to and in no way undermines or supersedes the Department's statutory duty to integrated education.
3747. The draft Bill defines shared education as:
- "the education together of (a) those of different religious belief or political opinion, and (b) those who are experiencing significant socio-economic deprivation and those who are not".*
3748. Some respondents, including some schools, identified practical difficulties in referencing "political opinion" and the word "significant" with regard to "socio-economic" status in clause 2 of the draft Bill. Upon further reflection, the Department has removed both from the wording of the Bill. That leaves us with the definition of shared education as:
- "the education together of those of different religious belief and socio-economic background".*
3749. There was some suggestion also that all section 75 groups should be specified in the legislative definition. In reality, this would set very challenging demands on the mix of children and young people that would be required to meet the definition. For example, including gender would have implications for partnerships of single-sex schools, and it is neither practical nor desirable for organisations to identify the sexual orientation of children and young people.

The legislative definition is underpinned by the policy description, which encourages educational settings to work to maximise the education together of those from all section 75 groups, as far as is practically possible.

3750. In relation to that description, the ministerial advisory group said in its 2013 report:

"In taking into account a wide range of evidence submitted, the Ministerial Advisory Group endorses the broadened definition of 'shared education' provided in the Minister's terms of reference."

3751. This definition, then, is the one that is reflected in the policy.
3752. There has been progress since we last briefed the Committee. Applications under the first call of the DSC shared education funding were approved for 32 partnerships comprising 72 schools. A further 10 partnerships consisting of 27 schools have been invited to refine and resubmit their applications. A second call for applications closes this month. Schools will be advised of the outcome prior to the end of the academic year to allow planning for implementation to commence. A project coordinator and a team of shared education development officers are now in place to support schools through the application process and in embedding shared education.
3753. The ministerial advisory group recommended a shared education premium within the common funding formula. As there are advantages and disadvantages to this approach, the Minister has committed to using the experience from the DSC project to determine the best mechanism for funding and mainstreaming any additional costs.
3754. Building the capacity of organisations to develop collaborative working where there is no history of partnerships between those schools will be addressed through the work that we have undertaken with the Special EU Programmes Body. The design of the shared education thematic area within Peace IV will recognise that

organisations that have not yet engaged in sharing need a different type of support.

3755. The Minister has clearly articulated his vision for the future of shared education. It is a vision for vibrant, self-improving education communities, delivering educational benefits to learners, encouraging the efficient and effective use of resources and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity, and community cohesion. We believe that the shared education policy and Bill provide a coherent framework to achieve this vision. We welcome the opportunity to answer any of your questions.
3756. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Thank you for those opening comments. Obviously, the Committee has been conducting an inquiry. I think that we have had 25 evidence sessions so far. It has given us the opportunity for a number of school visits, and I think that it is important to place on record at this stage that, as a Committee, we have been impressed by the quality and standard of the formal and informal contacts that are already there in terms of both improvement of educational attainment and community relations.
3757. You mentioned the either/or situation earlier, and I will take that in a slightly different context. One area that the Committee has been concerned about is the discontinuation of funding for community relations, equality and diversity (CRED). Particularly given the Life and Times survey and the very positive findings of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) review into CRED, we will be asking you quite a few questions. If it comes down to either CRED or shared education, I suppose that there will be a concern that CRED schemes are often a prerequisite, an initial stepping stone, for school communities prior to meaningful shared education. First, can you comment on the situation regarding CRED?
3758. **Mrs Graham:** We came to the Committee two weeks ago and talked about the situation with regard to CRED.

- Obviously, the funding has stopped. Now, as part of the review process for the policy, which was under way anyway before the funding stopped, we hope to look very carefully at all of the recommendations from the Education and Training Inspectorate report and use that as a platform to move forward. We are where we are with the funding, but the whole thrust of the funding for CRED was directed towards capacity building for the system. I think that the outworkings from the ETI review demonstrate that significant capacity has been built, and it is now about how we manage to take that forward without the additional funding that we had.
3759. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Does that mean that the door is closed on future funding for CRED, or will the ETI review lead to elements of that being reinstated?
3760. **Mr Andrew Bell (Department of Education):** In ending the earmarked funding, which, as Faustina said, was for a specific purpose, the Minister has indicated that the CRED policy will remain and that the CRED work will be mainstreamed. Schools, boards and the Youth Council will be expected to deliver CRED through their mainstream funding. The earmarked funding was there because the previous review of community relations schemes had identified issues, particularly around capacity building and sharing good experience. That all happened through the earmarked funding. Essentially, CRED will remain. It should continue to be delivered through existing funding. Indeed, we have identified that, for the Education Authority and the Youth Council, there is an expectation to address CRED within their existing budgets.
3761. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** The Committee will want to keep a close eye on that because we have all seen situations in different Departments where, if something is mainstreamed, that can either be a good thing by making it a key component of everything that is done, or, alternatively, it can be a code for it disappearing altogether. Mainstreaming can be a euphemism for the death of a particular project, so we want to see how that operates in practice. We have a fairly wide range of questions, and the first couple of questions will come from Chris.
3762. **Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the report. I want to start off by asking a few questions around integrated education. Time and time again, we see in surveys and newspaper reports a very high demand for integrated education, yet, when we look at school places and where that demand is eventually met, the figures never tally. We are not seeing the growth of integrated education that some of these surveys suggest. Why is that the case?
3763. **Mrs Graham:** I think that it is hard to know in the sense that, ultimately, the demand for integrated education has to come from communities. I think that it is about how those communities respond to wanting to have integrated education in their schools. The important thing for us is that, in the absence of the growth of the integrated sector, we cannot afford to stand still on the issue of community cohesion and building a better future for children and young people. We have seen that slowing down, and it certainly does not mean that nothing can be done about the growth of the integrated sector. That is obviously something we can work on with the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE). We are working with it on its business-planning process for the next year, as it has now become an NDPB. The whole thrust of change in the education sector, without that kind of certainty about how organisations will move forward, has probably caused a bit of a hiatus. We will certainly be looking at that carefully with them.
3764. **Mr Hazzard:** If I am picking this up right, you seem to suggest that it nearly needs to be a voluntary move from the community to embrace integrated education, but the Department has a legislative duty to encourage and facilitate it.
3765. **Mrs Graham:** Yes.

3766. **Mr Hazzard:** Does the Department not need to be doing more? For example, if you had waited for communities in America to voluntarily desegregate, we would probably still be waiting now. Does the Department need to do more when it comes to integrated education?
3767. **Dr Suzanne Kingon (Department of Education):** The Department funds NICIE to provide a support role to communities that wish to take forward the integrated option. There is a variety of paths by which communities can embrace the integrated option. One is through the establishment of a grant-maintained integrated school. The other is transformation of existing schools. There are different avenues open, and the Department provides support to schools that have indicated a wish to transform and to schools post-transformation. Members may be aware that the Minister is considering the need for, and the scope of, a potential future review of integrated education.
3768. **Mr Hazzard:** You mentioned NICIE, which is obviously not a statutory planning organisation on behalf of integrated education, whereas the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) could perhaps be described as such for the Catholic schools and the education and library boards, as they were, for controlled schools. You could argue that no one was formally planning for the growth of integrated education. Critics of the Department will say that you have a duty to encourage and facilitate the growth of integrated education but are not doing that.
3769. **Dr Kingon:** NICIE is represented at all levels throughout the area-planning process, from the area-planning steering group, local working groups etc. There is very much an onus on both the Education Authority and CCMS to work closely with NICIE in the planning of the schools estate.
3770. **Mr Hazzard:** OK, so is that situation failing? Is NICIE failing? Is the Department failing? We are not seeing growth. No matter what we do here, and no matter how much we talk about what is happening, we are not seeing the growth of integrated education that public support would tend to indicate. What is not working?
3771. **Mrs Graham:** There is a role for NICIE as we move forward. For the Department to be prescriptive is not the way to ensure that integrated education grows. Every piece of evidence I have ever read that tells people what is good for them and is prescriptive is not going to change things. We have to win hearts and minds. There is something that all of us can do, working together, around how we access — more creatively perhaps — community support for the growth of integrated education.
3772. We have used methods that are not necessarily tried and tested. You can use a questionnaire, for example, as you say, and people can suggest that that is not as strong or robust as it could be. We will be working with NICIE and we also have a meeting set up with the integrated education fund to look at whether to look at if there are more creative ways to access the community support that is actually there.
3773. The separate bit, as Suzanne has said, is the area planning process, looking at the whole transformation process. In the Department, we hope to look again at the transformation policy in relation to encouraging and facilitating. If the Minister, in considering the scope of a review of integrated education, looks at that, that would allow us to look at a process that has been in place for some time and would probably benefit from a second look.
3774. **Mr Hazzard:** Finally, again going back to the duty, it is arguable that the area-planning process has encouraged or facilitated integrated education. To what extent will this new shared education facilitate and encourage integrated education?
3775. **Mrs Graham:** We have spoken, at other appearances before the Committee, about the view that integrated education sits at the top end of a continuum of sharing, where you have a fully integrated model in a school. What we

- are looking at, with shared education, is the opportunities, which I mentioned in the briefing, for inter-school collaboration. That may, in time, lead to schools seeing that they have more in common than they have differences when it comes to working collaboratively — and perhaps becoming one school in some instances — particularly around efficient and effective use of resources. That has to be a decision that comes from the schools in particular and from the governors and communities with which they work.
3776. I made reference to the concept of working with communities. One of the key aspects of the shared education programme is the role of the school in the community. In education terms, generally, it has always been a key part of what is expected of a school. For example, given the bids that came in under the DSC programme, it has probably been the weakest part of the existing action plans. Everything seems to suggest that we in education are not as strong as we could be at every level when it comes to community engagement. We have tried in lots of ways. We have looked at ways to encourage parents in particular to become part of the school process, and very often people feel welcomed into the school, but I think that we have not maximised the potential of how our schools can truly engage with communities. That may be of its time in a sense. What do we need for the 21st century to fully engage communities in their schools and vice versa? Certainly the action plans that we have seen indicate that there is something there that we can work on, in the same way in which, as said, we hope to work with NICIE. If we say it is about community engagement, we have to ensure that the community engagement is meaningful.
3777. **Mr Hazzard:** Is that a particular piece of work going on at the minute? You are looking at the engagement and how —
3778. **Mrs Graham:** With shared education it is a key part. Each of the partnerships has four areas to look at, all of which are linked to the key pillars of Every School
- a Good School, one of which is the school in its community. Therefore, if the partnerships are working together, and the schools are working together, there is the expectation that they will also work with the community.
3779. Each partnership, in designing the action plan, is trying to move forward along the continuum. The education and training expectorate has identified the continuum in four stages. They need to move along that continuum to demonstrate success in the programme.
3780. There is a huge amount of learning that we should be able to accrue across the shared education programme that will have application to all schools, never mind the schools that are involved in the programme. That is when we can begin to get serious about how we engage, to the optimum, with the community that each school is situated in.
3781. **Mr Hazzard:** One final point, on the duty again. Some witnesses have said that it is time for the duty to go. Some have said that it needs to be bolstered. Where do you think we need to be going with the duty?
3782. **Mrs Graham:** As far as we are concerned, the duty is there and we are committed to being proactive in its implementation. That is the duty that is there, and it is the duty that the Department will continue to fulfil.
3783. **Mr Lunn:** Thank you for your presentation. I will be on the tack that you would expect. Faustina, you said in your presentation that the Department remains fully committed to supporting the integrated sector. Apart from funding NICIE, can you give us any example of something proactive that the Department has done to fulfil its obligation to encourage integrated education?
3784. **Mrs Graham:** Internally, in the Department, we have looked carefully across the Department. The Minister has asked that we do exactly what you say: ensure that we encourage and facilitate both integrated and Irish-medium education, because we have

a statutory duty there too. Over the last year, we have conducted internal workshops in the Department for all of the senior officials. You cannot underestimate the fact that we fund NICIE. The Department's statutory duty is to encourage and facilitate. NICIE's work is to promote the integrated sector. We have a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate.

3785. **Mr A Bell:** When developing policies, we look at where we can support it: for example, other schools see the transport policy and temporary variation policy as being more generous towards the integrated sector, but we are taking into account that statutory duty through policy development.
3786. **Mr Lunn:** I fancy that Justice Treacy gave you a considerable shove when he made his ruling on Irish-medium transport policy.
3787. It is all very well to say that you have conducted internal exercises, presumably to make sure that everybody in the Department understands what the obligation is. I still do not see what you have done externally to encourage integrated education. Has the Department ever done anything by way of information output through schools or to communities that would make people like me, who might be slightly sceptical, think that it is proactively trying to encourage integrated education?
3788. **Dr Kingon:** We recently updated the Department's website so that integrated education figures on the home page.
3789. **Mr Lunn:** Is that for the first time?
3790. **Dr Kingon:** It has always been on the website, but there is now a quick link to it on the front page for the first time.
3791. The Department has provided funding to support transformed schools for the first five years after transformation. The statutory development proposal process underpins area planning. In considering all development proposals, the Department infuses the consideration of the statutory duty. As Faustina said earlier, the Minister is considering a potential review of integrated education.

Part of any review of the transformation process will look at how we can make that a more publicly known and accessible process.

3792. **Mr Lunn:** That is exactly what I am talking about. I will not bore you with the dictionary definition of encourage, but we all understand what it means. It obviously involves proactivity. It is good that you are finally putting something on the web page and, internally, instructing all your staff that integrated education exists, but have you ever explained to schools the current process of transformation? I know that it is under review, but has the Department ever made any attempt, through outreach, to explain to schools that it is an available option for them? Do you just leave it to NICIE? While I am at it, how much money does NICIE get?
3793. **Dr Kingon:** The Department has produced a transformation pack for schools, which was provided to all grant-aided schools. It explains how to access, and the operation of, the transformation process. It is called 'Transformation: An Information Pack for Schools'.
3794. **Mr Lunn:** When was that done?
3795. **Dr Kingon:** I would need to find out the date and come back to you.
3796. **Mr Lunn:** Was it in the 1970s or the 2000s? I do not remember it.
3797. **Dr Kingon:** I think that the last time that it was updated was probably 2009.
3798. **Mr Lunn:** What amount of funding does NICIE get?
3799. **Mrs Graham:** Around £650,000.
3800. **Mr Lunn:** Is that before the cut or after?
3801. **Mrs Graham:** After the cut.
3802. **Mr Lunn:** I have £600,000 written down, so I will not argue with you. *[Laughter.]* It is what you might call a drop in the ocean.
3803. **Mrs Graham:** It was about £700,000 before the cut.

3804. **Mr Lunn:** I cannot argue about the need for cuts at the moment, but I suppose that it depends on what the priorities are.

3805. What do you say to the accusation, which the Committee heard in the course of the review, that the area planning arrangements require the other sectors to authorise growth in the integrated sector? Do you agree with that? Do you agree with the suggestion that provision for integrated education has never been increased in an area plan as a consequence of parental demand?

3806. **Mrs Graham:** Sorry, I lost the second bit of that.

3807. **Mr Lunn:** The provision for integrated education as a consequence of parental demand never seems to be built into the considerations under area planning.

3808. **Dr Kingon:** We are not from the area planning side of the Department. Colleagues there may be better able to answer your queries. However, NICIE has an integral role in all levels of the area planning process. The Department is keen to ensure that the Education Authority and CCMS work closely with NICIE in developing plans for the integrated sector.

3809. **Mr Lunn:** Do you think that the current area planning rules — the needs model and the various considerations — work in favour of or against integrated education, or would you say that they are neutral?

3810. **Dr Kingon:** I do not think that any of us at the table would profess to being experts on the details of the needs model.

3811. **Mrs Graham:** It is fair to say that Justice Treacy did not say that there was a problem with the needs model. Rather, it is that the needs model has to be applied sensibly. It is not meant to be hard and fast. It is indicative of what might happen and how populations will grow or change. Like Suzanne, I say this as someone who does not work in that area: the important thing in area planning, I think, is the range of information that the Department

looks at and provides to the Minister to inform his decision. Ultimately, the decision will be the Minister's, and it will be based on all the information that comes in. There is a very clear process that allows people to opt in to the various consultation processes along the way. I think that that process is very comprehensive. Of course, anyone is free to give you their view, but I think that the Department has a very comprehensive process in place for making decisions on development proposals.

3812. **Mr Lunn:** I do not have it here, but Judge Treacy criticised the needs model. In simple terms, he said that it currently involves projections of the need for the maintained and controlled sectors but not the integrated sector. I know that you will say that you are not experts in area planning, but that is more or less what it says, which indicates to me something not far short of discrimination against the integrated sector.

3813. **Mrs Graham:** I do not have it in front of me either, but that is not my interpretation of what Justice Treacy said about the needs model.

3814. **Mr Lunn:** Fair enough.

3815. **Mrs Graham:** I cannot not say that my interpretation is different from what you said. Like you, I cannot be authoritative, but that is not my interpretation or recollection of what the judgement said.

3816. **Mr Lunn:** OK, I will leave it at that.

3817. **Mr Rogers:** According to the Department, there seem to be few material differences between integrated schools and jointly managed schools. If that is the case, why do we need jointly managed schools?

3818. **Dr Kingon:** The interest came from communities interested in exploring the option of jointly managed schools, whereby a school would be organically linked to both the Catholic Church and the transferring churches through the composition of the school trustees and boards of governors. A number of communities were interested in

- exploring that. The Department then worked with the transferors and trustees to develop guidance for communities that may wish to consider this option.
3819. **Mr A Bell:** There are more similarities than differences, but the differences make jointly managed schools more acceptable to some communities. When the Committee heard evidence from CCMS and the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education, they set out clearly that they value the legal protection of ownership by the trustees, and the property guarantees. They also said that they place value on the fundamental values of a shared common good, reconciliation and peace, which they said were central to Christianity, being protected in law. The Catholic trustees and the transferors have said that they are willing to collaborate on the basis of protecting the Christian ethos that both value. So, crucially for jointly managed schools, the transferors and the Catholic trustees are content with the legislation. We talked last time about the differences between the set-up of a jointly managed school and an integrated one. They see that as a key point and a key issue in moving the whole thing forward. From that point of view, it is very much a bottom-up approach and an issue that I think may well make a significant difference in having a more integrated system that is not necessarily of integrated status. Some have referred to it as the difference between a capital “I” and a small “i”.
3820. **Mr Rogers:** You say that Christianity would be more protected in law. Will you clarify the Department’s position? Will the Christian ethos have better legal protection in jointly managed schools than in the integrated or controlled sectors?
3821. **Mr A Bell:** The trustees and transferors in a jointly managed school will agree the make-up of the board of governors. They will agree certain places between them. Since the board of governors sets the ethos for the school, it follows that the expectation is that the ethos will be Christian.
3822. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** To some extent, the point being made is that, in practice, people from different sectors would be there to provide that practical protection, but maybe you will drill down into the better legal protection.
3823. **Mr A Bell:** From their evidence, I think that they had thought about the fact that yes, that can happen in other schools. However, the key difference is that it does not necessarily have that legal protection. In my reading of what they said to the Committee, that seems to be one of the key principles that they —
3824. **Mr Rogers:** So, jointly managed schools will not have better protection of the Christian ethos than controlled or integrated schools.
3825. **Mr A Bell:** Well, from what —
3826. **Mr Rogers:** I am talking about from the Department’s point of view.
3827. **Dr Kingon:** It may be worth separating ethos from the legal position on the provision of collective worship and religious education. The provision of collective worship and religious education for all schools is set out in the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. It makes provision for daily collective worship at controlled, grant-maintained and — as amended in the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 — integrated schools. There is legal protection in statute for the provision of religious education and collective worship at all schools.
3828. Andrew is making the point that we would expect, as set out in our circular, a formal memorandum of agreement between the Catholic trustees and the transferors in a jointly managed school on its future ethos, arrangements for religious education etc. Also, both churches will be trustees of the school and, therefore, on the board of governors. Stakeholders feel that this gives additional protection to the Christian ethos and the individual ethos of each church.
3829. **Mr Rogers:** Yes, but, although there is a memorandum, there is really no further

- legal protection for the Christian ethos in a jointly managed school.
3830. **Dr Kingon:** School ethos is not prescribed in law, but it is very important. There are legal differences in the constitution of the schools, through the boards of governors, which can be perceived as an additional legal protection, if you follow me.
3831. **Mr Rogers:** Yes.
3832. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Trevor wanted to come in on that point.
3833. **Mr Lunn:** It is just a quick addition. It is heartening to see that trustees and transferors managed to agree on something like this. Is CCMS agreement needed for such a school to be set up?
3834. **Dr Kingon:** We talked about that last time, when we said that CCMS had full sight of the draft guidance. The circular expects the development proposal to close the existing maintained school. If the amalgamation is of a controlled and a maintained school, it will, of course, be put forward by CCMS. Working in conjunction with the Education Authority, CCMS would submit the development proposal to establish the new jointly managed school.
3835. **Mrs Graham:** CCMS, in its presentation to the Committee, made the distinction that it was not like NICIE. It is there not to promote Catholic education but to manage the school estate that is already in place. In my reading of the evidence to the Committee, there was that distinction, so it is not the case that the decision would come from the Church working with the transferors.
3836. **Mr A Bell:** When we met communities that expressed an interest in this, the boards and CCMS were involved. Both have been very willing to explore the issues with those communities.
3837. **Mr Lunn:** That is lovely CCMS-speak for “push it down the pipe”, frankly. It seems to me that the CCMS will, should they want to exercise it, have a blocking role. It may be making the right noises now, but, if you look at its recent history,
- it has, as far as I can remember, only ever acceded to one amalgamation with a controlled school, and that was Clintyclay Primary School. The Minister has challenged the result of the judicial review, so I really do not know where we go with that, but I am curious to know whether CCMS, separately from the Catholic trustees, has a legal right to block. In its evidence to us, Faustina, it did not only say that it managed the sector; it said that its remit was to open, close and maintain Catholic schools.
3838. **Mr Rogers:** We are all aware of the mix in schools. We have many schools that are highly mixed or “super-mixed”, as we call it. What has the Department done to promote that natural integration in schools across the North?
3839. **Mr A Bell:** With some of the schemes that we had in the past, such as the community relations schemes, that has been a natural consequence. We hope that shared education will further drive that work forward.
3840. **Mr Rogers:** Has the Department done any studies on super-mixed schools to see what makes them tick?
3841. **Mr A Bell:** I am not aware of any particular studies. I was managing agent for the International Fund for Ireland, and it had asked us to do some work on what made certain schools more acceptable to both communities than others. I know that the general feeling at that stage was that creating and making schools neutral spaces is what would drive us forward. During the work that we did on behalf of the fund, we visited a number of schools that have been very successful in attracting pupils from both communities, and what became very obvious very quickly was that it was not about creating neutral spaces; it was about those schools being more acceptable to their communities. Very often, it was parents who were making the choice because they saw that these schools produced better academic outcomes. That was part of the reason for sending their children there.

3842. I was struck by what I was told by one Catholic maintained school that we visited. It explained that it had always had a leavers' mass. When it tried to make it more ecumenical, the Protestant pupils said, "No, there is a long history at this school of having this mass." It was the pupils who asked the school to do it in the same way as it had always done it. That was quite an interesting perspective. That is as much as we have done by way of a study.
3843. **Mr Rogers:** I find that disappointing. It would have been important had the Department gone more deeply into that, because this goes much deeper than a leaving mass or leaving service. What schools do not understand, particularly the super-mixed schools that are doing really well, is that they cannot now avail themselves of shared education funding because, to do so, they would have to link with another school.
3844. **Mrs Graham:** Why would they object to working collaboratively with another school? What would be the problem with that? If they are doing well, it would be an encouragement to another school to gain and benefit from their experience. I do not understand why, if you have an ethos of sharing in your school, you would not want to work collaboratively with another school.
3845. **Mr Rogers:** I do not think that there is a problem with that, but why should they be penalised? They do super work in sharing across the social divide, the academic divide and everything else. They are doing fantastically well, but, whether maintained, controlled or integrated, they see that they are being penalised because they have to link with another school rather than being rewarded. Why can that good practice not be rewarded? It goes back to my earlier point that the Department should have done an in-depth study of what makes super-mixed schools really tick.
3846. **Mr A Bell:** Do not forget that the aim of shared education is to improve educational outcomes, including reconciliation outcomes. Part of that is based on research that shows that, when schools collaborate, they can improve educational outcomes, and, if they do it on a cross-community basis, reconciliation outcomes. While those super-mixed schools may have a good mix of communities, a very good school will have the opportunity to work with another school to raise its level. They can also learn from other schools.
3847. Last time, we talked about the framework devised by the Education and Training Inspectorate, which is a four-level model. In the first phase of the Delivering Social Change signature project, we targeted schools that had already been involved in considerable sharing. Among that first set of applications, no school was at the top level of that model, which suggests that all schools have an opportunity to benefit and raise educational outcomes by working collaboratively.
3848. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** I guess that there is a slightly separate point, which Seán has been making. I do not think that any of those schools will object to sharing and will probably be fairly proactive. However, there have been specific attempts to set up schools, some of which have been very successful, others less so. In my area, a number of schools have reached this position organically. In looking at the experience of those schools and trying to learn lessons from them, a more proactive approach to the exploration of information may be useful.
3849. **Mr A Bell:** You need to go back to the fact that the Minister, through the ministerial advisory group, has recognised that there are additional costs in sharing. From our five years' experience of running 22 strategic projects across the Province, which included 500-odd schools, we know that the main sharing costs are for transport and teacher substitute cover for planning purposes — aligning timetables etc — and for when a teacher goes with pupils to another school. That is where the Delivering Social Change signature funding is targeted. Sharing within your school means that you do not need to do that planning, and you do not have

- the additional costs for transport and substitute cover.
3850. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** We are talking at cross purposes. No one is saying that, from that point of view, we are looking at additional funding. We are saying that a number of schools have achieved certain things organically. Maybe they did not set out to do that, and maybe it was because of particular circumstances in the area. I am a little concerned that, from the broader departmental point of view, there does not seem to be the curiosity to explore what is happening in those schools to see whether there are useful lessons. It might well be that such exploration might find individual circumstances that are not transferable. Whatever is being done in shared education, those schools need to be looked at to ensure that the full information is pulled together.
3851. **Mrs Graham:** That is a totally valid point. It is important to say that everything is of its time. To have shone a light at different points in time on some of the schools that you talked about might not have been helpful. We are now in a place where some of the organic things that have happened over time can be celebrated. Over the next period, the whole concept of the work that is done under shared education will be to look at precisely the things that you are talking about. What is it that makes the difference? The truth is that we do not know, but we hope to get to that stage by the end of the four years on which we are embarking. We are looking right across the spectrum at schools under the Delivering Social Change programme that have a history of sharing. I feel very strongly that it is hugely important for the schools that Mr Rogers talked about to engage in the programme. Everything in education is about building communities of good practice; no school should be in isolation. Where there is good practice and it can be shared, it should be. Equally, we are in a learning phase with regard to what will allow us to get to a point, hopefully at the end of this four-year process, where we begin to see what we have described as a concept-shared education as something that is integral to every school and part and parcel of what they do.
3852. I spoke earlier about some of the explicit references in our curriculum that would lend themselves to shared education. We did not necessarily have the time to provide professional development to our teachers as part of this programme or to evaluate in the way that you described. I am really hopeful that, as part of the journey, we will find out the answers to the very questions that you pose this morning as part of the process. That was the concept of engaging the Education and Training Inspectorate right at the beginning of this process in the design and development, rather than just coming along as evaluators at the end, to accrue all the learning that will influence the system by the end of the four-year period. Your points are well made.
3853. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Seán, do you want to raise the issue of Drumragh?
3854. **Mr Rogers:** I want to ask Andrew a question. You talked about timetabling, which is a major problem. I noticed that some of the earlier projects involved schools adjacent to one another, whether in Limavady or Ballycastle or Moy. What consideration has been given to the rural White Paper, so that all our young people have the same access to shared education and so on, particularly in rural areas? Northern Ireland is so rural, and it really is not feasible in some cases to link two schools because of the distance. It is OK if they are a few hundred yards apart or in an urban environment. Sceptics would say that this will lead to the urbanisation of our education system; the rural school will be a thing of the past. A link with another school brings so many benefits, but it also brings more funding in, and that is crucial at the moment. What is your comment on that?
3855. **Mr A Bell:** I can only point to the examples over the last five years involving rural schools, particularly in what was the North Eastern Board area, now the north-eastern region. Yes, it

can be more challenging; there is no doubt about that. In Fermanagh, schools have very successfully collaborated, and I know that the Committee has taken witness statements from those groups. The evidence is that it was more challenging, but it will work. There is also the use of technology and IT to link schools up, which we are keen to explore. Schools linked up using technology, as well as face-to-face contact, through the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) programme. That gives an additional element to the joined-up approach, although we would always advocate face-to-face work.

3856. **Mrs Graham:** Certainly, listening to principals of schools, particularly post-primary schools, involved in the IFI projects, there is, as you say, the added worry of losing class time because of transport issues. In the consultation we had feedback from young people on some of the concerns that they have about that as well. I have found principals to be very honest about embarking on the IFI programmes and feeling exactly as you said: “We are getting extra funding here, but this will be so complex that we will struggle with it”. It is about working through those problems and finding solutions to them. The only thing that we can do is try. We see what has happened in some schools where those issues have been overcome, but they have not been overcome easily.
3857. I think that it has been the case over a three-year period that the first year has been quite difficult, in the second people have begun to get some sense that it is possible, and moving into the third year they think that it is something worth fighting for. When you see those outcomes from mixes of schools, it is something that would also encourage us to keep pushing at the boundaries of that as well, while not, at any point, ever sacrificing the educational quality of a school. Where a school knows what it can deliver on its own in terms of educational quality for its pupils, that should not be compromised in any way. First and foremost, the duty is to ensure

that young people get the best possible education, but we have seen how people have described the benefits that have accrued at the end of a process, while they themselves have been extremely fearful and extremely cautious at the beginning.

3858. **Mr A Bell:** It is probably worth saying that there are good examples — people who have been through the process and done it; therefore, we can point people to those who have experience. The Education Authority has development officers working with individual schools. If schools are having difficulties in that area, we would expect the Education Authority to make that known to us. We will then look at the issues and the barriers and how they can be overcome.
3859. **Mr Craig:** What are the guidelines on minority community representation in integrated education? More importantly, how many schools with the title “integrated” actually meet those criteria?
3860. **Dr Kingon:** The criteria for a newly transformed school are that, in the first year, it will achieve 10%, working towards 30% from the minority community, and the criteria for grant-maintained integrated schools are that they will work towards 30%. Obviously, for certain schools and certain communities, those targets have not been achieved. The schools continue to work to achieve those targets. I think that there is a recognition that, in some communities, those targets may not be achieved, certainly in the short-to-medium term.
3861. **Mr Craig:** I am interested to hear you say “short-to-medium term”. What is the definition of that?
3862. **Dr Kingon:** Certainly, within the next five years it seems unlikely that a number of schools will meet the 30% target.
3863. **Mr Craig:** If they do not meet the target in 15 years, what happens to them?
3864. **Dr Kingon:** The Department will work closely with the schools to try to ensure that they get the appropriate community balance.

3865. **Mr Craig:** So what happens to them?
3866. **Dr Kingon:** In what sense?
3867. **Mr Craig:** If they never meet the target, what happens?
3868. **Dr Kingon:** There is no question of the Department removing funding from those schools or —
3869. **Mr Craig:** Thanks for the honesty. So absolutely nothing happens. At least that is clarification.
3870. **Mrs Graham:** I think, to be fair —
3871. **Mr Craig:** Sorry; I have got the answer.
3872. How many schools not called “integrated” actually meet those criteria?
3873. **Dr Kingon:** There is much more to integrated status than simply the religious intake. The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education takes forward an awful lot of work on the ethos of those schools. There are also important legal distinctions on the composition of the boards of governors and other aspects of school provision. There are important aspects of integrated provision that are much more than just a numbers game about minority population at the school.
3874. **Mr Craig:** Suzanne, do you know the number of schools not in the integrated sector that meet those criteria?
3875. **Dr Kingon:** In terms of the 30%? We could certainly find that out.
3876. **Mr Craig:** Not only the religious breakdown of pupils. Plenty of schools meet those criteria in the make-up of the board of governors as well. Have we any idea what that is?
3877. **Mrs Graham:** We have that information in the Department, but we could not say off the top of our head here today.
3878. **Mr Craig:** However, you would agree that a number of schools meet those criteria but do not call themselves “integrated”.
3879. **Mrs Graham:** Yes, I would say that there are a number, but that is, as Suzanne said, in terms of religious balance as opposed to ethos.
3880. **Mr Craig:** There is also a growing issue of pupils and individuals not wanting to tag themselves as either one or other community. Those figures are growing generally across the board. Will there be any change in those artificial criteria to allow for that?
3881. **Dr Kingon:** As we said earlier, the Minister is considering both the need for and the scope of a future review of integrated education.
3882. **Mr Craig:** Will it be reviewed, then?
3883. **Dr Kingon:** As I have said, the Minister is considering both the need for a review and its scope, and whether it will encompass the areas that you have alluded to.
3884. **Mr Craig:** Fair enough.
3885. **Mr Lunn:** I heard what you said about how the qualification for an integrated school applies at the start and in the early years of that school, whether it is a transformation or a new school. I think that Jonathan is suggesting that they should lose their integrated status if they cannot comply. There is really no reason for that. Would you agree with me that integrated schools are far more likely to take ethnic minorities, for instance? I was in one recently that has just taken in four or six Somalian children who, I venture to suggest, would not have been taken by any other school in the area, because it was a secondary school and they had no primary education whatsoever, nor had they any English.
3886. **Dr Kingon:** I could cite examples of schools —
3887. **Mr Lunn:** There is far more to it than just the Protestant/Catholic balance. Jonathan quite rightly cites examples of very good schools that do not have integrated labels but which are effectively integrated. The one that we always to come back to, Chairman, is Methodist College, which would not strictly qualify, at the moment, if it

- applied for integrated status because it has only 25% minority, but it has 55% non-Protestant. So it is a silly argument. It is exactly as you say, Suzanne: it is all about ethos, approach and balance —. I am going to make a speech, and I do not mean to.
3888. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** To be fair, Trevor, there are an awful lot of questions to get through, so if we could avoid speeches it would be helpful.
3889. **Mr Lunn:** You would agree with me about the approach.
3890. **Mrs Graham:** It would be unfair to say that we have many schools that would be unwilling to take in children who have not had a previous education. That would be unfair, and I want to correct that. It is not only the integrated sector that will accept pupils who have a disadvantaged background in any way. That is my experience.
3891. **Dr Kingon:** Under open enrolment policy, schools will accept the pupils who apply if there are surplus places and capacity at the school. A point to make is that the majority of integrated schools have achieved the 30% target.
3892. **Mr Craig:** Fair enough.
3893. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Trevor, while you have the floor, do you want to deal with the issue of special schools and integration?
3894. **Mr Lunn:** Why is the Department so heart set against giving special schools integrated status?
3895. **Mrs Graham:** I do not think that the Department has a view that special schools should not have integrated status; it is the way that special schools are constituted. They see themselves as naturally, organically integrated, as we said earlier. Therefore, there is not the need for something called “integrated status” for those special schools.
3896. **Mr Lunn:** If one of them applies for integrated status from here on, would the Department be minded to allow it if it satisfied the criteria for an integrated school?
3897. **Dr Kingon:** We will come back to you with the detail on that. My understanding is that, at the minute, legislation prohibits a special school from becoming an integrated school. However, I would like to come back to you to confirm that.
3898. **Mr Lunn:** That is fair enough. You can come back and confirm that, Suzanne. I wonder whether that is correct. Why on earth would legislation prohibit such a transformation? If that is the rule, that is the rule. The logic would interest me. Why?
3899. **Dr Kingon:** We will come back to you about that position.
3900. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Can I ask a couple of questions about definitions? You gave a good reason why, from a practical point of view, widening shared education into all the section 75 groups would not be practical. People’s general perception, when we talk about shared education, is about across the religious divide. Obviously, that is clearly catered for. However, within that definition, you have also talked about socio-economic deprivation. To clarify, from the point of view of the qualification of shared education, if you had two schools in exactly the same sector, one from a fairly affluent area with children from a very affluent socio-economic background and the other from a more deprived area, with a virtually identical religious mix and being single identity, would that count in the definition of shared education if there were collaboration between those two schools?
3901. **Mrs Graham:** Where both schools have the same community background?
3902. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Yes. In the controlled sector, if you were talking about primary-school level and mixing a very affluent controlled primary school with 95%-plus of children from the broader Protestant/unionist community with a controlled primary school with 95%-plus of children from the Protestant/unionist community but much more deprived, does that count under this as shared education? To a certain extent,

- is that getting away from the notion? I would have thought that the driver behind this was particularly to, largely speaking, cross the community divide.
3903. **Dr Kingon:** There are a couple of points to make. The legislative definition is religious background and socio-economic. It is not “or”; it is “and”.
3904. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** So, effectively, it is both boxes in that regard.
3905. **Dr Kingon:** Having said that, there may be circumstances where schools of the same management type have different religious backgrounds, given the eccentricities of the system. In terms of applications to individual programmes, the Department will look carefully at everything case by case. However, the legislative definition is religious education “and” socio-economic, not “or”.
3906. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Is there a pecking order? For example, if a maintained school from a socially deprived background wanted to have a level of shared education and looked across a motorway or whatever and wanted to have a level of link with a controlled school also from a socially deprived background, is the lack of social mobility or status in that going to be a barrier to that being funded as shared education?
3907. **Dr Kingon:** In the Delivering Social Change project, we looked at all the applications case by case, and it is safe to say that the applications that we have received to date can all demonstrate a reasonable degree of social mixing. That issue has not arisen.
3908. The main thing is that we do not want to be prescriptive. We do not want to say, “This is only about this type of school and this type of school” because our system has so many eccentricities. There are controlled schools with majority Catholic populations. In Delivering Social Change, we have indicated that, in the majority of cases, we expect it to be schools of different management types cooperating.
3909. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Obviously, one of the issues that were raised by evidence from the Speedwell Trust was whole-school sharing. What assurances can we get that, whenever we are looking at it, we do not get simply tokenism in sharing; that it is not a question of ticking half a dozen boxes to show some level of activity. That would be almost like building up the brownie points and getting the badge as opposed to the notion that the shared-education activity should be based on a whole-school organisational involvement.
3910. **Dr Kingon:** In the Delivering Social Change signature project, the ETI has developed a shared-education continuum. At the beginning of the process, partnerships evaluate where they are in that process. The thrust of the project is that, in four key areas, they will develop their relationships. We expect to see an increase in the quantum of sharing, which is the number of year groups participating in the shared-education project, and the range of curricular areas that the sharing is in. That is built into the planning of the project.
3911. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** As part of that, it is really where the end game is in each of those. It may be that you are starting off with a limited level of direct involvement —
3912. **Dr Kingon:** Absolutely.
3913. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** — but, so long as there is a clear —
3914. **Dr Kingon:** There is a very clearly articulated —
3915. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** — pathway to sharing.
3916. **Mr A Bell:** The schools have to provide an action plan as part of their application as to how they are going to move. That action plan is looked at by the project board that approves the applications as to whether it believes that that is sufficient to get the school from where it says it is to where it aims to be.

3917. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** This is the final question I want to ask in connection with this. I appreciate that this does not relate to the post-primary sector. Particularly when people look at the significance of early years and particularly if we look at sharing from the point of view of community relations and academic achievement, to what extent will you reflect the need for sharing at early years in the obligations of the Bill?
3918. **Mr A Bell:** Early years are covered in the policy and in the Bill. As regards actual programmes, the Delivering Social Change programme targets schools specifically, but we have been working with the Special EU Programmes Body on the shared education thematic area for Peace IV. Peace IV will extend to schools that have not currently shared, as well as to early years and the youth sector. Indeed, we have asked the Education and Training Inspectorate for a continuing model specifically for the early years sector that ties in. In fact, they completed it just in the last couple of days, and I still have to look in detail at it. We have also asked them to do something similar for the youth sector, so that we have continuing models that are more appropriate to those individual sectors.
3919. **Mr McCausland:** You had a consultation process on the forthcoming legislation, but it says on page 131 that the number of attendees at the public meetings was small. How many meeting were there and how many people attended? What does “small” mean?
3920. **Mr A Bell:** We held three consultation events, one in Armagh, one in Belfast and one in Derry/Londonderry. There were probably fewer than 10 at each event. We catered for as many as wanted to come, but those were the numbers that turned up.
3921. **Mr McCausland:** You say fewer than 10; that could be two or nine. I would be interested to hear just how small the numbers were. We are told that there is evidence of huge demand for more integration and sharing, so it is surprising that across the whole of Northern Ireland you could not even get 30 people to turn up.
3922. **Mr A Bell:** As you know, the process is that we advertise public events fairly widely, and it is up to individuals —
3923. **Mr McCausland:** I appreciate that. What does it say that so few people did turn up?
3924. **Mr A Bell:** The events were held in the evening to facilitate as many people as possible who wished to attend. It is asking them to come out in the evening —
3925. **Mr McCausland:** If you are passionate about something, you will turn up.
3926. **Mr A Bell:** Absolutely, and those who did turn up were very passionate.
3927. **Mr McCausland:** It is just that there were not many of them.
3928. **Mr A Bell:** There were not many of them. Others used the questionnaire.
3929. **Mr McCausland:** Would it be possible to have the exact figures for each of the three events?
3930. **Mr A Bell:** Yes.
3931. **Mr McCausland:** I was reading John O’ Dowd’s ministerial foreword to the policy, and there is a line in it that I do not understand. He says:
- “My vision for the future of shared education is one of vibrant, self-improving education communities delivering educational benefits to learners, encouraging the efficient and effective use of resources”*
3932. — that is fine —
- “promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity”.*
3933. What does “equality of identity” mean?
3934. **Mr A Bell:** That is about people from different communities, who identify with a different community or who are from a different background coming together. It is equality across communities.
3935. **Mr McCausland:** Is it well expressed, though, if it is not clear? Does “equality

- of identity” refer to religious or cultural identity? What sort of identity?
3936. **Mr A Bell:** We are trying to be as inclusive as possible, and it is open to those of different identities to come together to fulfil —
3937. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Is there a difference between inclusive and vague?
3938. **Mr McCausland:** It is also incoherent.
3939. **Mr A Bell:** The only thing that I can say is that nobody raised it as an issue during the public consultation. You are the first person to do that.
3940. **Mr McCausland:** I think that there are certain things in life that people approach with a sort of glowing generosity where maybe they do not like to say those things. I can understand respect for diversity and community cohesion, but I think that the term “equality of identity” is meaningless. It needs to be much more specific and spelt out. I can understand that there is an attempt to get something that reads well with a lot of little phrases of about three or four words, but I stress that identity is multi-layered and it is many different things. It is a core issue in Northern Ireland and, if it is being mentioned in there, it is important that it is mentioned properly. I would like that to be relayed back.
3941. The other bit there — Jonathan Craig touched on it — is a recognised integrated school that is trying to reach the criteria. I think that I know the answer to this before asking: what about the school that has reached the criteria at some point but then slides away back because, for some reason or another, people from one community or another community walk away? I assume that that school also retains its integrated status.
3942. **Dr Kingon:** The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education works closely with those schools to help them to promote the integrated ethos. As part of the school development plan of an integrated school, the Department expects there to be significant emphasis on the integrated ethos and promoting the integrated ethos in the school.
3943. **Mr McCausland:** Do you have a graph for each school that shows how they are doing in terms of reaching those criteria?
3944. **Dr Kingon:** Yes; we do not have a graph, but we certainly monitor the figures.
3945. **Mr McCausland:** You would know whether a particular school was —
3946. **Dr Kingon:** I certainly have the figures. I might not know just off the top of my head, but yes.
3947. **Mr McCausland:** Even if one community almost entirely walked away from the school, it would still retain its status. The money would not be withdrawn.
3948. **Dr Kingon:** It is important to distinguish between funding for a grant-aided school and integrated status. Integrated status is bestowed through a development proposal process. It is statutory; it is in law. Once that is assumed through the development proposal process, it can only be taken away again via the development proposal process, which would have to come from the managing authority of the school. It would determine whether it wished to change its status to a management type of school.
3949. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** I think that Jonathan wants to come in on that one.
3950. **Mr Craig:** I have a supplementary to Nelson’s question. You have said a fascinating thing, Suzanne, because we all know how it is done. You call a meeting of the parents, and 51% of them have to agree to integrated status. Some of the decisions that have been made to go integrated have been extremely close. I am aware of one school where, really, that decision was made by three parents, and that was a school of several hundred pupils — and even more parents, for that matter. Are you aware of that process ever being kicked off for a school that has never met the other criteria set out in the definition of integrated?

3951. **Dr Kingon:** The ballot for parents is part of the statutory transformation process, so that ballot almost begins a process. The ballot of parents has to get the 51% that you talked about before a statutory development proposal can be published for transformation to integrated status. As part of the statutory transformation process, there will be a pre-consultation and a full public consultation on the proposal. At the end of the two-month statutory consultation, the Minister will make his decision based on all the pertinent facts. The school then becomes a controlled integrated or a grant-maintained integrated school in law, and that is the process. The parental ballot allows the school to go forward with publishing the proposal. It is not the end of the process. In looking at a development proposal for transformation, one of the factors that the Minister will look at is the community balance in the school and the community balance in the surrounding area and the likelihood that the school may, in future, achieve the community balance.
3952. **Mr Craig:** But, as my colleague quite rightly pointed out, Suzanne, if the balance is never achieved, but, more importantly, if local community support for the school actually lessens because of the integrated status, what mechanism is there, or what triggers the mechanism, to revisit the integrated status? I do not believe there is anything.
3953. **Dr Kingon:** It is a matter for the individual managing authority to consider the status of the school. As I said, it can only be reversed through another development proposal.
3954. **Mr McCausland:** If they did reverse, what would be the implications for the school financially?
3955. **Dr Kingon:** There would be no significant implications for the school financially in terms of its LMS budget. As I said earlier, some transformed schools get a very small amount of funding from the Department. The LMS budget is per pupil and would be unaffected.
3956. **Mr McCausland:** Finally, it seems to me that the process is somewhat fraudulent, in that the status does not get removed even though there are criteria there. The criteria are meaningless, in a sense.
3957. **Dr Kingon:** In looking at the proposal, the Minister will carefully take into account —
3958. **Mr McCausland:** I mean, five years, 10 years or 15 years on they become meaningless if the school either has never achieved the criteria or has achieved them and then slid back and fallen out.
3959. **Mrs Graham:** I think that we have to be careful here. We are reverting back to the concept of integrated education meaning just a balance of religion, as opposed to — as Suzanne articulated earlier — the whole concept of ethos. Every school will aspire to a particular ethos, whatever that is, depending on what the governors set as the ethos of the school. The truth of the matter is that we have integrated schools, controlled schools and maintained schools that do not actually fulfil the ethos that they aspire to. In any of those situations, what becomes important is what the school is doing in the round in order to meet the needs of its pupils.
3960. In terms of the five-year process, as you said, obviously inspection will come along to all schools at some point in time and will look very carefully at ethos. Unfortunately we do have schools where we have found the ethos to be unsatisfactory, horrifying as that may seem. For any school, if the ethos is not being fulfilled, that is irrespective of the numbers and the religious balance. All of the other elements around moral, spiritual and ethical education of children and young people are what come into play in ethos, and that is what has to be looked at. We have had lengthy discussions around that whole concept and we have to look at it in the round, particularly with regard to the integrated sector. The fact that a school aspires to achieve that does not mean that it always will. In those situations,

- whatever the issue, that school has to be supported in order to allow it to realise that ethos again. That is the important thing for the children and young people.
3961. **Mr Newton:** I thank the members for coming this morning. I will just ask you a few short questions around the shared education programmes themselves. You will be aware of Sir Robert Salisbury's comments around shared education programmes and his thoughts that educational improvement should be the first step, but that that should be quickly followed by improvements in reconciliation between communities, and that he would measure the success of shared education in those two ways. How does the Department suggest that shared education should be measured? Is that likely to be tied in with any funding mechanism that would be offered?
3962. **Mrs Graham:** The important thing in looking at shared education was for us in the Department to try to learn and benefit from what has happened in the past by analysing what worked and did not work in previous programmes. The key concept in shared education is ensuring that it is totally focused on the Northern Ireland curriculum. I saw Sir Bob's comments and, to me, they were very much in keeping with what I have said this morning. He was very clear that educational improvement is always, first and foremost, really important in a school. That is what it is there for and, obviously, that is the aim of the Department. He also saw, as I have said this morning, no tension between the concept of educational standards, as I call it, and reconciliation outcomes. At times, there has been a suggestion that the two things are separate. Integral to our curriculum are the thinking skills and personal capabilities, the attitudes and dispositions, and the subject areas that I talked to you about this morning — citizenship, learning for life and work, and PDMU in the primary curriculum. Earlier, you made a comment about lip service. In the past, we have seen programmes which have been interesting but quite superficial. There is something for all schools in ensuring that they can see what the value of this is for them. They are busy; they are doing a lot of things; they are trying to get through all of the programmes that they have. How is this going to be valuable to them, their principal and the pupils? Ensuring that all of those programmes are very definitely curriculum-based helps people to see that this is about improving both educational standards and reconciliation, and that both of those things are educational outcomes. We are trying to educate our young people to achieve highly, obviously, but also to be contributors to society in the future and to be contributors to the economy.
3963. The concept of measuring reconciliation outcomes is one that we have all struggled with. We have worked on this, and, certainly, the Education and Training Inspectorate, in designing the work that it has done for evaluation, is working very closely with Queen's in looking at how we actually get at the heart of measuring this, as opposed to hoping that it is all going to work out. There is probably no one else who has done any more detailed work than what we have done here. I think that we are at the cutting edge of looking at how we measure progression when it comes to the concept of reconciliation and, obviously, respecting difference, tolerance and all of those things.
3964. We started the process of articulating how progression is achieved in the evaluation of the IFI project that Andrew has talked about. I think that we made good progress in doing that, but we are not there yet. That is something that we will, hopefully, gain from and learn from by way of interacting with all of the schools and, ultimately, the youth and early years organisations over the next period.
3965. **Mr Newton:** You have agreed that the educational end, and success in that field, is fairly easily measured. Reconciliation is a bit more difficult to measure. How would funding be tied into a measure that is fairly nebulous at times?

3966. **Mrs Graham:** Andrew and Suzanne have referred to the application process that has been put in place for the DSC programme. It is about schools demonstrating how they are going to work together and set targets for themselves over a period. The continuum that ETI has developed is looking at the various stages of improving educational standards and reconciliation outcomes. That, at the minute, is a guide that allows schools to look at where they think they are at the moment. That will be tested by ETI on its baseline visits to the schools, when it will ask, “Is this an accurate self-reflection of where you are at?” and “Where is the evidence to demonstrate that?”. Over the course of the four years, each school will demonstrate how it has progressed. Along the way, ETI will refine that continuum in order to make those performance indicators sharper and clearer for everyone and something that all schools can use over that time. We already have indicators under the CRED policy for looking at community involvement. Beginning to combine all of those things and looking at what is the best of those should give us a more rounded product.
3967. **Mr A Bell:** It is probably worth saying that overlaying that level that Faustina is talking about, at the project level, the business case has identified three measures that Queen’s, which has done a lot of work around this measurement and reconciliation, has come up with. They are across good friendship, positive action tendencies and inter-group anxiety. So we have very clear measures for the Delivering Social Change signature project that we will expect to be moving, and we set out targets for those. Part of the difficulty is that we need to make sure that this work does not become a bureaucratic overhead for schools and that it is understandable to teachers. We have asked the inspectorate, over the four-year period, to consider other measures that we can use. As Faustina said, we are at the forefront of work to make that measurement easier, so that people are not trying to understand what cross-group friendship means, or positive action tendencies, or inter-group anxiety.
3968. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** That is quite important from the point of view of the burden it would place on schools. We have all seen, I am sure, whether in education or in other sectors, that, if you have projects which are effectively getting funded, quite often the money goes to the organisation that can produce the best paper copy — the best form-fillers — rather than necessarily where the greatest need is. Adopting criteria and conditions that are clear and understandable to people will be of significance; it is not just the person who can fit the most jargon into a particular application form.
3969. **Mr A Bell:** Do not forget that, through the Education Authority, we have put development officers in place to work with schools, and part of their role is working with schools through the application process. All schools, for example, in both the first and second tranches have attended workshops on the whole application process. Development officers will work with individual schools to try and overcome that problem, because as you say, some schools are better at filling out forms than others, and we do not want anybody penalised because of that.
3970. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** It is the same with any sort of funding application.
3971. **Mr A Bell:** Absolutely.
3972. **Mr Newton:** I just want to build on the point that Peter has raised. In evidence to the Committee there was a strong feeling that there needed to be support for building shared education — not just professional support to the teacher directly involved, but more widely to the board of governors and the parents. Am I right in thinking that the Department has accepted that training and support will be provided, and if so, what form will that take?
3973. **Mr A Bell:** That is the work that Faustina referred to in her opening statement around a capacity-building strategy.

That strategy will cover all those areas: teachers, schools, types of support and how to deal with parents. All those issues will be covered. We are working with those in the area and have invited them, as Faustina said in her opening statement, to bring forward a proposal on how best to achieve that. There are already a number of programmes out there, but the last thing we want to see is everybody doing this in a very piecemeal fashion. We want a very strategic approach. That is what we tried to achieve through the IFI programmes, which resulted in programmes such as the CREDIT programme at Stranmillis and St Mary's coming to fruition, which was very well accepted by teachers. The Committee heard that referenced in a number of previous witness statements. We are very much seeking that strategic approach.

3974. **Mr Newton:** I take up a point that Nelson made earlier about the cultural certainty of schools participating in these programmes. The phrase "capacity building" is often used. I am never sure what it actually means, either in this context or in others. How would capacity building address the cultural certainty or cultural identity of pupils?

3975. **Mrs Graham:** The capacity building that Andrew referred to — apologies if that sounds like educational jargon — is professional learning for teachers. It is about providing training that allows them first and foremost to address their own bias and what they perceive to be difficult issues in interacting with children and young people in the same forum. For example, we talked about section 75 this morning. A skilful teacher will be able to handle the cross-community issues and any other issues around identity that a young person might bring — they will seldom have only one issue — in a safe forum, first and foremost, as those young people deal with all of the challenges that they have. So the capacity-building focus is first on us as adults. Very often what we see is that it is we, the adults, who bring more problems and are less open to all the things that we are considering

here regarding the future than our children and young people. Equally, if those children and young people are not taught in a condition and a situation in which such openness about who they want to be and who they feel they are, there can be more damage than progress. It is about teachers exploring the various identities that they feel that they bring and, ultimately, from the Department's perspective, the approaches that teachers will use to work with children and young people and their experiences in training mirroring what we expect to see in the Northern Ireland curriculum. We should see all the things that we expect in the curriculum in teacher education as well, and all the issues that we have talked about today are in our curriculum. We are talking about tolerance, empathy, a respect for difference and being able to articulate your concerns clearly.

3976. I am sure that you are aware that we have examples of the schools or children that Sir Bob talked about. There was, in fact, a young woman in a school who had not contributed at all in an entire day. That is quite shocking, but it happens. We need to ensure that our young people can be articulate in expressing their views, whatever those views are, without necessarily causing offence but still being confident in expressing them. Our teachers also need to be able to do that. Sometimes, particularly in a teaching situation, people will avoid things that may in any way suggest conflict rather than addressing them, because they are worried that they might do more damage than good. We have to equip our teachers with the skills to feel confident and comfortable about doing precisely that.

3977. **Mr A Bell:** Before I worked in the Department, my post was in training. A general definition of capacity building is: what skills do you require to deliver something? In this case, the definition is: what skills do you require to deliver shared education? You then do a needs analysis to see what skills are out there and identify where the gaps are. The capacity-building strategy is simply about how to address those gaps. What is the

strategy for addressing those gaps to get from where you are now to where you want to be?

3978. **Mr Newton:** Faustina, my question is on the Minister for Employment and Learning's role in the teaching of the skills for the new intake of students at Stranmillis or St Mary's. What changes are there in their teaching programmes to include shared education and skills? What are the knowledge gaps, as Andrew outlined them?
3979. **Mrs Graham:** It is important to say that, particularly across the IFI programmes, a number of courses were introduced for teachers through our teacher training colleges.
3980. **Mr Newton:** Are you telling me that changes are now in place in their curricula?
3981. **Mrs Graham:** In initial teacher education?
3982. **Mr Newton:** Yes.
3983. **Mrs Graham:** As Andrew said, we have asked the educational stakeholders, working collaboratively, to bring forward their ideas to us. I will be attending the Committee to talk about teacher education in a few weeks' time. It is important that all our teacher educators work collaboratively. It is not a case of everyone doing something different or separately. We have asked for that work to be done so that it will be an agreed strategy, and I like to think that that will definitely impact initial teacher education. As you recognise, that is not our responsibility as such.
3984. **Mr McCausland:** I accept that it is not your responsibility, but the two things are utterly and totally inseparable. There are two factors: a psychological factor and a practical factor. The psychological factor is that, quite often, people have come from a socio-economically deprived background, done well, become teachers and moved on. How do they relate to the community that they initially came from? Do they turn their back on it, or do they retain some affinity? The practical factor is that, in many of

those socio-economically disadvantaged areas, I do not know anybody who plays the recorder, but I know an awful lot of people who play the B-flat flute. So what instrument is taught in schools? What affinity with and interest in it do the children have? Cultural issues are at the heart of this, which is why the identity of culture, which we discussed earlier, needs to be teased out and honestly answered. For years, people have shied away from the issue. There is a cultural confidence and assurance in certain sectors that is only starting to come into the controlled sector in particular. Some schools are doing really good work. We need to push and promote that, and that is where teacher training and —
[Inaudible.]

3985. **Mr A Bell:** Sorry, to address that point: it is probably worth mentioning an addition to what you have previously seen. Following public consultation, we have picked that up in the policy. The Department has a commitment to liaise with higher education institutions and other relevant education providers on aligning their approaches to professional learning for shared education practitioners. So we have recognised —
3986. **Mr McCausland:** What paragraph is that?
3987. **Mr A Bell:** This is a new paragraph under key action 9, "Develop the Workforce". It has gone into the policy as a result of the public consultation, so it is now specified.
3988. **Mrs Overend:** Thank you very much for attending and for bearing with us through all our questions. I will pick up on a few earlier points. You talked about the highly important role that schools' actions have in the community. How is that measured? Is it how the school building is used or how students participate in the community? Is there a measurement of that? Do you have certain set criteria, or is it done case by case?
3989. **Mr A Bell:** That is made clear under community connections in the shared education framework that ETI has

- developed and is continuing to develop. It outlines that, in the early stage of sharing, we would very much expect engagement with parents in the wider community. As you move through, it builds, and indicators of what should be done are given at each stage. The basic level is “defining” schools at a very early stage. They then move to the “developing” stage, and community connections will build to do more work in the community. By the time they reach the top level of “embedding”, we expect schools to have good connections with the community; parents to be well aware of what the shared education programmes are doing; schools to be using community resources; and, when possible, bringing in people from the community with experience of different areas — for example, if history is being taught, there may be people with a recent experience.
3990. There are all those levels, and the school should also be aware of what is happening in the community. The curriculum sets out minimum standards, but one thing that we want schools to do is to take those standards and apply them to that group of children and young people as well as possible. If they understand what those children and young people face in their local community, they can better address that. It is all those levels, and maybe that answers your question.
3991. **Mrs Overend:** It is interesting to hear those details. Thank you. Another question occurred to me during our discussion. Has the Department looked at other policies, such as the entitlement framework, that may work against the ideal of promoting shared education? The shared partnership in Magherafelt in my area promotes all schools working together, but people back off and want to deliver subjects on their own because of the entitlement framework.
3992. **Dr Kington:** Our experience of the applications process has been that schools being initially paired with each other through area learning communities has helped them to deliver on the entitlement framework requirement, because those schools may not have been able to deliver on their own. Some of these partnerships have come through strongly in the applications to shared education. That experience of collaboration and cooperation with another school and the practical difficulties that that can sometimes entail in timetabling and so on is a good basis from which to go forward with shared education. We do not see any particular tension there at all.
3993. **Mr A Bell:** As we have developed the policy, we have looked to other policies in the Department. Obviously, there is a suite of policies, so this needs to fit with others. Part of the work we do is to try to identify whether there are contradictions or difficulties or whether another policy is working against what we are trying to do. That would have been part of the policy development route that we went down.
3994. **Mrs Overend:** The Department’s stats identify that 24% of schools are not involved in sharing. In order to ensure wider and non-tokenistic participation, does the Department believe that a legal obligation is required for schools to be involved in shared education?
3995. **Mr A Bell:** The experience that we have built up over a number of years and all the research indicate that you need community support. If we started obliging communities to go down that route, you are going against that. We know from our knowledge in this area in this Province that, once you start forcing people to do things, that is when people will walk away from the position. We want to encourage and facilitate shared education as opposed to imposing it on communities.
3996. **Mrs Overend:** In respect of employment practices in schools, the Minister suggested that section 75 obligations might be extended to all schools but that a public consultation would be required. Will the Department comment on whether it believes that a legal obligation might be usefully placed on schools to promote good relations

and perhaps normalise employment practices in schools?

3997. **Mr A Bell:** That was one of the recommendations from the ministerial advisory group report. That group did a lot of work and a very widespread consultation process before coming up with that. That happens in other jurisdictions. There were a lot of concerns in some of your previous sessions about the bureaucracy that would be involved. Other jurisdictions have what is sometimes referred to as an “equality-lite” scheme for schools. It is light on bureaucracy as opposed to light in ensuring that they meet the groups. There are other ways to move that forward, and we would want to explore this area as part of that. OFMDFM is in the lead on that process. The Minister has written to the First Minister and deputy First Minister to ask for their views initially about moving this forward.
3998. **Mrs Overend:** When did he write to them?
3999. **Mr A Bell:** He wrote to them a number of months back.
4000. **Mrs Overend:** What is “a number”? Twelve? Twenty-four?
4001. **Mr A Bell:** I do not know the exact date off the top of my head, but it is probably more than six months ago.
4002. **Mrs Overend:** That is a reasonable amount of time in which to have expected a response.
4003. You might find that some schools will amalgamate because of school numbers or will work more closely together because of the risk of closure. Do you look on that favourably?
4004. **Mr A Bell:** Again, there are criteria, particularly for the Delivering Social Change signature project. As we work down through the policy level, we set out more detailed criteria in the individual programmes that deliver that policy. The criteria in the Delivering Social Change signature project state that, first, schools must be sustainable. When they come together for the shared

educational experience, the expectation is that they are doing it for the right reasons. That is one reason why they have to set that out in their action plans. Each school individually self-assesses against the continuum model, and they then work as a partnership to see where it sits. We have made the process fairly robust while not being too bureaucratic for schools to follow so that we avoid the situations that you are talking about, where they are coming at it from the point of view that it allows them to continue to exist as a school.

4005. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** I have a couple of final questions. Drumragh and Methodist College highlighted their individual circumstances. They are concerned that shared education, according to the definition, cannot really happen in a single site or school. Why is there a requirement for more than one school to be involved?
4006. **Mr A Bell:** It goes back to what I said earlier about the dual aims of improving educational outcomes and, as part of that, reconciliation outcomes. There is a lot of international evidence that, when a school collaborates with another school, it can raise standards. It is based on that evidence. A very good school can raise the standards of other schools and share with them how it has reached that standard.
4007. **Mrs Graham:** You referred to two schools that I am not familiar with. I do not know what those two schools are doing. However, we would have to ask questions. If someone is saying that they are doing all these things but is unwilling to work with somebody else, it raises questions.
4008. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Although I was not here when that evidence was given, to be fair, it is maybe somewhat pejorative to say that they are unwilling to do that. They are saying that they are providing a particular setting in which communities are mixing.
4009. **Mrs Graham:** That is great.

4010. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** They are simply asking why they are being excluded from that as opposed to —
4011. **Mrs Graham:** We need those schools to participate. The very fact they are doing those things makes it all the more important that they participate. As Andrew said, whether it is educational attainment, reconciliation outcomes or both, a stronger school that works with another school that is in need of support, needs to improve and recognises that need will pull up what is happening in that school. Hopefully, the stronger school will be able to take credit for the support that it provides.
4012. **Dr Kingon:** If you look at the practicalities of the Delivering Social Change programme, you will see that the funding that is available is to assist with transport and provide substitute cover. Andrew referred to that. It is funding to facilitate inter-school collaboration, which is recognised as having additional costs over and above a school's LMS budget. A school on its own will not incur those types of cost in the very good work that it is doing by itself.
4013. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Trevor, you have a final question on the Moy situation and the shared campus.
4014. **Mr Lunn:** I am not going to go down to the Moy again. The question was about the measurement of education and the societal benefit of shared education schemes. You have answered it at least three times, so you are off the hook.
4015. **Mrs Graham:** Thank you.
4016. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** On that note, I thank you for your evidence. There are a couple of issues that we could clear up. It may be useful for the witnesses to hear this. This is a two-stage process. An inquiry report will be drafted for debate, if we can get agreement on it, before the summer recess. We are also acutely aware that the Department hopes to take the legislative situation to the Executive, and we are keen to help with that. Given the time frame, I made a suggestion earlier. Members should email Peter with any thoughts, and we could give an initial view to the Department. The aim is to get something drafted next week so that we can give our initial view — one or two pages — to the Department.
4017. **The Committee Clerk:** This is about the Bill, Chair.
4018. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Yes. It is specifically about the Bill.
4019. **Mrs Graham:** That would be helpful.
4020. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** Hopefully, we can then agree a line and get it to the Department. That would be useful for next week's meeting.
4021. **Mr McCausland:** I am thinking about that phrase "equality of identity". There is a lot to be said for the old Community Relations Council model: equality, diversity and interdependence. It is the three-legged stool. It is a simple way of expressing what is in there.
4022. **The Chairperson (Mr Weir):** If members have any thoughts, I ask them to send them to the Clerk so that we can have something drafted for next week. Hopefully, we might be able to agree something, but maybe that is the naivety of the honeymoon period.
4023. Thank you for your forbearance. We have had two hours' worth, so there is a lot of meat on this, and I suspect that this may be stage one of a number of stages.



Published by Authority of the Northern Ireland Assembly,
Belfast: The Stationery Office

and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

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PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN

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TSO@Blackwell and other Accredited Agents

£39.38

Printed in Northern Ireland by The Stationery Office Limited
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ISBN 978-0-339-60590-9



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Committee for Education

Report on the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education Volume 2

**Together with the Minutes of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence
and Written Submissions Relating to the Report**

Ordered by the Committee for Education to be printed 1 July 2015

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- Initiate inquiries and make reports; and
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Northern Ireland
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Atlantic Philanthropies and International Fund for Ireland

Northern Ireland Assembly – Committee for Education Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

Submission by Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland

Contacts

Dr Padraic Quirk (Atlantic Philanthropies)

Dr Adrian Johnston (International Fund for Ireland)

23rd October 2014

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This submission to the Northern Ireland Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education is made by the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies, two organisations which have been jointly supporting shared education since 2007 onwards. We welcome the opportunity to submit written evidence to the timely inquiry on shared and integrated education.
- 1.2 Although the details of this submission focus on our collective experience of funding the Shared Education Programme, it is worth noting that Atlantic Philanthropies has supported initiatives in shared and integrated education and view both as positively contributing to transforming a divided education system.
- 1.3 Our submission follows the key headings set out in terms of reference by the Education Committee: nature and definition of shared and integrated education; key barriers and enablers; alternative approaches and models in other jurisdictions; and, priorities and actions to improve sharing and integration. Of necessity, the emphasis in our submission is based on our collective intervention on shared education drawing on the experience and research evidence generated therein.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 What is integrated education? Integrated education brings together in one school, children, parents, teachers and governors from Catholic and Protestant traditions and those from other faiths or none. Pupils experience an education that gives them the opportunity to understand, respect and celebrate all cultural and religious traditions. Parental involvement is a central value of integrated education, with a high level of parental representation on Boards of Governors.
- 2.2 The origins of the sector can be traced back to 1974 when a group of parents called All Children Together lobbied successfully for legislation which would allow existing schools to become integrated (Education (NI) Act 1977). The first planned integrated school (Lagan College) was established by parents in Belfast in 1981. Integrated education was given a major fillip through the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 (article 64) which, for the first time, placed a statutory duty on the Department of Education to ‘encourage and facilitate’ the development of integrated education. The Order also gave the department the power to fund a central, representative body to develop, support and promote integrated education in Northern Ireland – the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) was

established 1987). There are now 62 integrated schools in Northern Ireland with an enrolment in 2013/14 of 21,206 pupils or approximately 6.7% of the overall school population.

- 2.3 What is shared education? Shared education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained process ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to coordinated timetabling, and pupils taking classes across a network of schools. The Ministerial Advisory Report on Shared Education (2013: xiii) defines it as:

Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

- 2.4 Shared education is distinct from integrated education. The essential point is that shared education involves inter sectoral collaboration to improve both educational and reconciliation outcomes. It seeks to create interdependencies between schools mostly through delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher quality educational experiences. Shared education recognises that schools have interdependent relationships and promotes positive inter sectoral collaboration to support the common good.

- 2.5 Shared education has been delivered through 3 project providers: Queen's University Belfast, the Fermanagh Trust and the North Eastern Education and Library Board PEE project. In 2012/13 there were 101 primary schools and 61 post-primary schools involved in the Shared Education Programme with 12,771 pupils participating (4% of the school population). We set out the key differences between shared and integrated education in table 1. We do however see the practical distinction between shared and integrated education as a false dichotomy. Instead, we argue that there is a spectrum of collaboration which is possible between schools ranging from: schools working in isolation through, ad hoc collaboration, organic partnership, irregular (and less sustained) shared activity, regular sustained activity, culture of collegiality and institutional interdependence (Duffy, Baker and Stewart, 2013).

Table 1: Shared and Integrated Education – defining characteristics

	Shared Education	Integrated Education
Definitions	Shared education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained and meaningful process ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to coordinated timetabling, and pupils taking classes across a network of schools.	Integrated education brings together in one school, children, parents, teachers and governors from Catholic and Protestant traditions and those from other faiths or none.
Characteristics	The focus of shared education is delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher quality educational experiences. Shared education recognises that schools have interdependent relationships and promotes positive collaboration to support the common good. Shared education involves parental, pupil, teacher and community involvement.	Pupils experience an education that gives them the opportunity to understand, respect and celebrate all cultural and religious traditions. Parental involvement is a central value of integrated education, with a high level of parental representation on Boards of Governors.

	Shared Education	Integrated Education
Numbers involved	Maintain the percentage of schools engaged in shared education on a whole school basis at 15% (114) in the 2014/15 academic year and increase to 20% (152) by 2017/18 (from DE Business Plan for Shared Education Signature Project).	21,206 (62 schools) or 6.7% of school population.
Key transformative changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme for Government commitments to shared education. • Building a United Community commitment to share education: 'we will enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience'. • 10 new shared education campuses. • Ministerial endorsement of shared education and commitment to mainstream it to become part of the 'DNA' of education system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental choice for parents who wish to send their children to integrated schools. • Legislative commitment by Department of Education to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education. • State funding for integrated schools. • Justice Treacy's ruling (2014): integrated schooling cannot be delivered by schools with a predominantly Catholic or Protestant ethos – integrated education is a stand-alone concept.
Legacy	<p>Cross-sectoral interdependency between schools for education and reconciliation benefits.</p> <p>Boundaries between existing sectors are now porous.</p>	Solid base of integrated schools with opportunities for further growth to meet parental demand.

3. Enablers and Barriers

- 3.1 There are both public policy and legislative enablers. For example, the Northern Ireland Executive entitled Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC), makes a clear commitment to shared education as follows:

We believe that creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement unemployment, and sectarianism; and improving good relations amongst and for our young people. This must also be considered within the context of the increasing diversity of our society, which is reflected within the school environment. Through this Strategy, we will enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience. T:BUC (2013: 48).

- 3.2 Under the banner Delivering Social Change there is now a Shared Education Signature project which commits £25m from OFMDFM, the Department of Education and Atlantic Philanthropies to take shared education from pilot schools to scale throughout Northern Ireland. In addition, the Northern Ireland Executive has committed to building 10 shared education campuses. These projects should make a significant contribution towards mainstreaming shared education.

- 3.3 The Ministerial Advisory Report Advancing Shared Education (2013) recommended a statutory duty on the Department of Education (and ESA) to encourage and facilitate shared education as defined in the report. The Minister of Education told the NI Assembly (22nd October 2013):

Shared education is rolling out as we speak. I would like to see a legal definition put in place through the ESA Bill. However, if the ESA continues to be delayed, I will consider bringing forward legislation to introduce a definition of shared education separate from the ESA Bill, as I place such importance on it.

Given the collapse of the ESA bill we suggest separate legislation to enable the development of shared education as follows:

- (1) There will be a duty on schools to collaborate in the delivery of education on a cross community and cross sectoral basis.
- (2) Duties
 - i **Duty of schools**
 - a. There will be a duty on schools to collaborate¹ on a cross community basis² as defined in the footnotes below.
 - b. Principals and the Board of Governors shall take steps to ensure that opportunities are created for sustained, regular cross community contact between pupils through the delivery of Education. These commitments should be defined in school development plans and take into account existing DENI guidance on school improvement and educational delivery.
 - ii. **Duty of new (combined) Education and Library Board (ELB)**
 - a. There will be a duty on the new (combined) Education and Library Board to ensure curriculum choices are made available to all students based on the shared education model. The ELB will provide support, guidance, resources and funding of shared activities based on the statutory curriculum.
 - iii. **Duty of the Department of Education Northern Ireland**
 - a. There will be a duty on the Department for Education Northern Ireland (DENI) to monitor and evaluate the delivery of education on a cross community basis.
 - b. The Education and Library Board will have a duty to report on all schools cross-community partnership work and disseminate best practice both to DENI and throughout the ELB.

(Laura Lundy, Queens University Belfast)

- 3.4 Barriers: At the macro level there is a statutory duty on the Department of Education under the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. There is also a call from the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education (2013) for the same legal duty to be applied to shared education. Neither of these has however translated into a clear blueprint for a fully shared and/or integrated system of education. Hence, government intentions are aspirational rather than practical involving time-bound targets, associated funding to achieve significant change and measurable educational outcomes.

1 Definition of collaborate. By collaborate we are referring to schools working together on a regular, sustained basis in the delivery of statutory curricular subjects. "Collaborate" also refers to the delivery of extra-curricular activities.

2 Definition of "cross-community". By "cross community" we recognise the existence of controlled, maintained, voluntary, integrated, special education resource centres and Irish Medium provision. "Cross community collaboration" occurs when schools from different management types work together on a regular, sustained basis.

- 3.5 One of the key barriers to shared and integrated education is the area planning process which has attracted a large response through public consultation. There is evidence that in some cases ELBs have chosen to ignore grassroots opinion which offers potential local shared education solutions. This represents the worse type of paternalism on the part of school managing authorities; a 'we know best attitude' reinforced by a needs model in the area plans which is based on 3 separate sectors: controlled, maintained and integrated schools. Such an approach stifles 'innovation and creativity' which the Department of Education implored the Education and Library Boards and CCMS to embrace in their approach to area planning.
- 3.6 The Education Minister has encouraged public engagement in the future reorganisation of the education estate, in particular bottom-up solutions. There is evidence that people are much more advanced in their thinking than managing authorities which have acted as gatekeepers for local solutions and sought to protect their own sectoral interests. In short, the area planning consultation process has been tokenistic.
- 3.7 Another barrier to the development of shared education is that the Programme for Government (PfG) commitments may be treated in a 'light touch' way through the Entitlement Framework, Area Learning Communities, Extended Schools, and the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy (CRED). The inclusion of shared education targets within the PfG, whilst encouraging, are weak. What does 'ensuring that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education by 2015' actually mean when shared education in this context has been undefined? Moreover, the Minister's reference to shared education being an integral part of the way in which the Entitlement Framework operates lacks conviction as the Department of Education has no way of telling – they cannot provide evidence to substantiate this claim. The concern is that shared education morphs into community relations work rather than an opportunity to improve educational performance on a cross-community basis, with DE taking a passive role.
- 3.8 In addition, the sectoral vested interests, in particular the churches, maintain a resistance to a change in the status quo. While maintained schools, for example, have been active participants in shared education, they do not see their involvement in the long term as a substitute for exclusively Catholic education. An associated barrier is the political risks linked with creating a more shared education system since it blurs the traditional boundaries and could impact on the medium term voting habits in a political system which has reflected a segregated society.
- 3.9 The existing sectoral based teacher training degree programmes compound the status quo and can act as a barrier to a system which is attempting to become more shared and integrated. The new opportunities and challenges created by systemic educational change need to be reflected in the ways in which new teachers are trained and the professional development needs of existing teachers. There is little point in a structural reconfiguration of the school system without accompanying investment in those professionals which teach our pupils.

4. Other jurisdictions

- 4.1 Although the Shared Education Programme has a specific focus on Northern Ireland, there is the potential for wider learning in countries in, or emerging from, conflict. A team from the Centre for Shared Education in Queen's University were invited to support the work being carried out to tackle divisions with the Macedonian education system. This, in turn, has leveraged funding (from UNICEF and USAID) in support of a shared education programme between ethnic Macedonian and Albanian schools. Queen's University has been advising on the formulation and implementation of this programme given their experience in Northern Ireland.
- 4.2 A team from Queen's Shared Education Programme also travelled to Israel to participate in workshops and seminars on shared education. Working with Queen's, the Nazareth Academic

Institute examined ways to implement research outcomes within its constituency, namely students in a college of higher education and the communities surrounding it. Queen's is also co-operating with Hand in Hand, Centre for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel in order to explore shared options for school age children and their communities. Hand in Hand was founded in 1997 as a centre for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel and builds peace, coexistence and equality through a network of integrated, bilingual schools for Jewish and Arab children.

- 4.3 Atlantic's collaboration with the Office of the Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) in the Shared Education Signature project will link us into a European Centre for Delivering Social Change which, inter alia, which carry out work that provides a research-policy-practice nexus for policy initiatives at the centre of government. The Centre will disseminate best social change practice [outwards] to other European countries and learn from developments elsewhere [inwards] which will help tackle key thematic areas in the Northern Ireland social change agenda. Shared education research, policy and practice will be a core theme in the European Centre for Delivering Social Change.
- 4.4 Perry (2012) provides examples of shared education in other jurisdictions: shared campuses in Scotland; federation in England and Wales; communities of schools in Belgium; and school clusters in New Zealand. The Scottish experience of shared campuses was very positive despite initial concerns that denominational schools might lose their ethos. The federated model also offers a useful comparator for Northern Ireland. This is where two or more schools share leadership and governance arrangements. The literature notes that while federations require a larger budget in comparison to an individual school, economies of scale may be realised, and increased costs are offset by greater resources. In a recent Ofsted report on federations, inspectors found educational provision and outcomes had shown improvement, with the federated model as a contributory factor to the improvement.

5. Priorities and Actions

- 5.1 At the strategic level there is a need for the Northern Ireland Executive, Assembly and Department of Education to agree a future plan for a fully integrated and shared system of education moving forward. We need to move from aspirations to pragmatic systemic changes. The investments by Atlantic Philanthropies and IFI have demonstrated clear economic, education and societal benefits of shared education – what is needed is to embed shared and integrated education comprehensively in the delivery of education in Northern Ireland.
- 5.2 Beyond this strategic goal the key priorities and actions are scaling-up shared education in a meaningful way rather than a superficial engagement in short-term community relations work. The key priorities and actions are listed in table 2.

Table 2: Scaling-Up Shared Education

Scaling up Shared Education	<p>There are a number of elements involved in scaling up the levels of collaboration and sharing between schools. Typically this will comprise work across a number of areas including:</p> <p>Support for Shared Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants: Chairs of governors; all governors; governors sub-committee • Activities: agreed shared governance arrangements; promote school partnership; employment of staff; agree shared policies; and, oversight of partnership transactions/finance. <p>Shared School Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants: Principals and Vice Principals • Activities: Embed and promote philosophy of the partnership; Principals work closely with Vice Principals to shape programme; deployment of staff across the partnership; employment of staff; and, financial management. <p>Shared Curriculum Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants: Principals and Vice Principals • Activities: Maximise shared curriculum in order to reduce duplication and provide broadest choice possible; agreed benchmarking, assessment and target setting; synchronisation of timetabling; agreed teaching and learning strategies formulated; and Identification of future need. <p>Shared Teaching & Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants: Heads of department; subject specialist teachers; and teachers • Activities: Agreed teaching and learning strategies implemented; shared plans and schemes of work; audit of existing resources within partnership; maximise the use of existing resources across partnership; joint staff training; and creation of shared policies. <p>Shared Classes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants: Pupils • Activities: Pupils engaged in shared classes and learning; shared student council; and shared pupil extra-curricular activities (sports, choir/music etc).
	<p>Educational Improvement</p> <p>In addition to the above, school partnerships should be encouraged to specifically develop shared plans focused on improving educational outcomes. Likely activities to be supported will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance to identify common areas of educational need; • Conduct a curriculum audit which identifies duplication of provision, areas of under- provision and how best to address these issues. • Identify complementary expertise and how schools intend to use it to benefit the partnership. • Highlight existing resources that could be shared for the benefit of the partnership (physical space, ICT suites etc.). The schools will provide a rationale as to how existing resources can be used more efficiently and effectively across the partnership in a sustainable manner. • Identify opportunities for the development of common teaching and learning strategies, benchmarking and standards across the partnership with a focus on improving educational outcomes. • Identify opportunities for shared training and capacity building and how they intend to provide access to these on an on-going process. • Demonstrate how the cross-sectoral partnership will lead to improved educational provision across the partnership. • Identify additional resources that they would require to progress the work of the partnership in terms of improving educational outcomes.

Outputs	
The above activities will result in the following outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of schools involved in shared education delivery. • Increased level of interdependence in the school system. • Increase in the number of joint governance schools (models of confederation, federation, co-location and possibly shared campuses).
Expected Outcomes	
The outcomes from this work should result in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved educational outcomes and enhanced access to curriculum for all pupils involved in shared education. • Normalised peer-to-peer cross-community relationships built through regular contact within mainstream education. • Shared education becomes a core element of all schools' strategic planning and day-to-day functional activities. • The Department of Education will fund, incentivise and formally regulate shared education. • The Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) will incorporate shared education activities as a component part of their regular inspection process of schools. • Learning from shared education exemplars will inform international best practice on transforming segregated education systems.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The Ministerial statement Advancing Shared Education (22nd October 2013) noted:

- Shared education must become the accepted reality at every stage of education, from early years to post-graduate study...We need to ensure that sharing is in the DNA of our education system: in legislation, policy and the structure of ESA.
- Sharing brings: educational benefits, respect for diversity and good relations. It builds equality and a confident community. So my vision is one of education without barriers; good schools where children learn, grow and develop together.

6.2 Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland have, through the Shared Education Programme, developed the concept, practice and supporting evidence to demonstrate the benefits of shared education. We see the role of DE and the new unitary Education and Library Board as embedding our work in the system.

See appendix 1 for a sample of the evidence on the effectiveness of shared education

Appendix 1: Some examples of evidence on shared education

Title	Author(s) and source
Are separate schools divisive? A case study from Northern Ireland	Joanne Hughes (2010) British Educational Research Journal, iFirst Article, 1–22.
Sharing classes between separate schools: a mechanism for improving inter-group relations in Northern Ireland?	Joanne Hughes, Simon Lolliot Miles Hewstone, Katharina Schmid & Karen Carlisle (2012) Policy Futures in Education 10 (5)
School partnerships and reconciliation: an evaluation of school collaboration in Northern Ireland	Joanne Hughes, Caitlin Donnelly, Tony Gallagher & Karen Carlisle (2010) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
Sustaining Cross-Sector Collaboration: An examination of schools involved in the first cohort of the Sharing Education Programme	Gavin Duffy & Tony Gallagher (2012) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
Collaborative evolution: The context of sharing and collaboration in contested space	Gavin Duffy & Tony Gallagher (2012) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
Sharing education through schools working together'	Gallagher, T., Stewart, A., Walker, R., Baker, M. and Lockhart, J. (2010) Shared Space: A research journal on peace, conflict and community relations in Northern Ireland, 6, 65-74
School collaboration in Northern Ireland: opportunities for reconciliation.	C. Donnelly & T. Gallagher (2008) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
The Sharing Education Programme Attitudinal Research Results	FGS McClure Watters (2010) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
Inter-group contact at school and social attitudes: Evidence from Northern Ireland	Joanne Hughes (2012) Oxford Review of Education (under review)
Promoting good relations: the role of schools in Northern Ireland	Joanne Hughes and Caitlin Donnelly (2012) (Eds) Cillian McGrattan and Elizabeth Meehan, <i>Everyday Life After the Conflict The Impact of Devolution and North-South Cooperation</i> . Manchester University Press. (In Press)
Contact and context: Sharing education and building relationships in a divided society	Joanne Hughes (2012a), Research papers in Education (Under review)
The School in the plural and divided Society	Joanne Hughes and Caitlin Donnelly (2012a) Introduction to Policy Futures in education
Key Issues in Coexistence and Education	Tony Gallagher (2010) Boston: Brandeis University Coexistence International http://www.clubmadrid.org/img/secciones/CI_Key_Issues_in_Coexistence_Education_Jan_2010.pdf
Sharing Education Programme: Views from the White Board	Colin Knox (2010) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
Community Engagement in the Education Policy Debate	Colin Knox (2012) Draft paper (see authors) University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)

Title	Author(s) and source
The Economics of Shared Education Programme	Vani Borooah and Colin Knox Draft paper University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)
The Economics of School Closures in Northern Ireland	Vani Borooah and Colin Knox Draft paper University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)
Educational Performance and Post-Primary Schools in Northern Ireland	Vani Borooah and Colin Knox Draft Paper University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)
Northern Ireland's School Funding Formula: Explanation and Critique	Vani Borooah and Colin Knox Draft Paper University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)
A Critique of the Education and Library Boards' Area Plans	Vani Borooah and Colin Knox Draft Paper University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)
Community Engagement in the Education Policy Debate	Colin Knox (2012) Draft paper (see authors)University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland BT37 0QB. (Email: vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk)
Inter-school collaboration	Atkinson et al. (2007)NFER@ Queens
Education and a shared future: Options for sharing and collaboration in Northern Ireland schools	O'Sullivan et al. (2008) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/
Activity Theory in Practice: Promoting learning across boundaries and agencies	Daniels, H, Edwards, A, Engestrom, U and Gallagher, T (Eds) (2009) London: Routledge (Pp239 ISBN 978-0-415-47724-6)
Breaking through silence: tackling controversial barriers through inter-professional engagement.	Gallagher, T and Carlisle, K (2009) In H Daniels et al (Eds) Activity Theory in Practice: Promoting learning across boundaries and agencies, London: Routledge (Pp140-159)
A Deliberative Poll on Education: what provision do informed parents in Northern Ireland want?	Fishkin, J, Gallagher, T, Luskin, R, McGrady, J, O'Flynn, I and Russell, D (2007) http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/Views%20from%20the%20White%20Board%20May%202010.pdf
Developing the case for Shared Education	Oxford Economics (2010) IEF
Sharing over Separation - Part B - Promoting Shared Education	Russell (2009)CRC research reports No. 8 http://gtcni.openrepository.com/gtcni/bitstream/2428/56439/1/part-b-d-russell.pdf

Title	Author(s) and source
The Contribution of Shared Education to Catholic-Protestant reconciliation in Northern Ireland: a third way?	Borooah, Vani and Knox, C. <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> , Vol. 39 (5), 2013, pp. 925-946 (with Vani Borooah).
Reconciliation and Human Rights in Northern Ireland: A False Dichotomy?	Knox, C and Beirne, M. ' <i>Journal of Human Rights Practice</i> , Vol. 6 (1), 2014, pp. 26 – 50
Access and Performance Inequalities: post primary education in Northern Ireland	Borooah, Vani and Knox, C. <i>Journal of Poverty and Social Justice</i> , Vol. 22 (2), 2014: pp. 111-135
Segregation, Inequality and Educational Performance in Northern Ireland: problems and solutions	Borooah, Vani and Knox, C. <i>International Journal of Educational Development</i> (in press 2014)

Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College

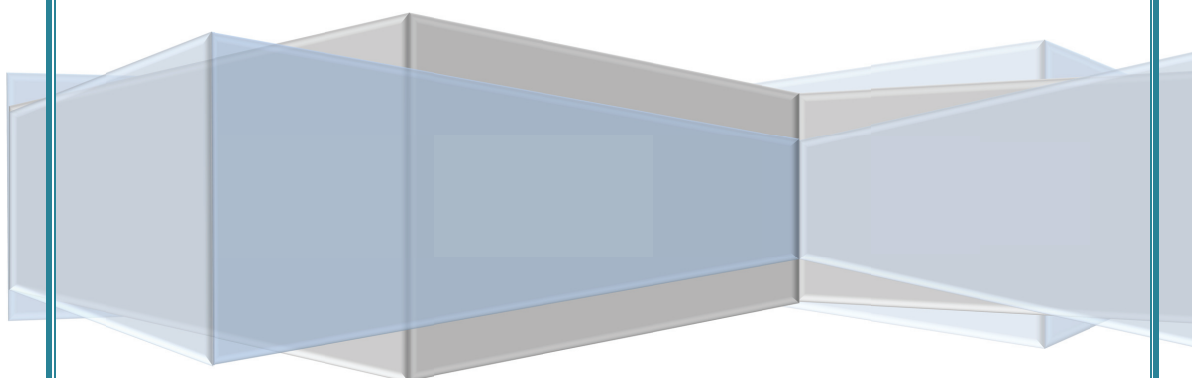


Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

Shared Education in Moyle

I Williamson and Barbara Ward



In Moyle, both Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College have a sense of helping to shape the future:

Background:

We have a strong sense of the successful history enjoyed by both schools and by the pupils who have attended our schools over the years. Pupils are drawn mainly from the town of Ballycastle and the rural hinterland surrounding the town. We enjoy a high level of loyalty from the community, with in many instances, several generations of families having attended the schools.

While enjoying this sense of history we are very aware of the role played by Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College in having helped to shape the future.

This vision of collaboration, efficient use of resources and increased choice, has proven to be highly beneficial to the pupils, parents, schools and the local community. This vision continues to grow with our involvement in the Shared Education Programme with Atlantic Philanthropies and Q.U.B. This project and current support has enabled further advancements of our vision to enhance shared provision for post-primary pupils in the Ballycastle area. At Key Stages 4 and 5 significant progress has been made in relation to meeting the requirements of the Entitlement Framework and furthering cross curricular activities.

The vision and ethos has grown organically within a heartfelt context of mutual dependency and respect for each-others differences. This non-threatening sense of shared purpose and simple 'good neighbourliness' has impacted significantly on cross community relations.

In a socially deprived area such as ours, many parents still just want the best life chances possible for their children. This is the pervading attitude of most of our parents. But this sense of aspiration and expectation has to be nurtured by effective communication and genuine open, caring relationships. Parents know that every child matters in both our schools. We earnestly endeavour to show our parents that education has in the past and can in the future provide the vehicle for their children's advancement.

We are both non-selective schools and our pupils cover the full range in relation to academic ability. Both schools benefit hugely from that diversity and the wide range of talents, characteristics and personalities presented by each of our pupils.

Our location and degree of geographic isolation has also been of benefit, with parents choosing to send their children to us instead of attending schools elsewhere. But we cannot take this for granted and the teaching staff and support staff are keenly aware of our need to continue to be successful schools which enjoy the full confidence of the community.

Nature of Shared Education in Ballycastle

Almost 300 pupils attend weekly shared curricular classes – 139 CPC pupils taking classes in BHS and 148 BHS pupils taking classes in CPC.

Vision and Leadership

- Collaborative Sub-committees with representatives from both of Boards of Governors has been formed – their focus relates to the planning of the collaborative curriculum offer, standards and attainment and pastoral care and well-being of pupils involved in the collaboration.
- Governors have jointly agreed the core values/ principles underpinning the partnership and the purpose of the collaborative arrangements (Appendix One)
- There is a shared approach School Development Planning in relation to 14-19 attainment and related school improvement actions.
- Regular opportunities for leaders at levels of management in the school to meet plan monitor and evaluate provision together – this includes Principals, Senior Leaders, Curriculum and Pastoral Leaders

Curriculum

- The partnership provides a wide range of BTEC, AS/A level and GCSE subjects, with subject option blocks aligned. 6th Form and Key Stage 4 provision meets Entitlement Framework requirements. Additional subjects are delivered in partnership with Northern Regional College.
- The nature of the curriculum offer reflects the 'All Ability', inclusive nature of the two schools, the diverse nature of young peoples' aspiration in terms of their progression to further and higher education as well as the needs of the local and wider economy

Extra- Curricular / Curricular Enrichment Provision includes:

- A Joint School council ensure that pupils views and opinions are sought and taken on board in relation to planning and organisation of provision
- A range of shared careers education events
- Joint Year 8 and 9 Rugby team
- Joint Choir, concerts and orchestral activities.
- Charity fundraising activities.

There is much evidence that the impact of the partnership extends beyond the classrooms into the wider community.

The Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group 2013; 'Advancing Shared Education' suggested that there are seven key principles that need be at the heart of efforts to advance shared education.

Shared Education:

1. Welcomes and celebrates diversity and respects the right of children and young people to be educated in accordance with their own religious, cultural or philosophical traditions while also ensuring that they develop an understanding and respect for others by having significant and meaningful opportunities to be educated together with those from different backgrounds;
2. Ensures that all children have access to a quality education and enjoy equal opportunities within the education system, and thus has a particular concern with identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people from vulnerable and/or marginalised backgrounds;
3. Is built upon strong links with parents and care-givers, fostered in early childhood and maintained throughout each child's progression through the education system, and respects the role they play in supporting their child's education and development;
4. Provides all children and young people with a broad-based and holistic education whilst also ensuring that this is progressively tailored to meet their individual needs and to help develop their particular strengths and talents to the fullest;
5. Helps children and young people develop a greater awareness of and respect for diversity, in all its forms, and equips them with the knowledge and skills to be able to live in an open, inclusive and confident society;
6. Respects the rights and dignity of all children and young people, ensures that their views and opinions are heard and responded to and promotes their safety and wellbeing; and
7. Acknowledges the central importance of good leadership in schools and the quality of teachers and support staff and thus places a particular emphasis on ensuring high quality initial teacher education and continuing professional development opportunities that encourage teachers and educationalists learning and sharing together.

It is our contention that the above summary encompasses the core and essence of what shared education is in the Ballycastle context.

Key Barriers and Enablers for Shared Education

This response is based on the experience of a long standing sharing of educational resources and expertise in Ballycastle. It reflects our thoughts on barriers and enablers at system wide level.

Enablers

The strength and quality of the partnership is a crucial enabler. Shared education will flourish in a strong partnership where;

- each partner feels equal and is confident of the purpose, worth and value of their own institution and of the contribution it can make to the success of the partnership
- the essential nature of the context, history, ethos and value system in each school is understood and respected
- where there is a strong sense of common purpose and commitment to the concept of sharing for the greater good of the young people and the wider community in which they will live and work

The Commitment of Key Stakeholders:

The support of those working at **planning and policy level** in the education system at all levels is vital if Shared Education is become a recognised part of the education system in Northern Ireland. This includes:

- Department of Education
- The new Education Authority including the full range of educational stakeholders included in this ELB's / CCMS / Trustees/ Others

It is essential that those who are key decision makers see this as an authentic, sustainable and appropriate option for communities which can impact positively in three ways;

- It can provide the option for a choice of type of school which reflects the aspirations, beliefs, culture and identity of pupils and their parents whilst at the same providing authentic, high quality opportunities to accept diversity and indeed come to understand and value each-others traditions
- It can avoid duplication, make economic sense through the sharing of resources
- Sharing and good use of resources can have a significant impact on outcomes for young people

The confidence of Parents and Pupils

Pupils and their parents need to be absolutely confident that the sharing arrangements will work for their pupils – entrusting your child's education, even if it is only in a limited number of subjects to another school is a real challenge. It is vital therefore that the quality of leadership, teaching and learning and well-being and care of young people is of the highest standard possible. Where there are shared arrangements, pupils and their parents must be kept well informed about the

opportunities available through sharing, arrangements for monitoring progress, meeting teachers and so on. The arrangement needs to be underpinned by Service Level Agreements, robust protocols and shared policies relating to key areas of shared educational experience.

Policy context

It is important that the policy context for education enables Shared Education however it is equally important that Shared Education will enhance the implementation of policy.

For example, the following DE policy areas can be delivered much more efficiently and effectively in some areas where well established shared arrangements exist:

- Entitlement Framework
- ESAGS – Raising Educational Attainment
- Literacy and Numeracy Strategy including the Signature Teacher Project
- Tackling educational disadvantage
- STEM activities
- CRED

Meeting a real educational need

Shared Education will only be successful in the educational and economic sense if it meets a real need. Where it facilitates enhanced curriculum provision and choice for young people, where it increases access to specialist teaching and or accommodation and where it makes better use of resources, it will be effective and worthwhile.

Training and Development of Governors and Staff

The development of high quality Shared Education experiences is a challenge for school leaders, governors and staff. It adds an additional, but in our experience very worthwhile layer to the leadership, governance, and management of schools involved. The availability of training opportunities would;

- Increase awareness of the significant benefits / opportunities which shared education offers
- Increase awareness of the particular challenges
- Support schools in developing the leadership capabilities of those involved
- Facilitate the sharing of good practice

Co-location

Shared Education opportunities have to make sense and enhance young peoples' experience as opposed to adding unnecessary cost and travel time. It therefore works best where schools are in close proximity to one another.

Barriers

There are a number of potential barriers to Shared Education Arrangements – on reflection they mostly relate to the absence of the ‘Enablers’ outlined above.

Geographical Distance

Sharing of day to day educational experiences is infinitely more difficult if it involves long distances and the use of public transport / taxis etc on a long term basis and is therefore often a barrier to authentic, sustained sharing.

Priorities and actions to improve Shared Education including relevant parts of CRED policy.

The aim of the CRED policy is to:

Contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.

In every sense the aim of the Community Relations Equality and Diversity policy is totally embedded in the ethos of both Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School. The key relationships within the partnership have been nurtured in an organic, genuine, natural evolution. A culture of mutual respect for each other's differences and a genuine desire to be good neighbours permeates every aspect of what the schools do.

However, there is no scope for complacency and everyone has to be mindful of inadvertent issues arising which may have unforeseen negative consequences. Everyone is mindful of the power of perception which is not borne out in reality. Poor communication or mixed messages can create misunderstandings which are at best inconvenient and at worst damaging to the partnership.

Both schools have separate identities reflecting the key aspects of faith, aspiration and identity for their respective communities. The fact that a choice exists as to which school parents/guardians choose to send pupils to is critical. There is nothing threatening or competitive in the relationship that exists in Ballycastle between the two schools. The fundamental premise that ours is a partnership based upon mutual need and individual choice is correct and highly significant.

The objectives of the CRED policy are:

- Ensure that learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination; and
- 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.

It is our contention that the experience of Shared Education in Ballycastle more than fulfils the aims and objectives of the CRED policy. However, it may be the case that this has been largely by default as opposed to design. The catalyst which initiated the partnership and is still at its heart, is to have a pragmatic relationship which best meets the educational needs of post primary pupils in Ballycastle and the surrounding area. In our locality, this is best achieved through Shared Education. As long both schools continue to successfully meet this need and achieve good outcomes for all pupils then the partnership will prosper. However, if parents or guardians lose faith in the educational capabilities of either school then the partnership will struggle. The societal and cross community benefits which have developed for our partnership are strong. However, they would be negatively impacted if confidence was lost in either school.

Appendix One Making the Partnership work in Ballycastle

The essence of Shared Education in Ballycastle has been present for many decades. The partnership has been nurtured and developed on a basis **of joint need** and mutual respect and a desire to develop in an organic and sensitive way.

A desire to best meet the educational needs of post-primary pupils in the area, has resulted in a sense that the two main denominations and communities in Ballycastle and the surrounding area are closer together. This has obviously been benefited by increasing social and political stability over a number of years.

Promoting Standards and higher levels of achievement

Of key importance in our Shared Education partnership is expecting, setting and communicating high standards of teaching, and achievement for both teachers and pupils. Promoting a culture of high expectations and success from all pupils, of all abilities, is fundamental to the success of both schools and the partnership. Fostering and sustaining a work ethic within the schools among the pupil body is again central. Closely monitoring on an agreed regular basis, the standards of work, effort, tracking and target setting for each pupil and sharing the results with pupils and their parents. Frequently communicated to provide immediate feedback to pupils on their progress and allowing parents to feel part of the achievement process. Hard working pupils are rewarded and recognised – ‘there is no drug like success’! We jointly continue to develop the effective use of data to inform target setting, and we see further potential in developing this. It is the level of success achieved by pupils in both our schools which provides the ‘cement’ that sustains the partnership

As Senior Leaders we feel it is important to be aware of our own need to develop professionally and to work effectively with others. We are continually striving to develop a collegiate approach among our staff towards the work of the partnership. Teachers work together to enable staff to be more aware of whole school issues such as discipline, extra-curricular enrichment activities, and raising standards. This means that the partnership works as a team for the good of all the pupils involved. Enabling senior colleagues to have their leadership skills fully realised and utilised to empower them to develop their strategic views and opinions is also essential.

Well being

A culture of pro-active Pastoral Care and a firm, fair and compassionate approach to discipline is very important to pupils, parents and guardians in both schools. Maintaining effective discipline in the schools avoids many time-consuming problems of a pastoral/behavioural nature which dissipate teachers’ energy; frustrate both pupils and their parents and which dilute the education and sharing process. These standards come from the top and need to be implemented in a firm, fair, consistent and compassionate way. In practice this means:

- Daily exchange of information eg absentees and events etc.
- Close pastoral contacts with Heads of Year and scheduled meetings.
- Regular joint Departmental Meetings for subjects sharing teaching.

- Btec Meetings – Consortium arrangements in place.
- Co-ordination of Parents' Afternoons with parents going to each school to speak to teachers.
- Joint 6th Form Student Council
- Leadership Awards
- Sports coaching training

As our partnership has grown and become more embedded the requirement to avoid needless administrative and systemic barriers has been considered. We have taken steps to minimise issues but this is an ongoing challenge and needs to be constantly monitored, evaluated and reviewed.

Both schools now:

- Endeavour to synchronise holidays and Staff Development Days.
- Close co-ordination and co-operation in timetable construction and curriculum planning.
- Close liaison between Principals in relation to staffing requirements
- Occasional sharing of facilities eg Assembly Hall.
- Collaboration in relation to school improvement this has included alignment in relation to reporting times and systems, target setting and pupil tracking procedures.
- Regular joint staff development and training.
- Aligning of key objectives for PRSD.

The benefits of shared education have been:

- The partnership enables the schools to meet Entitlement Framework requirements.
- Pupils of both schools benefit from a broad range of curricular choice, allowing them to make the most of their talents and abilities.
- Staff benefit from mutually supportive networks, developing next practice.
- Staff, pupils and parents from different backgrounds interact in a sustained, regular basis.
- Societal and economic benefits.
- Joint Board of Governors Sub-groups meet to consider the key aspects of collaboration.
- Careful consideration is given to joint School Development Plan objectives.

Another enabling factor in the development of Shared Education has been engaging meaningfully with other external agencies in the local community. This is central to the dynamics that exist in the town of Ballycastle. For example charities, schools, churches, social services, the PSNI, Council etc all have their own agendas, but the combined synergy of these interactions does benefit significantly certain individuals in our schools and in the community. If co-ordinated and funded appropriately these combined actions can bring significant benefit to shared partnership. Finding the time to foster

these relationships is essential to the idea of partnership, sharing and networking. It can be difficult to find that time, but it is highly important.

It is a key priority in both Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School to have cognisance of the need to address potential underachievement in disadvantaged communities. Both schools serve a wide hinterland which has significant pockets of social deprivation. Meeting the needs of this constituency is important to maintaining our partnership. Of equal importance is meeting the aspirations of parents and pupils from other socio-economic backgrounds. Both schools are highly aware of this and as such also promote an ethos which closely aligned to a key area of securing accountability.

Both schools place importance on the monitoring of examination statistics and bench marking data which is necessary to reveal extent of any problem. Also, to promote and develop a culture in the partnership of self-reflection and school improvement by making effective use of the data that is available.

Both schools have in the past in offered supportive literacy and numeracy classes to pupils showing underachievement in the first three years. Also, the work currently underway in developing the use of Cross Curricular Skills for Levels of Progression does have the potential to further support literacy and numeracy, within and across the curriculum of both schools. The appointment on a joint basis of teachers to support Literacy and Numeracy as part of the Signature Project has proven to be successful and potentially provides a model for further development.

Both schools endeavour to make effective use of ICT resources to support literacy and numeracy and promote effective teaching and learning. This emphasis, coupled with purposeful whole class teaching and where appropriate, individual personalised support, is an attempt to ensure all pupils are supported to reach their potential. Work is currently on going with C2kni to develop the Partnership Exchange procedure which will permit easier access to staff and pupils in both schools to a wider range of C2k ICT based systems and resources in both schools.

The partnerships systems which relate to the review of performance and provision are constantly evolving and developing and being tweaked! The benefits at micro (school) and macro (system) level could be significant. But these must be managed within the dynamic, vibrant environment that is a school. We need to secure a balance, with the restrictions and pressures of time constraints and not losing sight of the fundamental importance of positive relationships in bringing about effective change.

Securing accountability within the context of Department of Education's School Improvement Policy – Every School a Good School The and 'Together towards improvement' – especially the latter – are good publications since they spell out what good practice looks like on the ground. The publication by the Education and Training Inspectorate of; 'Quality Indicators for use in the evaluation of IFI Sharing in Education Funded Projects' has also been a useful enabling tool.

Both Principals and Governors are very grateful for the effective practical support which is essential from external agencies. PEACE 3 funded projects, the Shared Education Project (Atlantic Philanthropies and Q.U.B.) and the North Eastern Education and Library Board funded Peace, Inclusion, Reconciliation, Citizenship and History Project (PIRCH) have been beneficial recent vehicles in moving forward with our Shared Education Partnership and collaborative arrangements. However, continued support from CASS, CCEA etc to support effective and co-ordinated implementation of our strategies is required. There is a real danger of overwhelming staff, which can create confusion. Gaining and retaining staff ownership of initiative implementation is essential to sustaining a

positive working culture in our schools and partnership. The situation is not helped when changes come about which necessitate re-planning and re-scheduling.

A key example of this barrier relates to funding for the Entitlement Framework. The uncertainty which surrounds this critical supportive scaffold of our partnership is most unhelpful. Senior Leaders and Governors need clear direction and information relating to funding which is required to sustain our collaborative arrangements.

The quality of support for schools from RTU in relation to Shared Education is important. The assistance provided to schools is particularly important at a time of significant staffing changes within a school. Anything which eases succession planning and transition in relation to leadership/teaching changes within a school is important. This takes on even more critical significance in a Shared Education Partnership when it is more than one school which can be impacted by significant staffing changes.

Both Principals feel that they must comment upon the fact that that both Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College are considered to be a relatively successful schools in an area of social deprivation. This fact is testament to the hard work of staff, parents and pupils – sometimes in difficult physical conditions. We are in dire need of suitable, effective and indeed at times, a healthy and safe working environment. Our staff and children should not be made to feel second class in relation to their school buildings. We feel it is important at this time of financial constraint, that we should not lose sight of the urgent need for school refurbishment if not replacement of schools.

Both schools require capital investment in order to facilitate the partnership achieving its full potential. It is vital that the statutory bodies continue to support the schools in facilitating proposals for bespoke new builds and shared centres that will allow the partnership to develop fully. The North Eastern Board Area Plan for the post-primary schools in Ballycastle and the Department of Education announcement in July, relating to the Shared Campuses Programme have been welcomed by all key stakeholders. It is important that these commitments are fulfilled as soon as possible.

Appendix 2**SHARED EDUCATION IN MOYLE****Core Values**

It is really important to us that the partnership;

- Is all inclusive
- Caters for young people of all abilities and aptitudes
- Respects and promotes the unique identity and ethos of each school
- Reflects the needs and aspirations of the wider community
- Is pupil centred – the needs and well- being of young people at the centre
- Reaches out to and supports young people who are marginalised and vulnerable
- Embraces the richness of difference
- Promotes excellence – high standards
- Has the absolute confidence of the community
- Enables each young person to have a strong sense of loyalty to and pride in their own school
- Enables each young person to have a strong loyalty to and pride in the partnership

What is the purpose of the partnership?

- To enhance educational opportunities for all young people in post primary education in North Antrim – enhancing choice – promoting quality
- To improve outcomes for young people at Key Stages 4 and 5
- To make the best use of educational resources available
- To promote and nurture mutual respect and understanding as well as community cohesion
- To provide the local and wider community with young people who have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to make value contributions to the economic and community life the area

Ballymena Borough Council

Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Written Evidence from Ballymena Borough Council

23 October 2014

Policy.unit@ballymena.co.uk

Inquiry Into Shared and Integrated Education Committee for Education

The Committee for Education is undertaking an Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education and is seeking written submissions from interested parties by 24 October 2014.

The Terms of Reference are as follows:–

The Education Committee will:

- Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in Statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;
- identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;
- identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;
- Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED (Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education) Policy;
- the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools;
- and
- Report to the Assembly on its findings and recommendations by Spring 2015.

Shared Education

“Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

In 2012 the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Advancement of Shared Education in Northern Ireland, states the organisation and delivery of shared education must :

- *Meet the needs of, and provide for the education of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic groups together;*
- *involve schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and*
- *deliver educational benefits to learners, promote the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.”*

Submission

Ballymena Borough Council is of the view that there can be many positive impacts of Shared Education, as defined above. Shared Facilities/Campuses/Equipment has clear advantages for schools and the wider community in terms of resourcing/funding and efficiencies, which are becoming ever more important in the current economic and budgetary climate.

- Shared Education can provide an important mechanism for ensuring that children and young people have access to a wider range of subjects and courses;
- collaboration between schools can provide an effective means for teachers to share good practice and engage in professional development; and
- research shows most children and young people, and their parents and/or care-givers, involved in Shared Education initiatives find the experience a positive one and encourage more positive attitudes and relationships between children and young people from different backgrounds.

However, Council are of the view:

- It is important that particular models of collaboration are not imposed on schools but that they are allowed to develop organically, reflecting the needs and situations that exist at a local level;
- the existing funding model for schools tends to create competition between schools and can inhibit the extent to which schools feel able to genuinely collaborate;
- there are clear resource implications for schools and other educational institutions wishing to engage in Shared Education, and thus some mechanism for supporting and incentivising schools to be involved in cross-sectoral collaboration is required;
- school collaboration is not easy and presents significant practical challenges in relation to matters such as timetabling, curriculum planning and transport and thus strong leadership within schools is essential; and
- Council would also welcome a statutory definition of Shared Education.

Integrated Education

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) defines Integrated Education as follows:

“Integrated Education brings children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school. Integrated schools have been an alternative to an educational system in which most children attend largely religiously separated schools.

Integrated Schools differ from other schools in Northern Ireland by ensuring that children from diverse backgrounds are educated together every day in the same classrooms. Through their Admissions Criteria they enrol approximately equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant children, as well as children from other religious and cultural backgrounds.

It is important to note that Integrated schools are not secular but are essentially Christian in character and welcome all faiths, which aims to provide children with a caring and enhanced educational experience. Empowering them as individuals is seen as a priority so that as children grow and mature, they'll be able to affect positive change in a shared society.”

Submission

Whilst Ballymena Borough Council appreciates the concerns and apprehensions that exist towards Integrated Education, Council generally believe that Integrated Education may represent a positive choice for some parents and pupils. In 32 years the number of children educated in Integrated schools has grown from 28 pupils in 1981 to nearly 22,000 today. This has been mainly brought about by a desire for a different choice of education for children and young people.

A recent Millward Brown survey found that 83% of parents in Belfast believe that Integrated Education is a vital part of building a shared future in Northern Ireland. Over 70% of parents believe that adequate funding for Integrated Education should be made available, with enough places available for those who wish to send their children to an integrated school. Council would support this view but we must emphasise that it is essential that parents and pupils are free to choose other forms of education as they wish.

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre

For the community, by the community, with the community.



Submission to The Education Committee in relation to Shared/Integrated Education on behalf of the Ballymoney Community Resource Centre, Community Education Steering Group.

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre Community Education Steering Group met on 02.10.14 to discuss and contribute towards the inquiry response into Integrated/Shared Education. The BCRC Community Education Steering Group was initially formed to Those groups represented included Causeway Older People's Strategy Team (COAST) which was represented by Mary McCusker, Integrated Education Fund (IEF) was represented by Eleanor Kyle, Coleraine Education Community Project (CECP was represented by Paul McLernon), Focus on Family was represented by Brendan Patterson, Millburn Community Association was represented by Billy Eilis and Ballymoney Community Resource Centre was represented by Angela Mulholland.

The guidelines for the Inquiry are The Education Committee will:

- Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases – including consideration for the need for a formal statutory definition and obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education.
- Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education.
- Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes.
- Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools.
- Report to the Assembly on its findings and recommendation by Spring 2015.

The Committee agreed to set the deadline for submissions to the Inquiry as 24 October 2014

Here is the following contribution and record of discussion from the scheduled meeting.

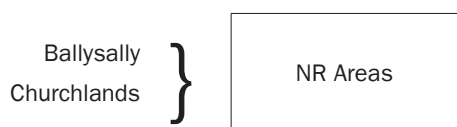
Two local Grammar Schools within the town of Coleraine were discussed (The Coleraine High School and The Coleraine Institute and it was stated that where a student attending these schools comes from can and does have a detrimental effect on their overall life experience within the education system. It was felt that the role of Community Education has to deal with the effect of this behaviour and that sometimes this form of education is the only route out of deprivation and low self esteem for not only the young people concerned but also for parents and adults alike.

It was recognised that there is a lot more support for students within the Primary School model and the Ballysally Nurturing Programme was held up as a model of best practice as most of the support is facilitated on a one to one basis, however once students reach secondary school level this support is seen to be delivered more on a speed dating level. Participants agreed that collaboration is important and vital to ensuring sustainability for programmes and projects alike. A current example of best practice in collaboration is the current programme Coleraine Education Community Project (CECP) which was set up in April 2010 in collaboration with ten of the schools and nurseries in the Coleraine N. R. Areas. Although this funding is only up to March 2015, it was agreed that programmes like CECP and it's Vision to build bridges between Coleraine schools and the communities they serve, to help families access opportunities, to realise their potential, and develop stronger,

independent and confident communities are vital to sustaining the concept of both Integrated and Shared Education.

It was recognised that there are at present 62 grant-aided integrated schools in Northern Ireland (with a total enrolment of 21,500 pupils, or 7 percent of total pupils in 2012/13), made up of 38 grant-maintained integrated schools and 24 controlled integrated schools. This result is still relatively low and needs to be addressed. However it was agreed very strongly that this issue has to be addressed however not at the expense of the standard of education for any student.

In relation to formal education it was stated that mature students were not made to feel particularly welcome whereas within the Community Education platform, everyone was made to feel welcome. This then led to a discussion on why kids are leaving both Primary School and indeed Secondary School levels with little or no qualifications. It was recognised that the concept of Integrated/Shared Education needs to get into the heart of the programme in the home. The home environment has to change and be part of Integrated Education and the concept of Working Class Kids getting Working Class Jobs has to be challenged. Just because there is no history of someone in the family not having achieved or having gone to University, should not be the same aspiration of the young people growing up within those areas. It was noted that particularly within the Millburn Estate 30% of the kids attending the school are from the estate, therefore this creates in itself an opportunity for integration amongst young people from different areas in Coleraine and wider afield. This also creates an opportunity for schools within the Neighbourhood Renewal to interact and take part in programmes designed to promote integration and shared learning.



Community Education can provide a platform within Neighbourhood Renewal areas for both Integrated Education and Shared Education. The role of the Community Networks/Community Groups and Associations is to co-ordinate and deliver what is needed on the ground. The role of Community Education should not be about any personal agenda but should be about the participants and those availing of the courses and objectives. The concept of a natural/shared space is at the core of Community Education. People need to feel safe, free from barriers and any special needs also need to be addressed. The discussion returned to the question of why is the current education system not working? Why are young people leaving without qualifications? The concept of working for yourself/learning apprenticeship skills and opportunities to start social enterprises that address real social issues can all be achieved through the medium of community education with a strong focus on integration and shared learning. It was also recognised that within different communities, engaging with parents is vital to continuing the concept of integrated and shared education.

Models of Good Practice were then discussed, The Aspire Programme in particular.

Aspire is a collaboration of local grass-roots community groups operating in the Coleraine area. Currently there are five core Aspire members with a much wider support from other local partners. Part of Aspire's remit is to deliver relevant community-based training (accredited and non-accredited) for the benefit of local communities. What has tended individual groups within areas will have Training/Programme Workers as paid employees whose main role is to generate programmes and participants to attend that individual group. Where Aspire aims to be different is by providing a genuine beneficiary-led approach to programme delivery - this means identification of local need and then provision of programmes to meet that need. As all the groups under Aspire are working towards the same goal, it means that where the programmes are delivered and by whom is largely irrelevant so long as the beneficiaries are getting what they need and the programmes are of the required quality to meet those needs.

This approach to integrated education puts the learner at the centre of the process as opposed to the more traditional approach of specific centres trying to attract people and courses solely within the confines of their own work. The expected result of this work will be that as well as the individual beneficiary gaining the skills, qualifications and learning that they desire, furthermore local organisations will develop genuine partnership working in terms of future delivery of programmes and services. The long-term aim of Aspire is to have a Programme Officer, working centrally and not aligned to any particular group. This role would involve identifying educational and training needs within local and wider communities and then engaging participants in programmes that are already running in the local area, or where there are gaps in programme delivery provision, setting up these programmes in partnership with the most relevant local delivery partner in the area. It is anticipated that this approach will provide a far more enhanced service for local beneficiaries than the current competitive arena that aims to secure participants for isolated courses.

Another approach that Aspire is taking is to ensure that access to relevant programmes and courses is accessible for all so there is a major emphasis on roles that encourage participation through person-centred, relationship-developing, pre-programme support. Given the barriers to education, whether through prior negative experiences from formal education processes or through the wide variety of other causes (family commitments, social isolation, lack of confidence, fear, lack of transport and other resources, etc), the aim of Aspire is to work alongside people to gently remove these barriers, resulting in the right stage and time where the individual feels comfortable and motivated to commit to a programme of learning, either formal or informal.

We all have a responsibility to our young people? There is a real challenge out there to keep skills within our own area, to ensure a vibrant and sustainable community for the future. Community Education helps to break the class issue down within the education system. It was generally agreed that the cost of uniforms were too dear, particularly when you have four or five children to send out at the start of each term. The concept of discrimination was also discussed and on how we measure success? It was generally agreed that valuing apprenticeships and focusing on opportunities to develop social enterprises was the way forward.

Submissions should be made by email to committee.education@niassembly.gov.uk

Beacon, P – Concerned Parent

The real inquiry should be into why LISNASKEA HIGH SCHOOL was closed when it was already doing a 3 year partnership with other ccms schools in the area.

This is so sad now when it is going to be made mainstreamed. It is definitely a good idea, it is a good chance for all children getting a chance to learn together.

My daughter was at Lisnaskea High when it closed last year, she decided to go to an integrated school, and total loves it. It is well organised and there is no fuss made by different religions . All are treated equal, which is the way it should be,

Phyllis Beacon

BELB

CM/GMcM

7 November 2014

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

Dear Peter

Shared and Integrated Education

Further to your letter dated 10 September 2014, please find attached, the Belfast board's response to your request for written evidence, which was approved at the board meeting on Thursday 6 November 2014.

Yours sincerely

Dr Clare Mangan
Chief Executive

Enc

Direct telephone line – 028 9056 4041
Fax – 028 9043 9861
E-mail address – Clare.Mangan@belb.co.uk



Towards a Learning City

Belfast Education and Library Board

Response to a request for written evidence on Shared/Integrated Education inquiry made by Northern Ireland

Assembly Committee for Education.

October 2014

Shared/Integrated Education inquiry

The Committee for Education is undertaking an Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education. The terms of reference for the Committee's Inquiry are set out below.

The Committee will:

- Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;
- Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;
- Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;
- Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools; and
- Report to the Assembly on its findings and recommendations by Spring 2015.

Introduction

Section 1

Belfast Education and Library Board

The Belfast Education and Library Board was established in 1973 and from this date has made significant contribution to the changing educational landscape of Belfast through innovative, creative and dynamic initiatives and support in education and youth contexts.

As the local authority the board:

- takes account of the need to provide pre-school education;
- ensures that there is adequate provision for pupils of compulsory school age;
- makes suitable provision for children who have been identified as having special education needs; and
- contributes to the moral, spiritual, cultural, intellectual and physical development of the community.

The board also secures the provision of adequate facilities for recreational, social, physical, cultural and youth activities and of other services ancillary to education.

The Belfast Education and Library Board is committed to providing a quality education and youth service which contributes to life-long learning for all the people of Belfast. As an education and library board we provide services to all school sectors at all levels – controlled, maintained, voluntary, Irish medium and integrated sectors. As a board we have a proven record of supporting schools programmes that have involved young people and schools engaging in shared education.

Section 2

Response to the terms of reference

2.1 Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education.

Comment:

1. Educational bodies and institutions will have their own definition and understanding of shared education based on their individual contexts. BELB believes that a clear and concise definition of Shared Education that is understood and shared by all is an important starting point for dialogue and development of a holistic approach to a system wide definition of shared education programmes. A clear nomenclature around shared education should help to facilitate understanding and help to allay misconceptions.
2. Recent definitions include:
 - ‘Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.’ (*Minister’s terms of reference and accepted by the Ministerial Advisory Group*).
 - ‘Working definition: shared education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained process ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to coordinated timetabling, and pupils taking classes across a network of schools.’ (*Professor Colin Knox University of Ulster*).

- ‘Shared education involves young people from diverse backgrounds learning together, enabling them to recognise and value diversity and develop higher levels of mutual understanding. It refers to methodologies and environments where pupils interact by sharing, building on and widening one another’s knowledge, skills and experiences and beginning to reconcile differences to promote a shared future. Shared education is more than just a shared space.’ (*A Final Evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland’s Sharing in Education Programme 2013*).

3. Each of these definitions highlight key aspects of shared education:

1. It is important that the definition indicates that Shared Education is not solely about promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion (important as they are) but also emphasizes (first and foremost) that it is about delivering educational benefits to learners as highlighted in the Ministerial Advisory Group definition. The wider evidential research demonstrates clearly that collaboration between schools can play a significant role in terms of school improvement, related to:

- pupil performance (attainment, engagement, motivation and behaviour)
- teacher development (motivation, morale, practice enhanced skills relationships)
- leadership economic improvements (sharing resources)
<http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/reports.html>.

This explicit link to learning in part should go some way to reassuring schools and parents about the fundamental purpose of shared education.

2. It is to an extent a given that it involves schools from different sectors working together, however within the historical context of Northern Ireland this is often taken to mean schools/pupils from a Protestant and Catholic background. Given the greater diversity of pupils in NI schools from different religious and cultural backgrounds any definition should reflect this, similar to the Sharing in Education Programme definition. Possibly cognisance should be taken to the fact that there is increasing diversity between schools from the same sector.
3. A definition of shared education should also indicate that shared education is not simply about a ‘one off’ event, a series of activities/events or lessons but rather is a sustained process to embed approaches/strategies (whole school approach) as indicated by Professor Colin Knox.
4. Any definition needs to reflect the changing composition of society and the increasing diversity of the population in Northern Ireland. We are living in an increasingly multicultural society and there is much work to be done to achieve respectful and welcoming relationships with people from different cultures. Shared education needs to be about more than the two main communities. Globalisation has demonstrated the interconnectedness of people’s lives around the world.

2.2 Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education.

Comment:

Enablers

1. There needs to be clear and committed leadership to the values and principles of shared education from the Board of Governors, principal and senior leadership team. (whole school approach). This should be linked to appropriate professional development to ensure staff are trained and developed.
2. The Northern Ireland Curriculum provides a sound foundation through a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities in areas such as PDMU, Local and Global

Citizenship and other aspects of Learning for Life and Work, for pupils to address issues such as race, gender, diversity etc. (section 75 categories). All subject strands but in particular, Religious Education, History, Geography, English, Languages, Drama and Art and Design provide opportunities for teachers to develop curriculum experiences that explore identity, diversity and promote reconciliation, developing the attitudes and dispositions. However, some aspects can be lost when 'educational performance' becomes an overriding factor. (Blocker - many of these areas in the former group are often allocated less curricular time).

3. A fully resourced and sustained programme of continuing professional development for governors, school leaders, and teachers to support, develop, promote best practice and identify next practice in the NIC.
4. Comment could be made in ETI inspection reports on schools with existing 'shared education' elements active in the school whether through formalised programmes, curriculum provision, extracurricular provision or community links. Highlighting effective practice.
5. The education and library boards (education authority) as part of its work with schools could identify and disseminate effective practice.
6. Schools and organisations could evaluate consistently the impact of the work of reconciliation on the young people's attitudes, behaviours, understanding and skills to be able to demonstrate clearly the progress of young people and to inform future planning.
7. When compiling future school development plans that targets relating to "Shared Education" priorities are identified and detailed. This could relate to point 6 above.
8. The work of the Area Learning Communities could be extended and developed to include a greater focus on shared education. A similar approach could be extended to primary schools (Primary Area Learning Communities).
9. A more collaborative/partnership and focused approach between the education and library boards and schools at induction/early professional development and continuing professional development to ensure high quality professional development opportunities that encourage teachers and support bodies learning and sharing together.
10. Collaborative approach between the school(s), parents, local community groups, statutory bodies in developing programmes which are contextualised and develop out of local community and school's needs. For example, since the late 1990s Edenderry Nursery and Holy Cross Nursery have established a model of collaboration in education across an interface area in North Belfast. The project runs exchange days/play days between schools. This involves a full class from each school travelling to spend a day in the other school. The programme is focused on enabling children to meet and play with their 'buddies' and the day runs like any other with children engaging in circle time, play, story time etc. A joint parents' programme is delivered in tandem with this. Parents participate jointly in cross community workshops, cookery programmes, parenting programmes, arts and craft activities etc within both nursery settings.
11. The confidence of parents and pupils
 - Pupils and their parents need to be absolutely confident that the sharing arrangements will work for their pupils. Where there are shared arrangements, pupils and their parents must be kept well informed about the opportunities available through sharing, arrangements for monitoring progress, meeting teachers and so on. The arrangement needs to be underpinned by Service Level Agreements,

robust protocols and shared policies relating to key areas of shared educational experience.

12. The strength and quality of the partnership is a crucial enabler. Shared education will flourish in a strong partnership where:
 - each partner feels equal and is confident of the purpose, worth and value of their own institution and of the contribution it can make to the success of the partnership;
 - history, ethos and value system in each school is understood and respected;
 - Shared resources, such as a teacher;
 - Building capacity, Board of Governors, principals and teachers;
 - Planning together (teachers).
13. All area based plans should also give cognisance/reflect a degree of shared education campuses.
14. School development proposals should have a section to indicate how the proposal will contribute to shared education.
15. Shared education placements between initial teacher education Institutions to enable student teachers to spend an 'extended' time (or) take part of their course in another institution.
16. Modelling of 'Good Practice' in shared education principles across the education sectors – increasing collaboration between the education support bodies.

Barriers

1. Work may be needed in persuading schools that Shared Education programmes/ sharing campuses will lead to real and measurable improvements in the quality of education that they provide and in raising educational achievement among their pupils.
2. Depending on the extent and nature of shared education, some schools may perceive it as a threat to their 'identity'/'ethos.' In Northern Ireland there is a very strong 'loyalty' factor to the school attended.
3. With changing demographics, schools have concerns about falling rolls and this has to a certain extent placed some schools in 'competition' with each other for pupil places. This may mitigate to the extent as to how far some schools may feel they could share and collaborate.
4. More beneficial if all participating schools share the one overall school site. By doing so you will greatly reduce potential transport, budgetary, supervision and timetabling issues.
5. Parental Support - It is essential that parents have totally bought into the proposed partnership and fully understand the process and intended learning outcomes. The process needs to be transparent.
6. Collaboration between schools attended mostly by children and young people from affluent backgrounds and schools attended mostly by young people from less affluent backgrounds may also present a challenge in terms of finding common ground.
7. Variability among schools in terms of educational outcomes may also present a barrier. For example, if there are two post-primary schools (either grammar or non-grammar) situated in the same locality, and one is a much 'higher achieving' school than the other, there may be a reluctance on the part of parents, teachers and senior

management in the 'higher achieving' school for pupils from the two schools to learn together in case this has a detrimental impact on pupils' educational attainment.

8. Funding may be identified by schools and other establishments as a major factor affecting whether a school can establish or maintain a shared education initiative. Initiatives may be programme-funded and therefore may only have a certain lifespan, and schools may therefore have to find other avenues in order to maintain provision.
9. A number of practical considerations may mitigate against some schools fully engaging in shared education programmes/initiatives, for example:
 - accountability for pupil outcomes;
 - timetabling issues;
 - travel time between schools;
 - safety and transportation issues;
 - parental consent;
 - staff time and resources;
 - some schools may perceive that other schools benefit more than they do;
 - Staff time and resources.

2.3 Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes.

Comment:

1. Significant work has already been undertaken in this area in identifying and analysing models of Shared Education, for example, 'Education and a Shared future. Options for sharing and collaboration in Northern Ireland schools.' (O'Sullivan, O'Flynn and Russell. <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/education-and-a-shared-future.pdf>). As a Board we recognise the implications of such reports for the support we provide to schools across all sectors.

2.4 Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools.

Comment:

1. The Advancing Shared Education document (2013) states one of the values that stem from the definition of shared education is:

“An emphasis on developing the whole child so that they have a strong sense of their own identity and an understanding and respect for others and that they are able to develop a wide range of knowledge and skills to enable them to make a full and positive contribution to building a prosperous, open, diverse and inclusive society”.
2. This is closely related to the key objectives of the CRED policy (2011) which are:
 - ensure that learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding of 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.

3. The CRED policy advocates a long term, meaningful, cross-curricular approach to Community Relations, Equality and Diversity. While curricular areas such as PDMU, Local and Global Citizenship and Learning for Life and Work already provide a framework which enables teaching and learning relating to these areas to be examined and developed the CRED policy encourages all educational settings to recognise how others curricular areas such as History, World Around Us, Literacy, Music and The Arts can also complement and extend this learning.
4. The delivery of training to Teachers, Youth Workers and Board of Governors has been a central element of this policy. This training ensures that staff has the knowledge, resources and confidence to develop the Policy within their school setting. Fundamental to the success will be the delivery of a platform of training programmes which ensure a co-ordinated approach which celebrates and learns from best practice. CRED is not currently embedded within initial teacher training however it would be important that is developed as we move forwards with any training relating to Shared Education or CRED.
5. The further development of links with community groups, specialist organisations and parents/carers has been a key aspect of the CRED policy which is very closely embedded within the Shared Education philosophy.
6. The CRED enhancement funding scheme has enabled schools to access resources to assist them to provide meaningful opportunities for groups of children and young people to engage with one another, develop their knowledge and skills and allow them to examine their values and beliefs. Shared Education will enable pupils to engage in learning in a shared classroom however a priority must still be given to ensuring children and young people have the opportunity to develop an understanding and appreciation of the diverse society existing in Northern Ireland. The allocation of additional funding and dedicated support officers to enable this is something which has proven beneficial as part of CRED and is worthy of consideration within the development of Shared Education.
7. The CRED Policy is nearing the end of its initial 3 year business plan. While it is still essentially a recent policy which many schools and early years settings are still adapting to and developing it has resulted in large number of staff attending Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Training, the collection and development of support resources, the allocation of funding and the celebration of examples of best practice. Future developments relating to both CRED and Shared Education may benefit for the establishment of policy links or shared practice.
8. There is a need to widen pupils' horizons and ways of thinking beyond local contexts. The development of cultural awareness, dialogue and understanding is of central importance in preparing young people for adult life. This could be achieved through a variety of approaches, for example, through the uptake of programmes such as Young Social Innovators www.youngsocialinnovators.org. There is a need to embed a global dimension in the curriculum as this should lead to school communities developing greater awareness of the wider world and less stereotypical views about others.

Blackwater Integrated College



22 October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Governors of Blackwater Integrated College in response to your request for written evidence with regard to Shared and Integrated Education.

Lagan College in Belfast and Shimna IC in Newcastle were oversubscribed and parents, in particular those whose children attended integrated primary schools, wanted to ensure the choice of integrated post-primary provision in the mid-down area. Rowallane IC opened in 2006 as an independent school, funded by the IEF. Unfortunately Rowallane did not receive government backing due mainly to the policy of proposals being considered in relation to likely impact on nearby schools, rather than in the light of parental demand. Undeterred in the second year of the school the parents sought another integrated option for their children.

Blackwater IC opened in September 2008 as the result of bringing together the independent school Rowallane Integrated College and the former Down Academy Controlled Integrated High School.

Blackwater IC is a school which operates in a building which is less than satisfactory. The current school was built for 250 pupils. If we were to meet our enrolment of 400 there would be serious health and safety issues! The lack of suitable facilities makes it more difficult to attract students.

I believe that Shared Education and Integrated Education are different. Integrated Education is full immersion sharing in which the children and young people are given the opportunity to learn about and from each other in their daily interactions. They learn to get to know each other as people and not as labels.

I have personal experience of shared education having attended a mixed school. The school was, however, single identity in its ethos and practice.

In addition, while working in the Controlled Sector, I was involved in a number of cross-community projects. While these displayed many examples of good practice and certainly had a worth and value, they had little, if any, long term impact.

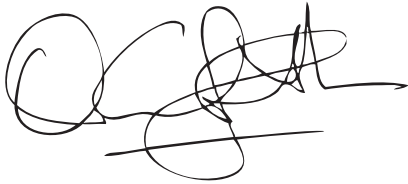
Any legislation to support Shared Education must not be at the expense of Integrated Education. Integrated Education is more effective in bringing children and young people

together and is more financially efficient than retaining separate schools with the resulting need to duplicate resources.

The key barriers to the growth of Integrated Education have been a weak political commitment due to our existing divided political system and the ‘what we have we hold’ mentality of so many educational institutions. It is significant that a Judicial Review was needed to clarify the Department’s statutory duty and to remind the Minister to fulfil it.

Educating our children together from a young age gives the opportunity for education to heal division. It is time to find a sustainable way to bring children and young people together if we are to work “together, building a united community”. Integrated Education as the norm for our children and young people provides an excellent model.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Olwen Griffith', with a large circular flourish on the left and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr Olwen Griffith

Principal

Bridge Integrated Primary School

Sir

As the Principal of Bridge Integrated Primary School, I feel it is appropriate for me to make a written response to the Committee. I have worked in Bridge IPS for 20 years and have had the privilege of being Principal in our school since 2005. Having grown up in a Catholic family and having attended Maintained schools, I was struck forcefully on entering the integrated school system, by the passion of the parents, staff and governors who led to its creation and maintained and encouraged its growth. This continues to be the case today.

Integrated Education inspires and achieves quality education alongside quality contact for the children who attend our schools. Our pupils are immersed in an ethos of respect for one another's communities from the outset of their attendance and from this grows curiosity and genuine interest in one another, without a need to suspiciously or negatively compare the beliefs, practices and cultures of a classmate or colleague. Friendships grow beyond the classroom and into the communities in which we live. Barriers, often formed through ignorance or as a result of community pressure, begin to be broken down and our pupils bring home a new message – that we can break the mould!

Shared education is a start – but must not be the end. It is imperative that fully fledged integrated schools, which are desired by parents, are allowed to grow and are facilitated and encouraged by the Department of Education. Shared education is a model of partial contact and this is not enough if the communities in our country are to grow in knowledge and trust of one another.

With thanks for your consideration of my comments.

Teresa Devlin

Bullick, E Retired Teacher

The Northern Ireland Assembly's Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

A Personal Journey

Although now retired my teaching career included 14 years as principal of a controlled primary school with 120 pupils, two years as an EMU Development Officer with a local ELB and 16 years as principal of an urban integrated primary school with 365 pupils. I hold an MA in Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies.

During my time working in EMU I had the opportunity to host a Danish headteacher on an exchange programme. In Denmark the vast majority of pupils are simply enrolled in the local community school nearest to their home. At the end of his stay he wrote the following:

"I find that here in NI you separate your children on almost every conceivable pretext. You send them to different schools based on age, ability, gender, religion, social class and more recently based on preferred language. If we were to introduce such a system back in my own country I fear that children might grow up to be suspicious or ignorant of each other. They might even grow up to hate each other. In a country where inter-communal mistrust is so prevalent I cannot understand why you would wish to take such profound risks with each new generation of impressionable young people."

This would not be an uncommon view. Our neighbours in Europe can see only too clearly what we apparently cannot see for ourselves. If an education system artificially separates groups of children during their most formative years they will indeed grow up in a state of ignorance and will be grossly ill-prepared for life in a dual-cultural or pluralist society.

We have provided and nurtured a system which has allowed vested interests groups and individual institutions to put their aspirations ahead of the needs of young people. We devise elaborate schemes to bring young people together through sporting and cultural initiatives yet we ignore the elephant in the room – our almost exclusively divided school system.

Each August we salve our collective conscience when we extol the virtues of our high achievers yet conveniently ignore the fact that our lowest achievers are amongst the poorest anywhere in Europe.

The Problem: Segregated Education

I departed the controlled primary sector because I became convinced that we were doing a disservice to our children. Year on year we were turning out pupils who were indeed numerate, literate and IT competent but who had no knowledge whatsoever about the other eleven year olds who were simultaneously leaving the maintained primary on the other side of the town. Education has to be about more than mere academic performance. It must also be about how we behave towards our fellow man and how we relate to him/her. Institutional separation denies pupils the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with their neighbours and it is therefore harmful to society.

The Solutions

For the past thirty years there has been a growing awareness of the detrimental effect of segregation and tentative solutions have been sought.

(i) EMU

In the decade 1985 – 1995 many EMU projects were lightweight, unsustainable and unsustained. There was insufficient contact for trust to build amongst either staff or students

so little benefit was achieved. Some of the better quality EMU projects however were akin to Shared Education in that they involved sustained twice weekly contact between classes over a lengthy period. At the end of the decade however the majority of initiatives were judged it to have been expensive experiments and logistically too complex to sustain. Teachers who had been responsible for so much additional planning were relieved when they could return to normal i.e. simply planning their own curriculum for their own students.

(ii) **Shared Education**

Despite its laudable objectives this initiative has to date only involved a tiny minority of students. Even if expansion were deemed a priority too few schools are currently physically close enough for shared education to take place. Buses travelling back and forth between schools is both a unwarranted expense and a logistical nightmare. Children apparently working collaboratively yet wearing different uniforms simply highlights the contrived nature of the exercise.

Schools are already complex institutions and teaching is already a stressful occupation. Combining groups of students for varying periods of time with different staff on different sites only adds to the complexity of the educational process. It may certainly be possible for some extra –curricular activities and it is certainly feasible at 6th Form but for the vast majority of students in the majority of schools meaningful Shared Education will not be achievable.

(iii) **Integrated Education**

The obvious solution is integrated education. Frustrated at the lack of government action parents took the initiative and created the current planned integrated school movement. Parents recognised that it takes sustained contact over months and years to create the atmosphere necessary for trust and mutual understanding to develop and it is only fully integrated schools which can offer this maximum contact time.

Integrated schools are the most cost effective strategy for creating and sustaining contact - there is nothing artificial or contrived about integration. Integrated schools do not dilute ethos nor do they shy away from difficult issues. Staff in integrated schools work together as a single team finding solutions to everyday issues. Together they devise innovative solutions to contentious events – *such as the election of a new Pope or the birthday of the Queen.*

It is sad reflection on our political and church leaders that it was left to parents to establish such schools. The 1989 legislation clearly states that DE should **encourage and facilitate** integrated education. In my view all it done to date is to merely **permit** integrated education.

“I do not know of any measures which would prepare the way for a better feeling in Ireland than uniting children at an early age and bringing them up in the same school, leading them to commune with one another and to form those little intimacies and friendships which often subsist through life”

Dr James Doyle, Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin , 1826

Almost two centuries on we have yet to recognise and deal with the travesty of segregation.

Eric H A Bullick

24th October 2014

Carr, A Concerned Parent

Dear Mr McCallion

24/10/14

I am writing in response to your request for written evidence with regard to Shared and Integrated Education. It surprises me greatly that 29 years since I, as a parent deeply committed to helping to create a society at peace, worked tirelessly and in a long term voluntary capacity to cultivate the first integrated primary school outside Belfast, All Children's Integrated Primary School, Newcastle, Co. Down and chaired the first meeting of a new parent's group to set in progress the development of Shimna Integrated College, next door, that there is so little understanding of the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education and the range of interventions to try and eliminate or drastically change the meaning of this duty.

Before I comment further on the areas of the inquiry which I can from deep commitment and personal experience contribute to, I share the story I wrote a few days ago for an up and coming publication about my journey.

All Children's Integrated Primary School, Newcastle, Co. Down, nestles at the foot of the Mourne Mountains behind the wall of what was originally a traditional Walled Garden, part of the Annesley Estate.

It would be hard to imagine a more perfect setting, the green of the forest and peaks of the hills on one side and the sweeping coastline of sea and sand on the other.

Today, 230 children, aged four to eleven, and reflecting the diversity of faith, culture and creed that is Northern Ireland, 2014, come together every day to learn, play, share and develop a caring understanding of one another.

And yet, All Children's only exists because a small group of dedicated parents and concerned friends came together in 1985. They were united in their belief that educating children together was important if Northern Ireland was to become a society at peace after so many years of violent conflict.

Anne Carr, is one of those founding parents and this is her story:

It was October 1985 when I read the small advertisement on the front page of our local paper, the Mourne Observer.

It invited all parents interesting in establishing a new integrated primary school in Newcastle, Co. Down, to a meeting in the community centre.

I had followed the news items on the group of parents who had a few years before established Lagan College and had been inspired by their determination and courage.

The mayhem of the "Troubles" had already deeply affected our lives in so many ways and as a young mother of three children, I was immediately drawn to the possibility of my children being educated locally with children of all faiths and none instead of the segregated education that was the norm.

I went to the meeting and found the room filled with parents from across our community divides, all passionate about the possibility of integrated education in our area.

The meeting was addressed by Belinda Loftus, a parent from Dundrum and representatives of the organisation All Children Together, a charitable group that had supported Lagan College in their endeavours and whose aim was to support parent groups interested in developing integrated schools in their areas.

I realised that the initial idea had come from a group of parents involved with Dundrum Community Association and led by Belinda, they had contacted the Board of Governors of Downshire Controlled Primary School in Dundrum to explore the possibility of it transforming to integrated status. They knew that pupil numbers in the school were dwindling and hoped that the idea of developing a planned shared school for the village might sustain its future. The request had been turned down so, still passionate about the development of integrated education in the area, they called upon the support of All Children Together and this meeting was organised to gauge wider support.

It was explained that a steering committee was required initially, to start to raise the funding required to get a school off the ground. The process was that All Children Together could provide a small grant to pay for administration, publicity and meeting costs and that they could also help with raising more substantial funds from charitable organisations around the word, interested in supporting the development of integrated education in Northern Ireland.

The reality was that funding from government sources would only be available when the school was up and running and considered viable and this could take at least one school year.

Despite the challenges, the enthusiasm of the people in the room was amazing and a steering committee was soon elected. The goal was to work towards the establishment of a new integrated primary and nursery school ready to open its doors to the first pupils in September 1986. I was appointed public relations officer that night and my journey with integrated education began.

It was only when we got down to the nitty gritty of the work involved that we realised what an enormous challenge we had set ourselves. If our school was to open in less than one year we had approx. £150,000.00 to raise, a school building to secure, teaching staff to appoint, classrooms to furnish, educational resources to source and most importantly, parents to sign up who would buy into our dream and enrol their children in our nursery and primary classes.

Whilst others got on with their area of development, I got on with sharing the dream - raising the profile of our plans, writing a monthly newsletter, writing articles for the local press, organising coffee mornings, meeting potential parents, sending letters to funders, getting as much publicity as possible.

The months flew by and slowly but surely the pupil numbers grew.

Our fundraisers proved an excellent way to engage potential parents and Belinda's efforts to secure educational charitable funds were successful and enough funding to hand we prepared to open our new school as planned.

The parent group met and decided on the name for our new school – All Children's Integrated Primary and Nursery School. The motto – "Harmony Through Understanding" was agreed and Steve Murphy, a founder parent and graphic artist designed the logo which depicted a dove of peace rising from an open book of knowledge. The first parents designed the uniform and decided that comfort and practicality would replace the normal shirt and tie uniform of the time in other schools. It would be a navy sweatshirt, short sleeved polo shirt and grey skirt or trousers. Trousers were accepted as the choice for both boys and girls if preferred.

It proved impossible to secure a building to house our new school so the only option was to rent a site in a local industrial area and buy second hand mobile classrooms.

It was all hands on deck preparing the land, bringing the mobiles on site, securing toilet facilities and tackling the internal and external painting of the classrooms, office area, kitchen, buying furniture and resources, much of which was second hand and hiring our teachers and ancillary staff.

As the 1st September, 1986 approached, time simply ran out and delays on the site meant that the school mobiles would not be ready. Emergency measures then and we were delighted

when the local St John's Church of Ireland church hall was made available to our group as initial temporary premises from which to run the school.

It was with immense pride that I watched our first pupils enter the gates of St John's Church Hall on 1st September 1986, the day All Children's Integrated Primary and Nursery School was born. There were 62 children on the role, a full nursery class, a combined Primary 1 – 3 class and a combined Primary 4 – 7 class.

My daughter Ashlee was one of the first Primary 1 pupils and my twin sons Darryl and Nathan were in Primary 5 and part of the combined Primary 4 – 7 class. (My youngest son Adam, born in 1988, was to enter the Reception Class in 1992.)

All Children's, the first fully integrated primary school outside the Belfast area had arrived and as PR officer I welcomed the world's press at the gates. Our opening was big and worldwide news. I did interviews with American, Australian and Japanese news crews. I travelled to Belfast to share our excitement and explain why we had developed the school to Wendy Austin on BBC Northern Ireland News and Gerry Kelly on UTV.

The school opened, we moved to a new phase of development. Settling into the mobile classrooms after three weeks in the temporary church hall, the much larger team of founder parents and friends, new parents, principal and teachers worked tirelessly to continue to raise the funds to keep the school going, develop the curriculum and at the same time ensure that the important ethos of sharing and developing understanding, parental involvement and child centred learning was at the heart of everything we planned.

Parental support was always crucial but in the early days it was volunteer parents who manned the school kitchen, made the lunches, did a lot of the maintenance and cleaning, led extra curriculum activities and continued to hold all sorts of fund raising events to raise much needed cash.

The pupils thrived, despite the often inclement weather and the reality of moving between mobile classrooms and a separate toilet block. Wellington boots were the answer for breaktime and outdoor play and the double size mobile became assembly hall, sports hall and classroom combined.

Enrolments grew steadily and the search for a permanent building to house our school continued. The lease on the industrial site was running out so it was a dream come true when we secured a piece of land, just off King Street, Newcastle to become our permanent home. The Annesley family in Newcastle owned the site and offered it to our governors at a significantly reduced price. It had been a traditional Walled Garden in the past and some of the old wall remained. It was on a magnificent setting between the Mourne Mountains and the sea and although in the interim it would house our rapidly deteriorating mobile classrooms, our long term vision was a new purpose built school on the site.

Two years after our school opened its doors, we were delighted to have been deemed a viable school by the Department of Education and awarded maintained status. This meant that our primary school's teacher salaries would be funded one hundred percent and seventy five percent of our running costs covered. We had still money to raise but significantly less than before and we as parents and staff celebrated our wonderful achievement.

The new school site was wonderful. We had space for many outdoor activities. A new school garden was developed and a large grassy area at the front was turned into an "All Ball Pitch". Two of the parents crafted goalposts which were suitable for soccer, gaelic football and rugby and our pupils enjoyed learning all three, a first for any school in the area at the time.

We made the most of the setting and a summer barbeque for parents, friends and pupils became an annual event and always incorporated a walk to the top of Slieve Donard led by mountaineering parents and a less strenuous walk to the top of Commedagh which often included mum's pushing buggys.

The development of our integrated school was not without its challenges. We had great community support but also faced the reality of those who saw our efforts as a threat to the status quo. It took many years to build relationships with some of the local churches and schools. Support from some of our political representatives was slow to develop. We had peaks and troughs in relation to pupil numbers, staffing and good relationships, some with the local education board and Department of Education took time to establish.

On 1st April, 1991, five years after the opening of All Children's Integrated Primary and Nursery School, we became the first Controlled Integrated Primary School in Northern Ireland enjoying full support and services provided by the South Eastern Education and Library Board. We closed the nursery school as it proved too expensive to continue and replaced it with a new Reception Class and our school was now fully funded in line with other schools in the area.

Thirteen years later, on 6th May 2004, after 18 long years in shabby mobile accommodation, and following a sustained, determined and at times fraught lobbying process, we moved into our new school. Our new school building is simply magnificent, nestled behind the Walled Garden with panoramic views of the Mourne Mountains. The bright and airy facilities are first class and pupils, staff and parents are thrilled to be afforded such a happy, safe and stimulating environment.

I came on board as a volunteer steering group member in 1985, progressed to become a trustee of the South Down Education Society, established to raise the funds to develop integrated education in the area, was a member of the parent's council and chaired the Board of Governors in total for just over fourteen years.

The successful development of All Children's became an everyday part of my life for over twenty years and like so many others involved, the journey we embarked on took determination, passion, perseverance and at times a backbone of steel.

I have said for a long time that integrated education may be just a baby step towards creating a fully shared and united community, at ease with difference but I firmly believe that it is a giant step in the right direction!

Now to contribute to the inquiry I offer the following:

- Shared and Integrated Education are completely different. In recent years politicians have sought to sell shared education as a viable alternative to integrated education. It is not. Shared Education at its worst is apartheid education with Catholics going in one door, Protestants another. At best it allows pupils to share some time together but in essence, while better than nothing, it is similar to most CRED work. While there are some examples of good work, it is largely ineffective. Two of my children attended a local Catholic primary school for the first five years of their primary school life and despite this Catholic Maintained Primary and the local Controlled Primary being literally across a bridge over the river from one another there was no real engagement between the two. The idea that the CRED programme compares in any way is baffling as my children's experience was going to nice places with another school and not really getting to know the children at all. The good work evident in CRED happens every second of every minute of every day in Integrated schools. More importantly, as the interaction is ongoing and a natural part of daily life, rather than artificial and forced, it IS effective in that the friendships and bonds are developed on an ongoing basis.
- It is the ethos of Integrated Education which so many fail to understand. I have faced the naysayers, those who say integrated schools were developed to satisfy the needs of middle class parents whose children couldn't pass the transfer test. So many of these people I found had never set foot in an integrated, and my term, PLANNED shared school, where parents deeply committed to creating an inclusive society gave years and years of their time to create something new and special.

- We have been made aware that a definition of shared education as opposed to integrated education was provided to Mr Justice Treacy as part of the court proceedings surrounding Drumragh. Why seek a legal obligation to facilitate Shared Education when our assembly, MLAs and educational bodies have ignored and avoided a legal obligation to develop Integrated Education. In fact, since, the Good Friday Agreement Integrated Education has been capped and suppressed. Having been an active member of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition who along with my colleague Jane Morrice, actually wrote the clause into the final draft of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement around Integrated Education and mixed housing I can assure you that there was no confusion. Fully integrated, planned shared schools is what we meant, not "integrating" schools or "shared education". This was voted on by our people and passed at Referendum, and as we know this is an International Agreement, no cherry picking, the legal obligations are clear and concise. Seeking a legal obligation to promote 'Shared Education' is just another excuse to **continue to avoid an existing legal obligation to promote Integrated Education**. Do we live in a democracy or a dictatorship? Any legislation underpinning Shared Education must not be to the detriment of Integrated Education which is more effective and financially efficient at achieving the shared aims. Rather it should demand 'shared practice' within the segregated sectors where they exist. This is the way forward. Fully Integrated education and all kinds of sharing practices as well.
- The key barrier for Integrated Education is the 'what we have we hold/no change' mentality of those in power and those working within the segregated sectors of education. Integrated schools have been actively prevented from growing so as not to negatively impact on neighbouring segregated schools. I have been at meetings for years and years with local and national politicians who have described integrated education as 'artificial, false and forced'. They have no knowledge of integrated education, no understanding of it and no desire to either. They fear it because Integrated Education is the only effective means of bringing about real positive change. With thirty years of experience the established integrated sector inc NICIE & IEF and existing Integrated Schools is the only body capable of facilitating it. The biggest barrier to Integrated Education is the existing divided political and educational system that needs a divided society to survive. Integrated Education would heal that division. Add the disgraceful behaviour that I as one parent have been subjected to by various churches and the discrimination which still exists where Catholic children and their parents are still in some cases shunned and not afforded the same pastoral care as other children in the parish.
- Vested interest knows no bounds.
- **Other jurisdictions have come to the Integrated Sector to learn from the model of existing good practice in Northern Ireland.** It speaks volumes that our politicians ignore the obvious answer on their doorstep to seek something else. Why on earth would you look at practice elsewhere and ignore the established practice within our own integrated sector that is seen as a benchmark of good practice? I for one have spent thirty years of my life sharing with others from all over the world, talking to parents here, trying to explain the journey in integrated education that I have taken and helping everyone to understand better what we as parents, and remember this is an education system that parents have driven. Does the education committee at Stormont have a reason for failing to recognise the integrated sector's thirty years of knowledge and expertise? It is beyond belief that the ELBs, are tasked with CRED when they have sought to maintain their status as a single ELB rather than potentially dilute their identity within ESA while the bodies with real knowledge and expertise are sidelined (eg NICIE). When I officially opened our new school building in Newcastle, the then Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education Board, Jackie Fitsimmons, talked of my passion, my knowledge of creating ease with difference and my perseverance in standing my ground in the face of unbelievable opposition coming from a range of statutory bodies and politicians. He talked about me not understanding the meaning of the word "No" and considering the magnificent achievement

that is All Children's, he hoped that I would never learn the meaning of that word "No". I can assure you that I never will because right always triumphs vested interest.

- **CRED programmes and many others like it, are helpful. Every intervention in segregation is important.** Having read about a dissemination of 'outstanding' practice for CRED last year it is no wonder why Northern Ireland is and will remain a divided society. The best facilitators had extensive work experience with NICIE yet NICIE was not part of the process. The outcomes of best practice were minimal and those identified happen every second of every minute of every day in integrated schools. It is what planned, shared integration is all about. Bringing all that is special about every single child into the classroom and working with it. Engaging parents and all levels of our school community, teaching and ancillary staff, friends. Celebrating diversity in a real way, every day. Providing safe enough spaces for the most contentious issues to be explored together and working out how best to make room for all.
- You cannot make a school integrated by simply changing its title/name and artificially forcing pupils together. Integrated schools have a unique ethos and practice. I have personal experience of education boards, obviously seeing the threat of a new parent group exploring integration in their area, targeting small Controlled schools to transform to integrated status. The transformation process is very important and in reality probably takes about ten years to be working effectively and for all the right reasons. Transformation should not be for limited, survival reasons. Long term commitment, willingness to change root and branch practice and buy in to a new and inclusive ethos is organic and complex. A Controlled School is not already an integrated school, something I have heard so many times, particularly from some political representatives.
- As so well written by the late Frank Wright, in his booklet on integrated education twenty years ago, Northern Ireland has British and Irish schools. Controlled schools support a British ethos and Catholic Maintained Schools support an Irish ethos. This permeates all areas of school life including sporting, music, after school activities etc and various emphasis in the everyday curriculum. We have definitely seen some excellent crossover activities and much more inclusion of new peoples and all the richness they bring to the school environment but basically this reality continues.

It is so important that you seek the views of all sectors. It is vital that you engage with the segregated sectors to ascertain the barriers to shared education, the effectiveness of any shared practice and the limits within the current structures.

If you ask a question you must be prepared to listen to the answer. If you want to be informed about Integrated Education you **must talk to the integrated sector**. If you want to bring about change you need to listen to the integrated sector. If you want to continue to promote division, continue to ignore it, sideline it and suppress it.

I hope this inquiry genuinely intends to listen to all the voices, passionate about our children and their education here. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with the committee to elaborate more fully on the points I have made above. I attended a controlled secondary school in the Greater Shankill area of Belfast in the sixties, my husband attended a Catholic Maintained Secondary school in North Belfast, two of my children attended a Catholic Maintained Primary for five years, a Catholic Grammar School for 5 years and a Voluntary Grammar School for A Levels. My younger two children have had an education in All Children's Integrated Primary School, Lagan College and Shimna College.

I am a committed dialogue practitioner having engaged our people in years of focussed conversations and sharing and learning processes for the last thirty years. I am passionate about our need to create real ease with difference, learn from the past and create a truly shared and caring society for future generations.

Yours sincerely
Anne Carr

Carrickfergus College

Submission from the
Governors and Staff of
Carrickfergus College to
the Committee for
Education Stormont

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Shared/Integrated
Education Inquiry



Carrickfergus College

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This submission is being made on behalf of the Governors and staff of Carrickfergus College.

A Factual Information.

1. Carrickfergus College has a total school population of 650 pupils when this submission is being written in July 2014.
2. Of those pupils, 122 indicate that they are of “No Religion”, “Roman Catholic”, “Other Christian” or are “Unclassified” in their religious affiliation. As a percentage that comes to 18.76% of the school population. Details available on “E” Schools.
3. The makeup of the borough in which Carrickfergus College sits would be overwhelmingly Protestant/Loyalist, which makes the profile of the College even more remarkable. Its feeder schools would again be reflective of this tradition making it likely that the College would have a very small non- Protestant pupil body.

B Issues/Concerns/Barriers

1. The Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College have tried for several years to get funding for a variety of shared education projects but have been deemed ineligible as they were unable to partner with a school locally which represented the “other”/ “minority” tradition. Carrickfergus has no Maintained Post Primary School. Such projects would have allowed Carrickfergus College to progress its desire to have a new build, better resources and enhanced teaching facilities.
2. The Governors and Staff feel that with the profile of pupils in the school they go a long way to already being a shared education school welcoming to pupils of any religion or none.
3. The Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College are concerned that by a quirk of geography they will never be eligible to apply for shared education status. As the criteria stand at present this is the case.
4. The Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College have adopted a very innovative approach to every initiative from DE over the years. We pioneered the way on the Revised Curriculum and Learning Communities and have been lauded for our ground-breaking work in the field of Emotional Health and Well Being of Pupils and Staff, have assisted upwards of 20 other schools to set up systems to track and raise the outcomes of their pupils, but feel that in the area of shared education we are simply not being allowed access to what is happening.
5. Being a truly Integrated School is, in the opinion of the Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College, about offering pupils of all abilities the opportunity to access the best teaching and support which can be offered regardless of religious background/ethnicity/sexual orientation/academic ability, allowing those pupils to complete their education as well rounded, independent learners. Schools which are currently deemed as “shared or integrated” schools were established and made to have a body of pupils from a diverse range of religious backgrounds. Carrickfergus College has had this diversity for over 50 years without recognition.
6. Having “Integrated Education” as it is currently defined protected by both the Anglo Irish Agreement and Good Friday Agreement leaves schools like Carrickfergus College feeling very marginalised. We seem to be unwanted by any sectors of Government or the educational establishment. We are spoken of by those who champion “integrated” education as being responsible for division in our society. That is clearly not the case in Carrickfergus College. Fingers are pointed by the same people accusing schools like Carrickfergus College of not delivering good education to their pupils. Again, clearly not the case when both ETI inspection reports and GCSE and GCE results are scrutinised.

C Recommendations

1. The Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College would ask that the Committee redefine “shared/integrated” schools as being those which open their doors to all pupils regardless of who they are. As indicated above the current definition can mean that statistically a school has “X” % from the Protestant community, “X” % from the Roman Catholic community but there seems to be very little that demonstrates how the school actually meets the needs or desires of its community. How many community groups use its facilities? What level of involvement in the local community does the school have on residents groups or community forums? Is the school disconnected from its community?
2. We would also ask that opportunities to access funding for “shared/integrated” education projects be looked at to allow schools like ours to be able to apply for such funding rather than excluding good innovative schools.
3. Finally the Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College would ask that the Committee lead the way in getting the message out to the public at large that schools like Carrickfergus College are to be valued and provide excellent opportunities to pupils in some of the most deprived areas in our province.

The Governors and Staff of Carrickfergus College would be prepared to give oral evidence to the Education Committee if asked to do so.

H Webb

Secretary to the Governors of Carrickfergus College
15/10/14

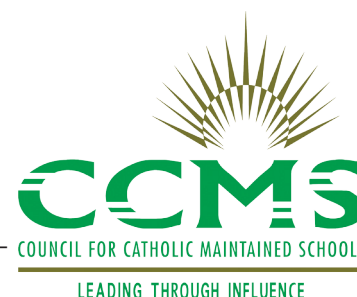
CCMS

Council for Catholic Maintained Schools.

Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry.

Submission of Written Evidence to Northern Ireland Assembly –
Committee for Education.

October 2014



1. This evidence is being submitted on behalf of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

CCMS is the Managing Authority for all schools in the Catholic Maintained Sector of education in Northern Ireland. There are 754 Catholic Maintained schools – 32 nurseries, 641 Primary and 68 Post-Primary schools.

CCMS manages the employment of all teaching staff within the Catholic Maintained sector, a number in excess of 8500.

2. CCMS welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the Committee for Education in order to inform its inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education and would wish to be considered to give oral evidence to the Committee.

3. There are 171,548 children in pre-school and primary school education in Northern Ireland.

- 31.3% of children attending Controlled schools come from a Catholic or “no religion stated” background.
- 3.3% of children attending Catholic schools are from a non-Catholic background.
- While the Catholic/Protestant share in Integrated schools is roughly similar, 37.5% and 36.0% respectively, 26.5% of pupils indicated no religious background.

From these figures it could be concluded that there appears to be a greater readiness from the Catholic community to consider a primary school outside of their traditional sector.

4. The percentage of children from a background other than Catholic who attend a Catholic school does not reflect Catholic Education’s overall commitment to creating a society in which everyone is respected, irrespective of their cultural, social, ethnic or religious background.

This aspect of Catholic Education along with the high quality of education delivered in the majority of Catholic schools is however, demonstrating increasingly to the community at large that Catholic schools are for all and are not just “schools for Catholics. ”

This is evident in a number of Catholic schools;

- School A in Belfast with an enrolment of 362 has 28% of pupils who come from a background other than Catholic.
- School B in a small seaside town with an enrolment of 53 has 69% of its pupils coming from a background other than Catholic.
- School C in a mid-sized town has an enrolment of 369 pupils, 69% of whom come from a background other than Catholic.
- School D, a large post-primary school of 601 pupils has 58% of pupils coming from a background other than Catholic.

The schools above are only a selection of schools which have a significant number of pupils from a background other than Catholic but they are nevertheless quite clearly and

unapologetically Catholic in ethos and daily practice and are shining examples of integration, inclusion and diversity which has arisen naturally over a period of years.

5. In the post-primary sector, there are 143,973 pupils.

- 4.7% of children from a Catholic background attend Controlled schools.
- 2.5% of children in the Catholic Maintained sector come from a non-Catholic background.
- The Catholic/Protestant split in Integrated post-primary schools is again fairly even, 35% and 48% respectively with 17% indicating “no religion stated”.

It should be noted that more than 33% of children at post-primary stage go to schools of “other management types”. The continued existence of the Voluntary Grammar sector will invariably skew figures on the level of attendance at “non-traditional” schools by one sector of the community or another.

6. Of interest is the fact that, at primary level 18% and at post-primary level 12% of the school population goes to a school for reasons other than religious or other ethos. In that respect, albeit to a small degree, the education system in Northern Ireland is not as “segregated” as some commentators might suggest. In fact, the term segregation to describe the education system in Northern Ireland is incorrect given that segregation, according to the Oxford English Dictionary means;

“enforced separation of racial groups in a community.”

The principle of parental preference in the Northern Ireland Education system in no way implies and should not be understood as “enforced separation”.

7. According to the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), Integrated Education;

“brings children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school”.

Integrated Education as an option within an educational system in which most children attend largely religiously separated schools began over 31 years ago. In that time, Integrated schools have developed across the country to the point where today there are 62 schools at Nursery (3), Primary (38) and Post-Primary (21) level.

8. In recent years there has been a tendency for schools within the Controlled sector to transform to “Controlled Integrated” status. In many cases this situation has arisen because of the perceived threat to the future of the school because of the low enrolment.

An examination of the religious breakdown in a selection of ten Controlled schools which transformed to Controlled Integrated status results in some interesting statistics as outlined in the table below.

	% from Protestant background	% from Catholic background	% stating no religion.
Pre-Transformation	55.84%	17.25%	26.93%
Post -transformation	45.09%	30.39%	24.53%

When the schools transformed from Controlled to Controlled Integrated status, the percentage of children from a Protestant background or none fell while the percentage from a Catholic background increased.

Without further in-depth analysis it would be difficult to say why this is the case.

9. In total there are 315,521 children of school age in Northern Ireland. Of that number 21,745 or 6.89% attend Integrated schools at primary and post-primary level.

While NICIE may claim that through their Admissions Criteria Integrated Schools enroll approximately equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant children, as well as children from other religious and cultural backgrounds the fact remains that the number of Catholics attending as a percentage of the overall Catholic school age population is only 4.9%. The percentage of the overall Protestant school age community attending is only 8.1%.

Therefore, the overwhelming number of children attending Integrated schools indicated that they are of neither the Catholic or Protestant faith, are of other faiths or have no religious affiliation at all.

The figures above indicate that the intention of bringing “Catholic and Protestant” children together in one school has only partially succeeded. The many polls which continue to be conducted on public opinion towards Integrated Education and which appear to demonstrate “significant” support for Integrated schools do not in practice reflect that. Parental preference continues to be exerted along traditional lines, as parents continue to send their children to schools which are largely in keeping with their religious, cultural, social or other beliefs and traditions. Indeed, in many cases their choice of school may be more to do with the quality of education or convenience rather than religious affiliation.

10. What are the factors then that have prevented Integrated Education from achieving its ultimate goal of creating a sector to “challenge” the existing Controlled, Catholic Maintained and Voluntary sectors? They are most likely the same factors that will challenge the development of Shared Education, namely;

- A. The continuation of cultural and social division. There is no concept of shared identity in Northern Ireland with the community at large being divided along Unionist/Nationalist lines. Cultural identity and sectarianism remains rooted in communities, not schools. An unwritten policy of separation remains with the continued existence of “Peace Walls” across the city of Belfast and in other centres across Northern Ireland.

In June 2012, a piece of research funded by OFMDFM and carried out by the University of Ulster entitled “Attitudes to Peace Walls” provided a valuable insight into the attitudes of those who live in close proximity to peace walls as well as those from society in general. Among other things the report concluded that;

- 78% of the respondents in the survey believe that the segregation of communities is common in Northern Ireland even where there aren’t any peace walls.
- 69% maintain peace walls are still necessary because of the potential for violence.
- 43% of Protestants compared to 20% of Catholics think peace walls protect their sense of identity.
- Catholics (40%) are more likely than Protestants (30%) to think there should be more opportunities for the two communities to come together to create the necessary conditions for the removal of the peace walls.

There are over 80 peace walls across Northern Ireland with the first being erected in 1969 in Cupar Way between the Falls and Shankill Roads. The Army Major over-seeing the construction of the wall at the time stated;

“This is a temporary measure, we do not want another Berlin Wall situation in western Europe. It will be gone by Christmas”.

- B. Urban gentrification. The economic boom pre-2008 created opportunities for large sections of the community to move up the social and property ladder and a process of gentrification (intended or otherwise at a Government policy level) “created new

layers of residential segregation in a city already preoccupied with ethno-religious territoriality". (B.Murtagh. Urban Studies 2011).

This alongside a lack of meaningful investment in areas such as North and West Belfast in particular and the political quarrel over, for example, housing as part of the Girdwood Barracks development resulted only in the continued stagnation and growth of many large, social housing developments which remain divided along sectarian lines.

The outcome? Those with the purchasing power, skills, transport and easy access to employment are "differentiated from those trapped in the single entity estates in the inner and outer city". (B.Murtagh. Urban Studies 2011).

- C. The issues of skills/skills deficit are perpetuated alongside the social division created by an education system which promotes inequality and social differences i.e. selective grammar schooling and the social class implication. Traditional industries have disappeared and given that such industries normally provided access to employment for a, predominantly, working class Protestant workforce without the overt need for education, that community now lags behind in terms of educational outcomes as the need for "education" was not something which was highly valued.

That being the case there is a need for an education system which provides and encourages access for all to high quality education which concentrates on the needs of society and provides young people with the skills and opportunities to meet those needs.

- D. Fear – The dominant communities have become even more polarized since the 'Good Friday' Agreement, especially at the working class level and perhaps to a more sanitized degree further up the socio-economic ladder.

- 11. CCMS would argue therefore that now is the time to consider the whole concept of Shared/ Integrated Education in Northern Ireland in a different light and to look at alternative means of fulfilling the objective put before the TACOT:IE (Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Integrated Education) Working Group in 1998, namely;

"to examine ways in which all schools could contribute further to the promotion of a culture of tolerance as outlined in the Belfast Agreement."

As a starting point, CCMS would suggest that linguistically we should move away from the term Integrated Education and begin focusing on how schools can explore a spectrum of shared options based on educational provision and access rather than on a political or philosophical basis. The definition of Shared Education used by the QUB Centre for Shared Education is as good a starting point as any;

"Shared Education is broadly defined as any collaborative activity within or between schools or other educational institutions that can: contribute towards school improvement, provide access to opportunity, encourage more effective use of resources, and promote social cohesion"

- 11. CCMS also believes that after 30 years, the time has come for the Department to dispense with its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated education. If after 30 years the sector has grown to the point where it commands only 6.89% of the school age population in Northern Ireland, the Department should evaluate the public appetite for 'Integrated Education' as a sectoral entity, reconsider the 'statutory duty' and look to the promotion of other "initiatives" which have a greater chance of making more effective use of limited resources, promoting social cohesion and delivering on the general principles of TACOT:IT as outlined below;

- a. It is a seminal purpose of the Northern Ireland Education Service to promote a culture of tolerance and reconciliation and, for schools, to do so in keeping with the particular

ethos and circumstances within which they operate. These different approaches should be valued and all schools encouraged to provide further opportunities to promote a culture of tolerance.

- b. There should continue to be a pluralist approach to education, expressed in a plurality of structures (i.e. different types of school) and ethos.
- c. All schools should provide a pluralist curriculum promoting tolerance and mutual understanding.
- d. The present structure for schooling has been determined by parental wishes and, subject to the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils should continue to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.
- e. education policy, administration, school funding and school support should be fair and equitable to all grant-aided schools, i.e. controlled, voluntary, integrated, Irish-medium maintained, denominational, non-denominational, etc.

(TACOT:IT June 1998)

12. The principles outlined in (8) above clearly focus on the fundamental obligation of Government to ensure that, within reason and recognising the Department's Sustainable Schools Policy and the principles of Area Based Planning, pupils continue to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, recognizing that in a society which is truly committed to respecting diversity there can and should be an acceptance of diversity in the nature of education provision – Controlled, Catholic Maintained, Integrated, Irish Medium or other.

The existence of various forms of education, each espousing its own distinctive ethos, is evident throughout the world as is the recognition that where change is deemed to be necessary it can be brought about while maintaining respect for each individual education sector or provider.

This has been delivered in many places across the world through the concept of Shared Education and Shared Campuses.

13. There have been and continue to be many examples of Shared Education in Northern Ireland which have developed from agreed local need or practices and through the EMU and CRED programmes. The Centre for Shared Education in QUB has involved over 7000 students in various shared programmes and the CREDIT - Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers - programme which was delivered jointly by St Mary's University College and Stramnellis University College brought together teachers from all sectors with the aim of enabling them to develop skills and confidence with issues of division, diversity, inclusion and community cohesion in the classroom and on a whole school basis.

In recent months the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister announced the Shared Campus Programme and the first successful projects have only just been approved. As these projects move forward the potential will grow for a range of sharing options, from limited curriculum interaction to shared governance.

This is a very exciting development in education delivery in Northern Ireland and one which has been evident in other countries for some time. We should endeavor to learn what we can from them in order to ensure success in our own endeavors.

14. In the United States of America, Shared Campuses have been the norm for many years. In New York, of the city's 1500 schools, about 600 are shared campuses. Supporters of the shared campus model argue that they increase the number of academic offerings, develop appropriate school sizes and more effectively use the available school buildings.

In one instance a school of 280 students shares a building with a 630 pupil school. A doorway serves as the “boundary” between one school and the other. There are of course hurdles to overcome but the arrangement is “overwhelmingly” successful.

Each school can retain its own distinctive ethos;

“School A’s students wear uniforms, walk in single file and remain in school until 5pm. The walls are adorned with murals of classic book covers and inspirational messages. School B’s hallways are barren and painted uniformly yellow and its students are gone from the building by 3pm. Seven years ago it was considered among the worst schools in the city of New York. Now it’s achieving a Grade B on the city’s progress report”.

The keys to success are meeting the needs of pupils in different ways, sharing instructional practices, students working inside each other’s classrooms learning from and understanding each other, developing relationships and respecting the existence of each other’s school.

Such has been the success of the New York venture that other cities across the USA like Chicago and Denver are moving in the same direction.

15. Closer to home and in an environment more akin to our own is Scotland. In recent years, several local Council areas have developed shared campus options in an effort to ensure that different sectors have retained an educational presence in particular areas while ensuring access to a full-educational experience. The arrangements invariably involve collaboration between Catholic and non-denominational schools. In some cases the Catholic school is the larger partner and in others the non-denominational school. Midlothian, Argyll & Bute and North Lanarkshire Councils are among those which have taken this route. In the case of North Lanarkshire the rationale for the development of the Shared Campus design is;

“based on financial and best value consideration. The building of schools with shared infrastructure generates savings and as a result more schools can be built or refurbished from the available resources. In addition, the model reduces the need to close small schools, particularly in rural areas, and enables the community to access greatly enhanced facilities”.
(North Lanarkshire Protocol for Management of a Shared Campus)

While “financial and best value considerations” were to the fore, the parties concerned underlined their “commitment to the preservation, development and respect for the identity and distinctiveness of each school.” The Council went one step further and emphasized that it was “unequivocally committed to Catholic education”.

All aspects of the Shared Campus arrangement were outlined in a management protocol; from respect for individual school identity and ethos through leadership, collaboration, communication right down to timetabling for use of the various shared facilities.

16. In 2008 North Lanarkshire Council commissioned an independent evaluation of Shared Campus schools within the District Council area. For the most part the findings were very positive in tone;
- It was the almost unanimous view of head teachers and staff that the shared campus environment had in no way impaired the traditional link between the individual school and the chaplain or the local church(es).
 - The smaller school is treated as an equal partner in the shared campus arrangement.
 - The protocol has played a significant role in the development of the shared campus model in North Lanarkshire.
 - The implementation of the authority protocol for the operation of joint campuses had generated no difficulties for head teachers.
 - Managing in a shared campus context is considered by head teachers to be more complex than managing in a single school environment.

- Pupils consider the best feature of sharing a campus with another school is the opportunity to meet more people and make more friends.
- The main pupil dislikes about their new environments have to do with noisy and cramped teaching/learning conditions and dining areas.
- There was almost unanimous support from staff, pupils and parents that the staff and pupils of the schools on a shared campus site show respect and good manners to each other.
- Relationships between staff and pupils of shared campus schools appear for the most part to be positive, solidly grounded and free from denominational tensions.
- Parents perceive the main benefit of sharing a campus to be associated with providing opportunities for children in the local area to travel to school together and to interact socially in their new environment.
- Between 85-90% of parents rated the quality of the educational experience being received by their children in a shared campus environment as very good or good, with no parents rating it unsatisfactory.

It is clear therefore from the experiences in Scotland that under certain circumstances and with the appropriate level of commitment, preparation and planning, a shared campus arrangement can work.

17. Of course, not everyone is at a stage where a shared campus would be a viable option. In those cases where it is hoped to develop such arrangements there is a long history of collaboration between the schools involved. This however does not prevent the development of sharing and the Department should consider how it can facilitate a range of potential options from the very low to very high level, for example;
 - Extending the concept of the 'Area Learning Community' to include all phases of education and to use this vehicle as the principal portal for continuous professional development of staff.
 - Putting greater emphasis on EMU/CRED activity being a key element of the curriculum in each year of a child's time in school.
 - Encouraging joint curriculum development days, especially between the staff of small schools where considerable responsibility for several areas of staff development is placed on the shoulders of a small number of staff.
 - Where one school cannot afford to employ additional staff, options for employment of staff across more than one school should be explored, especially in specialist areas such as music, art, physical education. The recent signature project which saw the employment of additional teachers in schools could be developed along these lines.
 - Encourage schools to collaborate more fully in providing children with extra-curricular activities.
 - Joint activities/curriculum workshops for parents across a number of schools.
18. It will not, however, be easy to develop an agreed approach to sharing while the education system in Northern Ireland remains in a state of uncertainty and confusion. The Department must take affirmative action to ensure that the climate across all sectors is conducive to the promotion of shared education. CCMS would suggest that priorities for action should include;
 - Promoting, as far as is possible, a 'social balance' in schools;
 - Ending selection in reality and legislating against anything which perpetuates academic and/or social selection;
 - Ensuring equality of access for all based on agreed and enforceable criteria;

- Recognising diversity of provision and the principle of parental preference and moving away from a “duty” to promote Integrated Education;
- Creating a multi-sectoral, equal system for all then exploring how “sharing” might be facilitated.

It must be recognised that integration/sharing/shared education cannot be enforced; it must develop naturally from the bottom up and in a range of different guises. The responsibility for this cannot be left to schools alone and while schools do have a key part to play, integration throughout society has to be a reality and the norm, if we are to work collaboratively to resolve the problems which Northern Ireland continues to face.

In 2004, the First Minister teamed up with Cardinal Keith O’Brien and a representative from the Church of Scotland to open a shared campus, which housed St David’s High School and Dalkeith High, in Midlothian - the first to be opened on Mr McConnell’s watch.

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19. In conclusion, CCMS believes that an integrated, shared system of education for Northern Ireland is achievable but it has to develop in a society which is mature to the point where individual and distinct sectors are recognized and valued for the contribution they make to a shared society.

CCMS and Catholic Education have consistently demonstrated its willingness to be part of that shared, education system. From as far back as 2001, the Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland (Building Peace Shaping the Future) were promoting the very strong message that Catholic schools, in living out their philosophy and ethos, are obliged to;

- Provide friendly contacts between pupils of different characters and backgrounds in order to encourage mutual understanding;
- Assist society to move beyond its deeply-ingrained divisions into a new coherence and openness to the world at large;
- Promote reconciliation and the common good;
- Recognize that the attendance at our schools of children from other denominations and none is an enrichment of the education experience offered by the school and is seen as a practical expression of the commitment to inclusivity.

CCMS and Catholic schools recognize that it is only in partnership that Northern Ireland will achieve the peace and reconciliation that all its people deserve. We cannot do that alone and stand ready to face the challenges of working with others across all sectors of Education and beyond to achieve the goal we all desire, a society in which we can live and work together in peace and harmony, not only accepting but cherishing difference.

Ceara Special School

Submission to the Education Committee in relation to Shared/Integrated Education

My name is Dr Peter G Cunningham MBE, my entire teaching career, 35 years, has been spent educating children who have special educational needs. I have been the principal of Ceara Special School, Lurgan for the last twenty years.

I have been a member of the Southern Education & Library Board for the last fifteen years and am currently a member of the Southern Education Transitional Board where I 'chair' Board's Child Protection Committee.

I am a member of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal, and have been for the last six years.

I am a member of CCEA Council.

I have been an associate inspector of schools (the first ever) for the Department for Education.

I have presented talks for the Regional Training Unit on educational management to educators from all sections of the educational community.

I have spoken on special educational issues to the European Parliament. More specifically, the inclusion of children who have special educational needs into mainstream contexts; and the effective management of ASD in mainstream schools.

I have a 2:1 (Hons.) in Special Education; an M. Phil in Special Educational Issues; a M.Sc. in Educational Management and a Ph. D in Special Education Management.

My evidence to the Committee will look at the advantages of a shared/integrated education from the perspective of the child/pupil and teaching and support staff.

At the outset I would remind everyone that the special school system (special care) when initiated in 1948 was a fully shared/integrated system, open to all children irrespective of religious belief or ability levels and to that end predated the Integrated Education movement by some 40 years.

I also note that the last time the role of the special school was 'looked at' by DE was in June 2006. I suggest that much of that document has merit today and would recommend it to the committee. In the South of Ireland the role of the special school was reviewed in 2009 by the National Council for Special Education (NASP), again much of the report has a great deal of merit.

Current DE policy is to encourage the maximum possible level of inclusion for children who have special educational needs within mainstream schools. This policy trend does give rise to an uncertainty around the role and operation of special schools. This review by the Education Committee is timely given the protracted gestation of the Special Education Review.

School Based Considerations

It is my view that children, irrespective of ability, should be educated with their peers in local schools in schools that are appropriately resourced and taught by highly trained and motivated staff who celebrate achievements and tackle difficulties head on and with enthusiasm; and that ELBs have a responsibility to provide a range of provision to meet those diverse needs. However, I recognize that for some children who have severe and complex special needs that a placement in a special school is an appropriate placement. In this

respect it is important to note that the needs and difficulties faced by teachers within the special school sector have changed significantly over the recent years especially with regard to behavioural issues.

Consequently, the special school should be viewed as an integral part of the totality of the educational provision – a continuum of provision. A special school placement should not be regarded as a segregated placement. An ‘inclusive special school’ is now very much the norm in many of our special schools in Northern Ireland, assisted in no small way by the inclusion of special schools into the Area Learning Communities.

It is my view that mainstream schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all and while I believe that there will always be the need for special school provision it need not be segregated provision. The day of the inclusive special school is very much with us. For example

- There is a trend toward increased connectivity between special and mainstream schools and special schools and special units.
- Special schools are part of every Area Learning Community in the country;
- More pupils from mainstream schools now visit special schools throughout the year than ever before.

There have never been as many children who have, or may have, special educational needs (SEN) in the school population. Many of these children attend special schools where, over the years staff have developed a wide range of expertise and skills in education these children. More recently, an increasing number of children who previously would have attended special schools now attend ‘mainstream’ schools. This places additional stresses on ‘mainstream’ staff.

As a group, children who have special educational needs are disproportionately more from disadvantaged backgrounds, are much more likely to be absent or excluded from school and achieve less well than their peers both in terms of attainment at any given age and in terms of their progress over time. Post sixteen years, young persons with special educational needs comprise one of the groups most likely not to be in education, not to be in employment or not to be in training.

Recommendation One

Staff from special schools could/should advise and support their colleagues in ‘mainstream’ schools on many of the issues facing children who have SEN. The Area Learning Communities could be the forum for this to occur. CPD for mainstream staff could take place in special schools. A two way process.

An ‘all encompassing’ approach

There is confusion around the term ‘shared/integrated education’. Does it mean ‘education for disabled children’? Is there a difference between ‘education for all’ and ‘inclusive education’? What does it look like in reality?

A lot has been written about inclusion, a great deal has also been spoken about it with the somewhat unfortunate consequence of polarised views that state that the angels are on the side of the ‘inclusionists’ and the demons are with the ‘segregationists’. Such debates often generate more heat than light. I see the concept of shared/integrated education as inseparable from the concept of quality education: education cannot be considered good quality unless it meets the needs of all its learners.

We need to be clear that the principles of shared/integrated education encompass a much broader range of issues than disability. But the changes needed to ensure that children with disabilities can benefit from education are not very different from the changes needed to help all excluded children get an education.

Recommendation Two

Making education 'shared/integrated' requires schools and education authorities to remove barriers to education experienced by the most excluded children – often the poorest, children with disabilities, children without family care, or children from minority groups. This will require cross-departmental, interagency collaborative working arrangements. Something we really are not very good at.

A Really Special 'Special School'

Currently, special schools cater for a range of special educational need. A broad spectrum of need. With advances in medical science children with very special needs are living to school age. These children require a 'medicalised' educational provision. I would suggest that now there is the need, at least at KS1 and KS2 to have regional schools, which can deal with very specific special educational needs. In this regard I am thinking of those children with extreme behavioural issues. This is the norm in many areas of the UK.

Recommendation Three

Establish schools (units), which, with an integrated approach, could deal with specific SEN from both children from special schools and those from mainstream schools.

Duel Placements

To date, pupils with SEN are enrolled in a specific school. You are special or you are not! This 'them or us' silo mentality does not consider that for the vast majority of children with SEN a 'duel placement' would be very advantageous for both their curricular and social development. The social inclusion benefits cannot be over estimated. Four days in a mainstream school and one day in the special school so to speak – an extended version of ALC 'Entitlement Framework' arrangements. This type of arrange does happen in NI at the moment but where it does it is 'informal'.

Recommendation Three

A change in DE policy that would allow duel enrolments with consideration to school funding and transportation as happens with EOTAS placements. Duel enrolments could be facilitated by co-locating mainstream and special schools.

Interdepartmental Collaboration

In 1986, special schools split from the Department for Health Authorities and became the responsibility of the Department for Education as previously mentioned. In my view, that split was too clean and too clinical. We need a more shared, integrated, inclusive practical working relationship in schools between Health and Education especially in special schools. The complex nature of the needs of the children I work with requires this joined up working collaborative relationships rather than the – what appears some time to be the jealous guarding of departmental boundaries. That is the new battle for shared/integrated education – departmental inclusion.

Recommendation Four

The establishment of collaborative working arrangements with health and social services to enable the development of multi-disciplinary shared/integrated service provision to all schools with all the benefits that could flow from such an arrangement.

Post 16 Provisions

As previously stated, there are increasing numbers of children in our special schools. This means that there are increasing numbers of young adults leaving, or about to leave our special schools. There needs to be the same opportunities available from a FE perspective to young adults with SEN. In this regard the 'shared education' vision implicit in the ALC arrangements could be better utilised.

Recommendation Five

There should be better cooperation between DE and DEL to ensure that our FE Colleges provide equality of opportunity for 'statemented' students.

Oral Evidence

I have no problems should the Committee wish to invite me to present oral evidence.

Dr Peter G Cunningham MBE

Ceara Special School

CnaG

Written Evidence to the Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry

25/3/15

- 1.1. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) welcomes the opportunity to present written evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee on Shared/Integrated Education.

Introduction

- 1.2. CnaG is a Department of Education (DE) sponsored council responsible for the provision of advice pertaining to the development and provision of IME. CnaG was established as a direct consequence of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), which placed a statutory duty on DE “to encourage and facilitate the development IME”. Article 89 of the 1998 Education Order that followed the GFA contained provision to allow DE to pay grants to any “body appearing to the Department to have as an objective the encouragement or promotion of IME”.
- 1.3. There are currently over 5,000 children in the IME sector from pre-school to post-primary level attending IME grant-maintained schools, IME Catholic maintained schools and units, IME controlled schools, IME voluntary grammar school (IME Stream) and IME voluntary non-maintained (IME Stream). In the IME sector, there are 32 voluntary pre-schools, 12 nursery units attached to IME provision, 29 stand-alone IME primary schools, 7 IME units attached to English-medium Primary schools, one stand-alone post-primary school and 3 IME streams attached to English-medium post-primary schools.
- 1.4. In 2011/12 there was a growth of 3.6% in the IME sector, in 2012/13 there was a 5.3% growth and the sector grew by 5.9% in 2013/14. CnaG calculates that the growth in 2014/15 will be 6.0%+. This would be greater if IME post-primary was available to IME primary pupils who lack easy access to this. Currently just above one third of IME pupils do not have easy access to IME post-primary provision.
- 1.5. IME schools cross a number of institutional school sectors. There are IME schools in the Controlled sector, in the Catholic Maintained sector and the Grant Maintained sector. The Irish-medium sector is co-educational, welcoming children from all religious backgrounds or none and all abilities. Although there are currently no IME schools within the Integrated sector C na G would welcome such a development in keeping with the wishes of parents and school communities.
- 1.6. It is CnaG’s role to represent the children, staff and schools in the IME sector as well as the wider IME community. We advise DE and others in relation to the specific needs of IME pupils, staff and schools. CnaG also lobbies on behalf of the sector and provides practical support and advice to parents wishing to establish IME provision in new areas, or those who wish to access IME.

Comments on Shared/Integrated Education

- 2.1. CnaG agrees with and supports the principles of inclusive shared education as a means of providing young people with opportunities to learn together and to reach their potential in educational achievements and as informed citizens and as a means of breaking down barriers arising from historic conflict.
- 2.2. CnaG coordinated a Shared Education project, Together Through Culture, funded by the International Fund for Ireland which involved pupils and teachers in schools learning about our shared Irish language heritage associated with surnames, placenames, songs, dance and

the Irish language. The success of this project is evidence that the Irish-medium Education sector can contribute to the aims of Shared Education in a meaningful and productive way. Irish-medium Education could contribute to many issues associated with the principles of Shared Education including but not limited to the following: promoting greater understanding of and respect for the Irish language and other languages and cultures; wider cultural experience; a greater understanding of lifestyle differences and a greater understanding of the benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism.

- 2.3 CnaG advises the Department of Education that Irish-medium participation in Shared Education developments must acknowledge and respect the language dynamic of the school. It would be unfair to expect Irish-medium schools to engage in Shared Education experiences solely through the medium of English. Opportunities must be planned strategically to ensure that respect for the ethos and language dynamic of the pupils and teachers is secured.

The nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;

- 3.1 CnaG advises that an agreed definition of Shared Education promoted by the Department of Education should be amended to reflect the fact that the education system in NI has both monolingual and bilingual settings and that the Department of Education in its statutory duty to facilitate and encourage Irish-medium Education must ensure that Shared Education is not delivered through one language, namely English.

Key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;

Barriers

- 4.1. The majority of schools in Northern Ireland are monolingual English-medium schools. However, a creative approach which is sensitive to the Irish-medium ethos can mitigate this barrier in order to deliver authentic and respectful Shared Education opportunities for all pupils, schools and communities.

Enablers

- 4.2. A range of research on the benefits of bilingualism indicates that bilingual children are, on the whole, more open to cultural diversity, due to the cultural enrichment they experienced. Irish-medium Education facilitates greater tolerance and understanding of other cultures; a truly shared educational experience.
- 4.3. In the context of Shared Education, 72% of all IME primary schools are independent, outside of the controlled or catholic maintained sector and have pupils from Catholic, Protestant and other backgrounds. Irish-medium Education is a choice for everyone in every community. Currently 6% of IME primary schools are within the controlled sector, 22% within the catholic maintained sector and 72% within the other maintained sector. Irish-medium Education is a linguistic choice for parents and pupils which can be catered for within all sectors. It actively encourages communities to avail of the advantages of bilingualism.
- 4.4. The system of immersion education which is used in Irish-medium Education is recognised globally for excellence. Not only does it deliver on Shared Education, but on shared heritage, language, traditions and history. It also delivers on the Department of Education's core vision, "Every young person achieving to his or her full potential at each stage of his or her development.
- 4.5. Immersion education is acknowledged as most effective way of developing second language fluency in children and young people. In the context of Shared Education, fluency in

both English as a major global language and Irish as a minority and native language has potential to bring communities together in a shared future as outlined in the Programme for Government.

What priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration.

- 5.1 Definition of Shared Education must be revised to reflect linguistic diversity and to deliver the Department of Education's statutory duties to encourage and facilitate Irish-medium Education;
- 5.2 Shared Education pilot projects should be initiated, funded and evaluated which take cognisance of the nature and the specific needs of the Irish-medium school sector.

Committee for Employment and Learning

Committee for Employment and Learning
Room 416
Parliament Buildings

Tel: +44 (0)28 9052 1448
cathie.white@niassembly.gov.uk

To: Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education

From: Cathie White
Clerk to the Employment and Learning Committee

Date: 10 September 2014

Subject: Inquiry into Shared / Integrated Education

Peter,

At its meeting today the Committee for Employment and Learning considered your correspondence regarding your inquiry into shared / integrated education.

The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to inform the Committee for Education that it has a number of Hansard transcripts on the NI Assembly website which may be of use.

I should be grateful if you would bring this to the attention of your Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'White', with a stylized flourish to the left.

Cathie White
Committee Clerk

Enc.

Committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister

Committee for the Office of the First Minister
and Deputy First Minister
Room 285
Parliament Buildings

Tel: 028 90521903

Email: committee.ofmdfm@niassembly.gov.uk

From: Kathy O'Hanlon - Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister
and deputy First Minister

Date: 11 September 2014

To: Peter McCallion – Clerk to the Committee for Education

Subject: Inquiry into Shared / Integrated Education

At its meeting of 10 September 2014, this Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Education detailing the Terms of Reference for its Inquiry into Shared / Integrated Education.

The Committee agreed to write to advise that if any issues relating to Shared / Integrated Education arise in response to its Inquiry into Building a United Community, that these will be referred to the Committee for Education for consideration.

Regards

Kathy O'Hanlon

Clerk to the Committee

Community Relations Council

Peter McCallion
Committee Clerk
Room 375a, Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX
committee.education@niassembly.gov.uk

October 2014

Dear Committee Clerk

RE: Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

The Community Relations Council (CRC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's inquiry into Integrated Education and Shared Education.

Education, both formal and informal, can act as a critical player in developing, supporting and achieving reconciliation in our conflict transformation process. This will require a systematic approach to support the embedding and mainstreaming of good relations across and within educational structures, policies, practices and procedures. The presumption that we have parallel and polarised systems that will meet the needs of children and young people should be replaced with a common commitment to enhance and maximise opportunities for meeting, sharing and collaborating on a cross-community basis both at a policy and a structural level.

CRC supports a vision of educating children together, and whilst CRC does not advocate a single uniform model of sharing or integration, it sets at its core the need to ensure the education of children provides maximum opportunities for engagement and enrichment. Local circumstances will require local solutions, and must be supported by a genuine policy priority to help make it happen. Political will and leadership are crucial to the delivery of these educational commitments.

A core element of CRC's intervention, whether policy comment¹ or financial support, has focused on the quality and the sustainability of the contact. CRC advocates for collaborative relationships and engagement, either through legislation, incentivizing or encouragement, and recommends the following principles - equity, diversity, interdependence, welcoming, open, accessible, and safe, to ground this interaction. Utilizing these principles, during the design and development stages of collaboration and partnership, will help set a trajectory that delivers high quality and long-term sustainable engagement, as well as contributing to reconciliation and peace-building.

General Comments

From the outset, the Committee may want to remind themselves of the various international and domestic legislation relevant to the inquiry (Appendix 1). It would also be useful to note the positioning of education in a number of peace accords/negotiations² as important components in our peace process. However, it is the outworking of these agreements into the legislative and policy environment that will ultimately test the commitment of these political commitments.

1 Appendix 3.

2 In the context of a society emerging from conflict it is important to bear in mind the focus afforded to educating children together within local political accords. The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (1998) states that 'an essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing'. The Hillsborough castle agreement also included a pledge from the British government to gift four former military bases to the NI executive highlighting an expectation that land in Omagh would be used for an educational campus

Finally, a number of legislative and policy instruments already exist which support or have the potential to further support and enhance the education of children together. Appendix 2 draws attention to some of these mechanisms.

Integration and Sharing - Evidence

The policy development process does not take place in isolation. As well as legislation and policy development there are a number of important external influencers. A range of independent reviews and research have been carried out, with each presenting recommendations that seek to influence and generate change. This includes the Strategic Review of the Schools Estate (2006) Report³, and the more recent report from the independent Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on the Advancement of Shared Education' (April 2013)⁴ which published 20 recommendations⁵. The Minister for Education responded positively to the report.

The report also included a definition of sharing 'shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion'⁶.

Other research relevant to this current debate includes the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People's research (NICCY) 'Shared Education - the views of children and young people'⁷, and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's (NIHRC) report on 'Education Reform in Northern Ireland-a human rights perspective'⁸.

In addition to this are the studies that examine the benefits of sustained contact, both in terms of education and inter-community relations. For example Vani Borooah and Colin Knox considered a range of independent research as well as the Shared Education Programme [SEP] initiative, and report on the 'significant types of benefits arising from shared education: economic, education and reconciliation benefits'⁹. They conclude that involvement in the SEP initiative would (A) Increase the likelihood of: getting good GCSE's, gaining fluency in a foreign language, and going to University; (B) reaffirm Hughes et al research that 'separate schooling is more likely to contribute to 'own' group bias, stereotyping and prejudice'¹⁰ and that educational contact is valuable 'as a mechanism for promoting more harmonious relationships that can help promote social cohesion in a society that remains deeply divided'¹¹; and finally (C) budgetary savings e.g. creating sustainable schools, as well as estimated savings of £80m per year¹² to society regarding reduced police costs and increased foreign investment due to reconciliation benefits.

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- 3 This report called on government to 'provide tangible support to schools that are actively engaged in sharing with other schools, or schools that are developing an inclusive environment in recognition of the diversity of their pupils' religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds' http://www.deni.gov.uk/letter_and_statement.pdf
 - 4 Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education – Terms of Reference; http://www.deni.gov.uk/shared_education_advisory_group_terms_of_reference.pdf
 - 5 Recommendations were presented under 5 themes a) mainstreaming shared education b) supporting schools in shared education c) schools and other educational institutions d) area-based planning and the schools estate, and finally e) academic selection. <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/FinalReport/>
 - 6 MAG Report-Page 7
 - 7 http://www.niccy.org/downloads/2013/publications/Adult_Report.pdf
 - 8 <http://www.nihrc.org/index.php/news/item/download/48>
 - 9 http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/RaISe/knowledge_exchange/KESS-01-11-2012.pdf Page 2.
 - 10 Hughes, J. (2011) 'Are Separate Schools divisive? A Case Study from Northern Ireland' British Educational Research Journal 37(5) 829-850.
 - 11 Hughes, J., Lolliot, S., Hewstone, M., Schmid, K. and Carlisle, K. (2012) Sharing Classes between Separate Schools: a mechanism for improving inter-group relations in Northern Ireland? Policy Futures in Education 10(5).
 - 12 Borooah, V. and Knox, C. (2011) The Economics of the Shared Education Programme. University of Ulster
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Lastly, it is important to pay attention to the aspirations of society in this area. Opinion polls regularly highlight the high levels of support for educating children together e.g. '79% of parents interviewed said they would back a move to transform their child's school to integrated, while 66% of all people questioned believe integrated schools should be the main model of our education system. Furthermore more than two-thirds said an integrated school best prepares children for living and working in a diverse society¹³'.

Integration and Sharing – Practice

There are many models and approaches that impact positively on collaboration and partnership between schools on a cross-community basis e.g. the department's Community Relations Equity and Diversity (CRED) Policy and Enhancement Scheme; whilst others are financially supported by external and international funders e.g. the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) support the 'Sharing Education Programme'¹⁴, and the IFI Sharing In Education Programme, and the Integrated Education Fund (IEF)¹⁵ through a range of grants¹⁶.

Recent announcements commit further investment for shared education such as Atlantic Philanthropies¹⁷, as well as the anticipated investment from Peace IV which will be allocated to support 'shared education initiatives'. This range of financial support signifies a huge commitment to encouraging and supporting schools to work and bring children together.

However, whilst these practical interventions produce positive outcomes they affect a small number of children. The current £25 million funding from philanthropy organisations for sharing involves approximately 10,000 children (approximately 2% of the school population)¹⁸, and the formal integrated sector represents 62 integrated schools (42 primary and 20 post-primary) which educates just over 21,500 children and young people. So whilst they are delivering constructive and tangible outcomes it could be viewed as having limited success. Moreover, given that some of the external money is a transitory measure, it could be argued that there is a limit to its success unless the learning and practice is strategically supported by the department. There is a danger programmatic interventions are prioritised and becomes the status quo which could result in limited opportunities for systemic change.

It is crucial for the department to give serious consideration as to how sustained and high quality contact will be secured post-external investment. CRC's response to the Peace IV consultation highlighted the importance of seeking assurances for supporting the development of a commitment from the governing structures – both local and departmental, to tackle the issue of sustainability and quality of contact during and post-Peace IV. These new monies are valuable and need to build on previous interventions – they should not be viewed as more of the same but rather grasped as an opportunity to support long-lasting structural change that enable sustainable, high quality contact across the various educational structures and personnel after Peace IV.

13 <http://www.ief.org.uk/2013/02/28/recent-poll-shows-overwhelming-support-for-integrated-education/>

14 www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk

15 Since its foundation in 1992, the Integrated Education Fund has made grants totalling over £15 million to schools and groups; <http://www.ief.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/projects-made-possible/>

16 Other grants include Support for Library Resources at Transforming Integrated Schools, Support for Existing Integrated Schools, Support for a Fledgling Grant Maintained Integrated Primary School, Grants for projects supporting newcomers and cultural diversity, Additional support for schools still growing, and Support for other small or unique/one off projects.

17 'Robinson and McGuinness announce £58million investment'. OFMDFM Press Release 17 September 2014.

18 Alan Smith, UNESCO. <http://15yearson.com/2013/04/08/is-the-government-planning-for-separate-development/>

Moving forward

The following comments are CRC's views as to how this could be achieved. There are 4 key drivers in relation to educating children together:

Policy

The advancement of policy, political and economic priorities requires strategic political leadership is critical, therefore the Minister of Education and the Department should give greater strategic direction to the schools sector to ensure the teaching and practice of good relations is successfully mainstreamed across all schools.

Current practice and evidence must have a stronger influence on the development of educational policy in order to improve educational outcomes and advance sharing. Then recommendations from the MAG should be implemented.

Area Planning

The recent consultation process on area-based planning did not convince CRC that due consideration had been given to the legislative and policy commitments e.g. Programme for Government (PfG) commitments to 'substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015', Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) commitments of creating 10 Shared Campuses, DE's CRED policy and enhancement scheme, area learning communities and the suite of projects supported by external supporters. Area based planning should require schools to explore options for sharing, with a clear public preference for those options which promote normalised interaction and engagement. Embracing this as a priority will help deliver a schools estate that meets the needs of children in all localities.

Facilitative Dialogue

Where schools are at risk of being closed or new schools are planned, local communities should be kept fully informed of the opportunity for possible collaborations. Wide scale direct debate with parents and children should be encouraged and facilitated at area based planning level. A deliberative poll exercise took place in Omagh in 2007 which facilitated discussions between parents on models of education provision in their locality. The final report revealed that people wanted more sharing with 71% specifically stating that they would support integrated education¹⁹. Those responsible for planning the schools estate should proactively engage with parents and the wider community and examine all options for increased sharing on a cross-community sectoral basis.

Legislation

Appropriate legislation should be developed to ensure shared education is strategically advanced. CRC called for amendments to the current bill regarding the promotion of Shared Education during the Committee Stage of the Bill. Furthermore, the MAG Report included a definition of shared education. This needs to be translated into law.

It is important the Committee inquiry consider current Assembly deliberations on the current bill, as well as any future legislation.

Barriers

Legacy

Our historical context and the legacy of the conflict are other obvious barriers, and it is clear current levels of communal segregation in our society are reflected within the education estate. For example, QUB research (2009) reported that children and young people from

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<http://cdd.stanford.edu/polls/nireland/2007/omagh-report.pdf>

six communities still remained significantly affected by the conflict and that “*violence has remained a part of everyday life for children and young people living in communities defined by uncertainty, unease and the continued presence of paramilitaries and dissidents*”²⁰. Dealing with the past remains a huge problem for the youth of our society, and despite the experience of relative peace by many children and young people, the traditions of the past continue to impact on their lives.

Teachers have also noted concerns about the impact of sectarianism²¹ on pupil relationships. This poses a potential threat to interaction and could result in avoiding or minimising this type of engagement because of the risk factor.

Policy

Integrated and shared education policy must be viewed as a part of the family of strategic policies – they are crucial in the long-term process of normalising interaction and meaningful engagement.

Area planning proposals were weak regarding shared and integrated education. Many options for mergers and collaborations were proposed on a cross-sectoral basis, but there were few on a cross-community basis. A generic commitment to ‘collaboration’ cannot be allowed to disguise the imperative for inter-sectoral sharing. It is noteworthy that responses to the SIEP evaluation indicated that ‘*less than half of respondents from all school sectors felt that current education policy supported cross-sectoral collaboration*’, despite the fact that ‘*a majority of all head teachers agreed that schools should promote better relations*’²². This requires urgent attention.

In addition to the above comments regarding drivers and challenges CRC has the following recommendations to make. There should be:

Legislation

- A statutory duty on schools to promote good relations;
- A duty to fully consider sharing and collaboration in school development plans:

Policy

- An endorsement of previous recommendations, on the re-structuring and re-organisation of educational structures which explicitly encourage interaction between young people and contribute to the reconciliation of our communities and improve educational outcomes for all children;
- Develop guidance on sharing and collaboration for area based planning;
- Place a responsibility on boards (Education Authority) and governors to adhere to policy commitments regarding good relations issues and ensure these are reflected in area-based plans;

20 Haydon, D., McAlister, S., Scraton, P (2009) *Childhood in Transition Experiencing Marginalisation and Conflict in Northern Ireland*. QUB, Save the Children, The Prince’s Trust

21 ‘Teachers specifically suggested that they were worried about pupil sectarianism or general hostility between pupils’, *SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AND RECONCILIATION: AN EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COLLABORATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND*, Project Team: Prof Joanne Hughes, Dr Caitlin Donnelly, Prof Miles Hewstone, Prof Tony Gallagher & Dr Karen Carlisle December 2010, Page 41. <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/reports.html>

22 <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/School%20collaboration%20in%20NI%202010.pdf> Page 32.

- Undertake an audit of current activity - what is being achieved, where and why sharing is not occurring and seek to identify barriers, as well as suggesting programmes to progress this lack of work²³.
- Consider the amalgamation premium in the common funding formula policy and explore how it could support collaborative approaches;
- Carry out audits to identify geographical areas for potential growth and changes in public attitudes;

Practice

- Strategic political leadership is needed to ensure the teaching and practice of good relations is successfully mainstreamed across all schools;
- Enabling a culture change. Good practice should be shared and publicised, and a culture of co-operation and partnership between schools and colleges encouraged;
- Practice and research must influence strategic policy;
- There should be a greater focus on sharing and collaboration within service delivery and the allocation of resources;
- Commit long-term and appropriate budget to support good relations activity across all levels of formal education;
- Develop a transitional programme including guidance relating to models for consulting on and how best to pursue sharing and collaboration. Adequate resources and a realistic timeframe will be needed to assess how suitable the models are to a particular area. Work with board of governors, parents and the wider community should be a central part of this change programme;
- Developmental programmes should be devised and implemented where non-sharing activity is identified. This should be linked to performance and inspections;
- Targeted support and resources - additional targeted support and resources for those schools in areas that continue to experience considerable community conflict, segregation and disadvantage;
- Ethos and identity issues should be dealt with using the UNCRC framework;
- A whole schools approach should be used which includes working with parents and the wider community;
- The curriculum should act as a critical lever for ensuring safety, welfare, dignity and respect in relation to personal understanding, citizenship and cultural understanding;
- Capacity building. Relevant regulatory and training bodies should include compulsory components of study on good relations in their training programmes;
- Stronger collaboration between teacher-training institutions to ensure all student teachers have the opportunity to experience the different sectors and ethos, via the exchange of learning and conducting some practice in another sector;
- Up-dated resources and materials for good relations work should be actively developed by DE, NI Curriculum and CCEA;
- Utilise external support and institutional knowledge to bring added value to internal practices;

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It must be stressed that a significant amount of this information is should be currently available from departmental and external sources but it would be a useful exercise to assemble it in one place. Importantly this scoping exercise would ensure that those involved in all types of sharing, or those who want to explore opportunities, can access the relevant information and be given the support to have that conversation.

- Non-accredited benefits - creating opportunities for engagement that develop trust, relationships, and improving educational achievement can help create transferable skills that are needed to create and maintain harmonious work environments and cohesive communities;
- Evaluation. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework that measures levels of collaboration and cooperation between local schools. This should be linked to performance and inspection, and should be published yearly;

The above is a series of suggestions that, if adopted across the various strategic and institutional structures, could positively impact on peace building and reconciliation within the current educational provision. They would also support the development of more formal and stable relationships thereby delivering longer and more sustainable outcomes.

Conclusion

Educational structures have already experimented in collaboration and partnership on a range of curriculum and extra curriculum activities, as well as between schools, pupils, teachers, institutions, and parents. It is important to set the work of this inquiry in this context. Clearly sharing, collaboration and integration are taking place, but the desire and aspiration for more is compelling and it is clear more needs to be done. The Committee should reflect on current provision, the vision and what needs to be done to support the development of this current practice over a sustained period.

CRC welcomes the opportunity to make this submission and would welcome the opportunity to engage with the Committee on this important aspect of peace and reconciliation.

Contact: Gemma Attwood, Policy Development Officer, Community Relations Council

Email: gattwood@nicrc.org.uk

Appendix 1

Rights agenda

Firstly, as a backdrop to this Inquiry it is useful to reflect on the range of international obligations that intersect with educational policy development and practice such as Article 29: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁴, *Article 6: Framework Convention on National Minorities*²⁵, *Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*²⁶, and Article 13(1) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which ‘recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the united nations for the maintenance of peace’²⁷. The Council of Europe’s 2007 White Paper ‘living together as equals in dignity’ drew attention to the role of education in supporting and enabling intercultural dialogue. It highlighted the need to learn the competencies that would promote intercultural dialogue²⁸. Finally, it is important to reflect on the concluding observations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2008) which recorded its concern regarding “the problem of segregated education” and called on government to take measures to address segregation of education in Northern Ireland²⁹.

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- 24 Article 29 (1) “States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: “(c) The development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; “(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin; UN (1989) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UN: Geneva.
- 25 <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/157.htm>
- 26 (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children; <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a26>
- 27 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx>
- 28 Living Together as Equals in Dignity. Council of Europe. 2007. http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf
- 29 October 2008 - COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, Forty-ninth session, CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION Concluding observations:UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND. <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/CRC.C.GBR.CO.4.pdf>

Appendix 2

Legislation

Ultimately legislation sets the direction for the development of policy that will enforce the legislation. The key legal instruments that can influence how children are educated together include the *Education (Northern Ireland) Act 1978/ Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1984*³⁰; *Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989*,³¹; *Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006*³². Further educational reform is progressing under the *education bill*.

Policy

There are a wide range of policies in existence that impact and influence this current debate. The *Programme for Government 2011-2015* includes a number of commitments regarding shared education including a commitment to ensuring that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; to substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015; and to establish a ministerial advisory group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the minister of education to advance shared education³³

(Report delivered 2013).

The Executive's 'Together Building a United Community' (TBUC) includes a number of goals relevant to education including summer camps/summer schools, a "buddy scheme" in publicly run nursery and primary schools; and development of age-appropriate primary and post-primary anti-sectarianism resources. However of major significance is the commitment to 'create ten shared educational campuses'³⁴. To date applications have been sought and 3 have been approved. A further call is expected in the near future.

The Department of Education's *Corporate Plan for Education 2012-2015* clearly identifies its relationship with the PfG stating that 'our focus will be on ensuring that every young person achieves to his or her full potential and on maximising the contribution that education can make to shaping a strong and shared community and delivering sustainable economic growth' and will 'promote opportunities for shared learning for pupils in schools in all sectors and all parts of the north'³⁵

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- 30 Controlled integrated status was introduced in the Education (Northern Ireland) Act 1978 and later incorporated into the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1984 "in order to facilitate the establishment of schools likely to be attended by pupils of different religious affiliations or cultural traditions"
- 31 clause 64—(1) 'It shall be the duty of the Department to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils'<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/csc/reports/fraser99d.htm>
- 32 Provided the broad legislative framework to implement the revised statutory curriculum, to give effect to aspects of the new arrangements for post-primary education, including the curricular Entitlement Framework and powers to introduce new admissions arrangements.
- 33 <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg>
- 34 <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community>
- 35 In particular Corporate Goal 4 commits to 'Improving the learning environment' and undertakes to deliver and support an environment that 'provides opportunities for sharing and for building a more cohesive society' via the following objectives: Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; Substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015; Significantly progress work on the plan for the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus as a key regeneration project. http://www.deni.gov.uk/de_corporate_plan_2012_english.pdf

Furthermore, the *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy*³⁶ has as its vision that it will ‘contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available”.

It is important to note that the CRED policy enhancement scheme operates under a significantly reduced budgetary heading from its predecessor with an approximate 70% reduction in financial support. The recent good relations indicators revealed that under the CRED enhancement scheme (2011/2012) 12,164 (3.8%) of children were involved participating in community relations activities which equated to 249 (20.6%) schools. The previous policy which had been operational until 2009/10 involved 30,997 children (10%) equalling 468 schools (38%)³⁷.

Other areas of educational policy relevant to this Inquiry include the *Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum*, the *Religious Education Core Syllabus*, the *Entitlement Framework*³⁸, Furthermore all post-primary schools are members of area learning communities which provide an opportunity to maximise the capacity of schools to deliver the entitlement framework via collaborative arrangements and a departmental circular 2013/10 - *delivering the entitlement framework* drew attention to financial support/incentives for this collaborative approach³⁹ (there is no official information available as to the extent of cross-community sectoral collaboration).

Other strategic policies which, whilst not having a specific community relations angle, have a significant role to play in supporting and developing community relations within the educational arena such as ‘*Schools for the future: policy for sustainable schools*’ (2009) which has as its vision a schools estate of educationally sustainable schools planned on an area basis, with a focus on sharing and collaboration. It states that the education sector will want to ‘uphold an education system that plays a powerful and positive role in the normalising of society, helping to make it sustainable and vibrant, with greater sharing amongst communities’; other policies include *Every School a Good School* (2009); *Area-based planning*, and the *Common Funding Formula* referred to an amalgamation premium, but it is unclear what type of amalgamation this referred to i.e. inter or intra-sectoral.

36 Its three main objectives focus on children and young people as the beneficiaries. It wants to ensure all learners ‘have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination’; to 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 finally to equip children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference <http://www.credni.org/contents/what-is-cred/>

37 Good Relations Indicators 2012 Update; OFMDFM; 2013. <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/gr-indicators-2012-update>

38 The legislation bringing the Entitlement Framework into operation applies from 1 September 2013.

39 http://www.deni.gov.uk/14-19_cet_2013_14_ef_circular__english_version_.pdf

Appendix 3

Good Relations Forum: Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts - A Strategy to meet our needs for the 21st century (April 2010), CRC& ECNI.

School and local level:

- Compulsory good relations programmes in schools;
- Good practice to be shared and publicised;
- Capacity building programmes for existing school teaching staff;
- Capacity building of parents and local communities;
- Keeping local communities fully informed of the opportunity for possible collaboration, where schools are at risk of being closed or new schools are planned.

Strategic level:

- Strategic leadership - the Minister of Education and the Department of Education to give greater strategic direction to the schools sector to ensure that the teaching and practice of good relations is successfully mainstreamed across all schools.
- Culture change - by creating a culture of co-operation, partner schools and colleges can bring considerable resources and skills that both add value to the learning experiences of children and young people, and crucially, help schools to do things differently.
- Budget commitment to good relations programmes - the Department of Education to identify and commit a long-term and appropriate budget to supporting all schools to provide good relations modules within citizenship programmes.
- Good relations lens – the entire curriculum to be good relations proofed, at least in those subject areas where it is both relevant and appropriate to do so.
- Targeted support and resources - the Department and ESA to offer more targeted support and resources for those schools in areas that continue to experience considerable community conflict, segregation and disadvantage.
- Greater focus on sharing and collaboration within service delivery - the Department, ESA and other key educational stakeholders to focus on maximising value for money and avoiding duplication of educational provision, by placing a greater focus on existing drivers, policies and practices that encourage greater sharing and collaboration, particularly on a cross-community basis.
- Developing tools that measure change – the Department to develop a set of targets, as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the changes to the level of collaboration and cooperation between local schools. This should be published yearly and publicised widely.
- Teacher, head teacher and governor training - the Department to ensure that amendments are made to the various training programmes by relevant regulatory and training bodies, making good relations modules compulsory components of study.
- Greater sharing and collaboration between teacher training colleges – the Department and ESA to encourage stronger collaboration between the different teacher training institutions, to ensure all student teachers, whatever their community background, have the appropriate time and opportunity to experience other sectors and school ethos. All initial teacher training courses/programmes to encompass an element of teaching from different sectors on a cross-community basis.
- Mapping future opportunities - audits would help identify geographical areas for potential growth in integrated or shared education and changes in public attitudes, thus, providing a strategic context within which the transformation of schools might take place.

- A generic commitment to ‘collaboration’ cannot be allowed to disguise the imperative for inter-sectoral sharing which must result. Of course, some schools will have more opportunities than others to engage on a cross-community basis and there are already a number of schools delivering this in practice. However without an obligation to explore all options some schools may opt out of this opportunity. This collaboration cannot be allowed to occur on an ad- hoc basis - this could simply come down to it being easier to engage/collaborate cross sector (not cross community) and also happen at the discretion of board of governors or the principal.

Concerned Parent

Open Letter to Committee Integrated Education

I am not an 'academic', I am not politically minded and I am not particularly religious. Yes I have my faith as such but that's about as far as it goes.

What I am is a single mum with a demanding job and two fantastic kids. My children are now 19yrs and 15 yrs old and I would do practically anything within my power for them. I made a very conscious decision that they would be educated in an environment free (well as free as can be expected) from sectarianism and tribalism as possible.

My own upbringing was one of working class with two fantastic parents who happened to be protestant Christians. However, my life was interjected with bombs, needless killings and my mother wanted to know my every move. 'in case I got caught up in an incident!!'. My parents were unionist voters, a fact I only became aware of in my late twenties, but had friends from all walks of life. As my mother worked in Community Development she had worked quite a bit with ex prisoners and some would like to call themselves 'combatants'.

I went to Methodist College, which in some way was 'integrated' even back then, with me having friends from Hong Kong and Dubai.

I have seen the destruction that sectarianism can cause to children. They hate, they fear and they don't respect and it breaks my heart that these kids are missing out on so much of life as my kids know. How do I know this for a fact? I have been a Police Officer for 25 years, working in North and West Belfast, the worst area for bitterness, youth crime and segregation in the North of Ireland! Yes, class, unemployment etc does have their impact, but these kids aren't being given the opportunity to experience the 'other side'.

When I sent my kids to Lagan College, it was to try to reinforce what I had already been teaching them - that we in some ways are all the same yet different and it's OK to embrace the differences.

I have seen the Pastoral care given by Lagan, they 'care' for the kids in their 7 hrs/day control. I admire the staff for wanting to give every child the opportunity to be the best they can be in life. I have seen that they are FULLY integrated – what I'm trying to say is Protestant, Catholic, Seikh, atheist, muslim, able bodied, disabled, girls boys and those in between, rich, poor and all colours sit side by side in class. Gifted and talented, and those academically challenged are all given the opportunity to be the best they can. This is where other schools fail miserably. There isn't that diversity encompassed in one learning location.

My kids have grown up with friends from every part of the City – Cregagh estate, Ladybrook and even rural areas such as Ballywalter. They have experienced a full life, swapping stories, life experiences and most of all RESPECTING others. They have come to realise that just because Conal lives at the bottom of the Ormeau Road, it doesn't mean he is an IRA sympathiser, its fine that Orla speaks fluent Irish – but this does not mean she is intending to disregard English and force everyone to speak Irish! They learn that by embracing the differences, we can actually move forward and that, is something which this wee country really needs.

It has saddened me greatly to that certain political parties and academics are not 100% behind Integrated Education. What are they afraid of?? Why do they not want to offer these experiences to the kids of today and tomorrow? For them to block this opportunity for our youth is tantamount to criminal in my eyes!

I read an article that only 6% of kids go to a recognised integrated school – and this was pounced on by CCMS, however, the CCMS did not take into consideration how many of those other 94% would have attended an Integrated school IF THE CHOICE was available.

As I say, I'm not an academic or politically motivated, I just care about this wee country's future. I care about the kids and I would love to see at some stage other kids experience the same as my kids have been fortunate to.

I know it will take time and money to implement these changes however, these are changes which must be made as a RIGHT for families to decide that they want their kids to be educated in an all-inclusive environment. Again I say to the opposers of this – What exactly ARE you afraid of???

Corrymeela Community



For the NI Education Committee “Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education”

**The Corrymeela Community is pleased to respond to some of the terms of reference the Education Committee has been asked to consider.
We would be pleased to share our experience with the Committee, if members so wished, at some later date.**

The Corrymeela Community, founded in 1965, as a cross community reconciliation organisation, has continuously initiated diverse Schools Community Relations Programmes since 1966, using a mixture of its own charitably donated resources as well as support from a variety of philanthropic, public and peace funding sources.

Within the Membership of this voluntary organisation we have many educational practitioners associated with Mutual Understanding, Shared Education and Integrated Education.

We have a number of Higher Education Lecturing Staff who have been involved in the professional formation of: teachers, educational managers, Boards of Governors and Principals.

We have a number of school principals, senior school staff and experienced teachers promoting mutual understanding, citizenship, shared and integrated approaches.

Additionally there are now many youth workers, in full time and voluntary community relations practice, who developed their interest in this work through volunteering or being engaged with reconciliation practice at our residential centre over the past 49 years.

The Context

Education in an ethnic frontier society such as ours can readily become a contested theme for people from all traditions. How different people and traditions view education needs to be more widely understood by us all, if we are to really focus on how we build a system centred on:

- the personal, social, intellectual and spiritual development of our children and young people;
- enabling them to embrace a shared future together, with diverse others;
- engaging parents and carers, from all backgrounds and traditions, as partners in this enterprise;
- support professional teaching staff, support staff, management and Boards of Governors work to the fullest possibilities offered to us through the current and exciting Northern Ireland Curriculum.

In view of the different educational providers and the current structures that exist in Northern Ireland, it is important that all initiatives that seek to promote an openness to difference, sharing or integration are welcomed and supported.

It is also important that all educational work is subjected to quality challenges around the extent to which they are explicit about working to reconstruct this society as one characterised by mutual respect and a willingness to share a common life together-

Corrymeela House Belfast
129 Ormeau Road,
Belfast, BT7 1SH
Phone: +44 (0) 28 9050 8080
Email: belfast@corrymeela.org

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between children, young people and adults-in this society.

We welcome all contributions that fully, promote sharing and integration and we are working to promote such a supportive culture around our schools. Schools have a central role in assisting us become a shared, mutually respectful and united society. This goal is a task for adults to drive forward.

We ask our own members and staff, and others also, to challenge a tolerance of 'compliance' that only offers minimal responses to the demands of public policy to promote CRED policies. Minimal responses, with no depth of 'a commitment culture' that promotes a more open and shared society, have little place or right to call on public financial support. Our children and young people deserve better.

A. Responding under your terms of reference: "Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education"

For us:

A 1. There is a need for an open, shared examination between all parties about the fears and dynamics associated with the control of education.

We attach a detailed political history of education analysis by our late member, Professor Frank Wright, published by us some years ago.

This text, together with the detailed historical appendix on 'Education and National Division in Ireland' since the early 19th Century, is an important reminder about the fears and dynamics associated with the control of education.

In Frank's analysis of: separate education, possibly being a means of managing distrust; and integrated education, possibly offering possibilities for reconciling diverse national traditions; he cautions us all to think carefully about making education a political football to serve diverse and opposing traditions and a way of stopping the needs and talents of our children and young people remaining the focus of public policy.

A 2. If the ethos of our schools is not primarily one of trust, then all schooling engagements between pupils from different traditions will be charged with a fear of assimilation.

Drawing on his experience of living in Britain, the former Yugoslavia and Northern Ireland, Frank argues that, in contested societies, histories are about relationships that are always charged with anxiety or tension in the present moment, whereas those living in more stable societies do not have this experience.

He argues that the different traditions and sectors need to understand the dynamics they are too readily caught up in and take courage to move out from them and beyond. Such a move would be a signal of mature political leadership (Shriver)

A 3. A need to offer culturally appropriate education within a united, shared, future vision



Wright argued that “the most important principle to uphold is the parents right to choose a culturally appropriate education for their children - state, catholic, integrated, irish or free presbyterian- where possible, to look for a way of expressing these needs on a united basis.”

He argues for this united approach between the different sectors.

A 4. It is important that the 1998 internationally guaranteed political agreement that addressed integrated education is honoured.

In “*Integrated Education: A Review of Policy and Research Evidence 1999-2012*”, Hansson and his colleagues argue that:

“In terms of education policy, the concept of integrated education was endorsed in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement,..., but later Executive documents, such as the strategy for Cohesion Sharing and Integration Consultation Document (July 2010) and the Northern Ireland Programme for Government (2011-2015) avoid any direct references to integrated education and the role it will play in future policy.

Current educational reform, such as the Education Bill (2012) ...do not refer directly to integrated education or to the duty of the Department of Education to ‘encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education’. Instead, there is an emphasis on sharing in education and ‘integrating education’ rather than a policy to increase the number of integrated schools.

A Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education was established in 2012 as part of the Programme for Government (2011-15), but there is no explicit reference to integrated education within its mandate.”

A 5. In our experience one most significant barrier is the resistance of professional educators to engage together in exploring sensitive and challenging societal issues around history, identity and beliefs with colleagues from different political, cultural and religious traditions. It is not primarily the attitudes of parents, carers or children and young people.

Of course we recognise the excellent work of many educators in this area. However, in spite of this body of forward-looking educators, in our experience we have encountered some professional educators as a major challenge.

This is compounded by:

- A still limited embedding of dealing with sensitive issues within the Higher Education training of teachers in our Universities and Colleges;
- The limiting of Continuous Professional Training opportunities that means teachers from diverse sectors do not meet together (**Note: In Scotland each teacher has four to five Continuous Professional Development Days Annually, as a commitment to supporting their children and young people**);

Since 1969 the Department of Education has often supported Mutual Understanding work, however this work has primarily been funded by local charitable organisations, the externally offered Peace Funds and International



- philanthropy.

There is a need for a central public budget to be established that supports this work and a government reliance on philanthropy stopped;

- There are now very limited opportunities to explicitly engage with the sensitive themes around Mutual Understanding issues due to a lack of core Public Budgets in this area;
- This area of work needs prioritised and embedded within the in-service training of experienced teachers, middle and senior management.

A 6. The Peace Agreement of 1998 and subsequent agreements were forged out of many strands of political and civil society actions. Central to these experiences were experiences of politicians being away from home or living with one another at residential venues.

As an educational model of change the residential experience, being with one another, out of our normal space, is one way in which we meet one another deeply. If this experience was essential to the wider peace processes, it remains essential to the future formation of children, young people and adults, many of whom still live quite separate lives.

The work of Sharing and Integrating will be enhanced if resources for residentially meeting together are prioritised.

B. Responding under your terms of reference:

“Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes”

In our experience Northern Ireland has been a lead in developing twinning approaches between schools that other societies could and do learn from.

We would caution the Committee from, too readily, looking elsewhere at the expense of gathering the accumulated experience developed within this jurisdiction. As an aid to this internal knowledge we offer the following examples:

B 1 Since 1940, the early attempts by Dan Mc Call and John Malone with the National Council of YMCA Programmes for young boys from areas of social deprivation.

B 2 Since 1966:

The experience of Corrymeela in developing, long lasting, **twinning programmes** between secondary schools and grammar schools around Mutual Understanding that started before the civil conflict and continued through the worst years of the violence. For example in areas such as Rathcoole; East Belfast-Armagh; Dungannon; North Down; Ballymena; Omagh; Craigavon; Coleraine; Derry/ Londonderry.

The provision of **four-day residential teacher development courses** at Corrymeela around systemic and curricular developments around promoting and sustaining Mutual Understanding.



The development of primary school partnerships in areas of social deprivation addressing poverty and underachievement, some of which were supported by Corrymeela fieldwork / teaching staff.

The provision of **Forgiveness Education and Religious Education** Resources on peace building and reconciliation.

B 3 The current Corrymeela Community 'Facing our History, Shaping the Future' Programme, developed jointly with a US Education Partner.

We have developed this excellent programme over the last years, highly commended by the ETI Inspectors. Together with teacher and student resources this programme, originally funded through the IFI 'Shared Education' initiative, has been curtailed. The programme is very relevant to all Secondary Level Schools.

At present this programme has reached 60% of all post Primary Schools in Northern Ireland. However as we have no substantial long term funding against this project, this is preventing us from releasing its full potential. Currently we are using our charitable resources to augment this work.

B 4 Since 1969 the **Schools Community Relations Programme**, established with King George VI charitable funding and supported by the (then) Ministry of Education under the direction of John Malone. This led to the development of a **Schools Support Service**, then based in QUB but ended in the 1980's.

B 5 In the 1970's many programmes of community relations based school work were developed. These are explored in the recent work of Norman Richardson and Tony Gallagher and in the writings of Alan Smith, Alan Mc Cully, Gerry Tyrell, Alan Robinson and others.

(See Norman Richardson, Tony Gallagher Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding: the Experience of Northern Ireland. Bern: Peter Lang.)

C Responding under your terms of reference: "Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools"

C 1 In our experience terms such as: reconciliation, mutual understanding and human rights; community relations, equality and diversity (CRED); are terms that should be both structurally promoted and relationally experienced.

This means that systemic approaches to colleges and schools embedding fair treatment, acknowledging diversity and promoting a sense of interdependence between staff, parents and students from diverse backgrounds and traditions need promoted within the daily codes, rituals and working practices of those institutions, as well as within the Department of Education itself.

Alongside these structural supports for Sharing and Integration there needs to be a



relational culture developed between all the interested parties in their day to day interaction and engagement with one another.

In such daily relational events and structures new ways of being with one another; new ways of speaking respectfully about and acknowledging 'different others' who belong to this society, but who may not be in that particular school, are repeated daily, structured and eventually become "the ways things are done here".

C 2 The Need for Systemic Changes in Structures that promote Sharing and Integration as core themes.

Some years ago Corrymeela developed a manual on such approaches called 'Joined Up'. This manual offers a way for schools, systemically and relationally, to develop their resilience and support to processes that support both sharing and integration.

We wish to engage with pilot schools further around this systemic change approach. *(The Joined Up material was made available to the GTCNI Research Repository. This resource base is now closed down-we are arranging to have a disc copy sent to the Committee.)*

As a responsible charity committed to promoting reconciliation, we have currently committed major charitable resources to support informal and formal education that supports sharing and integration.

We are currently reviewing our schools, youth, family, volunteering, faith and inter-cultural work, with a view to launching a new platform of transformative education models of practice that support learning for a new, mutual and shared future.

Sometimes alone, and often with different partners, we hope this will develop specific practices that, adequately documented and researched, will be capable of multiplication across the pre-school, primary, secondary, further and higher and adult education sectors.

Whether these are shared or integrated approaches will depend on the participants and each context. However what is clear to us is that they will be an expression of our commitment to work to promote a more open, shared and respectful society based on fair treatment, a respect for difference and a wish to build interdependent relationships between all citizens in this society.

C 3 All educational spaces have an opportunity to promote or dilute CRED.

In all schools where there are elements of shared or integrated governance, such spaces offer society, and citizens, foundation blocks for taking many of us beyond the more seductive and familiar comfort of our separate traditions and backgrounds.

Therefore all shared and integrated Boards need affirmed and encouraged to go further in the quality of their engagement and risk taking that supports a more open shared society.

C4 Promoting Restorative School Cultures



We are considering the potential of the concept of Restorative Schools as a transcending umbrella that could engage schools from all the sectors in a common programme of work that builds the values and processes we think are central to a shared and mutually respectful society, and which are needed by children, young people and adults.

Drawing on experiences of some members and staff with schools in New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, the United States, the Republic of Ireland, the County of Lancashire and in Scotland, to name only a few, we are convinced that:

- The quality of relationships between pupils, staff, parents and governors can be enhanced;
 - Community engagement affirmed;
 - Pupil attainment, teacher confidence and safety, and parental participation increased, through such an approach.
- (See some resources on this work below).

We repeat again how important it is that we urgently promote diverse manners of structural and relational work that builds a more open, shared, and future oriented inclusive society based on mutual respect and, eventually trust between diverse people.

To support this visionary task, the promotion of shared and integrated educational structures are important, as they will bring quality experiences of being at ease with different others to staff, parents, carers, children and young people, as members of these enterprises.

Yours sincerely

Colin Craig
Executive Director
Corrymeela Community

S Mc Ewen
Head of Programmes
Corrymeela Community

Dr D Wilson
Chair
Programme Committee
Corrymeela Community

Appendix 1:

Corrymeela Resources we offer to the Committee:
Integrated Education and New Beginnings in Northern Ireland
by (the late) Professor Frank Wright, a Member of the Corrymeela Community.
(To be sent by disc)

Joined Up: Developing Good Relations in the School Community, Mary Potter & Nichola Lynagh,
(2005) Belfast: Corrymeela Press.
(To be sent by disc)

The Facing History and Ourselves Programme resources.
Teacher materials and Video resources: <http://www.storiesofcourage.net/#/contact/4576241132>



Appendix 1: Other Corrymeela Resources:

Learning about reconciliation-schools and mutual understanding work

Sheelagh Dean and Sean Pettis (2013) *Key Stage 3 History Scheme of Work: Investigate the long and short term causes and consequences of the partition of Ireland and how it has influenced Northern Ireland today including key events and turning points*. Belfast; Corrymeela Press,

Jon Hatch, Karen Murphy, Sean Pettis (2013) *Up Standing: Stories of courage from Northern Ireland –Educators Guide*. Belfast: Corrymeela Press

Yvonne Naylor (2001) *Moving beyond Sectarianism – a resource for young people 14-18* Irish school of Ecumenics;

Yvonne Naylor (2003) *Who We Are: Dealing with Difference: a resource for children and young people 9-14*, Irish school of Ecumenics

Yvonne Naylor (2006) *Stepping Out: a resource for diversity and inclusion for teachers, leaders and children 5-9 years old*, Irish school of Ecumenics

Available from the N.I. Curriculum website in both RE and PDMU areas of learning. See:-
http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/key_stages_1_and_2/areas_of_learning/pdmu

Restorative Schools-A few Articles

Campbell, H, McCord, J, Chapman, T and Wilson, D (2013) *Developing a Whole System Approach to Embedding restorative practices in YouthReach Youth Work and Schools in County Donegal*. County Donegal Vocational Education Committee. University of Ulster and Co. Donegal ETB Restorative Practices Project. 44 pp.

Drewery, W. 2004, *Restorative Practices for Schools: A Resource*. 1st edn, School of Education, University of Waikato., Hamilton, N.Z.

Flanagan, H., 2010, *Restorative Approaches in Schools Guidance Document* 1st edn, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire.

Hendry, R. 2009, *Building and Restoring Respectful Relationships in Schools: A Guide to Restorative Practice*, Routledge, London

Hopkins, B. 2004, *Just schools: a whole school approach to restorative justice*, Jessica Kingsley, London.

McCluskey, Gillean, Sellman, Ed and Cremin, Hilary (eds) *Restorative Approaches to Conflict in Schools*. Interdisciplinary perspectives on whole school approaches to managing relationships, Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon & New York, pp. 59-74.

Morrison, B., *Practising Restorative Justice in School Communities: The Challenge of Culture Change*, Public Organisational Review, A Global Journal 5, 335-357, (2005)

Scottish Government evidence on Restorative Approaches in Schools. see
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/0>

<http://www.teachersmedia.co.uk/videos/restorative-justice-in-schools>

DÚN LAOGHAIRE / RATHDOWN COMENIUS REGIO 'RESTORATIVE APPROACHES' PROGRAMME 2010-2011-A FORMATIVE EVALUATION. 81 pp.



Developing Good Relations in the School Community

Developed and produced by:

The Corrymeela Community
Corrymeela House
8 Upper Crescent, Belfast
Northern Ireland, BT7 1NT

belfast@corrymeela.org
www.corrymeela.org

NICIE
Aldersgate house
13-19 University Rd, Belfast
Northern Ireland, BT7 1NA

info@nicie.org.uk
www.nicie.org

This resource has been produced with the financial support of:

Department of Education
International Fund for Ireland Community Bridges Programme
The Ireland Funds





Developing Good Relations in the School Community

Nichola Lynagh & Mary Potter



This resource seeks to promote effective teaching and learning practice, and to provide guidance for exploring some of the more controversial issues which emerge in ways that are appropriate, safe, and create positive learning experiences.



Grateful acknowledgements
must go to everyone who
assisted in the development
of this resource.

IN PARTICULAR, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

- Kathryn Edgar, Tony Gallagher, Bernie Kells, Yvonne Naylor and Mediation Northern Ireland for their specific contributions to sections of the resource;
- Sharon Bell, Pat Blackman, Harry Greer, Ruth Hodgins, Pauline Lewsley, Peter McCreadie, Terry McMackin, Roisin Marshall, Matt Milliken, Emily Stanton and everyone else who participated in the consultation process;
- All the schools and teacher education bodies which helped us in the development of materials;
- Fred Vincent, Sam Bell, Joy McKnight and others who assisted with editing, design and production;
- Corrymeela and NICIE and for their support and assistance throughout the process of writing and producing the resource;
- The Department of Education, the International Fund for Ireland Community Bridges Programme and The Ireland Funds for their financial support of the resource and its development.

Joined-Up:
Developing Good Relations in the
School Community

ISBN: 1 873739 30 3

Published March 2005 by
The Corrymeela Press
8 Upper Crescent, Belfast
Northern Ireland, BT7 1NT

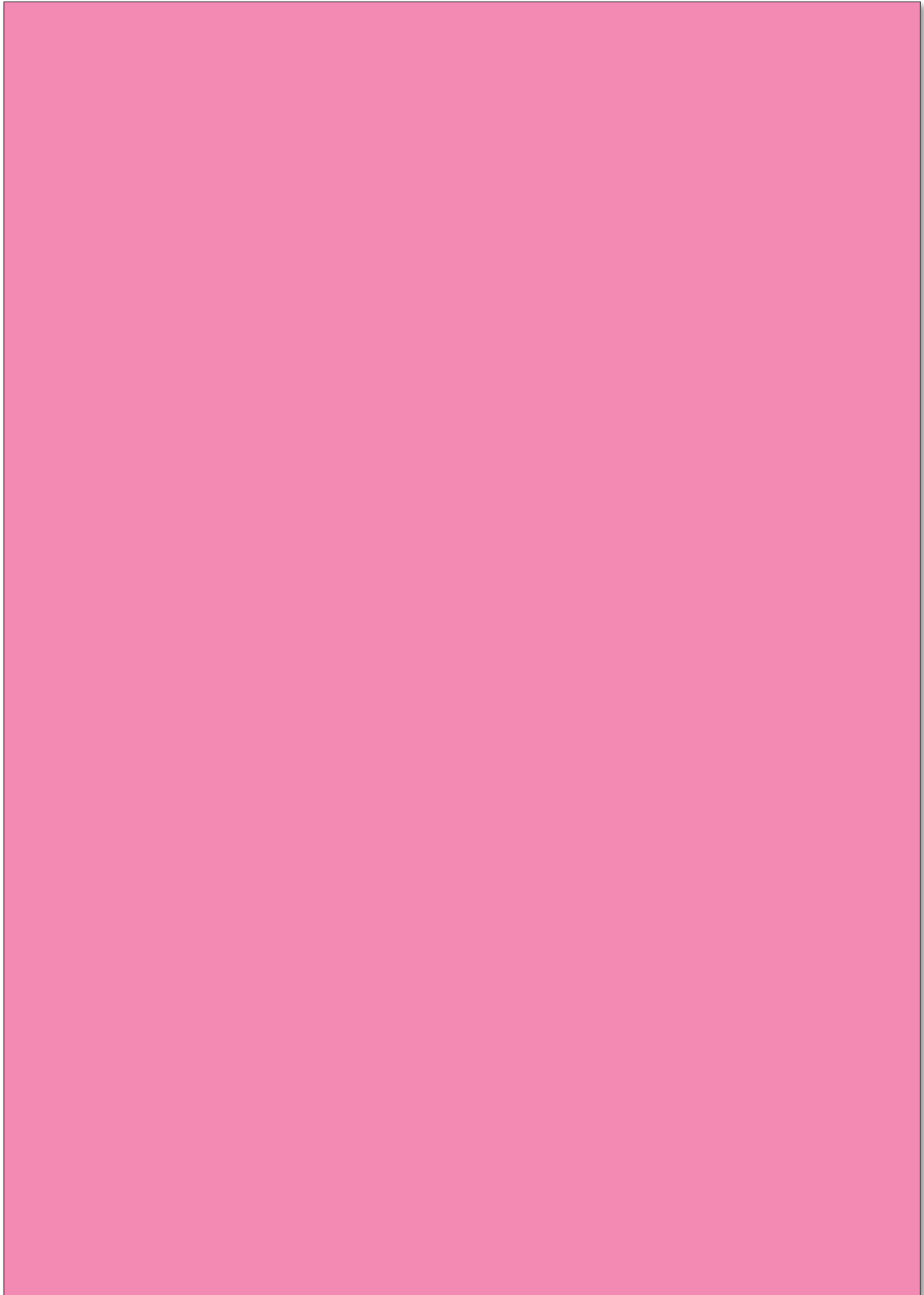
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& Mary Potter (Corrymeela), 2005
Illustrations © Fishbone, 2005

Design by Fishbone

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The promotion of good relations is about breaking through the denial and avoidance of the Northern Ireland conflict and acknowledging its impact on the community and organisations working within it. It is also about actively recognising the challenges faced by people in Northern Ireland who are members of minority ethnic communities and minority religious faiths and the additional difficulties that they may encounter. Good Relations challenges sectarianism and racism, promotes equality, develops respect for diversity and raises awareness of the interdependence of the people and institutions within Northern Ireland. It states a public commitment to these beliefs and continually seeks ways to build on them for the future.

DEFINITION DEVELOPED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL.



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Introduction

introduction



What is the purpose of the resource?

- To support schools in developing a whole school approach to building good relations throughout their school community.
- To provide school senior managers, teachers and teacher educators with guidance and resources to support them in developing effective active learning approaches for exploring controversial and difficult issues with children, young people and adults.
- To encourage you, as school senior managers, teachers and teacher educators, to reflect on your own understanding and ongoing learning as you consider how best to enable children, young people and adults within school communities to explore these themes.

Schools are situated at the heart of communities, playing a crucial part in the lives of children, young people, and the adults who work within them or come into regular contact with them as parents, visitors, etc. These children, young people and adults do not leave their 'outside' lives at the school door when they arrive, but bring with them a wealth of life experiences and learning.

Whether they are acknowledged or not, all the life issues and struggles of identity, relationships and community are present within the school setting. The Northern Irish experience of the conflict has added a particular dimension to this, one which schools are often reluctant to address, given the difficult and divisive issues which it can raise. Other aspects of life, such as the increasing diversity of ethnicity, culture and beliefs within Northern Ireland society, bring valuable opportunities for learning, including more challenging themes such as the experience of prejudice and discrimination.

This resource explores these issues as an essential part of learning how to live in society, specifically in the contested and transforming society of Northern Ireland. The issues that tend to be avoided or kept hidden ('taboo' subjects) may be the very ones that most need to be explored. The resource seeks to promote effective teaching and learning practice, and to provide guidance for exploring some of the more controversial issues which emerge in ways that are safe and appropriate, and which create positive learning experiences for children, young people and adults alike. It recognises that the most effective structure for this is a whole school approach where there is a shared ethos and commitment to being a respectful learning community, which values all its members as well as those outside.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE RESOURCE?

Section 75 of the Equality Legislation (Northern Ireland Act, 1998), along with other human rights' frameworks, such as the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child, provide a broader context of good practice, and should be further supported by a holistic, best practice approach to Child Protection.¹ The revised curriculum with its overall emphasis on values and skills builds on earlier work developed through Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU),² and offers clear opportunities for these themes to be explored, particularly in the areas of Mutual Understanding in the Local and Global Community (Primary)³ and Local and Global Citizenship (Post-Primary).⁴ Work in these areas can also be enhanced further by the opportunities offered by the Department of Education's Schools Community Relations Programme,⁵ which encourages partnerships between schools as well as creative exploration of relevant themes within individual schools.

While recognising that this can seem like a huge additional area of work for schools, the resource focuses on principles of effective practice, which support positive ethos and high quality teaching and learning across every dimension of school life.

Who is this Resource For?

The resource was specifically developed to provide more training and support to student teachers, teachers, school senior managers and others involved in education, enabling them to feel more confident in exploring controversial issues with their colleagues or pupils, particularly those relating to identity, diversity and conflict, and to create an appropriate context for this work.

The ideas contained in the resource have been developed and tested over the past number of years in schools, teacher education institutions and Early / Continuing Professional Development contexts. The resource also draws on experience gained in youth and community work settings.

Among other possibilities, this resource would be useful for:

- *teachers working with their classes;*
- *a principal, Education & Library Board (ELB) advisor or external facilitator working with a team of teachers and / or support staff;*
- *two or more schools working together on a community relations programme;*
- *a tutor working with student teachers;*
- *ELB advisors working with Beginning Teachers;*
- *ELB advisors or external facilitators working with a group of school governors or parents;*
- *a principals' cluster group.*

¹ Department of Education Circular (1999 / 10), Pastoral Care in Schools; Child Protection; Volunteer Development Agency (2000), Our Duty to Care: Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People, Belfast, VDA.

² CCEA (1997), Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage: Cross-Curricular Guidance Materials, Belfast, CCEA.

³ CCEA (2002), Primary Values, Belfast, CCEA.

⁴ CCEA (2003), Local and Global Citizenship: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools, Belfast, CCEA.

⁵ DENI (2002), Review of the Schools Community Relations Programme, Bangor, DENI.

How can the Resource be Used?

We have tried to distil usefully, some of the key aspects of this kind of work. In some cases, this means that we only touch on areas which could fill several resource packs in themselves – the resource list at Appendix One will point you to places where you can find out more, if need be.

The resource takes a 'how to' approach, recognising that people will come to the resource with different experiences and learning. Some will find it useful to work through the resource from start to finish while others may choose to focus on particular sections.

Wherever the starting point, it is crucially important to give some attention to the overall ethos and approach before launching into the controversial issues dimension of the work.

Within each section you will find (if applicable):



Questions for Reflection

These can be used individually or as the basis for group discussion (in a tutorial setting, a staff team development setting or governors' / parents' session, etc.).



Theory into Practice

Based on real life examples, these scenarios and suggestions provide the opportunity to think about how the ideas in different sections could be used.



Sample Exercises and Resources

Examples of activities and resources to support groupwork and whole school development.



Session Outlines / Lesson Plans

Examples are given for Foundation Stage, Key Stage One, Key Stage Two, Secondary and Adult – but many of the activities within them can be adapted to suit various ages.



Checklists

These provide general points to think about in preparation for an individual session / lesson or a longer programme / module.



Definitions and Explanatory Notes

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE RESOURCE?

IDEAS TO GET STARTED

- *Start by skimming through quickly, taking in headings and key points.*
- *Choose sections that look particularly relevant to your situation.*
- *Begin at the start and work your way through to the end, using the Questions for Reflection to develop your thinking.*
- *If this kind of work is unfamiliar to you, work through it with an experienced colleague or mentor who can provide support.*
- *Try out some of the activities.*
- *Summarise the key points for someone else.*
- *Persuade someone to summarise it for you!*
- *Use it as a training resource with colleagues.*
- *Use it as an aspect of your Early or Continuing Professional Development, or of your Professional Qualification for Headship.*
- *Use it for bedtime reading!*



As you consider using the resource, bear in mind some of our starting premises:

- Learning is most effective when it is gained through active engagement in the process.
- Learning is about making connections, and understanding its application across a range of situations.
- Positive learning involves taking appropriate risks.
- Learning requires us to reflect, so that we can consolidate what we have learnt and put it into practice.



There are a lot of ideas and materials in this pack, but do not feel overwhelmed if many of these are new to you!

Take the ideas a step at a time, trying out what you feel confident about, and taking the appropriate risks when you feel ready for them.





Understanding the Context

Teaching and Learning in
a Contested Society

People talking without speaking


People hearing without listening ...

'Fools,' said I, 'You do not know

Silence like a cancer grows.'

LYRICS FROM: SIMON, P. (1964), SOUNDS OF SILENCE.

understanding the context



1.0

Introduction

Northern Ireland is a curious place. Since 1969 over 3,600 people have died as a consequence of political violence. Since the mid 1990s there has been a peace process of sorts, but people are still being intimidated and killed, and shared political institutions have spent more time in suspension than in operation.

Despite the significant reduction in political violence in recent years, there is still a close relationship between people's religious or community background and:

- *the political party they vote for;*
- *the type of school they attend(ed);*
- *the area in which they live;*
- *their social and cultural preferences;*
- *the names they give to their children;*
- *the way they pronounce the letter 'h'!*

Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society. In fact, there is some evidence that the level of segregation in our society is getting wider, almost as if it is easier and safer to live apart than to develop a shared future. Recent evidence reveals that children are beginning to show preference for symbols of 'their' community, as young as three and four years old.¹

This research suggests that entering school for the first time represents a significant

milestone in the life of any child. It is likely to be the first time that many will begin to interact with larger numbers of other children and come under the influence of older peers. The report came to two broad conclusions:

- Children, from the age of three, should be encouraged to explore and experience a range of different cultural practices, events and symbols and to appreciate and respect difference and cultural diversity.
- From the age of five, children should be encouraged to understand the negative effects of sectarian and racist stereotypes and prejudices and to be able to identify them in their own attitudes where appropriate.

This clearly points out the role education can play in supporting children and young people to learn about themselves and others. It is complemented by the statutory requirements of the curriculum.

In all cultures people avoid talking about things that would make life difficult. Northern Ireland is not, of course, unique in this regard. There are secrets; taboos that are not talked about but are not forgotten. The reason for this behaviour is usually benign – people do not want to cause upset or hurt, to get into an argument, or to put themselves at risk. These adaptive behaviours are often so ingrained in our lives that we do not recognise them. We might, however, question whether this 'silence' is the best way to deal with the legacies of division and conflict in our society.

¹ Connolly, P., Smith, A. and Kelly, B. (2002), *Too Young to Notice*, Belfast, Northern Ireland Community Relations Council.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT



The Concept of Northern Ireland as a Contested Society

A stable society is understood to be characterised by people sharing a common sense of identity. Within this a high degree of support and unanimity is accorded to state institutions and the institutions of law and order.

A contested society is one where there is no shared sense of identity and people have traditions / loyalties which can be exclusive and unlikely to accommodate difference.³

Derick Wilson et al. cite the example of experienced teachers on a residential course who spoke of how they had not met 'in depth' with people from other traditions. The opportunity to hear about the lives of others brought up in a different culture / tradition was completely new for them, a silence was broken.² When we hear one another sharing openly a new reality comes between us. We begin to marvel at the separated lives we often lead here.

We live a so-called 'normal life' in the midst of a 'troubled society'. Social structures and inter-group relations have all been impacted by polite behaviours, divisions, fears, hostilities and segregation in contexts such as:

- *family and friendships;*
- *neighbourhoods and public spaces;*
- *school and youth experiences;*
- *church and culture;*
- *sports and recreation;*
- *the workplace;*
- *government, politics and law;*
- *ethnic groupings.*

There are at least three main reasons why it is important for schools and the wider education system to try to break through this 'sound of silence':

- 1** It is difficult to see how we, as a society, can solve the legacies of division and conflict unless we find a way to talk about those legacies. It is not enough to ask people to forget about the past, but neither should we become prisoners of the past.
- 2** Evidence reveals that people find it liberating and enlightening to break through these silences. We often make assumptions about others, but when we are given opportunities to listen genuinely to other perspectives we can begin to develop better and more informed understanding.⁴
- 3** It has long been a matter of policy that schools and teachers have a responsibility to promote better community relations, tolerance and reconciliation among children and young people.

³ Adapted from a concept developed by Derick Wilson et al.

² Morrow, D. and Wilson, D. (1996), *Ways Out of Conflict: Resources for Community Relations Work*, Coleraine, Understanding Conflict Trust.

⁴ Morrow, D. and Wilson, D. (1996), *Ways Out of Conflict: Resources for Community Relations Work*, Coleraine, Understanding Conflict Trust.

Within our political world decisions have been designed to encourage inclusion and a peaceful society. A pattern of developing a new society can be discerned, not just in the Belfast Good Friday Agreement, and Section 75 of the Equality Legislation (Northern Ireland Act, 1998), but in a raft of decisions taken by the British and Irish Governments, Secretaries of State, devolved government departments and other public bodies.



Section 75 places the duty on all public bodies to pay due regard to the promotion of equality under nine different categories, and to promote good relations among people of different religious or racial backgrounds and political beliefs. These categories are as follows:

- *sexual orientation;*
- *age;*
- *gender;*
- *disability;*
- *dependents;*
- *marital status;*
- *racial group;*
- *political opinion;*
- *religious belief.*

Whilst this does not include schools, it does include the Department of Education and teacher training institutions, and it highlights the need to be advocates for good practice in relation to the legislation.

1.1

How has the Education Sector Responded to the Conflict?

There have been many attempts to address these issues through education. In the 1970s some teachers organised contact projects between schools. In the 1980s the Department of Education created a special fund to support this work. During the same period, groups of parents started to establish new Integrated schools for Protestant and Catholic pupils and teachers. In the 1989 Education Reform Order the themes of Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage were established as compulsory parts of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, and the government took on a commitment to support the development of Integrated Education.

Throughout these years exemplary initiatives have been carried out by schools and committed teachers. Research indicates, however, that the overall contribution of schools has been limited. The consensus is that education could and should do more to contribute to the improvement of community relations and the promotion of reconciliation and tolerance.

It was partly for these reasons that changes were made to the Northern Ireland Curriculum. These changes include the Local and Global Citizenship module for Post-Primary schools and revised curriculum for Foundation Stage, Key Stages One and Two, i.e. Personal Development Strands One and Two: Personal Understanding and Health, and Mutual Understanding in the Local and Global Community.

Local and Global Citizenship is based on the following key themes, which are addressed in local, national, European and global contexts:

- *diversity and inclusion;*
- *equality and social justice;*
- *democracy and active participation;*
- *human rights and social responsibility.*⁵

⁵ CCEA (2003), *Local and Global Citizenship: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools*, Belfast, CCEA.

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

These themes are not seen as separate but as closely interrelated aspects of citizenship. The aim is to support pupils in investigating the themes and in developing their capacity to be active and participatory citizens within the Northern Ireland context.

Some teachers will be given specialist training in Local and Global Citizenship, but all those involved in education need to be aware of the positive role they have to play. Most significantly, they can and should help children and young people feel comfortable with difference, whether it is defined in terms of religious or political outlook, ethnic or racial identity, gender, disability, etc.

The revised primary curriculum aims to empower children to develop their potential. It aims to support children to develop as:

- *individuals;*
- *contributors to society;*
- *contributors to the economy and environment.*

The Mutual Understanding in the Local and Global Community strand encourages the exploration of diversity and allows for development of the concept of citizenship.

These changes to the curriculum create further opportunities for schools and the wider education sector to contextualise the support they can offer to children and young people. They also support the school to address the issues of managing diversity in an ever-changing society with increasing levels of racism and sectarianism, and to reflect the ethos of the school in all its practice.

1.2

How can the Education Sector Address Issues of Diversity?

Education can have a role in preparing children and young people to be at ease with diversity, including:

- with people from different ethnic traditions to their own;
- with people from different religious and political outlooks;
- around people of a different gender orientation;
- around people with different levels of physical and mental ability.

These aims can only be achieved if the reality of the contested society is acknowledged by all within the school community.

This can be done by reflecting upon our understanding of our experiences of life in Northern Ireland, which have shaped us as individuals. On a practical level we need to create spaces where children, young people and adults can meet in a new way, so that change is a positive experience and is not forced or contrived. People need to understand each other in an atmosphere of trust, so that they can speak freely without the anxious politeness which so easily generates sectarianism or racism. A useful place to start this process could be with:

- *your whole staff team;*
- *your department or Key Stage group;*
- *your class;*
- *parents / carers;*
- *governors.*

If the Questions for Reflection are used with different groups, they will need to be adapted to suit each particular one.



Questions for Reflection

What do you feel has been the impact of the conflict on:

- *the education sector as a whole;*
- *society;*
- *the school;*
- *children and young people;*
- *you, personally (and professionally)?*

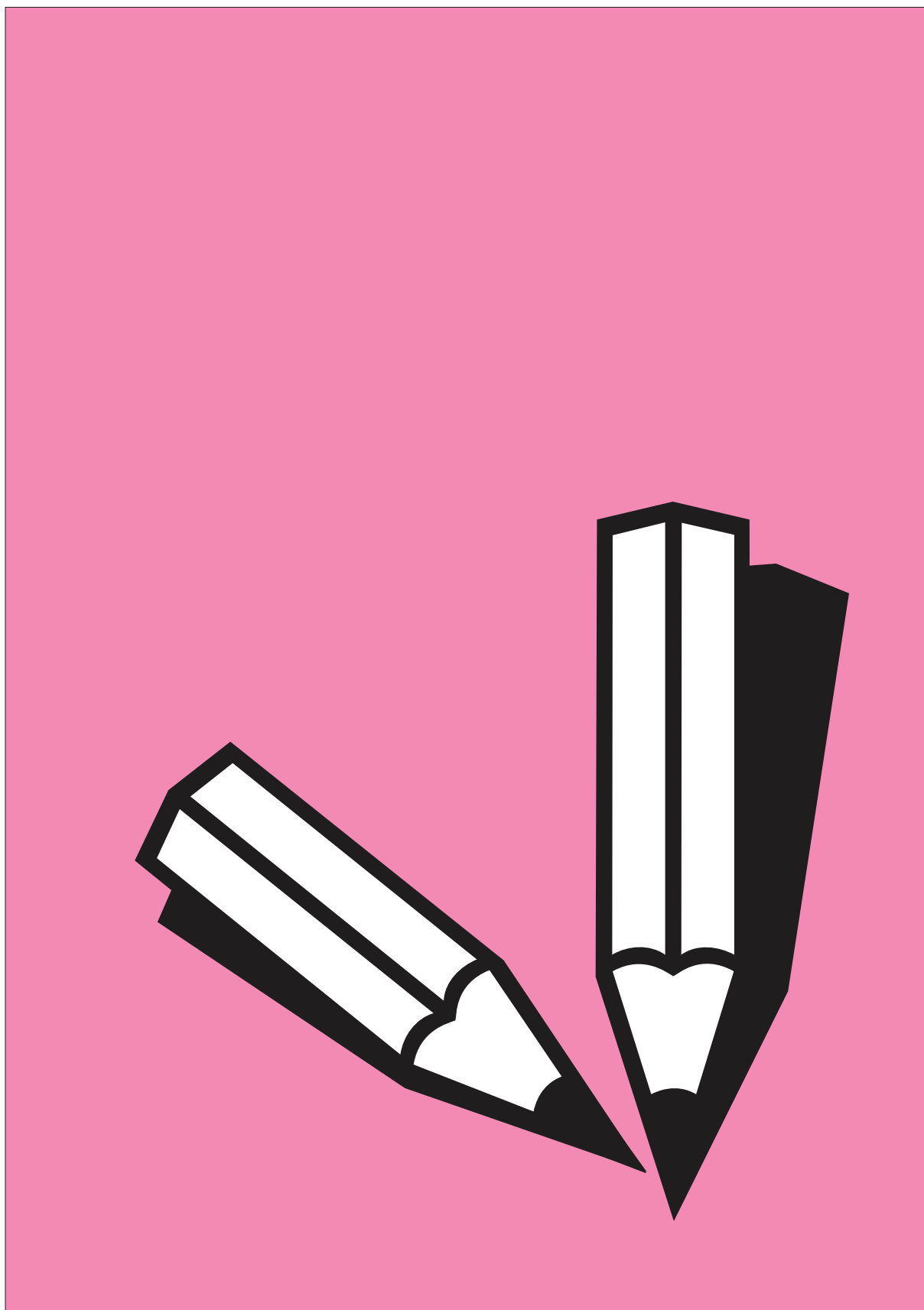
What things do people tend to be private about or have as taboos in Northern Ireland?

Should we be private about certain things?

Are there certain things that are private in the classroom / school?

How can the education sector meet the challenge of contributing to the creation of a peaceful society based on equity?

Does the school see itself as having a part to play in this?





Creating an Inclusive Learning Community

A Whole School Approach

'Genuine learning occurs in
the context of our lives, and
the long-term impact of any
new learning depends on
its relationships to the world
around us.'

SENGE, P. ET AL. (2000), *SCHOOLS THAT LEARN*,
LONDON, NICHOLAS BREALEY PUBLISHING.

creating an inclusive learning community



2.0

What is an Ethos?

Every school has its own ethos in the sense of a dominant pervading spirit or character that finds expression in the behavioural habits of those who are part of it. An ethos is, ideally, owned by the whole school community.

It has both overt and hidden dimensions and is expressed and developed best through 'a shared dialogue on the core values of the school community and the daily practice, which tries to reflect these values'.¹ An ethos is more perceptible to visitors or new staff / pupils as we often adapt to the circumstances we are in and become blind to old habits.



A school ethos should be:

- based on agreed core values;
- reflected in the structures / relationships in the school;
- reflected in the curriculum and other working practices of the school;
- reflected in school policies;
- reflected in the relationship with the wider community;
- reflected in the practices of all within the school community.

It is important to ask whether the school's practice mirrors its mission statement or whether there is a dichotomy between theory and practice?

If values are compartmentalised so that they only exist in certain subjects then the school has not developed a community built on values of fairness, diversity and interdependence (recognition that we are in relationships with a whole spectrum of individuals and communities). The message pupils may receive is that these values are only 'real' in Personal Development / Local and Global Citizenship and that they do not have a role in all aspects of school life.

What is Diversity?

All environments have diversity within them, but for a school the challenge is how to respond to the visible and invisible layers of diversity surrounding it.

Diversity is not simply a 'positive good, it is a necessary element of education.' Senge et al. suggest that the diversity of ideas which comes from the diversity of people is one of the best ways to create the necessary condition of learning. Fostering this diversity of ideas and engaging 'with the individuals who brought with them their diverse personal and cultural histories can contribute to a vibrant intellectual education'.²

¹ Furlong, C. and Monahan, L. (2000), *School Culture and Ethos: Cracking the Code*, Dublin, Marino Institute of Education.

² Senge, P. et al. (2000), *Schools That Learn*, London, Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY



Questions for Reflection

Does the school see 'diversity' as a guiding principle, or has it become a 'catchword'; is it advocated to achieve equity?

What plans are in place for the school to be active in contributing to an inclusive and diverse society?

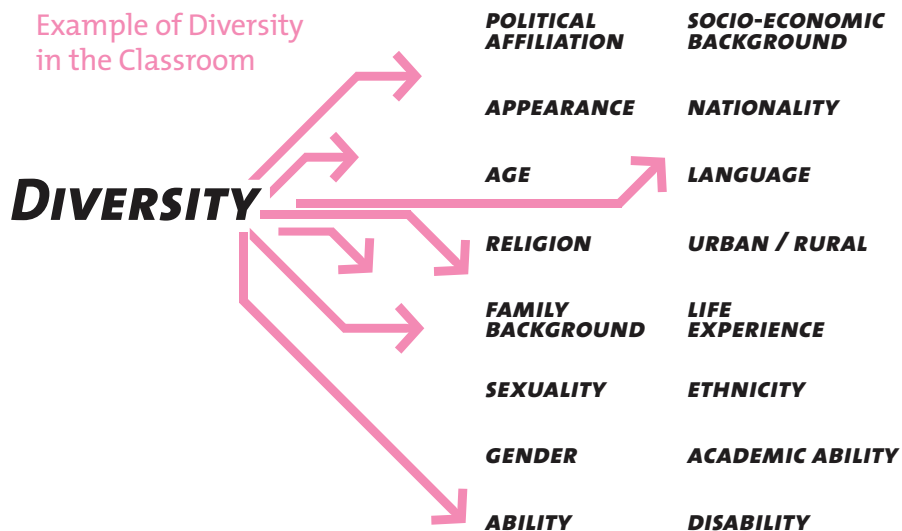
To explore this question it will be important to reflect upon what contributes to a diverse environment: what do we understand diversity and inclusivity to mean?

If an environment exists:

- *which is inclusive;*
- *which is equitable;*
- *where individuals are valued and respected;*
- *where trust is built;*
- *where open and diverse discussion occurs;*

then there will be possibilities for positive relationships and the development of new skills and relevant life learning.

Example of Diversity in the Classroom



What is a Culture of Inclusion?

A culture of inclusion describes a place which appreciates the diversities within it. It requires commitment from a number of areas in the school and it will take significant time, depending on the current climate.

Inclusion involves increasing the learning and participation of pupils, staff and other adults in the school community, and minimising barriers which may stand in their way; it is a set of never-ending processes.



Inclusion in education:

- Inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society.
- Inclusion is concerned with fostering mutually sustaining relationships in schools, between schools and between schools and communities.
- Diversity is not viewed as a problem to be overcome, but as a rich resource to support the learning for all.
- Inclusion is concerned with improving schools for the staff as well as for the pupils.
- Inclusion involves restructuring the culture, policies, practice in schools so that they respond to the diversity of pupils / staff.³



Questions for Reflection

How does the school respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse and pluralist society?

What kinds of diversity are in the school?

How do you know when you are in a diverse environment?

When do you feel diversity is a good thing and can add value to learning and when does it become negative?

Does recognising diversity lead to greater fairness?

Can several identities exist at the same time within the school community?

How do pupils and staff (including support staff) relate? Do people treat each other with respect and dignity? Are opportunities for demonstrating a caring and supportive attitude provided?

Has the staff discussed the school's hidden curriculum?

What strikes visitors as they enter the school:

- Religious symbols and emblems?
- Pictures of successful work / school teams?
- Pictures of class groups?
- Pupils' artwork?
- Are the symbols displayed in the school inclusive or exclusive?

Has the school a competitive ethos or co-operative / collaborative ethos? How is this manifested?

Are opportunities for exercising responsibility provided for the pupils and for the staff?

³ Adapted from Booth, T., Ainscow, M., Black-Hawkins, K., Vaughan, M. and Shaw, L. (2000), *Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools*, Bristol, CSIE.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

2.1

A Whole School Approach

For some time there has been widespread agreement among educationalists that collaborative school development and planning is a powerful means of promoting school effectiveness. Increasingly, schools are engaging in ongoing whole school planning in order to create optimum learning environments and to embed fully key initiatives and effective practice, for example:

- any new procedures;
- curricular provision;
- teaching and learning values;
- teaching and learning strategies;
- self-evaluation;
- good relations.

A whole school approach enhances the school's ethos and work and is effective in as far as it includes all who make up the school community.

The whole school approach is essentially a process in which policy and plans evolve from the ever-changing and developing needs of the school community. This approach takes into account the school's uniqueness in terms of its:

- teaching and support staff;
- pupils;
- governors;
- parents / carers;
- support structures;
- local context / community;
- availability of resources, etc.

This approach supports the whole school to manage diversity effectively and build on the principle of inclusivity.

Who is Involved in a Whole School Approach?

As stated earlier, a successful whole school approach requires the involvement of all the stakeholders. The extent to which individuals will be involved will depend on their role within the school.

WHOLE SCHOOL

PUPILS

PRINCIPAL

GOVERNORS

SUPPORT STAFF

CLASSROOM
ASSISTANTSSENIOR
MANAGEMENTLOCAL
COMMUNITYDEPARTMENT,
YEAR, KEY STAGE
AND SUBJECT
CO-ORDINATORS

PARENTS

TEACHERS

What is a Whole School Approach?

A whole school approach is a statement of the educational philosophy of the school, its aims and how it proposes to achieve them. In practical terms, this can be described as a school plan; a written resource which facilitates a co-ordinated development within the entire school community.

Such a document can only be arrived at through a process of interactive and collaborative dialogue within the broader school community, which is continually reflected and acted upon as practice and learning emerges.

The whole school approach should contain some basic principles at its core:

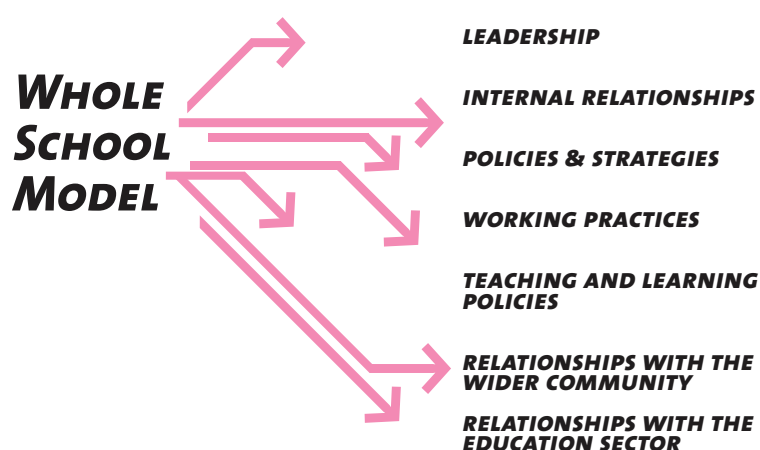
- a commitment to an ethos / culture based on fairness, diversity and interdependence;
- opportunities for involvement of the entire school community in the development and planning processes;
- creating a climate to ensure the ownership and development are encouraged and sustained;
- monitoring and evaluation systems to measure the effectiveness of, and the learning within, the approach.

Essential to the school plan is that it should describe how the school can prepare children and young people for a multicultural, diverse and inclusive society and support the practice of democratic life.

What is Involved in a Whole School Approach?

Leadership

This refers to the management structures (what are they; who has access to them?) and the need for growth in its own understanding and capacity to think in terms of relationships



CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

and negotiating differences: for example, to what extent does management demonstrate a vision of inclusiveness?

Internal relationships

These are the foundation of a good school community. Structures need to be put into place to allow relationships to develop and promote a culture of inclusion. To develop a whole school approach to self-esteem, culture and ethos, staff need to reflect on their own practice in the school. Staff need ongoing professional development.

Policies and strategies

These need to be designed to support a diverse and inclusive environment, for example, a policy / strategy on good relations which could include managing diversity, promotion of understanding, respect and tolerance, symbols / emblems, inter-school projects, positive behaviour, pastoral care, etc. Reflection is needed on what policies / strategies currently exist in the school. How are these tested / monitored and do all the stakeholders know the reasons for these policies and strategies?

Working practices

These show how effective the school is at practising fairness. This will involve reflecting on, for example, the:

- curriculum;
- teacher - pupil dialogue;
- meeting pupils' needs;
- pastoral care;
- personal and social development;
- environment – classroom, school, foyer, etc. – is it welcoming?;
- pupil morale;
- positive discipline;
- extra-curricular activities;
- sports day;
- assemblies;
- self-evaluation system.

Teaching and learning policies

These reflect the school's understanding of the concept of learning; the values which underpin the approaches to teaching; the styles and methodologies used in teaching adopted by the school; the aspiration of developing autonomous learners; the need to take into account the range of intelligences; learning styles; the impact of teaching a diverse group of individuals; and the practice of self-evaluation.

Relationships with the wider community

These show the school identifying its place in the wider community, acknowledging the relationship it has to it and creating strategies to enhance relationships with the school's potential partners, for example, the business and voluntary sectors.

Relationships with the education sector

The school does not exist in isolation from the educational changes that are happening around it and the drive to forge partnerships with other educational bodies. The school needs to be aware of whom they make links with and for what reasons.

2.2

Building an Inclusive Learning Community

Strategies to build a whole school approach must facilitate reflection on existing practice and design practical steps which build on the culture and ethos of the school. The change process must be seen to be integrated into the school development plan and not separate or additional. A framework may include the following. (This is not, however, a blueprint and may need to be adapted to suit the uniqueness of each school.)

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

This process supports the school in learning about itself. It actively creates opportunities for growth and learning, which will enable the school to contribute to a society, which is struggling to build inclusivity.

This process, detailed below, is designed to support the school and all the stakeholders within the school. It can provide you with a focus and a starting point. There may, however, be different starting points that suit your situation better. The process must be owned by the leadership of the school.

EXTERNAL FACILITATOR

This could be an ELB advisor, a Regional Training Unit officer, a representative of the voluntary sector, a mentor, another principal, etc. The role of an external person is to support the school to engage in the discussions that need to happen for a true reflection. The external person also brings new networks, ideas and experiences that challenge the insularity of the school and may enrich the learning.

Some useful points in selecting an external facilitator:

- The school needs to be clear about what they need from an external person so they have clear parameters in which to work and be accountable.
- The person needs to have a good understanding of change management and of the education sector.
- The person needs to be effective in group management and facilitation skills.
- The person needs to be an individual with whom the school feels comfortable and trusts.

ESTABLISHING A DEVELOPMENT GROUP

This is a group which will act as a driver for the process of change and the implementation of a whole school plan / approach.

The group is made up of people from diverse levels of the school and must include the voice of the pupils in some form, enabling them to make a meaningful contribution to the process. It could, for example, include a member of the senior management team, two teaching staff, two support staff, a member from the administrative team, two parents and a Board of Governors' representative.

It will take some time for this group to gel and to establish a set of agreements for how the group will work together, so this must be taken into consideration in thinking about a time-frame.

The role of the group is to ensure the process of change is implemented and remains a priority for the school. It also creates a working space which role models 'good relations' and supports a whole school philosophy.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Some useful points to take into consideration when establishing the development group:⁴

- Establish criteria for membership of the group. It is important to invite those who are initially sceptical or opposed to this process as well as those who are committed.
- Membership of the group should have an upper limit, depending partly on the size of the school.
- The external person should facilitate the group until the group members gain an understanding of the process.
- Communication internally and externally should be discussed and agreed; as should how the group will communicate their function, their learning and deliberations.
- Meetings should be clearly structured.



Questions for Reflection in the Development Group

How should this journey / process begin?

Who needs to be involved and when?

How are those from the wider school community to be engaged?

Can the process connect with the school development plan / vision?

How will we manage the time commitment?

How will we monitor the progress and maintain the changes?

Can we identify an external evaluator?

ESTABLISHING A BASELINE

It is important to know where the school's starting points are and to value what is already being achieved. A useful way to do this is to carry out a school audit which provides you with a baseline of information. This will also assist you in your monitoring and evaluation as you will be able to reflect on where you have come from and where you want to go to. Further details on this are provided in the guidance material which follows.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

For full exploration of the purpose of evaluation, see Developing a Model for Self-evaluation (Section Six).

Points for consideration:

- The audit will provide baseline information, which can form your performance indicators.
- Keep all records of meetings / consultation.
- Evaluate all meetings / development sessions, using, for example, minutes, feedback sheets from participants, etc.
- Review practice based on the evaluations and include any updated practice, for example, policies, lesson plans.
- Keep copies or a record of all resources used.
- Keep a record of all external facilitators, consultants, etc. who have assisted.
- Check that you are receiving input and feedback from all members of the school community, including children and young people.
- Complete the audit again after, for example, six months or a year to measure progression.

2.3



Creating an Inclusive Learning Community: Guidance Material

Establishing a Shared Vision, Values and Mission Statement

Elements of the Visioning Process

- Take into consideration all stakeholders.
- Develop an agreed set of values, a vision and a mission statement.
- Implementation includes the strategy, plans, procedures and key actions that will form an action plan.
- If you enable the individual to grasp / contribute to the vision, change will be less insurmountable / scary / disconcerting.

Those who anticipate the future are empowered to create it.

John F. Kennedy



Some see things as they are and ask 'why?', I dream of things that never were and ask, 'why not?' G. B. Shaw



Vision

Description of preferred future, which the school wishes to create. A vision statement should include your basic strategy on how you want to achieve your mission. It should include your spoken and unspoken hopes and dreams. Your vision should inspire and touch you.

Values

Values are the principles, the standards, the actions that people in a school represent, which they consider inherently worthwhile and of the utmost importance. Values are the meaning we attach to things. People act from their values, and different people value different things. Shared values provide everyone with a common direction and guidelines. These values, in turn, should underpin policies, practices and standards for the group.

Mission Statement

This answers questions such as:

- *Why do we exist?*
- *What do we do and for whom?*
- *How are we unique?*
- *What is most important about our work?*

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

**SAMPLE VISIONING EXERCISES ⁵**

Below are guidelines and then some examples to stimulate individuals thoughts regarding their vision.

- *Focus on what really matters to your school.*
- *Focus on imagining what is happening.*
- *Focus on what you want to create.*
- *Avoid how to make it happen.*
- *Avoid today's problems.*
- *Avoid what is not working.*

1 You are in a lift with an education inspector, you have one minute to convince her / him of the benefits of the vision you have for your school.

2 Imagine achieving a goal that you deeply desire. There is no proper way of answering this and no measurable way to win or lose. Playfulness, inventiveness and spiritedness are all helpful. Imagine accepting into your life the full manifestation of this goal.

What does it look like?

What does it feel like?

What words would you use to describe it?

Now pause and consider your answer to the first question. Did you articulate a vision that is close to what you actually want?

**SAMPLE VALUES EXPLORATION EXERCISES**

1 Using the series of quotations listed below, which can be spread around the room, ask individuals to select one or two quotations which mean something to them and say something about the values in which they believe. Reflect on these quotations and ask individuals to identify the practice relating to those chosen. Ask how this practice is evidenced in the school, classroom, canteen, playground, parent meetings, Board of Governors' meetings, etc.

Quotations to Consider:

It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business.
Mohandas K. Gandhi, activist (1869-1948)

If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we should find in each man's life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility.
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, poet (1807-1882)

Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.
Paulo Freire, educator (1921-1997)

There would be no society if living together depended upon understanding each other.
Eric Hoffer, philosopher and author (1902-1983)

A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.
Greek proverb

To have doubted one's own first principles is the mark of a civilized man.
Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., poet, novelist, essayist and physician (1809-1894)

Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in.
Alan Alda, actor and director (1936-)

The secret of life is honesty and fair dealing.
If you can fake that, you've got it made.
Groucho Marx, actor and comedian (1890-1977)

The truth is rarely pure, and never simple.
Oscar Wilde, writer (1854-1900)

No two persons ever read the same book.
Edmund Wilson, critic (1895-1972)

**The best way to find yourself is to lose
yourself in the service of others.**
Mohandas K. Gandhi, activist (1869-1948)

We are all in the gutter, but some of us are
looking at the stars.
Oscar Wilde, writer (1854-1900)

**If only there were evil people somewhere
insidiously committing evil deeds and it
were necessary only to separate them from
the rest of us and destroy them. But the line
dividing good and evil cuts through the
heart of every human being. And who is
willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?**
*Alexander Solzhenitsyn, novelist,
Nobel laureate (1918-)*

Live as if the change you want to see has
already come.
Mohandas K. Gandhi, activist (1869-1948)

**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful
committed people can change the world.
Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.**
Margaret Mead, anthropologist (1901-1978)

No child on earth was ever meant to be
ordinary, and you can see it in them, and
they know it, too, but then the times get to
them, and they wear out their brains learn-
ing what folks expect, and spend their
strength trying to rise over those same folks.
Annie Dillard, writer and poet (1945-)

**Die when I may, I want it said of me by those
who knew me best, that I always plucked a
thistle and planted a flower where I thought
a flower would grow.**
Abraham Lincoln, U.S. President (1809-1865)

I tell you, the more I think the more I feel that
there is nothing more artistic than to love people.
Vincent Van Gogh, artist (1853-1890)

**To try to improve society is not worldliness,
but love. To wash your hands of society is
not love but worldliness.**
*Sir Frederick Catherwood, former vice-president
of the European Parliament (1925-)*

2 You could get individuals to reflect on
some of the following questions in small
groups and feedback their responses:

- What do we stand for?
- What behaviours would mirror these values?
- How do we treat each other, pupils,
parents, Board of Governors, community etc.?
- What core values are most important to us?
- How do we want to treat each other?

These answers should spark a discussion
which supports the identification of the
most important values.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

3 Write the values in the school prospectus onto A4 paper and ask individuals in small groups to arrange the statements in a pyramid with the most important at the top and the least at the bottom. Ask individuals to reflect on the pyramid, how they made their decisions and what values held some tension for the group. Encourage the group to explore how these values relate to their practice within the school and all those involved in the school.



SAMPLE EXERCISES FOR THINKING ABOUT A MISSION STATEMENT

Groups have experimented with developing an image of the future – their vision – without referring to their mission. The image tends to become impractical when it is not grounded in the specific mission of the school. The mission statement should say who you are and why you are passionate about it. The mission is directly linked to a broad analysis of the school and its environment. Make it short – try not to have more than three sentences.

A mission statement might include statement starters such as some of the following:

- *We believe that ...*
- *At this school we are committed to ...*
- *Our school community is ...*
- *Our aim is to ...*

Carrying Out a School Audit

An audit is a tool which can gauge levels of need under a specific theme. It is important for the school to test the underpinning values, to map out the current reality in terms of how individuals feel in relation to fairness, diversity and interdependence.

This mapping out of the realities must take into account all aspects of school life, for example:

- *curriculum;*
- *leadership;*
- *relationships internally and externally;*
- *policies and strategies.*

Such a tool must gather the feedback from all sections of the school community. The audit could be done through a number of methods such as one of, or a combination of, the following:

- *written questionnaires;*
- *focus groups;*
- *circle time;*
- *drama or art-based activities.*

See Appendix Two for a Sample School Audit





Priorities for Development

In order to draw up priorities, the development group examines and analyses the contributions from everyone who has been consulted. This is a large amount of work and, therefore, needs to be shared, especially if it is a large school. The external facilitator is a useful resource for this process.

It may be desirable to keep the information gained from the different stakeholders of the school separate initially so that the differences can be genuinely explored.

As the issues are identified, further information may be required to provide a clearer picture. The finalising of priorities must consider the needs of each of the stakeholders within the school so that the voices of the least powerful are not lost. It is not simply a matter of including those issues which are most commonly stated.

It is inevitable that there will be a short-term and long-term list of priorities. The development group must explore the implications of each priority so that a realistic action plan can be agreed. This is particularly important in relation to reviewing the progress of the implementation.

Implementing Change

Key areas for practical change need to be identified and a development plan drawn up to implement these changes. This should outline distinct tasks, identify those responsible for carrying them out and indicate clear deadlines.

Action Plan

What are the areas for reflection?

What are the strengths?

What do we need to do to effect improvement?

What evidence will we seek to monitor the changes?

What resources will we need?

Who will be involved?

How long will it take?

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING COMMUNITY

STARTING POINTS

Making the Task of Change more Manageable

After you carry out the audit you might want to focus on one aspect of school life rather than dealing with all the potential learning from the audit at once. Break it down into manageable chunks which can be incorporated into the school development plan and focused on over a set period of time, for example, a year.

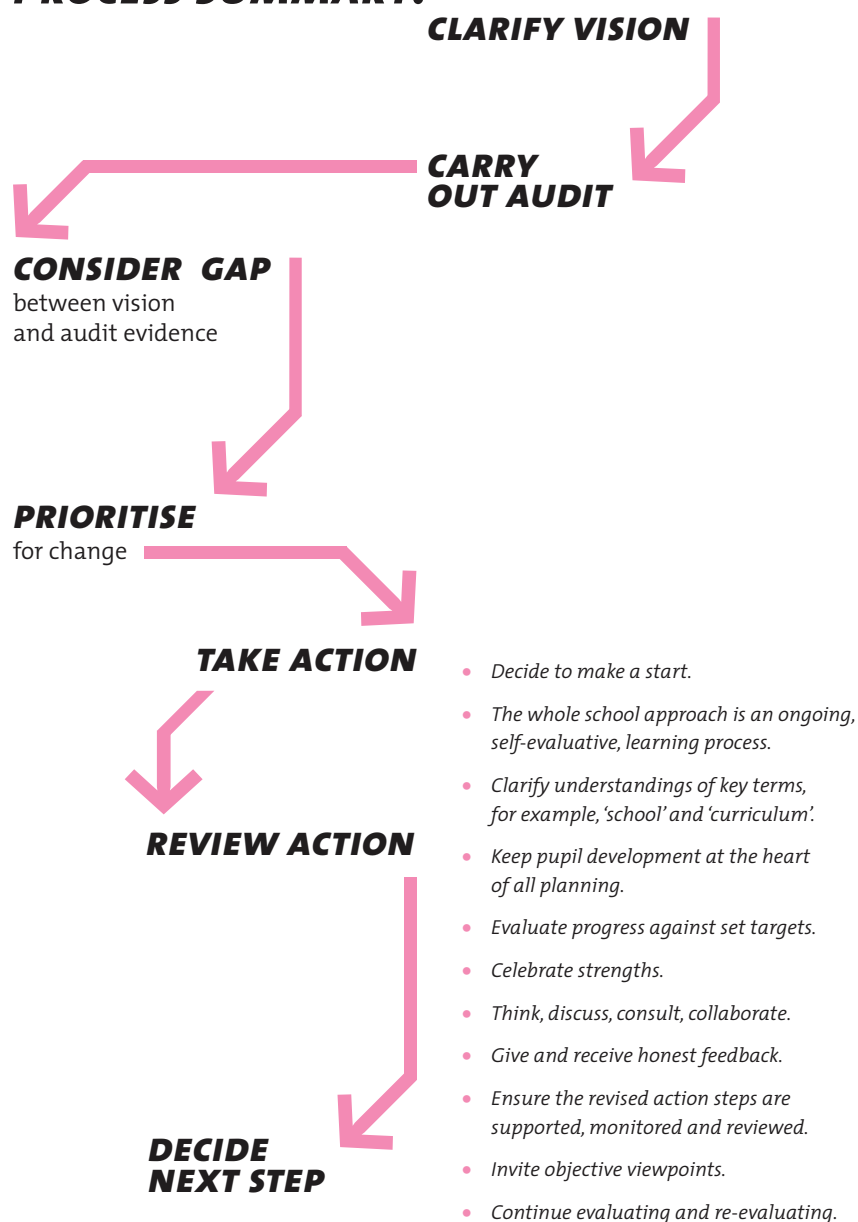
The Process can Start in Many Places

- It might start by looking at the individual classroom climate / ethos where a reasonable question might be: *How can the classroom environment foster self-esteem, positive interpersonal relationships, independence and interdependence?*
- Or it might start with the teaching and learning process where the question might be: *What strategies has the teacher built into the learning and teaching process to ensure opportunities for the development of the whole person?*
- Or equity of opportunity might be the starting point: *What strategies are in place to ensure true equality of opportunity for all, by which individual aspirations may be recognised, encouraged and achieved?*
- Or the promotion of positive behaviour:

How does the school become a place where care and trust are emphasised above the constrictions and threats, where each person is asked to live up to the ideals of kindness, fairness and responsibility?

- Or the environment of the school: *How can members of the school contribute to and enhance the school environment for the mutual benefit of all?*
- Or lines of communication: *How can attention to the nature of communications within the whole school community reflect key ideas such as respect and mutual trust and promote positive relationships?*
- Or leadership: *By what processes does a leader, whether of the school, subject department, classroom or group within the class, ensure a climate of co-operation based on trust and high regard?*

PROCESS SUMMARY:



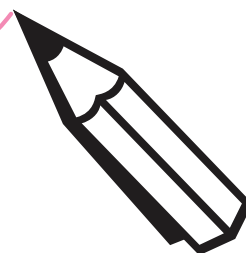




Building a Positive Learning Environment

Using Groupwork
and Facilitation

building a positive learning environment



3.0

Introduction

This section looks at the use of groupwork and facilitation as a way of working, which supports the development of a positive learning environment. The purpose of the section is to:

- provide some definitions and explanations of key terms;
- suggest some general guidelines for using groupwork and facilitation with children, young people and adults;
- look at the benefits and possibilities of another facilitator (co-working);
- encourage personal reflection and preparation on the part of facilitators (this could be a teacher, a senior manager, an ELB advisor, etc.);
- explore how groups work, thinking about the individuals who make them up and the interactions between them;
- consider how the facilitator can best support group members and enable them to learn;
- suggest some guidelines for responding to behaviour which is 'challenging'.

3.1

Groupwork

People come together in groups for all kinds of reasons, and there are many examples of work in groups within a classroom / school setting. These might include a:

- *teachers' Key Stage meeting;*
- *department staff meeting;*
- *group of pupils working on a project together;*
- *teacher working with her / his class;*
- *parents' group meeting;*
- *playground supervisors' training session;*
- *senior management team discussion;*
- *Board of Governors' meeting.*

Any of these gatherings might involve a groupwork dimension which in this context has a specific definition as outlined below. Circle Time is a highly structured example of this kind of groupwork which is already widely used in schools.

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



Groupwork

Groupwork occurs when a number of people gather together to participate in a purposeful process for which there is likely to be one or more facilitators.

The Process:

everything which takes place within the group: how things happen, the relationships and interactions involved, etc.

The Facilitator(s):

may come from within the group, or be an external person drawn in because of her / his particular experience or skills. The groupwork process will ideally have a clear beginning, middle and end to achieve its purpose. At its most effective, the process is likely to involve:

- clarity of purpose / aim and expectations;
- self-reflection;
- listening to different perspectives;
- the expression of ideas and feelings;
- learning from each other;
- exploration of personal and group values and beliefs.

While the group may set out to complete a **task** together (for example, drafting a mission / vision statement for the school, giving a group presentation to the class, developing a series of positive behaviour strategies), a greater emphasis is placed on the groupwork **process** rather than simply on completing the task itself.

This kind of groupwork is an invaluable methodology for exploring themes which draw on people's life experiences, attitudes and beliefs, because it:

- is based on an inclusive and democratic ethos;
- is relational and interactive;
- encourages co-learning, i.e. the facilitator can learn from group members and vice versa;
- is not dependent on 'right' answers or factual expertise, it encourages investigative approaches.

The benefit of all of these dimensions has been highlighted within Local and Global Citizenship guidance materials.¹



Questions for Reflection

What groups do I belong to as a member or as a facilitator or potential facilitator?

What tasks are these groups focused around?

What aspects of the group process am I aware of?

- how people relate to each other?
- how individuals participate?
- the facilitator's style of working?
- body language?
- other aspects?

Does the process involve the aspects outlined in the previous box? What demonstrates this? How can we measure this?

How do I participate in the group as a learner?

What am I learning through my involvement in the group(s)?

¹ CCEA (2003), Local and Global Citizenship: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools, Belfast, CCEA.

3.2

The Facilitation Process



The Role of the Facilitator

A facilitator is essentially an enabler. Through her / his interaction with group members and attention to the group process, s/he enables group members to participate effectively and to achieve the agreed purpose of their time together.

While group members are being encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, and to participate in planning and evaluating programmes, it is ultimately the facilitator's responsibility, in conjunction with the group, to:

- keep the group focused on the overall purpose of the session;
- ensure that an inclusive setting and atmosphere are maintained in which people feel safe enough to participate.

This needs to be built on the facilitator's personal and programmatic preparation for work with the group. The facilitator's role will include the following specific elements:

- Building trust within the group. This is likely to mean spending time working together on building relationships before focusing directly on the programme / session's theme.
- Developing ground rules with the group, and appropriately calling group members back to these when necessary. See Section Five (Developing a Contract / Learning Agreement).

- Ensuring clarity about the group's purpose and objectives for their time together, whether this is for a particular session or a series of sessions / module.

- Avoiding jargon and abbreviations which may confuse, exclude or alienate some or all group members. Do not assume that group members, even if they are colleagues, have had access to the same information, documentation, etc. which you have had. If you need to use particular jargon, etc., respectfully check out that group members understand the meaning and context.

- Establishing an atmosphere of respectful listening and ensuring that everyone gets the opportunity to speak without interruption if they want to.

- Maintaining and demonstrating fairness, making sure that no one person or group dominates the discussion or activities but that everyone has the opportunity to be heard and to participate.

- Giving attention to the process. This includes:
 - *being aware of body language and 'mood' within the group;*
 - *recognising reactions and allowing them to be expressed appropriately;*
 - *assisting effective communication between group members, if necessary;*
 - *being sensitive to things which may be difficult for people to say or to hear;*
 - *being aware when someone is experiencing strong feelings but is unable to express them vocally within the group;*
 - *being sensitive to when a group needs a short break for whatever reason;*
 - *attending to conflict within the group.*

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Modelling an enthusiastic and interested approach right from the opening remarks, and keeping an eye on the energy levels within the group. It is useful to have some calming and re-energising strategies ready, in case they are required.
- Choosing appropriate activities for different age groups, abilities (physical, language and literacy, etc.), cultural contexts, genders, etc.
- Working at an appropriate pace for the group, building on their previous experiences and learning. Allowing time to develop the issues being explored – do not be afraid of silence, and do not cut people off too quickly, as they may feel dismissed and lose interest.
- Expressing milestones, summing up the process to date, and helping the group to reflect on what they have achieved so far and what remains to be done.
- Highlighting and seeking alternatives to expressed opinions so a range of perspectives can be heard, points of agreement reached where appropriate, and ways forward discovered.
- Enabling the group to take new directions or move on if they get stuck in a particular discussion. This might be through asking some open questions or through introducing a new activity that will help people to approach the theme from a different angle.
- Bringing the group back to the core purpose / theme if the discussion becomes inappropriately sidetracked (but avoid steering towards a predetermined outcome which you have decided the group needs to reach).
- Being flexible with the programme so that changes can be made in line with group needs.
- Being aware of the time available, structuring it appropriately and making sure group members know how much time they have for particular activities or discussions.
- Limiting your own vocal contributions, bearing in mind that you are facilitating the learning of group members and are, therefore, a different kind of participant. This also means being comfortable with silences, and not filling them unnecessarily with your own voice.
- Being aware of your own learning process, being prepared to listen openly to constructive critique, suggestions and group members' evaluation of sessions / lessons.



Questions for Reflection: Preparation for Groupwork

How can I establish an appropriate atmosphere for the group to work in?

What will I need to do to ensure that all group members feel safe to participate?

How will I ensure a balance in the participation of group members?

How will I need to speak and act in order to demonstrate fairness?

How comfortable am I with silence? Do I sometimes rush on too quickly? If so, what strategies can I use to manage this better?

How will I ensure that the purpose of the group's time together is appropriately met? Am I personally clear about the group's purpose?

What strategies can I use to start and end the session effectively?

What will I do if energy flags within the group?

How attached am I to the lesson / session plan? Have I room to be flexible if necessary?

Roles for Facilitators

None of us comes to the task of facilitation from a neutral position, because we all have our own set of values and beliefs. In most circumstances, however, the facilitator is expected to maintain a high degree of objectivity and fairness in order to ensure that all group members, with all of their different life experiences, feelings and views, feel valued and able to participate equally in the group process.

Having clearly set this baseline, it is sometimes appropriate for the facilitator to take on a particular role in order to enhance the group's learning or to challenge their thinking in a new way. It is important that these roles are taken on self-consciously, for a specific purpose and time. It also needs to be done in a way that signals this to the group, and lets them know that respect, fairness and the other group ground rules have not been set aside. A number of possible roles (and there are many others) are outlined below.²

² Adapted from BAA / Nottingham Project, Teaching through Controversial Issues, Nottingham, BAA.

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FACILITATION ROLES

ROLE	DESCRIPTION	ADVANTAGES	PITFALLS
NEUTRAL FACILITATOR	Enabling the group to explore a range of viewpoints without stating your own opinion.	As you are clearly not taking sides, this can help facilitate an open exchange of views.	No one is 'neutral', so pretending that you are can be unhelpful to the development of trust within the group.
ADVOCATE	Raising perspectives which are the authentic beliefs of other individuals and groups.	Represents alternative views and experiences which may not be represented within the group. This can also stimulate responses, and demonstrate that there are equally strong (and possibly valid) positions which do not match with their own.	Can leave the group confused as to what you actually believe.
DECLARED INTERESTS	Begin by declaring your own position so that the group knows your views.	May help the group understand that you cannot be neutral. They need to give your views the consideration that they would give to anyone else's.	Some may be dismissive of your views because of your stated position at the outset (i.e. they associate a whole list of characteristics and opinions with the ones you have expressed). It may inhibit group members who disagree with your views.

ROLE	DESCRIPTION	ADVANTAGES	PITFALLS
ALLY	Supporting the views of a particular sub-group or individual (usually a minority) within the group.	Can really help people who are intimidated in a minority position, can help them express and clarify their position.	As you are not necessarily expressing your own views, this can be misleading. The minority group may feel pressured to speak when they are not ready.
OFFICIAL VIEW	Letting the group know the official position of your employer / organisation / statutory authority / the law / etc. This might not be your own view.	Can help the group understand the context in which you and they are working, and any limitations which this may set.	Group may sense any contradiction between your views and the 'establishment' ones which may not always be helpful, as it may raise tensions which may be difficult to resolve.
CHALLENGER	Through questioning, challenging views being expressed, encouraging people to justify their position.	Encourages people to think about their opinions, gets them used to challenge in a relatively safe environment.	The challenge could be too much for someone who already finds it difficult to speak within the group. If challenged, they may be reluctant to speak again.

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All of the roles outlined above can have their uses within a groupwork setting. In each case it is important to weigh up the possible advantages and pitfalls, and the specific appropriateness or otherwise for a particular group and programme at a particular time.



Questions for Reflection

Can I think of situations where some of these roles might be useful in my facilitation?

Do I sometimes take on any of these roles without intending to?

What are the particular characteristics of the group with which I am working that I need to bear in mind in deciding to take on any of these roles?

Are there additional advantages or pitfalls for these roles that I can envisage within my particular circumstances?

Are there other roles that I can imagine that might be useful to me?

What do I need to do to ensure that I maintain respect, fairness and the other ground rules at all times within my facilitation?

Managing Change

One of the key areas of responsibility for the facilitator is the management of change within the group. Among other possibilities, this could take the form of changes in:

- *the membership or facilitation of the group;*
- *the way group members relate to and interact with each other;*
- *your relationship with group members;*
- *the group's purpose and direction;*
- *attitudes, opinions and behaviour of group members;*
- *or a combination of the above.*

In order to support group members in engaging positively with change, it will be important that the facilitator:

- affirms and encourages group members, individually and as a group;
- maintains a positive perspective on what can be learned from or gained through change;
- helps the group to recognise the value of past experiences and learning, but not to remain stuck in them;
- assists the group in describing and reflecting on the present situation, and to make connections across their learning;
- explores with the group any unwillingness or uncertainty about moving forward;
- encourages the group to think creatively about future possibilities and ways of working towards them.

It is important to bear in mind that the facilitator also needs opportunities to de-brief and to receive support.

In exploring controversial issues relating to diversity, such as prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination, it is highly likely that it will involve attitudinal challenge and change for at least some group members. In these circumstances, it will be important:

- to appropriately notice and affirm learning that has taken place;
- not to rubbish or condemn previous attitudes and beliefs;
- if those who have changed or those who have not are in a small minority within the group, not to isolate them or cause them to feel unsafe or vulnerable;
- to be aware that these changes often involve a level of risk, for example, in terms of peer, family or community relationships, and ensure that they are given appropriate support. See Beyond Programmes: Learning for Life (Section Seven).

NB. All attitudinal change is likely to involve some level of risk-taking and personal vulnerability, for example, because previously held beliefs may now be seen as wrong or because it may involve stepping out from the crowd. At a certain level, this risk-taking and vulnerability, if handled positively and supportively, is part of what allows the learning to take place. However, if the risk level is high, the support available must be correspondingly so.



Questions for Reflection

How do I feel about change in general?
Do I usually feel comfortable with it, or threatened by it?

Am I aware of potential changes within the group's experience?

How can I support the group in responding positively to these changes?

Is there particular support needed by group members with regard to attitudinal change?

Do I need support (for example, resources, a co-facilitator) myself in order to provide these kinds of support to the group?

What strategies can I use with the group to reflect on the changes which may have taken place?

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The Facilitation Process: Managing Change

Outlined below are a number of scenarios, based on real life examples, for you to consider how the theory of managing change might translate into everyday practice. Drawing on the ideas within the Managing Change section and elsewhere in the resource, how might you respond to the situations outlined below?

Alternatively, or additionally, consider examples from your own experience – reflecting on them now, what might you do the same and what might you do differently?

1 A new pupil joins your class in March. You are aware that s/he has struggled with some behavioural issues in her / his previous school.

How can you best support her / his positive integration into the class group?

2 The school's Parents' Group has previously had an almost exclusively fundraising role. Now you (as principal / senior management team) would like them to also act as a consultation focus group to provide input and feedback to staff who are revising some of the school's key policies. The Group has agreed, but members are unsure of their ability to do it.

How can you assist them with this transition?

3 Up until now the staffroom in the school has always actually been the 'teachers' room'. As you (principal / senior management team) develop a whole school approach, you want to change this so that the room is welcoming for all staff.

What can you do to build a sense of team among staff, and a shared wish for this to happen?

4 A new teacher has joined the staff in your department / Key Stage team, and makes it known that they are gay / lesbian. As department head / Key Stage head, you become aware of explicit and implicit prejudice among other staff which is making it difficult for the new teacher to settle in.

What can you do to address this?

3.3 Co-facilitation: Working Together

There will be times when it will be valuable to work with a co-facilitator (such as a colleague, a youth worker, an ELB officer), for example, when you:

- want to try something for the first time;
- want to try something more challenging and invite someone with more experience in that area or way of working to give you some support;
- are planning to explore more controversial issues with a group and feel that another facilitator's perspective and support would be beneficial;
- are working with a group in which a significant number of members are dealing with particular pastoral or behavioural issues;
- want to divide a large group into smaller facilitated groups for particular sessions or activities.



For Co-facilitation to be Productive and Creative:

- Each facilitator needs to be aware of and value the contribution of the other(s).
- Each facilitator needs to be very clear about their role and contribution.
- All facilitators need to be clear and in agreement about the purpose of the group.
- All facilitators need to be prepared to discuss fully conflicts, tensions, feelings, etc. which may be raised through their joint work and group experience.
- All facilitators need to be willing to value their differences in perceptions, styles and approaches.
- All facilitators need to collaborate, share, trust and talk to each other in and out of the group setting. The ability of the group to share and to deal with conflict and interpersonal issues is directly related to how effective the co-facilitators are at this.³

Benefits and Complications

When deciding whether co-facilitation is the best approach for your work with a particular group, being aware of some of the benefits and complications may help you make that decision.

THE BENEFITS

- It increases the resources available to the group and can be enriching. For example, male / female, older / younger, different backgrounds, or just two different people with different ideas and styles of facilitation.

- It may provide a model of co-operation which is useful for group members' learning.
- It reduces the pressure on the facilitator because there is a shared responsibility for guiding the group, feeding in observations, ideas and information, responding to group needs, etc.
- The two facilitators can take responsibility for different emphases. For example, one might promote the task to be achieved while the other promotes the positive relationships within the group.
- It can provide mutual support and enjoyment for the facilitators if they are compatible and work well together. Sufficient time spent preparing together will give some indication of compatibility and ensure that both facilitators go into the group session feeling confident about the way they plan to work together.
- It can add weight to the leadership of the group so that it is more seriously regarded.
- It can increase the effectiveness of the facilitators' reflection, evaluation and personal learning as the two facilitators can give each other feedback and reflect together on the experience.
- It can free one facilitator to observe without distraction or other responsibilities and feed back these observations to the group.
- It can free one facilitator to look after any unexpected event or crisis while the other attends to the group process as a whole.
- It can offer a novice the opportunity to learn through mentoring or two novices to learn together.

³ Adapted from J. Benson (1997), *Working More Creatively with Groups*, London, Routledge.

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Preparation for Co-facilitation

THE COMPLICATIONS:

- It can involve irksome and unnecessary extra planning. Joint preparation and evaluation is essential, so it is important to be aware of the additional time this may take.
- Co-facilitators are a role model of collaboration, trust and a creative relationship, so a lot is at stake if the partnership is not successful. Group members will very quickly become aware, for example, of any discrepancy between the values being promoted in the ground rules and the way the two facilitators interact with each other.
- Conflict between facilitators can undermine the group and its purpose, causing anxiety and splits within the group. It is, however, important to note that total agreement and harmony can give a message to group members that conflict is 'not OK'.
- It is essential to clarify roles and responsibilities when there is more than one facilitator.
- The facilitators may have to consult each other within the group when on-the-spot responses / decisions have to be made.
- It can be more expensive in terms of time, people and money. In some situations, co-facilitation may simply not be an option.

AGREEING PURPOSE AND PROCESS FOR WORKING TOGETHER

- What does each facilitator see as the core purpose of the group's time together?
- What are each of the facilitators' hopes for the group's time together?
- What ways can the facilitators support each other? Are there particular concerns that one or other of the facilitators has about the work?
- How will the facilitators communicate with each other during the session when, for example:
 - *one facilitator wants the other to take on the main leadership for a while, or for a particular activity / discussion?*
 - *there is a pastoral or behavioural issue which requires a response?*
 - *they need to 'check out' the mood within the group, one facilitator feels that the group needs a break, etc.?*
 - *the facilitators themselves need time out to discuss something?*

NB. It will be important to sit where you can see each other!



Co-facilitation: Working Together

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- What roles / responsibilities will each facilitator undertake? For example:
 - *Who will open and close the session, lead particular activities or discussions, facilitate group evaluation, etc.?*
 - *Will one facilitator take more of a lead while the other takes on the task of observation and feedback if this is needed, or will they alternate?*
 - *Who will keep an eye on timekeeping?*

NB. Even if you are not facilitating at a particular point, you need to participate in ways that will continue to enable group members' learning. If you respond first to all of your co-facilitator's questions or 'jump in' to take leadership in an unfacilitated small group, for example, you will be undermining your co-facilitator's work and limiting opportunities for group members to participate and learn.

- Are there key ground rules which each facilitator feels will be important for facilitation as well as for the group as a whole? What atmosphere do you want to try to create when the group begins?
- What needs to be said to the group so that they are clear about who the facilitators are and what their roles / tasks are?
- What practical planning needs to be done? Are there particular resources each facilitator needs to bring / prepare?

EVALUATION

- When will the facilitators meet to debrief, give each other feedback and do any written evaluation, etc. that is required?

Outlined below are a number of scenarios, based on real life examples, for you to consider how the theory of co-facilitation might translate into everyday practice. Drawing on the ideas within the Co-facilitation section and elsewhere in the resource, how might you respond to the situations outlined below?

Alternatively, or additionally, consider examples from your own experience – reflecting on them now, what might you do the same and what might you do differently?

1 You are about to embark on a groupwork-based programme exploring prejudice and discrimination within the local community with your class group / staff group. This is a new way of working for you and within your budget you have the option of asking a local youth worker with experience in this kind of work to co-facilitate with you.

**What would be the possible benefits?
What would be the possible complications?
Are there other facilitation possibilities?
Based on these factors, what do you decide?
Why have you made this decision?**

2 You become aware of some parents' lack of familiarity and resulting unease with one of your new school policies. They find it jargonistic and feel that they could have been consulted. You want to facilitate a meeting for them but are aware that some of their frustration is aimed at you as principal / co-ordinator with responsibility for the policy. You have the option of co-facilitating this meeting with the chairperson of your Board of Governors, or of inviting in an ELB officer as an external facilitator. Both of these people are knowledgeable and supportive.

**What would be the possible benefits?
What would be the possible complications?
Are there other facilitation possibilities?
Based on these factors, what do you decide?
Why have you made this decision?**

3.4

Personal Preparation for Facilitation

3 As caretaker / secretary / playground supervisor / classroom assistant you have just returned from an intensive Child Protection / Safeguarding training course. Your principal would like you to share this learning with all the staff in the school and is confident that you will do a good job. You know your material, but feel very nervous about facilitating a session for your peers and senior management team. You have the option of asking a staff member from another local school, who also did the course, to co-facilitate, and then you would also work with them in their school.

What would be the possible benefits?
What would be the possible complications?
Are there other facilitation possibilities?
Based on these factors, what do you decide?
Why have you made this decision?

'Teachers affect eternity: no one can tell where their influence stops.' Henry Adams

Each one of us is shaped by our life experiences, the people around us, and numerous other factors. Each one of us has a value base and belief system which affects the way we view the world and relate to other people.

Given the powerful position which facilitators hold within a group, it is important that this is recognised, and that they understand what they are bringing, both positive and negative, to their facilitation role.



Values are:

'principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life stances which act as general guides to behaviour or as reference points in decision-making or the evaluation of beliefs or action ...'⁴

Values and Self-reflection

All facilitators need to give honest attention to their own value base, life experiences and attitudes. This process of self-reflection means exploring thoughts, attitudes, feelings, reactions, etc. It involves recognising and acknowledging how these impact on, among other things:

- how I relate to pupils, parents and colleagues;
- the teaching and discipline styles I use;
- the information I choose to share about particular historical or contemporary events and situations;
- anxieties I may have about exploring certain issues.

Values are not restricted to religious education, assemblies, pastoral care, etc. although these may be the places where they are made most explicit. The whole ethos of the school will be shaped by the dominant values within it, just as the ethos of each classroom is likely to be shaped largely by the values of the teacher. It is important, therefore, to be aware of these and of their implications in practice.

These values:

- are conveyed in teaching and learning processes;
- are embedded in school structures, management, policies, language and relationships;
- can be both explicit and implicit;
- can be 'substantive values' (such as honesty, respect) and 'process values' (such as reflection, caring);
- reflect the values and structures of society and the education system, including curriculum, inspection and assessment approaches.⁵

⁵ Adapted from Taylor, M.J. (1998), *Values Education & Values in Education*, London, Association of Teachers and Lecturers.



Questions for Reflection: Value Base

What do I believe is the purpose of education?

What are the values that underpin my work as an educator?

What are my assumptions about children / young people, colleagues, other adults in the school community?

What are the most important things I bring to the classroom / school?

What are the most important things the children / young people bring to the classroom / school?

What values am I conveying through my way of working? Are these the ones I intend to convey? Am I consistent? How do I know this?

Building Support Structures

A Whole School Approach is the most effective structure for enabling staff, pupils and others in the school community to explore themes, some of which might be contentious, that may arise relating to diversity, within the Citizenship framework. See *Creating an Inclusive Learning Community: A Whole School Approach* (Section Two).

A whole school approach to which all in the school community are committed, particularly the Board of Governors and the senior management team, means that appropriate support can be given to all those involved. For example:

- The work is given a recognised place within the overall prioritising of teaching and learning so that individuals are not left feeling that if they do specific work around

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diversity and controversial issues they will be penalised in some way for not adequately covering prescribed areas of curriculum content.

- If a parent expresses concern about or criticism of work being done in the classroom, the staff member involved can be certain that s/he will have the support of the senior management team in talking with the parent, and will not somehow be scapegoated.
- All staff will be supported with sufficient development and training opportunities to enable them to facilitate intentional work in the classroom, to respond to topics which arise (for example, as a consequence of events in the local community or reported in the media) and to address incidents of prejudice, discrimination or bullying. Ideally, this will include opportunities to reflect on their practice through a supervision type model.*
- All staff will have practical support in terms of both financial and physical resources, adequate planning and evaluation time, recognised lesson time within the curriculum to deliver the work.

Support Through Supervision

Supervision has an everyday meaning relating to management. Supervision in the sense that we are using it here, however, is primarily a relationship that enables the staff to explore issues relating to their work. It allows staff to:

- *look back at recent work;*
- *explore the successes and dilemmas which may have arisen through it;*
- *give validation to skills;*
- *consider how to progress with future work;*
- *assure quality and professionalism;*
- *reflect on personal learning and development to date, and future training / support needs.*

Supervision is most effective when there is a positive professional relationship between the practitioner and the supervisor, and when it takes place regularly, possibly once a month. In a school setting, it may be that once a term is more realistic. The supervisor can be someone from within the workplace structures (for example, the principal or a member of the senior management team) or someone external (known as an 'off-line' supervisor).

Where supervision is not available, use other informal, but regular support structures on a monthly or termly basis, for example, meeting with a colleague from your own or another school, an ELB advisor, another experienced teacher, possibly one who has recently retired.

Practically, it is important that all staff:

- work together in developing programmes as this provides opportunities to share ideas, to check out planned activities with others who may have experience of using them, to ensure that programmes are developmental and consistent across different year groups, and to evaluate programmes together;

- ensure that senior management team members are involved in this process so that they have clear information and can give their backing to the programme;
- work with senior management team members to make parents aware of the work being undertaken;
- draw on other support structures as appropriate, for example, through the ELB and relevant voluntary agencies.



Questions for Reflection

Is there a whole school approach in place which supports this kind of work?

Within my work context, what possibilities do I have for carrying out this kind of work?

What support do I need to carry out the work?

Who can help me with programme planning, evaluation, etc.?

How can I work best with the senior management team?

Can parents and others be involved in the process? How can this best be done?

Is supervision a possibility? Where else can I reflect on and learn from my practice?

Preparing for Facilitation: Encountering Diversity

In addition to personal reflection on value base, experiences, attitudes, feelings, etc., facilitators need opportunities to explore these with other people in a similarly safe environment to that which they will create for the children, young people and adults with whom they work.

One way of doing this is to instigate some structured or informal conversation around the issues in question with friends or colleagues who have different views and life experiences. This kind of experience could also be provided through development / training sessions: some suggestions are given below.



You could ...

- intentionally include diversity issues as a theme for internal staff development days;
- organise joint training / development sessions with your Schools Community Relations Programme partner school(s);
- visit local faith centres, churches and others;
- invite pupils and / or parents from ethnic minority communities to facilitate sessions and / or provide information input to staff, governors and parents;
- invite a panel of local politicians to speak on a particular theme or for a question and answer session;
- hold a disability awareness workshop for governors and staff, drawing on the experience and skills of pupils and parents;
- organise a tour for staff living outside the school's local community, led by, for example, parents or local youth / community workers.

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As well as having inherent value in itself in deepening personal understanding and relationships, the benefit of this experience is that it:

- allows you to feel the fears and other emotions which group members may also hold;
- provides you with meaningful insights into other perspectives and the life experiences which shape them. This is important if you are working in an environment where everyone comes from a similar background;
- demonstrates that you value the reflection process and do not expect group members to take risks which you have not also experienced in some form;
- enables you to increase your knowledge base in relation to, for example, historical events, flags and symbols, political structures, relevant legislation, etc. This needs to be qualified, however, by recognising that you are not expected to be an expert, and that a response such as, 'I don't know the answer to that question, but I will try to find out for our next session' is an appropriate part of the facilitation process.



Questions for Reflection

What are my concerns and fears about exploring diversity?

What are my attitudes / feelings towards people whose:

- *religion;*
- *ethnic background;*
- *cultural background;*
- *political views and affiliation;*
- *sexual orientation;*
- *physical and learning abilities;*
- *social background;*

is / are different to my own?

Do I have prejudices which I need to examine?

What opportunities do I have to explore life experiences, attitudes, etc. with people from backgrounds different to my own?

Where can I learn more about different traditions, symbols, flags, etc.?

What opportunities are there to bring these aspects into my work?

To what extent am I prepared to talk about my personal experiences, values, beliefs, etc.

- *with colleagues and other adults?*
- *with pupils?*

Developing Facilitation Skills

Facilitation involves a wide range of skills, and it is important that the facilitator models the behaviour and skills which they would like group members to develop. The facilitator, therefore, may need some training support in order to feel confident and competent in her / his facilitation.

Some of the skills which are important for facilitators include:

Group Awareness

It is important for the facilitator to be sensitive to the needs, interests and 'mood' of the group and individuals. Group members may volunteer information but the facilitator also needs to be aware of non-verbal communication (body language, etc.) and to be able to draw out further information. See Group Members and Group Dynamics (Section Three).

Enabling Participation

It is the facilitator's responsibility to ensure that all group members can participate as they feel comfortable, helping the group keep to its contract and maintain the 'safe space': ensuring confident group members do not dominate discussion, and encouraging quieter members to have their say. See Enabling Group Members (Section Three).

Active Listening

This is about absorbing what a person has said, and ensuring that s/he knows that s/he has been heard by giving both verbal and non-verbal responses. It means giving a person your whole attention, and does not mean that you are busily thinking about your reply while s/he is speaking. See Developing Skills within a Group (Section Five).

Giving and Receiving Feedback

This can be about giving affirmation to group members for their skills, contribution to the group process or tasks, etc. It may also be about respectfully and appropriately challenging group members to consider their strengths and weaknesses, to try new things, to look at a situation from different perspectives, etc. See Section Three (Enabling Group Members).

Critical and Creative Thinking

A facilitator needs to be able to reflect on a range of perspectives and ideas, and be able to support group members in exploring different ways of understanding these. Where problem-solving is involved, s/he also needs to be able to enable the group to think creatively about a range of possible solutions or outcomes.

Positive Ways of Approaching Conflict

Where strong differences of opinion are expressed within a group, it is important that the facilitator supports the group in working through any conflict that may emerge. As well as helping the group to keep to their contract, this might include sharing skills in relation to negotiation, mediation, etc. See Managing Conflict (Section Four).

Enabling Closure

The facilitator needs to support the group in bringing a session to an appropriate close, so that everyone is able to move on to whatever they are doing next. S/he also needs to support the group when a programme is ending, so successes and learning can be celebrated and strategies for the next stage can be planned. See The Importance of Closure (Section Five).

The development of skills and confidence is ongoing and increases through experience, but it is good to have some grasp of these skills in starting out to work with a group.

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Questions for Reflection

What skills do I feel confident about?

Which skills do I need to work at?

Where can I get support in developing these skills?

Are there situations when it would be helpful to have a co-facilitator?

How can I share these skills and support group members in developing them?

3.5

Building Positive Relationships Between the Facilitator and Group Members

As well as the facilitator's personal preparation, there are a range of other aspects which need to be given attention in order to create a 'safe space' for groupwork. Building positive relationships with group members and enabling them to become familiar with ways of working as a group will help to create a framework for exploring issues, including more controversial ones, together.

Questions for Reflection

Do I really care about each pupil in my class?

Do I speak respectfully to each pupil?

Do I regularly acknowledge the positive attributes of each young person?

Do I expect certain pupils to misbehave?

Do I assume certain pupils are guilty before establishing the facts?

Am I able to apologise to any pupil if I have reacted unjustly?

Am I able to deal positively with conflict?

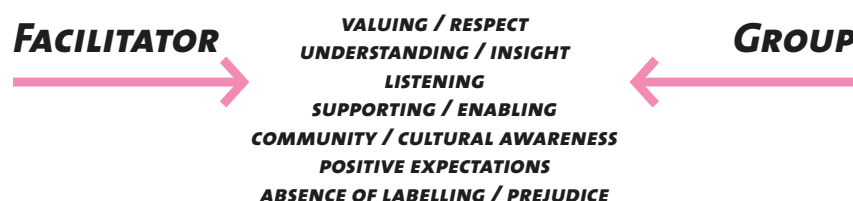
Is my body language consistent with the words I use to each pupil?

Do I organise the curriculum, recognising the diversity of learning styles, so that it's possible for every pupil to achieve daily moments of success, which I then take time to notice? ⁶

Also consider these questions in terms of: the members of my staff team; the parents; the governors; any other group members I work with.

⁶ Adapted from Jenny Mosley (2000), *Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom*, Wisbech, LDA.

Aspects of the Relationship between the Facilitator and Group Members



Positive relationships help create a sense of being a team and encourage the group to support each other and work together. This involves:

- valuing each person and getting to know her / his talents, interests, needs and concerns;
- listening to and affirming each person;
- enabling everyone to participate fully by providing learning opportunities suitable for different abilities, needs and learning styles;
- developing an understanding of the community and cultural contexts within which they live, particularly if members of staff live outside the school area or come from a different background to some or all of the pupils;
- being aware of events and relationships within local communities which may impact on individuals or groups, and can affect the level of risk-taking involved in exploring certain issues or in meeting groups from different backgrounds.



Questions for Reflection

How well do you know the local community within which the school is situated?

How well do you understand the cultural / religious / political background of the children, young people and adults who make up the school community?

What do you know? Are these facts, assumptions or judgements?

What issues are being faced by the children, young people and adults who make up the school community?

What spaces are created to discuss these life issues? What support do they have?

What is appropriate in terms of exploration / intervention within the classroom or school?

What is the purpose of the work being undertaken with them?

Is there a 'change' agenda?

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



It is important to keep a balance between this kind of 'helpful awareness', while avoiding preconceived judgements based upon past experience, perceptions of the community, or what has been said in the staffroom, etc. Try to avoid:

Labelling

perceiving someone as 'quiet', 'a troublemaker', 'someone who overreacts' with the inherent assumption that s/he 'always' (or mostly) has been and will be like this.

Prejudice

feelings or attitudes towards a group or individual without reasonable knowledge of that group or individual.

Transference

where someone within the group reminds you of someone outside the group, and you assume that the group member will also be like that person in other ways.

Projection

putting your own traits, feelings, attitudes, etc. onto group members and assuming that they will respond and act in the same way that you do.

Scapegoating

placing the blame for things that go wrong, negative feelings, etc. on one group member, whether or not there is any justification for this.

Practical Points

- What do I want to be called by the group? For example, if I am working with a class, am I happy for them to use my first name or not? All the time? Just for this kind of lesson / module? Just during name games / activities? Not at all?
- How will I learn the names of group members, if I don't already know them? Name badges? Name game? Introductions? Reminder activities? Other possibilities? See Developing Programmes for Children, Young People and Adults (Section Five).
- What kind of relationship do I want with this group? Why? What style of working will best assist this? What ground rules will best frame this?
- How will group members benefit from this relationship in terms of learning, enjoyment, etc.?

3.6

Group Members and Group Dynamics



Group members are the individuals who make up the group. The term 'group dynamics' is used to describe the nature of the relationships and interactions between these individuals.

Every group, whether it is a class or smaller group of pupils, a staff team or a gathering of other adults within the school community, is made up of individuals who each bring their own skills, needs and life experience to the process. The way each individual behaves and contributes to the group process will be shaped by these factors, and this in turn will play a part in shaping the dynamics within the group as a whole. It is crucially important, therefore, that the facilitator pays attention to these, both because they will be the source of much of the group's learning and because the group may need support in addressing particular issues or conflicts which emerge from them.

What Group Members Bring

In working with any group, some aspects to consider are:

AGE AND LIFE EXPERIENCE

While some aspects of life experience can be loosely determined by age, others vary widely from person to person. Life experience is probably the most important factor in shaping what individuals bring to a group. For example:

- a child who has lived in different places may bring a positive experience of diversity which others in a class may not have;

- a staff member who lives within the local community will bring a knowledge of pupils' day-to-day environment, which those who come from elsewhere may not have;
- a group of young people who have experienced tragedy will bring an insight into grief and its related feelings and struggles which others may not have;

- a parent or governor may bring particular skills from their area of work (within or outside the home) while others may bring different ones.

Without prejudging individuals within a group, it can be helpful to know something of their life story so that sensitivity can be applied to areas which they may find challenging or difficult. While this does not mean avoiding these areas, it is important to remember that this kind of groupwork is not counselling, and if particular behavioural or emotional difficulties arise, it may be appropriate to offer further support elsewhere. See Beyond Programmes: Learning for Life (Section Seven).

SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE

Some of the key ingredients of positive self-esteem include:

- *feeling physically safe;*
- *feeling emotionally safe;*
- *having a sense of personal identity;*
- *having a sense of belonging;*
- *feeling capable and effective;*
- *having a sense of purpose and meaning.*

The extent to which group members experience these will affect how they participate within the group. It may be valuable to include some activities within the programme which, as part of their purpose, are aimed specifically at building group members' self-esteem and confidence.

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With regard to work around community relations or other controversial issues, people who are confident about and secure in their own sense of identity are likely to feel less threatened by difference. This means that they will be more able to engage in exploration of controversial issues, to gain positive learning from the experience and to deal effectively with any conflict which may arise.



Building a positive atmosphere in the classroom / school in general and for groupwork specifically is easiest when you feel good about yourself. Similarly, it is difficult to build the self-esteem of participants if you yourself have low self-esteem.

- Take time to think about the different things, big and small, which you have achieved over the past week, month, year. If you find this difficult, ask a friend or colleague to help you!
- Everyone has bad days, so do not blame yourself unnecessarily for these. Instead, be honest with the group about how you're feeling, adapt the session to or swap it with one that you can manage more easily or postpone it to a better time.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES & LEARNING STYLES

Rather than thinking of intelligence in purely academic terms, Howard Gardner⁷ has identified at least nine intelligences which individuals have to different extents.

1 Interpersonal

the capacity to understand and work well with others.

2 Intrapersonal

the capacity to understand oneself and learn through reflection.

3 Kinesthetic

the capacity to use mental abilities to co-ordinate bodily movements in effective ways.

4 Linguistic

the capacity to respond to and use language effectively.

5 Logical / Mathematical

the capacity to investigate and analyse problems logically and scientifically.

6 Musical

the capacity to appreciate, compose and perform music.

7 Naturalist

the capacity to appreciate, explore and understand aspects of nature and the environment.

8 Visual / Spatial

the capacity to understand the dimensions and possibilities of different kinds of visual space, and to be creative with this.

9 Existentialist

the capacity to explore and understand in spiritual and philosophical terms.

⁷ Gardner, H. (1993), *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (2nd Edition), London, Fontana Press. (He has adapted and added to his list of intelligences over time.)

This will affect how individuals participate in terms of the things which interest them, the aspects which they pick up or respond to most quickly, etc. By its very nature, group-work demands that all group members use their intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence (defined by Daniel Goleman as 'emotional intelligence').⁸ Developing skills in these two areas will increase the effectiveness of group members' participation and learning through the process. Again, it is likely to be useful for the facilitator to include activities within the programme which have such skills development as part of their purpose. This emotional literacy is a necessary and valuable skill for group members in all aspects of their lives.

The recognition that individuals do not have a fixed amount of intelligence means that our capacity for learning is effectively limitless, and, aside from the important issues of respect and self-esteem, make labels such as 'bright' and 'stupid' meaningless. Individuals do, however, learn most effectively in different ways or combinations of ways, as defined below:

1 Visual learning

people who learn best by seeing, for example, reading, looking at diagrams, maps or pictures, etc.

2 Auditory learning

people who learn best by hearing, for example, listening to a talk or lecture, learning by association with particular music, etc.

3 Kinesthetic learning

people who learn best by doing, for example, by trying experiments, making things with their hands, using drama or role-play, etc.

Facilitators, teachers and leaders have a tendency to work out of their own preferred learning style and should be aware of providing for a range of learning styles to maximise the opportunities for all participants.

The ability to learn is also affected by our past experiences, how we feel about learning and the situations in which we find ourselves. Again this reminds us of the importance of self-esteem, and of the facilitator's need to be aware of the emotions that are being experienced during group sessions.



You might want to consider doing an intelligences or learning styles questionnaire in order to reflect on your own strengths, weaknesses and preferred learning styles. The purpose of this is not to put you in a box, but to assist with self-reflection and awareness, and to enable you to broaden the range and types of activity which you include when facilitating a group.

There are a number of websites which offer such questionnaires, for example:
www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.mi.htm

⁸ Goleman, D. (1996), *Emotional Intelligence*, London, Bloomsbury Publishing.

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EXPECTATIONS

Each group member will come to the process with different hopes and fears. This may affect their expectations of the process and their willingness to engage with it. The first time the group meets, it is likely to be valuable for the facilitator to create a space for group members to express (anonymously or directly) some of these hopes and fears. By doing this, fears can be allayed, and, as appropriate, hopes can play a part in shaping the process or programme. If some hopes or expectations are unreasonable within the possibilities of the group, this can be clarified and the purpose of the group's time together explained again.

It is important to recognise here that within a school context, some people may have a choice about participating and others may not. Where participation is compulsory, clarity about the purpose of the group's time together is especially valuable. If the facilitator can give attention to group members' hopes and work to allay any concerns or fears, this is likely to increase group members' willingness to engage with the process. Being aware of their interests and particular skills will help the facilitator to find 'hooks' which will draw

their attention and enthusiasm for the process. For example:

- children (or adults) with a preference for kinesthetic learning will be drawn into the process more quickly through interactive exercises than by listening to a talk;
- teachers are likely to feel happier about participating in a groupwork activity when they can see its direct relevance to the specific challenges which they are facing in their classrooms;
- young people's interest is likely to be sparked by a theme which relates directly and realistically to their life experience outside school;
- support staff are likely to be more willing to give extra time to participate in training sessions when they feel their contribution to the school is clearly and specifically valued.



Questions for Reflection

Take time to reflect on your own:

- *self-esteem and confidence;*
- *intelligence strengths and weaknesses;*
- *preferred learning style;*
- *hopes and fears.*

How might these affect the way I facilitate the group?

Have I included activities within the programme that will help to build individual group members' self-esteem and confidence?

Have I included a diverse range of activities to enable all group members to enjoy and learn from the group experience?

Personality Types and Group Roles

Within a group, individuals will participate in different ways. This will be partly shaped by personality, and it may at times appear that certain group members are taking on particular roles. Identifying these roles can be helpful in trying to develop an understanding of the relationships and dynamics within the group. However, it is important only to do so when bearing in mind that:

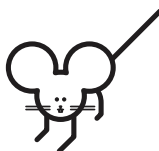
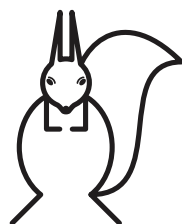
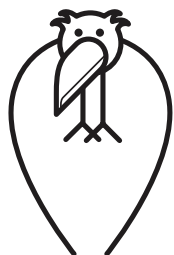
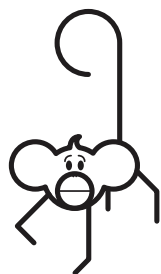
- role definitions apply to specific behaviours and not to the whole person;
- although some roles are disruptive to the group process, others are of benefit, and some can be both, depending on the context;
- some roles are very transitory while others appear to be more enduring, but each

person has the potential and possibility of changing their behaviour;

- if the role is disruptive and needs to be challenged, highlight the specific behaviour and do not condemn the individual;
- identifying roles does not become a labelling of people which prevents them from participating differently within the group or that limits their personal development.

One of the purposes in identifying the roles of particular individuals is to encourage participation in the group process in different ways to the ones they habitually use.

Some roles that it may be helpful to look out for include:⁹



The Monkey

brings humour into the situation but can also chatter a lot and prevent serious discussion.

The Sheep

is a patient listener but can also follow the crowd instead of thinking for her / himself.

The Parrot

is a good talker but also incessantly answers back without taking time to listen.

The Squirrel

stores up all the anger and hurt inside.

The Snail

withdraws when under pressure and refuses to share her / his ideas and opinions.

The Mouse

quietly gets on with things but also finds it hard to speak up.

⁹ Naylor, Y. (2003), *Who We Are: Dealing with Difference*, Belfast, Irish School of Ecumenics.

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Interaction and Group Dynamics

Within any group, there are numerous relationships developing, all at the same time. In a group of eight people, for example, there are 28 different relationships happening at any given time. In a class of 30 pupils plus one teacher, there are 465 relationships happening at any given time!¹⁰ It is these relationships which create the dynamics within a group, and the behaviour of one individual or a small group can affect all of them. The facilitator in particular needs to be aware of how her / his own mood, attitudes and behaviour can affect everyone else in the group.

Throughout the life of the group, ways of behaving and interacting develop between group members. As with the roles which people may take on as part of this process, some of these behaviours and interactions will be of benefit to the group while others may be detrimental. One of the facilitator's jobs is to ensure that there is a clear, agreed understanding of respectful behaviour within the group, for example, through the early development of a group contract which can be re-visited at different points throughout the group's life as necessary. If detrimental behaviours and interactions emerge as the group progresses, the facilitator needs to challenge them appropriately and support individuals or the group as a whole in addressing them. See Responding to Behaviour which is 'Challenging' (Section Three).

All groups will also experience conflict at some time or another. While this is a normal part of life, it does have the potential to be harmful rather than creative, so it is vital that it is managed effectively in order to reach as positive an outcome as possible. See Managing Conflict (Section Four).

It is within these interactions that enjoyment, creativity and learning take place. Groupwork is a relational, exploratory model of co-learning which is effective because of what participants bring to the process, supported by thoughtful and compassionate facilitation.



Questions for Reflection

What roles am I aware of within the group?

Am I using this awareness appropriately, or am I limiting people by labelling them?

How many relationships (using the formula) are happening within this group?

Can I see developments within group members' relationships and interactions as they get to know each other better and / or as the programme develops?

Are clear boundaries of respectful attitudes and behaviour being maintained?

What am I learning from group members and through my experience of the group process?

¹⁰ The formula for this is:

$$\frac{(\text{Number in Group}) \times (\text{Number in group, less one})}{2}$$

Kindred, M. (1995), *Once Upon a Group*, London, Roy Allen Print Ltd.

3.7 Enabling Group Members



Group members have the right to expect:

- consistency, fairness and honesty;
- recognition of worth, respect and consideration;
- that the facilitator develop and create new experiences;
- structure, direction and boundaries;
- protection of standards, norms and values;
- feedback, advice, suggestions;
- an increasing and proportionate role in making decisions;
- that the facilitator act as a model of legitimate and compassionate authority.¹¹

Creating the Learning Environment

When setting up the learning environment you need to consider the:

- people who will be involved (who are they, how do they relate to each other);
- time of day, and amount of time you have;
- place in which you are working.

Along with your facilitation, these factors will shape the learning that takes place. This learning will be most effective if the environment is defined by characteristics such as those listed in the diagram which follows.

The term, **Democratic Classroom** is becoming increasingly familiar, particularly within the

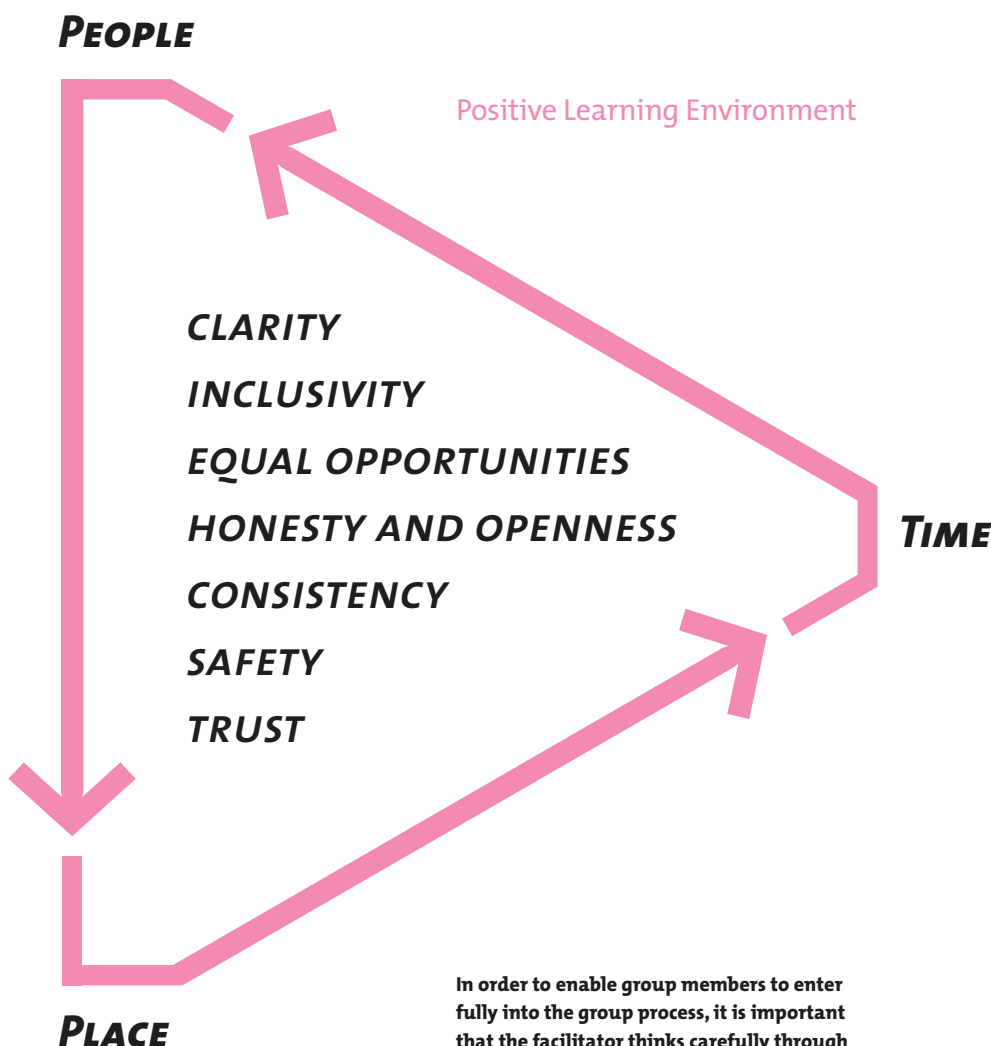
context of Local and Global Citizenship. Groupwork is most effective when it takes place within such a democratic setting, and where:

- group members are supported to take responsibility for their own participation and learning;
- group members are significantly involved in programme planning, development and evaluation;
- the nature of the group process is inclusive and fully interactive;
- learning takes place through open and investigative questioning and discussion rather than purely didactic methods.

To be truly effective, the 'democratic classroom' needs to be underpinned by democratic approaches throughout the school. It is difficult, for example, to expect teachers to model democratic approaches within their classrooms if they do not experience a similar democracy in management styles, decision-making processes, etc. Similarly, if pupils experience a democratic approach in one classroom, but not elsewhere, it is likely to have a detrimental effect on their relationships with different adults in the school community and to leave them uncertain about what is expected of them in terms of their participation, behaviour, etc. Children, young people and adults alike will be quick to spot inconsistencies between what is being advocated in the classroom and what is being practised in the school as a whole. Democratic ways of working are not always familiar within a school setting and although there is some risk-taking involved, the learning and relational benefits can be enormous.

¹¹ From Benson, J. (1997), *Working More Creatively with Groups*, London, Routledge.

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In order to enable group members to enter fully into the group process, it is important that the facilitator thinks carefully through the beginnings of the process and the gathering of the individual participants into a coherent, functioning group.

The creation of a 'safe space' in which the group can meet and learn together has an overarching significance, but there are also a number of specific factors which can be highlighted. The creation of a positive learning environment is about finding ways to maximise group members' participation for both their individual benefit and that of the group as a whole.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WELCOME

In many ways, the first session can set the tone for the rest of the group's time together. It will have a large impact on whether group members come back to the next session and / or the extent to which they are prepared to engage with the process. It is important that participants feel welcome when they enter the group space. This is not just about the words which the facilitator uses, but also the warm and inclusive atmosphere which s / he sets out to create.



Within the first session, this might include:

- Ensuring the room is physically comfortable in a way appropriate for the session's purpose.
- Having a starting ('bell') activity which will give people something to do when they arrive and may help them to feel less self-conscious. This could include anything from a structured exercise which encourages people to talk to each other, to offering a cup of tea or coffee.
- The facilitator speaking clear and inclusive words of welcome, backed up by welcoming body language and an overall style which is friendly and respectful.
- Giving people the opportunity to introduce themselves by the name they like to be called, and providing them with some guidance as to what information would be useful, with perhaps one piece of 'fun' information included, for example, your first name and why you were given it, your first name and your favourite film.

The factors which build this atmosphere of welcome need to be sustained throughout the group's life: it is not simply an 'act' for the opening session.

CLARITY ABOUT PURPOSE AND PROCESS

Group members will find it helpful to know what is expected of them in terms of participating, behaviour, etc. It is particularly important that they have a clear understanding of the purpose of the group's time together. A mismatch between the facilitator's and a group member's understanding of the group's purpose can lead to unnecessary frustrations and conflict which will have a negative effect on the experience of individuals and the group as a whole.

It is also important that the facilitator listens to the hopes and fears of group members about the process. As discussed above, where group members see evidence that their hopes and fears have been taken on board, they are likely to participate more fully and effectively in the overall process. Group members will feel more ownership of and commitment to the process where their views and ideas are included in programme development.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

As with most other aspects of their experience, each group member will come to the group with different skills and levels of skill. For the group's effectiveness, it can be valuable to include activities and exercises early in the process to ensure that all group members have a shared baseline of opportunity to develop skills that will be useful to them during the group's life and beyond. How each individual responds to the exercises will, of course, vary, but at the very least, some key skills, such as active listening and creative thinking will have been highlighted and can be revisited throughout the time the group is together. See Developing Skills within a Group (Section Five)

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It is also important for the facilitator to be aware that previous group and life experiences may have bred negative 'skills' for some individuals or for the group as a whole. One example of this would be group members who have learnt to hide their feelings and opinions, especially about more controversial issues, because past experiences have taught them that these are not things to talk about in a classroom or professional setting. Specific time will be needed to address such 'skills' where they inhibit personal and group development and learning.

ENABLING PERSONAL SHARING

This kind of learning is not necessarily about right or wrong factual answers. It is about investigative approaches, hearing different perspectives and opinions, developing emotional literacy (including empathy), etc. Therefore, the life experiences, thoughts and views of each member of the group are needed so that all of the group can learn and develop. It is the facilitator's job to help people to feel confident and comfortable to do this in a way which is appropriate. This can be supported through strategies such as the following:

- activities which encourage the development of intra / interpersonal skills;
- creation of group guidelines or contract;
- the specific ground rule of using 'I' statements, avoiding the use of generalisations or assumptions about what others might think or experience;
- techniques such as a Circle Time round with a 'Sentence Starter' to aid the expression of feelings or experiences;
- the facilitator appropriately sharing some of her / his own experiences, feelings and views, encouraging a greater openness as group members become aware that the facilitator is not asking them to take risks that s/he is unwilling to take her / himself.

Ultimately, people are most likely to share their personal experiences, feelings and views when they feel that they are being listened to and valued. It is essential, however, that group members do not feel that they are being pressurised into taking risks in sharing personal information, etc. when they do not feel ready to do so or they do not feel it is appropriate.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Disruptive behaviour does not just create difficulties for the facilitator, it affects everyone in the group. At its most extreme, it may intimidate or distress people to the extent that they decide not to come back to the group or not to participate in any way beyond what they absolutely have to. It is, therefore, essential that such behaviour is addressed promptly and appropriately, for the sake of all group members as well as for the individuals involved and the facilitator. It is important, however, for the facilitator to be aware of the (sometimes fine) distinctions between purely disruptive behaviour, and challenging behaviour which emerges as the result of an uncomfortable or controversial theme. If handled effectively, the latter can provide opportunities for personal reflection and learning for the wider group as well as for individuals directly involved. A fuller discussion of disruptive and challenging behaviour, and of some response strategies can be found in Responding to Behaviour which is 'Challenging' (Section Three).

GIVING FEEDBACK

Giving feedback is about the facilitator responding to what people say and do within the group setting. Working within the framework of respect and inclusivity, it is a skill which, among other things, can be used for checking out, affirming, encouraging, and challenging.

It is a valuable part of the facilitator's job for a number of reasons, for example:

- it allows the facilitator to check that s/he has understood the points, feelings, etc. someone is trying to convey;
- the facilitator can encourage and build a

group member's self-esteem through commenting positively on her / his contribution to the group;

- it can be a tool for encouraging group members to take their learning further, through affirming what they have learnt, and asking questions which may encourage them to think even more broadly or deeply about something;
- the facilitator can also give feedback on negative behaviour or comments, respectfully challenging group members to think about their words or actions, and how they might participate differently.

The facilitator can also receive feedback from group members, peers and senior colleagues / tutors. Creating opportunities for them to give feedback will both demonstrate how they are valued and enhance their own skills. For the facilitator, this can be valuable for her / his personal and professional development, and for the development of the current and future programmes. This will be most useful if you:

- ask for it to be given in a helpful way (giving examples, positive as well as critical comment);
- listen all the way through;
- remember that it is their experiences of you and their perspectives on the situation;
- give yourself permission not to reply at once, and to take time to think about what has been said;
- give yourself permission to learn from mistakes.

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For feedback to be useful, it needs to be:

- planned: consider when and where is most appropriate, how the person will feel, whether s/he has had previous negative experiences, how you hope to follow it up in a constructive way, etc;
- owned: 'This is my feedback to you', i.e. how I see the situation – there may well be other perspectives;
- clear;
- specific and behaviour-focused;
- balanced: highlight strengths / weaknesses;
- relevant and soon after the situation;
- regular and integral to the group process.

Remember to give group members the opportunity to respond if they wish, or to come back to you at a later stage, either within or outside the group setting.

Feedback must always be appropriate in terms of both what the facilitator says and when they says it. For example:

- A young person with low self-esteem who is very aware of her / his position within her / his peer group, may find it difficult to receive public affirmation, so it may be more appropriate to give it on a one-to-one basis after the group session. Otherwise, rather than encouraging greater participation and learning, these may actually be inhibited.
- Yelling at a child or young person about her / his negative behaviour does not constitute appropriate feedback and breaks all the rules of the contract that the facilitator is trying to model to the group!

ENABLING APPROPRIATE ENDINGS

All group processes must come to an end at some point. Although group members and the facilitator may meet in other contexts and for other purposes, the particular process in which they were involved will be completed. Even where a teacher continues to work with the same class or a principal continues to work with her / his staff team, the series of lessons or development sessions need to have a clear finishing point. This does not mean that particular themes or concerns cannot be revised or explored further at a later date, but this should be seen as a separate stage of the process, and may not involve the same group of individuals.

Appropriate endings provide a sense of closure and contribute to the group's sense of working in a safe space with clear boundaries. Endings are also important because they are part of the learning experience. A clear ending:

- prevents the process from becoming too drawn out, or even boring;
- provides a specific opportunity for reflecting back on the process and assessing the learning which has taken place;
- creates a space for celebrating what has been learnt and the value of the relationships and process which the group has experienced;
- gives the group members the opportunity to think about how they are going to use their learning in school and in their broader life experience;
- allows group members to consider what further learning might be useful to them.

For further information on 'endings' see The Importance of Closure (Section Five) and Developing a Model for Self-evaluation (Section Six).

3.8 Useful Tips for Facilitating Discussions



Outlined below are strategies to assist effective discussion. Consider how these could be replaced (when need be) with, picture or colour cards, one word responses, thumbs up / down, other actions, puppets, etc., particularly when working with younger children.

Ways of Starting

Sometimes it is good to get everyone involved by asking them for a quick contribution. You might set the 'ball rolling' by asking each person for a one word reaction to the theme, to say, briefly, how the issue relates to them or by telling a personal anecdote that is sparked off by the subject. Alternatively, each individual could complete one of these unfinished sentences:

- *I am excited about this discussion because ...*
- *I am not sure about this discussion because ...*
- *Right now I feel ...*



Questions for Reflection

What are the things I can do to create a positive and democratic learning environment for those I work with?

What practical things can I do to create a warm welcome at the start and throughout the module / programme?

Have I taken time to write down the purpose of this programme? Is it clear, relevant and easy to understand? Check it out with someone!

What skills will group members need for this programme? Have I built in sufficient time and activities to support them in developing these?

What can I do to encourage appropriate personal sharing within the group?

What might it be appropriate for me to share from my own experiences?

What opportunities have I built in to give and to receive feedback?

Have I ensured that the different aspects of ending the programme can be attended to?

NB. Consider using humour sometimes as a way of introducing controversial issues. It can be a great way of 'hooking' people's enthusiasm and good will and releasing facilitator and group member anxieties prior to a deeper level of investigation.

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Ways of Ending

Stopping a discussion can be as hard as starting one! Marking the end in some way often helps. Ask a member of the group to sum up what has been said, gather some key words / points of learning on a flipchart, or try using these unfinished sentences:

- *By participating in this discussion I have gained ...*
- *New things I have learnt by participating in this discussion include ...*
- *After participating in this discussion I will do things differently because ...*
- *Something I have enjoyed about participating in this discussion is ...*

Effective Discussions

Sometimes a discussion can become sidetracked, people can get bogged down in a particular issue, energy levels can plummet, something can happen to distract people, etc. There are a number of quick interventions that may help. (At other times, a more significant intervention may be needed, or people may simply need some 'time out'.)

Just Checking

Everyone can be asked to say a few words about how they are feeling at that moment, for example, bored, interested, tired, etc. Alternatively, the facilitator can call out suggestions and individuals can stand up if the word matches how they are feeling. This can be useful if the group seems to be breaking up for no clear reason.

Optimists

If a discussion is becoming negative, or the group is becoming irritable and mistrustful, ask everyone to make one positive statement before they criticise an idea. They may need a structure to do this, for example, 'One good thing about that is ... I also feel that ...'

Sides

If discussion is becoming polarised, people should be asked to put forward the opposite viewpoint to their own position or to state their own view, then put forward an opposing case. Alternatively, they could be asked to repeat what they heard the other person say and check this out with the speaker. Indeed you may need to be prepared to do something similar yourself or to play 'devil's advocate'. This can be useful in getting people to consider the others' case and lead to a better acceptance of the others' views.

Turns

To help make discussions less rowdy, to encourage listening as well as talking, to support individuals to think before they speak, a number of techniques can be used:

- put a ball on a table or in the middle of the group. If anyone wants to talk, s/he must take the ball from the table or the middle and return it (always to the table / middle, not to another group member) when s/he has finished.
- give three playing cards to each participant, once s/he uses these, s/he is not allowed to speak again.

Stuck Discussions

Sometimes, discussions just seem to get 'stuck'. No one has anything to say and there is an uneasy, anxious atmosphere. Usually when a discussion is really stuck, something has happened to make people feel very anxious. They are afraid of talking. All their energy is bound up in worrying and they find it hard to speak. This often happens if you have approached an emotional subject too soon, before enough trust has developed in the group. Leave emotional subjects until people know each other better. If it does happen, however, (and sometimes it does quite unexpectedly) try:

- *going back to less threatening topics;*
- *working in pairs or smaller groups;*
- *saying what you think is wrong – talking about the problem can make it less frightening and you can start to rebuild trust.*

Sometimes discussions get stuck because people have genuinely contributed all their ideas. When this happens, even if it is sooner than you anticipated, you need to close the discussion (possibly with one of the suggestions above) and move on. It may be useful for the group to come back to the theme at a later stage when they have had more time to think about it or have learnt more about it through other activities.



Questions for Reflection

Have I thought about how I am going to start and finish the discussions within this session?

Have I a few quick strategies 'up my sleeve' so I can feel confident to respond to situations such as those outlined above?

Considering this session's theme and the group involved, are there any potential difficulties that I may need to watch out for?

What are my fears about this session's potential discussion themes?

Will I be able to be flexible if I need to alter my session plan?

Have I a couple of activities in my head if we finish the planned work early?

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

3.9

Responding to Behaviour which is 'Challenging'

The starting point for any facilitator in responding to challenging behaviour within a group is to be aware of their own attitudes, actions and reactions within the group process as a whole and within a specific situation.

When we think about challenging behaviour, we often imagine behaviour which is noisily disruptive, aggressive or confrontational. This may 'tap into' our anxieties about a lack of skill or training / support in ways of positively responding to verbal or physical conflict. There may be, however, many other behaviours which we find challenging, and it is important to be aware of which behaviours have an emotional impact on us and which raise anxieties about our ability to deal with or resolve them. Some challenging behaviours within a groupwork setting can include:

- *shyness and linked withdrawal;*
- *disengagement, possibly due to boredom, a sense of irrelevance, etc.;*
- *joking about and a refusal to engage with serious themes;*
- *other diversionary tactics;*
- *cliques, and refusals to work as a group.*

When you are striving to create an inclusive, participative atmosphere, the challenge may be how to ensure that people are genuinely included and able to contribute and learn.

Finding out What's Wrong:

- Don't assume that because you can see a particular behaviour that you know the reasons behind it.
- Jumping to the wrong conclusions may mean that you make the wrong response.
- The priority must always be ensuring the physical and emotional safety of the group.
- Once this is established, take time to check out what is going on with group members.
- This discussion in itself may be enough to resolve the difficulty, otherwise it will allow you to make an informed decision about the next step.

There are many resources which provide helpful insights into positive behaviour management both generally and in a specific groupwork based context. Some of these are listed in the resources section at the back of this pack. Below are some aspects to consider and some specific strategies which may be useful.

Thinking about Ourselves First

There can be a tendency to associate challenging behaviours with children and young people, but adults are equally likely to display any of the behaviours previously listed. Given this, it is important to be aware of your own behaviour as a group member, and the things that you might do which will create difficulties for the facilitator and, potentially, inhibit the group as a whole.

A humorous list of examples (How to 'Wind-up' the Facilitator), but with a serious point, is outlined below. It is worth thinking about how these or similar things irritate you when you are facilitating, teaching or chairing a meeting, for at least two reasons:

- it helps you to be aware of the potential impact of your behaviour on the facilitator;
- it helps you to be aware of behaviour which particularly triggers negative reactions within you when you are facilitating. This can help you to develop some coping strategies and constructive responses in advance, rather than reacting out of irritation or frustration.

Think also about any distinctions you might make in the way that you approach a situation involving adults and one involving children or young people. Sometimes these distinctions will be appropriate, because of the age groups involved and their levels of understanding, personal development, etc. Although working with peers may involve different dynamics, we must respond to children and young people with the same respect which we give to adults.

Sometimes it is tempting to let adults away with behaviour not perceived as acceptable if the group members were children or young people. Often this is the case because we find responding to the behaviour of adults, particularly our peers, more challenging, and some additional support (for example, within a supervision context) may be needed.

HOW TO 'WIND-UP' THE FACILITATOR

- 1 Always arrive late and make a lot of noise finding a seat.
- 2 When talking, use 20 words when five would do.
- 3 Set your watch alarm to go off regularly.
- 4 During discussion yawn and sigh deeply.
- 5 Pass notes to others.
- 6 When the facilitator introduces an exercise, just say that you have done it before and you know that it does not work.
- 7 Always come in late after lunch and fall asleep - alternatively, do not bother to turn up for the afternoon session.
- 8 Organise for friends to call you on your mobile phone during the session, and send text messages to those that do not.
- 9 When asked if there are any questions, ask how long it is until break / lunch.
- 10 During discussions, talk behind your hand to the person next to you.
- 11 When in small groups to do an exercise, spend the time talking about your last holiday or what you're planning to do at the weekend.
- 12 Break the ground rule about speaking for yourself. Make many sweeping generalisations, which suggest that the whole group shares your view that the session is pointless.
- 13 Do not say a word during the evaluation, then go around afterwards being very critical.
- 14 At the end, do not pick up your handouts and take them with you. Ideally, leave them scattered on the floor.¹²

¹² Adapted from Skinner, S. (1992), Training and How Not to Panic, Halifax, Community Development Training Unit.

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



A Context for Responding to Challenging Behaviour

The starting point to responding to challenging behaviour is to consider whether you, as the facilitator, have done your best to create and maintain a safe learning space. This would include the following:

CLARITY OF GROUP / PROGRAMME PURPOSE

- Have you clearly explained the purpose of the group being together and the specific programme?
- What evidence do you have that group members have understood this and perceive its relevance to them?
- Are you restating the purpose, flagging up any changes / developments and checking this out with group members at appropriate stages throughout the process / programme?

A SAFE SPACE FOR LEARNING

- Have you taken sufficient time in the early stages of the programme to:
 - *get to know group members' names?*
 - *build trusting and respectful relationships between yourself and the group, and between group members?*
 - *work with the group in establishing a clear contract for working together?*
 - *enable the group members to develop the skills they will need in order to participate fully in the process / programme?*
- Are you taking time to revisit these aspects of group building at appropriate stages throughout the process / programme?

PROGRAMME PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Have you made yourself aware of any appropriate information you need with regard to aspects of group members' life (and, specifically, school) experience which may impact on the way in which they participate in this particular group and programme?
- Have you included a broad enough range of learning experiences to cater for the different learning styles and interests of group members?
- Is there coherence between individual sessions / activities and the overall programme purpose?
- What evidence is there that group members are able to see the purpose and relevance of individual sessions and activities to:
 - *the programme as a whole?*
 - *themselves as individuals?*
- Is there flexibility in the programme to respond to group members' learning needs and interests?
- Have group members been able to share in programme planning, evaluation and further development?

Developing Responses to Specific Behaviours

The ways of working suggested previously may seem time-consuming within the pressures of a classroom or other timetable, however, if you are encountering 'challenging' behaviours, it is likely that time is not being spent usefully anyway, and that learning and enjoyment are being restricted.

In order that learning and enjoyment can be re-established the issues and behaviour need to be dealt with and this process, if facilitated well, will involve learning in itself. Sometimes this means having the courage to abandon your original programme, at least temporarily!

Below are some examples of behaviour which will need a response, and some suggestions as to what this process might involve in terms of underlying principles. The list is far from exhaustive, and there are no set answers: different settings, groups and programmes will need different responses. There are also scenarios at the end of the section which you can use to consider your own underlying values and strategies. In each case, the starting point for responding is a respectful and inclusive setting.

A GROUND RULE IS BROKEN

If this happens, it is important that the response is prompt and appropriately visible to the whole group: they need to know that the contract is meaningful, and that they have a responsibility to keep it themselves and to support the rest of the group members in keeping it. Equally, they need to know that there are consequences if a ground rule is broken. Having involved all group members in drawing up the contract, they also need to be involved, where possible, in deciding what happens if a ground rule is broken. See Developing a Contract / Learning Agreement (Section Five).

CONFLICT WITHIN THE GROUP

Conflict can take many forms within the group. A **restorative approach** to behavioural issues¹³ would argue that negative behaviours are not simply about broken rules but are, more significantly, about the breakdown of relationships which require restoration. Any response will need to address the feelings and attitudes of both 'perpetrators' and 'victims' – it is likely that both or all of those involved may perceive themselves as victims in some way, or may perceive themselves as both at different points in the process. In the example above, if an individual group member breaks a ground rule, the relationships between her / him and the other group members, and between her / him and you are broken. As the facilitator, you are likely to need to take on a mediation role or to involve another facilitator. Depending on the incident and on the group itself, this could be another group member. Some guidance on dealing with conflict situations, including mediation, is provided in Managing Conflict (Section Four).

LACK OF PARTICIPATION

An apparent lack of, or a withdrawal from participation by individual group members can be for all kinds of reasons: shyness, a preference for observation, boredom, no sense of relevance or meaningfulness, distractions, a more pressing priority to think about, etc. Each of these will require a different response, and you are unlikely to know what the cause is unless you check it out with the group or the particular individual concerned. When it does involve one person, it will often be more appropriate to address it with her / him individually. If the cause is shyness or anxiety, for example, picking her / him out within the group is likely to make matters worse.

¹³ See, for example, Belinda Hopkins, www.transformingconflict.org

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR

All kinds of behaviours can be disruptive, whether it is apparently harmless joking, everyone talking at once and not listening to you or to each other, or numerous other examples. Again, there may be a wide range of reasons for the behaviour, and you will probably need to check out the possible causes in order to deal with it effectively. Is it:

- *boredom;*
- *anxiety about discussing a particular theme;*
- *absence of a sense of connection or relevance;*
- *excitement about other things;*
- *not being challenged or stimulated enough;*
- *finding it too challenging or difficult;*
- *an issue or conflict from outside that has been brought into the group;*
- *the time of year?*

You may need to use some 'containing' strategies in order to create the space for exploring causes and potential responses. Depending on the circumstances, these could include:

- a change of activity – possibly to something more active to enable people to 'let off steam' (see Section Five (Using Games)) or, alternatively, to something calming, perhaps a few moments silence;
- a change of venue – to somewhere where there will be less disruptions or distractions, or with different associations;
- a change of theme – back to a 'safer' theme, until there is greater trust and skill within the group to enable them to explore the one which you had originally planned;
- a five / ten minute break;
- using the break to have a quick one-to-one chat with particular individuals, if need be;

- using 'warning cards' or quietly letting people know that you are unhappy with their behaviour and why, so that any further action is part of a process and is not unexpected or misunderstood;
- 'time out' from the group for an individual member (this needs to be managed appropriately, and be for a set length of time);

- going around the circle and asking everyone for one word to describe how they are feeling at that moment – this will give you a starting point for responding and / or opening a discussion.

Where the whole group seems to be affected, and you are fairly sure of the cause, suggesting this openly to the group and giving them the opportunity to respond and to talk about it, may in itself partly resolve the problem. It may at least give you back their attention, because (if you have got it right!), you are now working with them on something that is relevant, set by their needs and at their level. If you have got it wrong, inviting their input and analysis may in itself be enough to re-engage them with the process. When you are not sure, asking an open question to check out your assumptions may also provide a way in, for example:

- 'It seems to me that some people are feeling a bit unsettled today. Would anyone like to tell me how you are actually feeling?'
- 'What do you think of these activities that we're doing today? Why is that?'

Always try to include those who seem to be less directly affected, or who may have gone quiet as others became more disruptive: they may feel that it is nothing to do with them, or they may feel frustrated by the disruption to the session, etc. These individuals may also be more able to see a creative way out of the difficulty.



Summary Points:

- Start by creating and maintaining an inclusive and safe setting.
- Model the behaviour you expect from group members.
- Affirm and give attention to positive behaviour, rather than focusing on negative behaviour.
- Check out your assumptions: do not assume you know the cause of the behaviour you see.
- Confirm the physical and emotional safety of the group before going on to address the behaviour more fully.
- Consider how the whole group has been affected, not just those most obviously involved.
- Be flexible with your programme – keep reviewing it to ensure relevance, stimulation and enjoyment.
- Take time to resolve situations thoroughly, if possible: it will be worth it in the long run.

NB. It is possible that you will encounter children and young people whose behaviour is consistently challenging and who need additional support. This can be stressful and exhausting for the teacher(s) working with the child or young person on a daily basis, and they also need support, as may the other pupils who participate daily in classes with them. Here, perhaps more than anywhere else, the importance of a supportive staff team comes into play, as does awareness and availability of external resources, for example, through the ELB or other agencies. One source for suggestions on strategies for working with children and young people 'beyond' is Jenny Mosley's Circle Time Model as outlined in her various books.¹⁴



Responding to Behaviour which is 'Challenging'

Outlined below are a number of scenarios, based on real life examples, for you to consider how the theory of responding to behaviour which is 'challenging' might translate into everyday practice. Drawing on the ideas within Section Three (Responding to Behaviour which is 'Challenging') and elsewhere in the resource, how might you respond to the situations outlined below?

Alternatively, or additionally, consider examples from your own experience – reflecting on them now, what might you do the same and what might you do differently?

¹⁴ See, for example, Mosley, J. (2000), *Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom*, Wisbech, LDA.

BUILDING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



Responding to Behaviour which is 'Challenging'

1 You are facilitating a session exploring a contentious issue. (This could be anything from a playground conflict, to a political or ethical issue, to a change that is proposed for the school's decision-making structures, etc.). One person in the group seems to have particularly strong views on the subject and is dominating the discussion to the extent that the majority of group members have not spoken.

How do you respond?

2 There is a lively discussion taking place within the group, but one person has not contributed at all in this or the previous session. When you used sentence completion around the circle, s/he chose to pass. You are not sure of the reasons for her / his lack of participation, but you are concerned that s/he may not be learning from or enjoying the sessions, and, equally, no one else is benefiting from any contribution this person might be able to make.

How do you respond?

3 You are feeling frustrated because every time you try to take the group's work and discussion to a deeper level, one group member with apparent influence over others keeps joking, introducing 'red herrings' and generally pulling the conversation back to a superficial level.

How do you respond?

4 You are exploring flags and symbols with a group. After significant preparation, you decide to introduce actual flags as part of a discussion exercise. The behaviour of a small number of group members becomes aggressively disruptive, preventing both them and all other group members from engaging with the exercise.

How do you respond?





Exploring Controversial Issues

'... all learning begins when our comfortable ideas are found to be inadequate ... the diversity of ideas that comes from the diversity of people is one of the best ways to create this necessary condition of learning.'

CAMBRON-MCCABE, N. AND QUANTZ, R., 'GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PREPARING TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' IN SENGE, P. ET AL. (2000), SCHOOLS THAT LEARN, LONDON, NICHOLAS BREALEY PUBLISHING.



4.0

What is a Controversial Issue?



A controversial issue is 'an issue about which there is no one fixed or universally held point of view. Such issues are those which commonly divide society and for which significant groups offer conflicting explanations and solutions'.¹

By their very nature, controversial issues can involve strong feelings as well as different perspectives and viewpoints. Each person will approach them from her / his own value base and life experiences.

Intentional and Responsive Work

In considering this area of work within schools and other educational settings, it is important to recognise that opportunities to explore controversial issues do not only come about because they have been planned into a scheme of work or a staff training session. Often, they may arise as a result of an external event (in the media or the local community, for example) or as a consequence of an incident of prejudice, discrimination or bullying

(whether general, or of a sectarian or racist nature) within the school itself. In these cases, an immediate response may be required, and / or it may be appropriate to build the issue into future lesson plans and meeting schedules. This means that everyone involved in the school can contribute to learning and may find themselves in a position to respond in particular situations, for example, the playground, the canteen, off-site activities, etc. This kind of responsive work may be very different in its starting points from the intentional work of planned lessons, modules and training programmes, but the underlying ethos and processes will be essentially the same. If a class regularly uses Circle Time, for example, to explore classroom issues, or a staff team regularly uses a groupwork format to reflect on school successes, issues and concerns, the fora for responsive work are already in place. Time taken to create a whole school approach, to build positive relationships, to develop skills and to familiarise adults and pupils with these ways of working will be well spent, and, in fact, crucial in providing a framework for the exploration of more controversial issues however and whenever they arise.

¹ Advisory Group on Citizenship (1998), *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in School*, London, QCA.

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Why do Children, Young People and Adults need opportunities to explore Controversial Issues?

‘Stories are the secret reservoirs of values: change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves and you change the individuals and nations. Nations and people are largely the stories they feed themselves. If they tell themselves stories that are lies, they will suffer the future consequences of those lies. If they tell themselves stories that face their own truths, they will free their history for future flowerings.’²

- Children and young people’s experience of learning in school needs to be relevant to their broader life experience and the opportunities and decisions which they face personally, socially and vocationally.
- Exploration of controversial issues opens up many opportunities for personal development and learning.
- Avoidance or denial of difficult issues can leave a significant gap in their educational experience.
- Controversial issues often have a strong ‘feelings’ dimension. Giving children and young people the opportunity to articulate and explore these feelings is an important aspect of developing emotional literacy.
- Exploring controversial issues involves the development of a whole range of skills including active participation and listening, critical and creative thinking, investigative and reasoning skills, decision-making, empathy, finding positive ways of approaching diversity and conflict, etc.
- An indication that a school is a genuinely ‘safe place’ for everyone in the school community and for those who visit, will be

the extent to which children, young people and adults are able to openly and respectfully discuss controversial issues.

- Perhaps most importantly, research indicates that children and young people are interested in these kinds of issues and want opportunities to explore them.
- These experiences and learning are also important for adults so that when they have the opportunity to explore them with children and young people, they can do so with:
 - *a personal awareness of the everyday nature of such issues;*
 - *confidence in their own ability to participate in and / or facilitate such discussions;*
 - *a recognition of the learning they can gain from children, young people and their peers.*



Questions for Reflection

What are some of the issues that I would define as controversial?

Do I see it as part of the role and responsibility of schools to explore issues such as these with children, young people and adults within the school community?

What do I personally perceive as some of the potential benefits of such exploration:

- *for myself;*
- *for children and young people;*
- *for the adults in the school community?*

What do I perceive as some of the potential difficulties?

Can I see possibilities for creating opportunities for this kind of exploration within my own work and sphere of influence? Where?

² Okri, B. (1996), *Birds of Heaven*, London, Phoenix.



4.1 Diversity Dictionary ³

Prejudice

Unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand without knowledge, thought or reason. Feelings or attitudes (positive or negative) towards individuals or groups and based on prior assumptions.

An untested or inherited assumption or belief

Stereotype

Tendency to think or act in rigid, repetitive and often meaningless patterns. A standardised image or perception shared by all members of a social group. Most of our stereotypes tend to be negative, because of this some people prefer to substitute it for the less emotive or value-loaded term 'generalisation'.

Applying fixed notions to people

Discrimination

Unfair treatment of a person, racial group, minority, etc; action based on prejudice. It is important to see discrimination as prejudice in action, since it is based on the creation of unfavourable distinctions between one group or people and another, often because of characteristics such as race, colour, sex and intelligence.

Discrimination can be positive but is usually negative.

Race / Racism

Group of persons sharing a genetic pool. Disputed term as cannot really be shown to exist. Racism occurs when discriminatory action is taken on the basis of a person's or group's perceived ethnic origin.

Sectarianism ⁴

A system of attitudes, actions, beliefs and structures:

- *at personal, communal and institutional levels;*
- *which always involves religion, and typically involves a negative mixing of religion and politics;*

which arises as a distorted expression of positive, human needs especially for belonging, identity and the free expression of difference; and is expressed in destructive patterns of relating to:

- *hardening the boundaries between groups;*
- *overlooking others;*
- *belittling, dehumanising or demonising others;*
- *justifying or collaborating in domination of others;*
- *physical or verbal intimidating or attacking others.*

³ Adapted from an NUS / USI Training Document.

⁴ Adapted from Liechty, J. and Clegg, C. (2001), *Moving beyond Sectarianism: Religion, Conflict and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland*, Dublin, Columba Press.

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

4.1

Acknowledging Fears and Concerns

There are people who for different reasons, may feel very positive about the opportunity to explore more controversial or challenging issues. Others may have significant anxieties based around the very term 'controversial issues'. Even for those who do feel positive, there may be concerns about the risks that might be required, and fears that other people will not bring the same degree of openness to the group.

Why do we feel Anxious or Afraid?

When thinking about exploring themes which may be controversial it is important to bear in mind that:

- Fears and concerns are genuinely felt, even if you, as the facilitator, do not share them. Equally, there may be very strong reasons why people feel this way and these may emerge in discussion.
- Fears and concerns are likely to be strongest among a group that does not know each other well and where the levels of trust are low.
- They may be shaped by previous negative experiences, or by stories they have heard from others.
- The tendency to raise subjects such as politics, religion, etc. only with those from the same background and perspective can deepen fears about conversing on these issues with those from different backgrounds.
- A culture of 'polite avoidance' of themes such as politics and religion may mean that people simply do not have much experience

of such conversations and do not know what to expect. They may fear that a 'can of worms' may be opened, rather than feeling positive about things they might learn or the opportunity to hear other people's perspectives.

- Fears and concerns may be caused or heightened by events and relationships within the local community and / or by wider societal and political developments.

Fears and Concerns that might be Experienced?

Below are listed some examples of fears and concerns that were expressed or demonstrated in various ways by group participants exploring themes of identity and sectarianism in Northern Ireland. Remember, these are only examples and the list is not exhaustive!

- *not being listened to or respected*
- *being laughed at, mocked or embarrassed*
- *being misunderstood*
- *giving offence*
- *harming (new) friendships*
- *being 'forced' to talk about difficult / sensitive / personal issues*
- *isolation or being a 'lone voice'*
- *'letting the side down' or breaking the united front presented by the rest of the group or sub-group*
- *being shown up as ignorant of their own or others' traditions*
- *issues being talked about outside the session or group*
- *verbal or physical attack, either during the session or afterwards*

Fears and Concerns that might be Experienced by the Facilitator?

You may share some of the fears and concerns that group members feel, and it is important to explore these as part of your personal preparation. You may also have concerns about how you facilitate this work, and whether you have sufficient support within your school or organisation.

This issue is explored more fully in Personal Preparation for Facilitation (Section Three).

Thorough preparation and finding ways to create a safe space are of paramount importance to allay fears of both participants and the facilitator, ensuring that the risk-taking involved is appropriate and adequately supported. The most effective overall structure is one which is based on a whole school approach where the commitment to, and responsibility for, this way of working is shared by everyone in the school community.

Responding to the Unexpected

Sometimes themes may arise within a session which you as the facilitator did not think would be controversial or emotive but which spark off strong feelings within the group.

Some of the group members may be as surprised by this as you are. If you feel personally well prepared and have put the structures in place which create a safe space for your groupwork, you will already have the tools which you need to facilitate the new development within the group process. Again, this may be a time when you have to significantly change, or even abandon, your original programme.



Questions for Reflection

Do some of the fears and concerns listed above resonate for me?

Where can I get some support in addressing these?

Am I aware of any of these fears and concerns being particularly relevant for the group in relation to the themes we will be exploring together?

What are some of the things I may need to do with the group to address these?

Having worked with group members to address their fears and concerns, what are likely to be some of the positive outcomes for them from exploring these particular themes?

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

4.2

Working with Emotions**Working with controversial issues involves facilitators in being willing to:**

- pay attention to their own feelings and values around sensitive / controversial issues;
- see their own personal development as an integral part of their professional development;
- understand that their growth in confidence and competence will be a continual process – ‘lifelong learning’;
- take account of other relevant programmes both within and outside of school, and support group members in making connections in their learning;
- work towards creating an open and democratic classroom using negotiated ground rules to promote a safe, enjoyable environment conducive to enquiry and learning.

Working with controversial issues involves group members in being willing to:

- recognise and take responsibility for their feelings as opposed to avoiding or denying them through blaming or accusing someone else for making them feel bad;
- pay attention to how they each experience feelings in their bodies and the language that they use to communicate how they are feeling;
- look for and, when appropriate, challenge patterns which connect their feelings and their behaviour;
- operate the ground rules and act in ways that promote fairness and democracy.

All of this needs to be grounded in a framework of positive relationships which is sustained throughout the process. See Building Positive Relationships (Section Three) and Creating Safe Space (Section Five).

What Feelings are likely to be Generated around Controversial Issues?**Possibilities might include:****Anger**

Expressions of hatred; stereotyping, insulting, denigrating, blaming, accusing the other person / ‘side’, wish for revenge / retribution.

Pride

in individual / collective identity, culture, a particular cause, place, event, etc.

Hurt

feelings of being ignored / neglected; not having a chance to tell their side of the story; experience of being a victim of conflict.

Kinship / loyalty

towards an individual, group, party, etc.

Guilt and shame

feeling responsible, dishonourable, unworthy; feeling of ‘letting the side down’.

Sadness

sense of loss, grief, disillusionment, hopelessness, despair.

Triumph

sense of achievement, victory (possibly at the expense of another person / group).

How Might they be Manifested?

There are many models for understanding behaviour but a very generalised summary of them could suggest that our emotions can be experienced in three ways. We may, of course, display our feelings in more than one way at the same time. These are through:

- 1 bodily feelings, for example, 'butterflies in the tummy' i.e. 'feeling' the feelings;
- 2 physical behaviour including body language i.e. 'acting' out the feelings through gesture, posture, behaviour, non-verbal communication;
- 3 verbalising i.e. naming and 'talking' about the feelings.

Why do Some People Seem to Act out their Feelings more than Others?

We all have varying levels of self-awareness about how our emotions can affect our behaviour. Our self-awareness can also fluctuate depending on how we are feeling on any given day and on the degree of the emotion aroused by the issue. Strong feelings will usually indicate a high degree of personal involvement with the issue – currently or in past experience.

Are Feelings Always What they Seem to Be?

Instead of demonstrating what we are actually feeling in one or more of the three ways suggested, another option is to mask or translate the feeling into a form that is somehow less frightening or more acceptable (in our perception) either to ourselves or to another, for example, the facilitator. Many of us resort to using **defence mechanisms** when

we are feeling threatened in any way. Common defence mechanisms include:

Resisting or Denial

refusing to accept that there is any emotional reaction, despite evidence to the contrary, for example, 'I'm not angry!!!'

Sublimating

channelling anger towards a safe target as opposed to dealing with the root cause.

Avoidance

disengaging from the session; causing disruption to divert attention away from source of unease; displaying boredom; giggling; 'This is stupid' etc.

Compliance

where a group member appears to be engaging but actually is not.

Minimising

feelings, perhaps by taking refuge in clichés such as, 'It was OK / not too bad', 'I'm alright / fine', etc.

Are Defence Mechanisms Unhelpful when Looking at Controversial Issues?

Defence mechanisms are there for very good reasons: they are forms of learned behaviour that in our past experiences have proved helpful in dealing with threatening situations. As such, they are to be respected and worked with gently. When dealing with controversial issues the aim is to provide enough safety to be able to explore the issue that has set off the defence mechanism in the first place, but at a level and a pace that the person can handle. Too confrontational an approach can cause the person to become more defensive, leaving little opportunity for learning.

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

What Can be Done if Someone does Become Very Emotional?

SUMMARISE

When working with controversial issues, periodically summarise what seems to be happening and reflect this back to the group, for example, 'I can see that when I say that there seems to be a variety of reactions. Some of you look a bit annoyed, some of you seem OK.'

In this way, if someone does become very emotional, it will not come as a huge shock to the group. This also creates partnership between the facilitator and the group around the pace and the intensity of the learning processes.

LET GROUP MEMBERS SET THE PACE

The facilitator will need to 'feel her / his way' as to how far and how deep to go within the given time. This also means checking out the group's readiness, perhaps through tentative questions, such as 'Would it be OK to talk about ...,' and making adjustments guided by group responses, such as 'Maybe we could skip on to looking at people's attitudes towards...'

ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE GROUP

If feelings do become strongly engaged do not ignore them or pretend that nothing is happening. If you do, the individual and the group as a whole will lose confidence in your honesty. They do not necessarily expect you to 'fix things' but they will need you to acknowledge something is happening and to work with them in dealing with it.

RESPECT FEELINGS

Do not minimise anyone's reaction otherwise they may feel humiliated, ashamed or exposed. Reflect the person's feelings to them and the group, and offer them a choice: 'Is this something you want to talk about now or would it be better to take some other time to do it?'

If someone is personally aggrieved over something that has arisen out of the group's work provide an opportunity for them to speak, listen, reflect, summarise and acknowledge the level of feeling. This does not mean condoning or rejecting the validity of the feeling. That can be a matter for more discussion once feelings around the issue have been discharged.

If someone in the group feels tearful, it is important to acknowledge this and to reassure her / him and the group that tears are OK. It may be appropriate to offer her / him some 'time out', to talk with her / him individually after the session, or support her / him to stay within the group.

Do encourage everyone as individuals to take responsibility for their own feelings. When taking part in discussions ask everyone to use 'I' statements as opposed to 'We' / 'You'. If necessary, interrupt speakers politely to remind them to do this. Model this yourself as the facilitator.

Allow people to respond to each other's feelings without intervening to 'protect' them unless this becomes necessary. Where appropriate, keep reminding them of the contract – the importance of respect, etc.

NO-BLAME

- Do not make the group feel guilty that feelings are running high; instead encourage them to consider the meaning of such strong feelings and what can be learned from them.
- Do not scapegoat individuals; keep the emphasis on 'us as a group'.
- Try to provide a safe and respectful way for people to express their feelings, for example, through offering a structure: 'When you say ..., I feel ...', etc.
- Be 'up front' (in relationship terms, aim for transparency) about what is happening: 'It's obvious that X and Z are very annoyed by this and we need to sort this out before moving on,' and involve the group actively in creating some sort of resolution.
- Do not force people to take more risks than they are ready for – but, equally, do not limit the group inappropriately by your own fears.

WHEN IT ALL SEEMS TO GO WRONG

Try not to feel that because the session has not 'gone to plan' that it has been a disaster. It can seem unhelpful and contrived to steer discussion too closely. Wherever the group and discussion have ended up will have involved useful learning. Turn the situation into an opportunity for evaluation and learning. See If Things 'Go Wrong' (Section Five).



Questions for Reflection

What are my anxieties around facilitating work which may raise strong emotions?

What can I do to minimise these anxieties without limiting the work itself?

Am I aware of similar or other anxieties within the group?

How can I best support group members?

Have I strategies in place if someone does become very emotional?

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

4.3. Managing Conflict



The Chinese word for 'conflict' is made up of two characters.

One character implies that conflict can be a crisis, while the other indicates that it can be an opportunity. Often we focus on the crisis and miss the opportunity to see the positive aspect about conflict.

The reality is that conflict is all pervasive in our lives. It appears in our personal life, exists in our communities and is present in schools.

STARTING POINTS:

- 1 Conflict is a natural part of everyday life.
- 2 Conflict in itself is neutral, however, if not handled appropriately conflict can become very destructive; it can also bring about learning, growth and change.
- 3 Each of us can develop skills to handle conflict creatively.

Conflict is constructive when it:

- *brings about meaningful communication;*
- *addresses the issues;*
- *releases built up emotions or anxiety.*

Conflict is destructive when it:

- *causes aggressive or violent behaviour;*
- *hardens attitudes;*
- *lowers self-confidence, self-esteem or security;*
- *prevents real issues from being addressed.*

Types of conflict can focus on the following themes:

Interests

What 'I' want
What 'you' want

Understanding

What 'I' understand
What 'you' understand

Values

What is important to 'me'
What is important to 'you'

Styles

How do 'I' deal with issues
How do 'you' deal with issues

Opinions

What 'I' think
What 'you' think



Questions for Reflection

What do you understand conflict to be?

Describe a positive / negative experience of conflict?

Was it resolved?

What were your feelings at the time, and now?



Can we Simplify Conflict and Focus on how it is Made Up? ⁵

Behaviour

Often, the first experience of conflict is behaviour (shouting, fighting, withdrawing etc.).

Feelings

Behind the behaviour there is normally a feeling (anger, frustration, hurt, powerlessness etc.). We need to ask, 'What is the person feeling?'

Issues

Behind the feelings there are normally issues or experiences. We need to ask, 'Why are they feeling that way?'

Relationships

In conflicts, issues usually involve another party or relationship. We need to ask, 'Who else is involved?'

Personal Task

Using this structure, describe a conflict with which you are familiar.

concerned about keeping relationships together and fear conflict will damage relationships.

3 Compete

Those who adopt this style try to force others to accept their positions and deny the feelings and needs of others. They believe in 'win-lose' scenarios.

4 Compromise

This style is characterised by a 'give and take' approach to conflict resolution. Compromising is a middle ground, which addresses issues to some depth and leaves people partially satisfied.

5 Collaborate

These individuals confront conflict openly and fairly. They have a high regard for other interests and for preserving relationships.



Questions for Reflection

What strategy do you think you adopt most often?

Is this different in your personal life to how you manage conflict in the classroom / with colleagues / with other adults in the school community?

Does your strategy change depending on the situation?

What other factors influence how you deal with conflict?

How does the school deal with conflict?

Conflict Management Styles ⁶

Five main ways to manage conflict:

1 Avoid

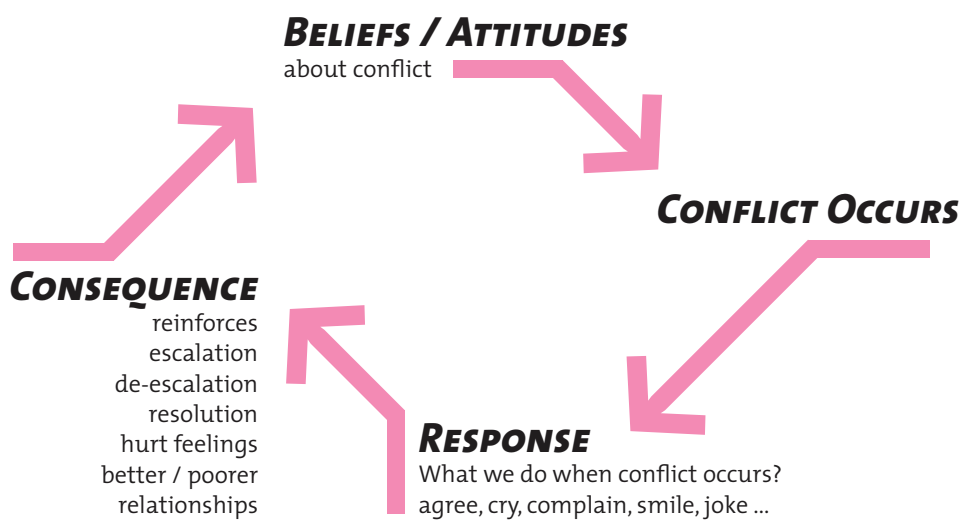
The individual withdraws from the conflict. S/he believes it is hopeless to try and resolve conflict and avoid people and issues that may cause it.

2 Accommodate

These are co-operative individuals who tend to quickly accept the position of others and ignore their own needs. They are very

⁵⁺⁶ Adapted from material developed by Mediation Northern Ireland.

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES



Conflict Cycle

What we believe about conflict comes from the messages we received from, for example:

- *our parents;*
- *teachers;*
- *the media;*
- *our own experiences.*

These beliefs affect how we respond when a conflict occurs. It is, therefore, important to reflect upon where our messages have come from.



Questions for Reflection

Where did you get your messages about conflict?

What did you learn about conflict?

How was conflict dealt with in your home, with friends, in school or other workplaces?

Is it important that children, young people and adults learn about conflict?

What do you want children, young people and adults in the school community to learn about conflict?

What support do you need to facilitate this work?



Practical Steps for Dealing with Conflict Between People ⁷

Do not let conflict fester. Address conflicts as early as possible, when there is the greatest possibility of resolving the conflict and restoring the relationship.

Talk directly to the person with whom you have the problem (providing there is no threat of physical violence). This is much better than sending a letter, shouting, throwing things or complaining to everyone else.

Think beforehand about what to say. It is important to be clear about what the problem is and how you feel about it.

Choose a good time and place and allow enough time. Try to find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed.

Do not blame the other person for everything, call names or tell him / her what should be done.

Listen and give the other person a chance to talk and try to learn how s/he feels about the problem. Do let her / him see that you are listening and that you are glad that the two of you are talking together.

Give information about how you see the problem and how you feel about it.

Talk it through, and once you start, try to talk about all the things that bother you - even the 'difficult' areas or the things that niggle you.

Plan for the future and begin work on a way forward together. Try to make sure that both of you are going to work at it. Be specific about what you agree.

Escalation and De-escalation of Conflict

The effect of most responses to a conflict is either escalation or de-escalation. It is helpful to understand the conditions that contribute to each of these.

A conflict will be more likely to increase or escalate when:

- other people become involved in the dispute and take sides;
- one or both people feel(s) threatened by the other;
- there is no interest or investment in maintaining the relationship;
- there is a history of unproductive, negative conflict between the parties;
- there is an increase in the acting out (indirect expression) of anger, fear or frustration;
- important needs involved are not acknowledged and met;
- there is a lack of the skills necessary for peacemaking or a lack of awareness of the skills the parties do, in fact, possess;
- there is limited, ineffective communication.

A conflict will be more likely to decrease or de-escalate when:

- those involved focus on the problem rather than on each other;
- emotions of anger, fear and frustration are expressed directly rather than demonstrated indirectly;

⁷ Adapted from material developed by Mediation Northern Ireland.

EXPLORING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES



Sample Programme: Exploring Conflict

- threats are reduced or eliminated;
- the people involved have co-operated well prior to the dispute;
- needs are openly discussed;
- communication is effective;
- the people involved are able to use their peacemaking skills, or they receive some help in applying them.



Mediation

a 'neutral' body in the dispute, assisting communication between individuals or groups in order to manage or overcome difficulties and effect positive change.

Negotiation

to attempt to come to an agreement on something through discussion and compromise.

TIME AVAILABLE:

Three hours *

AGE GROUP:

KS3+ or adult

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- *explore our perceptions of conflict*
- *reflect on how we have learned about conflict*
- *develop understanding of and assess our own conflict style*

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

- *Share aims for the session*
- *Reminder of contract / guidelines*

2 ACTIVITIES:

'Conflict' Wordstorm

Purpose:

to focus thinking, gather thoughts, personal and group reflection

Resources:

flipchart, markers

Gather ideas about the term 'conflict', writing all the comments on the board. Once all the thoughts have been exhausted, ask the group to identify from the words the ones which were positive and the ones which were negative. Ask individuals to reflect on the range of negative and positive words and explore what the overall perception of conflict is and how this impression has been formed.

Conclude with a discussion around the question, 'Where have we learnt about conflict?' A definition of conflict can be presented at this stage. Use the starting points highlighted at the start of this section.

Personal, Local and Global Conflict: Pairs Discussion

Purpose:

to explore the levels at which conflict occurs

Resources:

paper, pens

In pairs, ask each group to identify the type and range of conflicts that occur at a personal, local and global level. Reflect on these lists and ask each pair to identify which of the listed conflicts are destructive and which are constructive.

Conflict Spectrum

Purpose:

self-reflection, to establish a baseline of understanding

Resources:

paper, markers

Using the full space of the room, place at one end of the room the statement 'Avoid conflict' and at the other end 'Confront conflict'. Individuals are asked to imagine a line between both ends of the room and to stand at a point in the line in relation to their perceived approach to conflict. When individuals are positioned they are encouraged to explain their place and ask each other questions.

Difficulties in Dealing with Conflict

Purpose:

self-reflection, communication skills, skill analysis in managing conflict

Resources:

flipchart, markers

In small groups, ask individuals to share their answers on what they see as the blocks which they face in dealing with conflict.

These can be written up on the board / flipchart. Using this information, ask individuals to discuss the most appropriate way of dealing with the range of conflicts that they may face.

You could develop this activity further by using role-play of the situations they come up with.

3 CLOSURE:

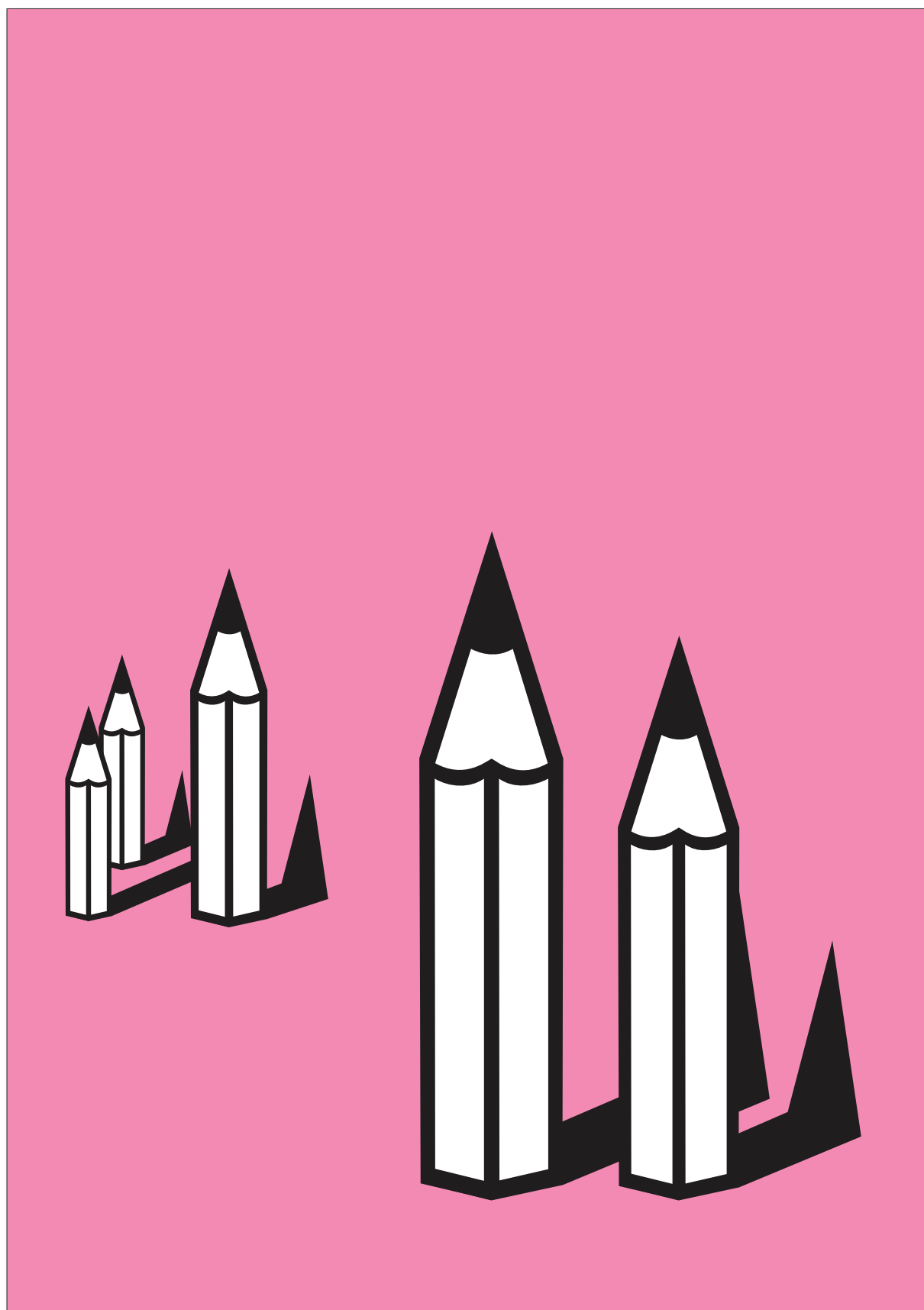
Sentence Completion

Purpose:

review and evaluation, communication skills, encouraging the participation of all

Use a sentence completion statement around the circle: 'One new thought about conflict ...'

* Alternatively, this session could be delivered in 45 minute sections. It will be important to allow for introduction and closure for each one.





Developing Programmes

For Children, Young
People and Adults

'Children will always need safe
spaces for learning. They will
always need launching pads
from which to follow their
curiosity into the larger world.'

SENGE, P. ET AL. (2000), SCHOOLS THAT LEARN,
LONDON, NICHOLAS BREALEY PUBLISHING.

developing programmes

5.0

Creating Safe Space



WHAT IS 'SAFE SPACE'

A 'safe space' within groupwork and the classroom / school is one where everyone is enabled to reflect individually and together on the themes which are raised, and to apply that learning to their life experience. It will be a space where people feel supported to take appropriate risks in talking about their personal experiences and views, in building relationships and in exploring areas of potential and actual conflict.

A safe space does not necessarily mean that group members will find these things easy to talk about, or that they will agree about everything – in fact, it is much more likely that there will be a range of perspectives. What it does mean is that they will feel able to trust the rest of the group and that the overall experience of participation will be positive.

The principles and ethos which characterise a 'safe space' have been explored in more detail in Building a Positive Learning Environment: Using Groupwork and Facilitation (Section Three). In this section, we consider the practical tools and ways of working which can be used to build this kind of atmosphere and setting.

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING SAFE SPACE

The strategies outlined in this section give some ideas about the reasons why different tools and methodologies are used, and about what makes them effective. Their overall effectiveness is grounded in respectful, relaxed facilitation which values each group member and is aware of their needs, interests and potential.



Questions for Reflection

What do I understand to be a 'safe space'?

What things might make me feel unsafe and might restrict my participation / facilitation?

As you work through this section, consider:

- *How could these tools and strategies build my sense of safety as a participant or a facilitator?*
- *As a facilitator, how could these tools and strategies enable me to contribute to the safety of group members?*

DEVELOPING PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN,
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

5.1

Working in a Circle

Circles have been used as a forum for meeting throughout history and within many different cultures. A circle is an appropriate structure for groupwork because it:

Encourages Equality

There is no beginning or end to a circle, no fixed 'first place / last place', no hierarchy and no leader. It is helpful, therefore, if everyone has the same seating.

Builds Trust

Everyone can see and hear everyone else, and may talk more honestly about experiences and views when they can see everyone else's reactions. The contrast, for example, might be rows of desks where a child or young person in the front row worries about what reactions might be happening behind as s/he speaks.

Encourages Participation

The nature of the circle and the use of tools such as a talking object encourage each person to contribute as s/he feels able. It is also easier to move about if an exercise requires it.

Promotes a Sense of Belonging

As people participate they can be encouraged to think about themselves as a team and increase their support to each other.

Creates Opportunities for Affirmation

When giving affirmation, the giver and the listener can see each other easily.

Encourages a Sense of Personal and Group Responsibility

The equality within the circle and the supportive group setting encourages people to take responsibility for themselves and develop this as a group. For example, this might be around what they contribute to the sessions and how they keep the ground rules they have developed in their contract / learning agreement.



Questions for Reflection

What experience do I have of working in a circle, either as a participant or a facilitator?

What key reasons make working in a circle valuable?

Do I feel comfortable and confident working in a circle?

Where can I gain some experience, training or support in relation to this?

How can I best familiarise group members with this way of working?

What resources might I need?

Some Strategies for Circle Based Work

Not all children, young people or adults will feel comfortable speaking in a large circle all the time. There are a number of different strategies which you can use to encourage and support group members in their participation. These include:

Using a talking object

An object is passed around the circle, and the person who is holding it is allowed to speak. This helps the group members to focus on and develop listening skills, as well as enabling them to see when their turn is coming.

Being able to say, 'Pass'

While you want to encourage everyone to participate, there may be some who feel unable to do so from time to time, and being allowed to say, 'Pass' can take the pressure off

these people. Sometimes people say, 'Pass' because they have not had time to think, so it is worth asking at the end of a circle round whether there is anyone who passed who now feels ready to contribute.

Using partners or small groups with feedback

Some people feel much more comfortable speaking to one other person or to a smaller group. It is good to mix in activities where group members work in pairs or in small groups (threes or fours) and then provide feedback about their discussion to the large circle. Not only does this support participation in general, but it also enables more in-depth discussion of the theme being explored. Feedback to the large circle may form the basis for a whole group discussion.

Supporting shy or less confident participants

There may be individuals who consistently find it difficult to participate and who may need specific support to enable them to grow in confidence. In part, this is about sensitive and appropriate facilitation, as well as recognising that listening is as important a form of participation as speaking. Specific strategies, such as the use of puppets and masks as a medium to talk through, can be useful in this process. With younger children, allowing a friend to speak for them or asking them if they would like to sit beside you so that you can speak for them can be useful starting points. It is important to try to move on from this position by using some of the other strategies outlined above.

What is Circle Time?

The term 'Circle Time' has come into increasingly common usage in schools. While often associated more with primary schools, it is also a valuable methodology for use at Post-Primary level, particularly where pupils are already familiar with the process from their primary school experience, and for use with adults (for example, in staff meetings, with a group of parents).

The purposes behind it include developing:

- *self-esteem and self-discipline;*
- *communication skills;*
- *emotional literacy;*
- *positive relationships and a sense of team;*
- *problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.*

It is most effective when:

- it is part of a whole school approach, where all school staff work within the context of the ethos which it promotes and operate a consistent rewards and sanctions policy;
- adults in the school community participate in Circle Time, and understand its purpose and structures;
- all classes have regular Circle Time sessions, so that children and young people experience progression in their learning through their years at the school;
- Circle Time sessions have a clear purpose, structure and intended learning outcomes.

One such model is the Whole School Quality Circle Time Model developed by Jenny Mosley.¹ Her books provide information on how the model works, including suggested outlines for individual Circle Time sessions with different age groups. See the Resource List (Section Eight) for further details.

¹ Mosley, J. (2000), *Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom*, Wisbech, LDA; Mosley, J. and Tew, M. (1999), *Quality Circle Time in the Secondary Classroom*, London, David Fulton Publishing.

DEVELOPING PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN,
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS



Questions for Reflection

What kind of school ethos would support effective Circle Time work?

How can I practically integrate Circle Time into my teaching plans and classroom ethos?

- *When would be the best time in the week / within the module / training programme?*
- *How will I introduce it to the class / group?*
- *What planning and evaluation time do I need?*

What personal preparation would I need to do?

What support / training needs do I have?

What resources might I need?

- *ideas for structure, activities, etc.?*
- *support or co-facilitation at the start?*

How can I reinforce the Circle Time learning within other aspects of classroom work / training and development, and vice versa?



Developing an Outline for Circle Time ²

Intended Learning Outcomes

In preparing for the session, you need to start by defining your purpose and intended learning outcomes for the series of Circle Time sessions and for this particular session. The learning outcomes should:

- *address specific individual and group learning needs;*
- *enable continuity and progression between sessions;*
- *encourage risk-taking within a safe environment;*
- *provide you with a starting point for selecting focused and purposeful activities.*

Welcome and Introduction

It is important to set a positive atmosphere at the start of the session and to remind participants briefly of important ground rules. This demonstrates to group members that both they and the activity which they are participating in are valued. These statements will also explain what the session is about so that the participants are clear about what is expected of them. It also makes links to past and future sessions.

Introductory Game

This game aims to:

- *create a relaxed atmosphere;*
- *encourage mixing and new friendships / working partnerships;*
- *provide a fun / light introduction to the theme being explored;*
- *allow the facilitator to assess the group situation and respond flexibly to group and individual learning needs.*

Sentence Completion

Participants are given a 'sentence starter' to complete which will focus on the theme being explored. Asking for a volunteer to start, the 'talking object' is then passed around the circle enabling everyone to have a turn in speaking. This activity:

- encourages group participation;
- assists in developing thinking, talking and listening skills;
- develops confidence in speaking in a group;
- encourages self-reflection (identification of personal needs, feelings, etc.) and responsibility for self.

Discussion Activity / Sharing more Information

This is where the main exploration of the theme will take place, and where use of pairs / small group work, role-play, creative arts activities, etc. with feedback to the large circle can be useful tools. Effective activities will demonstrate development across a wide range of skills as well as achievement of your specific intended learning outcomes.

Closure

It is important that the Circle Time session is brought to an appropriate close so that participants can move on to whatever they are doing next. This needs to involve all group members and might take the form of:

- a Closing Circle (possibly using sentence completion) which allows people to evaluate the session or say how they are feeling;
- a game to release any tension;
- a simple guided meditation to help bring a sense of calm to the group;
- an affirmation exercise.

Evaluation / Planning Ahead

As you consider how the Circle Time has gone and plan for the next Circle Time session, some questions to consider are:

- What feedback did I obtain from the group?
- What other evidence is there that intended learning outcomes are being achieved?
- Were the intended learning outcomes and activities focused at the right level? Do I need to make adjustments for future sessions?
- What will be the next step in terms of continuity and progression?



Planning a Circle Time Session ³

TIME AVAILABLE

THEME / TITLE

AGE GROUP

RESOURCES NEEDED

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

-
-
-

Welcome and Introduction:

Introductory Game / Activity:

Sentence Completion:

Discussion Activity / Sharing More Information:

Closure:

EVALUATION / PLANNING AHEAD

5.2

Developing a Contract / Learning Agreement



A contract is essentially an agreement between all of those involved in a group (both facilitators and participants) about the ground rules which they need in order to work together safely and effectively.

This needs to be based on a shared understanding of the group's purpose, and a commitment from all group members to work within the agreed rules. The issues being addressed need to be perceived as relevant to all group members, and the reasoning behind any ground rule needs to be clear to everyone. They may be about the way people relate to each other within the group, the way people participate, and general expectations about behaviour.

Why Use a Contract / Learning Agreement?

Creating a contract or learning agreement together is an important part of a group's development. Some of the reasons for using a contract are that:

- A contract enables each person in the group to have a sense of ownership for the group and the framework within which they are working together. With this in mind, both the contract and any possible sanctions need to be discussed and agreed by the group.
- A contract asks each person in the group to take responsibility for her / himself and to be accountable to each other for how the experience of the group develops. It is not the facilitator's role alone to call people back to the contract, although it may be appropriate for them to do this at times.
- A contract enables a group to clarify their purpose and hopes for their time together. If the facilitator is coming from outside the group, it ensures that s/he and the group are agreed on the purpose of their work together.

- A contract enables a group to think about their needs as individuals and as a group in order to feel safe and comfortable to participate.
- A contract helps people to know what is expected of them within the group.
- A contract allows people to explore the meaning behind the words they use, and to think carefully about what different values or ground rules mean in practice. For example:
 - *What does 'respect' mean in practice?*
 - *When we ask everyone to participate, how do we ensure that each person feels safe to do that at a comfortable level?*
 - *When we talk about confidentiality, what are some of the limitations and responsibilities around this (for example, the facilitator's responsibilities in relation to Child Protection)?*

- Within this context, a contract helps create a setting where people feel safe enough, for example, to discuss more controversial issues, to take appropriate risks around sharing personal experiences and views and to listen to those of others without feeling defensive.

Making an Effective Contract / Learning Agreement

In order for the contract to be used effectively, it is important that it is genuinely agreed by all group members and that it remains relevant to their context. There are a number of factors which it is useful to bear in mind in relation to this:

- In order to keep the contract 'live' it needs to be re-visited at different stages of the group's time together to ensure that the guidelines within it are still relevant and do not need to be revised. This will be particularly important if a new person joins the group.

DEVELOPING PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN,
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- The group also need to consider what the consequences will be if the contract is broken, both in terms of the implications for the group's experience and in terms of appropriate 'sanctions'.
- There need to be clear distinctions between Safety Rules (for example, fire procedures) which are non-negotiable, and the ground rules within the contract which are agreed by the group.
- Where possible, particularly at a classroom level, it is usually helpful to create one set of ground rules together which apply to all activities which the class group is involved in both in the classroom and outside. These also need to be consistent with the general school rules.
- It is usually best to keep the contract fairly short and straightforward. If there are too many rules, people can find it hard to remember and apply them, and can feel restricted by the very fact that they are there.
- It is helpful to display the agreed contract as a visible reminder to people about what they have committed themselves to.

DRAWING UP A CONTRACT / LEARNING AGREEMENT

- 1 Outline and check understanding of the purpose of the programme / session.
- 2 Explain the need for ground rules.
- 3 Gather suggestions for rules and note them down where everyone can see them. This can be done as a whole group, or by working in pairs / small groups and feeding back to the large group. It is important that all contributions are valued.
- 4 Decide together which rules are most necessary and appropriate.
- 5 Keep the list of ground rules manageable.
- 6 Together make a commitment to try to keep the agreed rules. You may like to sign your names to the contract to show your ownership of it.
- 7 Display the finalised rules where everyone can see and re-visit them at the start of the next few sessions, and at intervals after that.

Contracting with All Age Groups

It is possible to develop a contract with any age group, but it is important that the language used is age appropriate.

Younger groups may need more prompts to help them come up with ideas, and it is important to keep their list of rules short. When re-visiting the contract at the start of a session, it can be used as a memory exercise. Where children have not yet learnt to read, pictures can be used to represent the different rules. Even with older young people and adults, pictures and symbols representing the different ground rules can be useful.

When Time is Short

When working with a group within a very limited time-frame, it is still important that some ground rules are put in place. The facilitator needs to clearly outline the purpose for the group's time together and, in presenting a small number of ground rules, needs to ensure that participants understand the reasoning behind them.

This circumstance should be the exception, rather than the rule – time taken with a group at the start of a programme or an academic year to develop and agree a contract together will be time well spent in the long run!

- providing guidance in developing appropriate sanctions – children and young people can sometimes tend towards overly harsh sanctions;
- checking all group members feel that the sanctions are appropriate and fair;
- ensuring sanctions are carried out fairly.

It is crucial that the facilitator ensures fairness when the contract is broken, and that a similar process is followed each time so that there is no sense of some people being punished arbitrarily.

If a rule in the contract keeps being broken, there are a number of options:

- It may reveal a low level of skill in relation to a particular rule (for example, listening to each other) among some or all group members. The programme could be revised in order to spend more time on skill development.
- More work may need to be done around empathy so that group members have a greater understanding of the consequences of their actions and the impact on others.
- It may be that some aspects of the contract are no longer appropriate for the group, and it needs to be re-negotiated.
- It may be that some group members have not understood the importance or relevance of a particular rule, and this needs to be re-clarified.
- It may be that new members who have joined the group since the original contract was made, do not understand the reasoning behind some of the rules or do not have any sense of ownership of the contract. A new contract needs to be developed that is owned by the whole group, or at the very least, the existing contract needs to be re-visited and amendments made.

If the Contract is Broken

It is important that the group understands that if the contract is broken there are consequences in terms of the quality of relationships within the group, the level of trust, willingness to participate and to share personal experiences and opinions, etc.

Having involved all group members in drawing up the contract, they should also be involved, where possible, in deciding what the sanctions will be if the contract is broken. This discussion will take time, but is of great importance because it demonstrates the way the contract is valued, and enables group members to use and develop skills such as listening, empathy, conflict resolution, etc. Some key tasks for the facilitator within this process will be:

- enabling everyone, including those who have broken the contract and those who may have suffered as a consequence to feel safe to participate in this discussion;
- encouraging the group to listen to and understand different perspectives in the group;

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SAMPLE CONTRACT

We agree to:

- Listen to each other
- Give each person a chance to speak – don't interrupt
- Respect each other's opinions – agree to disagree
- Support each other / be kind – no put downs
- Speak for myself – use 'I' statements: for example, 'I think', 'I feel'
- Keep confidentiality – what is said in the room, stays in the room*
- Respect people's right to pass / not answer personal questions
- Have fun!

* In agreeing to maintain confidentiality, which will enable people to participate without fear of repercussions beyond the session, it is important that the facilitator is clear that this cannot be absolute when the facilitator has responsibilities in relation to Child Protection. The commitment of group members to keeping this ground rule, balanced by individuals taking responsibility for what they choose to say, is crucial for people's safety outside the programme as well as within it.



Sample Exercises: Ways into Contracting

Suns and Clouds

Purpose:

to explore people's hopes and fears about the group's programme, ensuring that hopes are realised and fears / concerns are minimised by developing a contract

Resources:

paper cut-out sun (yellow); paper cut-out cloud (blue) - or people can make them for themselves (paper, scissors, crayons / pens)

Each person in the group is given a cut-out sun / cloud. The sun represents their hopes for the session and the cloud represents their fears / concerns. They are asked to write or draw a hope on the sun and a fear / concern on the cloud.

These hopes and fears can be shared in the group in a number of ways, for example by:

- laying them all on the floor, or sticking them all on the wall, so that people can come and look at them. This way they remain anonymous;

- collecting them all in a box, and getting each person to pick one sun and one cloud from the box. They are then read out / shown around the circle. Again, they remain anonymous;

- going around the circle, allowing each person to read out / describe her / his hope and fear.

This can be followed by a group discussion, perhaps using questions such as:

- Does anyone have any comment that they would like to make about the hopes / fears we have shared?
- Is there anything in particular anyone has observed about the hopes / fears we have shared?

At this point, people have the opportunity if they wish to point out their own hope or fear to make a more detailed comment on it.

Ideal Island

Purpose:

to think creatively about an ideal setting, specifically, about rules / laws which would ensure that it remained ideal for everyone, providing a basis for rules needed in the classroom / school

Resources:

large sheet of paper (A3+)
smaller sheets of paper to draw / prepare on
coloured pens, pencils, etc.
scissors, glue, old magazines, newspapers

Situation:

After being shipwrecked you and a few friends find yourselves stranded on a small island.

There may be others living on the island but you are not sure.

Group activities:

- *Think of a name for your island.*
- *Draw your ideal or perfect island - natural resources? food? housing? other buildings? roads? etc.*
- *Make a list of laws you think will be needed to make sure that people can live safely and happily on your island.*

Other questions you could think about:

- *What kind of government will you have?*
- *What punishments will you have for those who break the laws?*
- *What jobs will you and your friends do?*
- *What kind of schools will you have?*
- *What do specific groups need on the island (for example, elderly people, families)?*
- *What other things will be important?*
- *What will you do if you discover other people living on the island?*

Evaluation:

- *How did you get on in your group?*
- *Did your group work well together?*
- *Did one person take leadership / control?*
- *How did you decide on what laws / rules to have?*
- *Do you think that if you stuck to your laws everyone would be safe and happy?*
- *When you wanted different things, how did you work that out?*

The maps and ideas can then be presented to the large group, and the maps displayed. The large group can use the ideas about laws / rules as the basis for thinking about what rules we need to ensure that the classroom / school is a place where everyone feels welcomed, is able to learn and can enjoy being.

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5.3

Developing Skills in a Group



‘Emotional life is a domain that, as surely as math or reading, can be handled with greater or lesser skill, and requires its unique set of competencies ... emotional aptitude is a meta-ability; determining how well we can use whatever other skills we have.’⁴

As well as developing her / his own interpersonal and facilitation skills, the facilitator needs to support group members in building the skills which will enable them to make best use of the learning experience. These skills will be useful not only for this process, but in the whole of their lives. There are a number of overlapping skills areas which will be involved, including those outlined below.

INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS

These skills focus on developing the ability to think about what is going on ‘inside me’, and are essential for assimilating learning and moving forward on a personal level. They include aspects and qualities such as:

- Self-awareness / Self-knowledge
- Self-reflection
- Self-respect / Self-esteem
- Self-management / Self-responsibility
- Self-motivation
- Openness and honesty
- Assertiveness
- Emotional literacy: awareness and clear expression of personal feelings, values, etc.
- Effective self-expression of opinions, ideas, etc.

This skill area focuses on questions such as:

- How do I feel about this and why?
- What do I think about this and why?
- What have I learnt?
- How will this shape my future thinking, feelings, actions?
- Are there things I need to think about or do differently? If so, what?
- How will I do this? Do I require help to do it?

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

These skills are about the way we relate to and interact with others. They are essential for making the best of our relationships, both personal and professional, and enable us to maximise our learning from each other. They include aspects and qualities such as:

- Active listening
- Communication
- Respect for others
- Respect for and understanding of diversity
- Working co-operatively, as part of a team
- Empathy
- Affirmation of others
- Managing and resolving conflict



This skill area focuses on questions such as:

- What can we learn from each other?
- How can we best work on this together?
- Have I really understood what you are saying and feeling? Do I need to check it out?
- Do we have a good understanding of and respect for each other’s positions?
- Do you know the specific ways in which I value our relationship / conversation / interaction?
- Can I / we find a way of positively acknowledging and responding to the conflict between us?

THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

These skills are about the way we process ideas and draw conclusions both individually and collectively. They include aspects such as:

- *Creative thinking*
- *Critical thinking*
- *Identifying issues*
- *Recognition of multiple perspectives, possibilities, solutions*
- *Reflection*
- *Decision-making*
- *Negotiation*
- *Mediation*



This skill area focuses on questions such as:

- What sparks creativity within me?
- Are my thinking skills strongest:
 - if I have peace and quiet for myself?
 - when I can work collaboratively with others?
 - what are the benefits of these for me?
- Do I take what I see / hear / read for granted, or do I ask questions and analyse it?
- Do I think before I speak?
- How do I make major decisions?
- In a discussion, how do I think through and present my views?
- In a situation of conflict, am I able to imagine a number of possible solutions?
- Am I able to work with others to come to a shared conclusion, or a respectful difference of conclusions, where appropriate?

ACTIVE LISTENING

One of the key skills upon which many others can be built is active listening. This is a crucial skill for both facilitator and group members as it is essential for good communication.

Active listening is about absorbing what has been said and ensuring that the speaker knows that s/he has been heard. This is conveyed to the speaker through both verbal and non-verbal responses.

The effectiveness and usefulness of active listening will be undermined for both the speaker and the listener if:

- the listener is experiencing anxiety or other strong emotions which distract her / him from focusing on what the speaker is communicating both verbally and non-verbally;
- the listener has a negative or judgemental attitude which prevents her / him from listening with openness to what the speaker has to say;
- the meeting place is inappropriate: too many distractions, poor acoustics etc.

People will not feel that they are being heard if, for example:

- the listener is looking elsewhere and is giving no eye contact;
- the listener is demonstrating very 'closed' body language;
- it becomes apparent that the listener is so busy thinking about her / his response that s/he is not really hearing what is being said;
- the listener interrupts and goes on to something else;
- her / his contribution is ignored, not valued or negatively judged.

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Sample Exercises: Developing Listening Skills

Newspaper Game

Purpose:

to introduce a session on listening and communication

Resources:

newspaper cuttings, paper, pens

People are asked to find a partner and to stand at opposite ends of the room. Those at one end of the room are given a newspaper cutting each, and their partners are given a piece of paper and a pen. When the facilitator says, 'Go', the people with the newspaper cuttings have to read them out while their partners write down what they hear. Each pair gets two points for every word and one point for every piece of punctuation they get right. This can get very noisy!

People will feel that they are being heard if, for example:

- the listener's facial expression and eye contact shows that s/he is paying attention;
- the listener's body language indicates that s/he is relaxed and attentive;
- the listener demonstrates that s/he is listening and interested by encouraging the speaker, and asking open-ended questions allowing her / him to develop what s/he is saying;
- the listener clarifies / reflects back what the speaker has said to ensure that the listener has understood.



Questions for Reflection

How effective are my active listening skills?

What evidence do I have of this?

What distracts me from listening actively to the people I work with?

When listening to someone, how aware am I of:

- *my body language;*
- *my facial expressions;*
- *my thoughts, feelings, etc.*

Do I take time to reflect back what has been said to make sure that I have understood?

How can I best support group members in developing active listening skills?

What I had for Breakfast

Purpose:

to begin to explore what it feels like not to be listened to

People are asked to find a partner, and label themselves A and B. A's task is to tell B all about what s/he had for breakfast, while B has to do everything s/he can to make sure s/he does not hear – this can involve covering her / his ears, making lots of noise, running away, etc. – but not using physical violence! After a few minutes they swap over and do it the other way round. In the pairs and then in the large group, questions can then be explored around:

- *what it felt like not to be listened to;*
- *what it felt like to deliberately not listen to someone else;*
- *what the consequences of this could be.*

Chair / Table / Flower

Purpose:

to explore how much we actually listen to what other people say

Resources:

slips of paper with a word written on each (for example, chair, table, flower, tree)

People are asked to find partners and to label themselves A and B. A is given one of the slips of paper which s/he must not show to B. A's task is to describe the word on her / his paper without using the word itself for three minutes. Following these instructions, they begin. At the end of the three minutes, the Bs are told that they must now repeat back to the As everything they said within the three minutes. In most cases they will find this almost impossible, as they will have switched off from what A was saying as soon as they thought they had worked out what the word was. In the large group questions can then be explored around, for example:

- *how much real listening we do;*
- *how we can jump to conclusions and stop listening;*
- *why we might do this;*
- *how we value each other if we do not listen.*

Personal Space / Magic Spots

Purpose:

to take time individually to listen to the sounds around us that we may not normally notice

Everyone goes and finds a space on their own, preferably outside and not talking to anyone else. They then spend ten minutes (vary as appropriate to the group) listening to the sounds around them. This also provides a space for individual reflection and listening to ourselves.

Pennies

Purpose:

to explore how we evaluate / make choices about what we have to say, how different people participate within a group, and the power balances involved in speaking and listening

Resources:

enough pennies or tokens (for example, cardboard cut-outs) to give three to five to each person in the group

Working in small groups, each person is given three to five pennies / tokens, and each group is given a topic to discuss. These might include:

- *men are better drivers than women;*
- *blondes have more fun;*
- *school uniform should be abolished;*
- *cigarette smoking should be made illegal;*
- *a topic which is directly relevant to the theme which the group is currently exploring – however, at this stage, do not introduce something that will take the group 'too deep' too soon within the process.*

Each person may only speak when s/he puts one of her / his pennies in the middle of the table, and once s/he has spent all her / his pennies s/he may not speak again. The group needs to create a supportive atmosphere where those who normally do not speak very much feel able to use their pennies.

This highlights questions and issues around, for example:

- the right and responsibility to speak;
- the choices we make about our participation;
- the way these choices impact on others;
- how much thought we put into what we are about to say;

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Using Games

- the fact that everyone has something of value to contribute;
- the frustration felt by those who are used to speaking a lot when they have to keep silent;
- the value of listening;
- issues of power and justice when the image of pennies is translated to group, community or global level. Who are the people in our society who have lots of pennies / power, who are the people who have little or no pennies / power? How does this affect the way they relate to each other?

WHY USE GAMES?

The perception of games can be that they are 'just a bit of a laugh' and not really very valuable within the context of education and learning. They can be, however, purposeful exercises which have clear learning outcomes, and very useful tools when trying to create 'safe space'.

Some of the reasons for using games in this way are that:

- Games are fun - they can help people relax and have a laugh together, perhaps as an ice-breaker activity at the start of a process, or as a closure exercise to release tension after a more difficult discussion. Remember, if facilitators do not enjoy or feel confident about the experience, it is unlikely that group members will either!
- Games can enable people to get to know each other - they can allow people to learn each other's names, to talk to each other and to find out information about each other in a non-threatening way.
- Games can enable individuals to become a group - they can help people to become aware of each other and of each other's skills, needs, contribution to the group, etc., encouraging people to support each other and work together.
- Games can involve everyone - including those, for example, who may not feel so confident about speaking out in a discussion.
- Games can enable people to experience success and affirmation – and to demonstrate talents and achievements in a way that they might not, for example, in an academic setting.

- Games can enable people to develop skills - they can create opportunities for people to use skills such as listening, communication, co-operation / teamwork, aspects of leadership, problem-solving, etc.

- Games can enable people to learn - they can raise awareness and understanding of all kinds of issues, for example, sense of identity, diversity within a group, etc., and provide a more light-hearted introduction to deeper discussion or more demanding exercises.

Using Games Effectively

In order to be effective, the games which are chosen need to be appropriate for the particular group and the individuals within it.

Some people dislike the idea of games, especially ice-breakers, and others actually dread being asked to participate. This may be because of previous negative experiences and may be linked into concerns about:

- feeling stupid or embarrassed;
- feeling pressured to join in when they would rather not;
- the games seeming to have no real purpose;
- the games going on for too long;
- an atmosphere of tension rather than ease or appropriate challenge being created;
- a lack of thought on the facilitator's part as to whether the games are suitable for the group, its individual members and their purpose of meeting together;

- the games having an unexplained ulterior motive, known only to the facilitator(s).

To be most effective and enjoyable, games need to be chosen carefully so that:

- they are appropriate for the ages, cultural backgrounds, gender mix, physical and learning abilities, etc. within the group;
- they are appropriate for the stage in the group's life (i.e. how well people know each other and how comfortable they feel together as a group);
- they are physically safe;
- they fit within the values reflected in the contract or learning agreement you create with the group. For example, a game which leaves one person feeling left out and laughed at will not 'match' the values of respect, being supportive to each other or participation which are being encouraged within the group. Given that the games are an integral part of building the group, games which encourage competitiveness may not always be appropriate;
- they are purposeful and need to be included with particular learning or developmental outcomes in mind as an integral part of the overall learning experience.

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Different Ways of Using Games

Outlined below are some specific ways in which games can be used. Some samples of each of these are provided at the end of the section. Many games can be used in a number of different ways and will be most effective if there is clarity about their purpose and appropriateness.

NAME GAMES

These enable group members to learn and remember each other's names in a fun way. These are particularly important when a group is coming together for the first time, but it can be helpful to use them again to refresh people's memories. Name games are also a valuable way into a theme such as 'Identity' because names are a core part of our sense of who we are.

ICE-BREAKER GAMES

These help a group to relax and feel comfortable with each other. Some groups will find these useful at the start of most sessions, but they are particularly important when a group comes together for the first time.

GROUP BUILDING GAMES

These encourage a group to build a relationship around a task, to work as a team and to develop trust. These games will also help a group to explore the roles which different individuals take on within a team and to begin to think about the skills which they need to work together effectively.

Some points to bear in mind:

- Some group building games involve physical challenge. It is important that games are chosen which are age and ability appropriate, and sufficient attention is given to health and safety.

- Similarly, some group building games involve physical contact. There may be cultural reasons why these games will be inappropriate for some groups or individuals. Some people may simply feel uncomfortable about physical contact with others of the same / opposite sex.

- Trust within a group will not be built by games alone. It is crucial that the level of trust within a group is not over-estimated and that sufficient time is given for trust to be developed. Awareness of the degree of trust within the group and being able to assess the appropriate level of risk-taking is a core part of the facilitator's role.

ENERGISING GAMES

These are games which help a group to re-engage with a process or task, for example, after a break or when energy levels are low, and will usually involve getting people to move around. They may also involve getting people to think about the theme or task from a different angle to encourage new ways of thinking and creativity.

BRAIN GYM ⁵

These 'brain exercises' can be used to help a group to refocus on the process, as research has demonstrated that our brains actually work better if we take a break from what we are doing and try some of these kinds of physical activities at different points throughout the day. The exercises stimulate both sides of the brain, develop co-ordination and dexterity, and reduce stress or tension, which may enhance the end of a challenging session.



Some Brain Gym Examples:

- Practice yawning! Stretch your mouth as wide as you can. Stick your chin out and move it from side to side.
- Hold your ears with your opposite hand and slowly roll your earlobes between finger and thumb.
- Stand with a partner shoulder to shoulder, now move apart so that you can touch the tips of your forefingers. Now try to trace a circle together.
- Sitting with your hands holding your seat, extend your feet forwards and rotate your feet together one way, then the other.
- Write the keywords from the lesson in the air with one hand.
- Trace the number eight in the air with two hands held together. Follow your hand movements with your eyes only. Keep your head still. Keep your lips and teeth together.



Session Preparation: Choosing Games

- What is the purpose of the session?
- What are the intended learning outcomes?
- Would a game(s) be useful?
 - *as an ice-breaker?*
 - *to develop skills and a sense of team?*
 - *to introduce the theme?*
 - *to re-energise or re-focus the group?*
 - *to help close the session?*
- What game(s) would be appropriate for this particular group – their needs, abilities, ages, etc.?
- How will this fit the time and space available?
- Are there other considerations?

THEMED GAMES

These provide a way for a group to begin to explore the theme of a particular session. The intention is to provide a safe, light-hearted way into a subject which can be explored in more depth through other exercises and discussions.

CLOSURE GAMES

These enable a group to bring a session to a close in a way which affirms their group identity and the positive relationships which have developed. If the session has involved more difficult discussion, a game which involves laughter and / or appropriate physical contact may help to diffuse any tension and enable the group to move on to whatever they need to do next.

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Sample Games

A range of games and activities are included within the sample lesson / session plans in Section Eight.

Outlined below are some specific examples of the different kinds of games described within this section.

NAME GAMES

Name Graffiti

Resources:

large piece of paper (A3+), markers

Place a large piece of paper (A3+) and some coloured markers in the centre of the group. In turn or when they feel they want to, people write their name on the sheet and tell something about themselves - perhaps something about their name (such as, what it means). They can also draw a picture / symbol beside their name as a reminder to everyone of what they have said. The poster can then be displayed as a representation of the whole group.

Name and Action

Each person needs to think of an action to express her / himself. One person begins by saying, 'My name is ... and my action is ...', and performs the action (for example, a clap, turning round, clicking fingers, etc.). The second person says, 'His / her name is ... and his / her action is ...'. My name is ... and my action is ...', This continues around the group. It is only a good idea to include the repetition of others' names and actions if the group is not too big, otherwise people can become bored and / or the task of remembering everything can become too threatening. The group needs to work together to help each person to remember – it is not a competition!

Alternatives:

name and rhyme / adjective / animal / food / country / etc., (starting with the same letter)

ICE-BREAKER GAMES

The Alphabet Game

Resources:

A4 size cards, each marked with a letter of the alphabet

Lay cards with the letters of the alphabet around the room. Invite participants to go and stand beside the letter which is at the start of, for example:

- *the place they live;*
- *the place they were born;*
- *their favourite food;*
- *their ideal holiday destination;*
- *the name of a person they admire;*
- *the last book they read;*
- *a film they have seen recently.*

Encourage participants to introduce themselves to the other people who are standing beside the same letter, and to find out their response to the statement that had been called out. If people are standing on their own beside some letters, encourage them to talk to the people near to them. This is a good game to use as an ice-breaker, to help people get to know each other and to talk informally, and to introduce the session theme.

Group Dividers

Sometimes it is necessary to divide a large group into smaller groups for the purpose of the session(s). If you want to try to avoid cliques, or the same people always working together, you could use one of the ideas below, rather than simply numbering people off. These games are useful at the ice-breaker stage as they are fun and require people to work together.

Animals

Resources:

sets of cards with animal names (same number of each name, enough in total for each group member to have one)

In silence, give each participant a card, having explained they are to find other members of their group by making the sound of their animal.

Dots

Resources:

a coloured sticky dot for each group member (using equal numbers of each colour)

Stick a coloured dot on each group member's forehead. In silence, they have to find the other people with the same colour of dot as themselves. Afterwards ask the group about how they worked out what colour dot they had and how they found the other members of their group.

Back-to-Back

Resources:

sticky labels, with the name of half of a pair written on each one (enough in total for each member of the group to have one)

A label is stuck on each person's back with, for example, an animal, a famous person, a fairy tale character, etc. written on it. Asking questions that can be answered with 'Yes' or 'No', they have to find out who they are, and then find the other half of their pair, or the other people who would be in the same group as them.

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GROUP BUILDING GAMES ⁶

People Machines

This exercise can be done in small groups. The group work together to create a machine, acting it out using themselves as parts – everyone in the group must be involved. They can then act it out for the rest of the large group to guess what it is. This can be done in silence or with the appropriate noises!

Alternatively, one person begins with an action and a noise, and others gradually join in, adding their action and noise, to create a connected imaginary machine.

Another version, is where a group work together to create a vehicle, using themselves as parts, to travel from one point to another. It can be a 'real' or imaginary one. The challenge is to include everyone in their group, and to actually get from A to B in one piece.

Human Knots

The group stands in a circle, hands outstretched and crossed in front of them. They move forward quietly and slowly with eyes closed and take hold of two hands - not the people on either side of them and not hands belonging to the same person! The group's task is to sort itself out into a circle again without letting go hands. If you have a very large group, divide it into smaller groups of a manageable size (about eight people).

Fawltly Towers

Resources:

newspapers, pieces of string, cardboard boxes, masking tape / sellotape, scissors
You could also add a couple of things which are 'red herrings'!

Working in small groups, the aim is to see how high a tower each group can build within a certain space of time. Afterwards, evaluate the exercise with the group, exploring how they worked together and what they learnt from the process. In order to develop the team building aspect, one or two members of the group can be blindfolded, one or two others can have their hands tied together, etc. Part of the evaluation will focus on how the group included these people, and how everyone worked together as a team.

ENERGISING GAMES

Paper Islands

Resources:

newspapers

Spread large sheets of newspaper on the floor. Explain that these pieces of paper are islands and that the other area is the shark-infested sea. While music is played the group moves around the room and when it stops they jump onto an island. Each time the group stops more paper is taken away.

Finish by seeing how many people can fit onto one large piece of newspaper.

Another version of this game is to divide people into pairs, and give each pair a sheet of newspaper the same size. Each time the music stops, they have to fold their newspaper in half and stand on it, so that each time the piece of newspaper gets smaller. The pair that can balance on the smallest piece of newspaper are the winners.

⁶ Be aware that many group building games involve a high level of physical contact and you need to consider whether this is appropriate for your group and / or the group's current stage of development.

Ducks and Corrals

The group is the corral fence and stands in a circle holding hands. Approximately four to six people volunteer to be ducks, and stand in the middle. They have to hold their ankles, close their eyes, quack and walk backwards! A break is made by the corral fence people at one point in the fence, and the ducks have got to find their way out. Once a duck has found the break, s/he has to quack loudly to let the other ducks know where it is. To prevent them hearing, the fence has to sing 'Row, row, row the boat' as loudly as they can. The game finishes when all the ducks have escaped.

BRAIN GYM

See examples on page 125

THEMED GAMES

Ideal Islands 2

Resources:

A3+ sheets of paper / flipchart paper, markers

This is a version of Ideal Islands which explores the themes of diversity, conflict and negotiation.

Working in groups of five to eight people, each group imagines that they are stranded on a desert island and as a new society, they have to come up with three to five rules which everybody on the island agrees to live by as their new constitution. They have 15 minutes to do this.

The group can also think about drawing up:

- a map of their island;
- a list of all the things they would choose to have on their island;
- a list of all the things they would choose not to have on their island. These go in the surrounding sea.

As the time draws to a close, ask for a volunteer from each group. While the remainder of the group finalises their constitution, privately brief the volunteers that they are to be washed from their original island and stranded on another island. On the new island, they will be presented with the constitution whereupon they will decide to break one of the rules. Their violation needs to be reasoned as they will need to justify it to the other islanders.

Bring the volunteers back into the room and allocate them to a new group, explaining they have been washed from their original island and landed on a new one. The original islanders are invited to introduce the new islander to their constitution. Once this is completed the new islander informs them that s/he cannot live by Rule X and must break it.

Leave the groups for about ten minutes and observe the process of settlement – whether it is compromise, expulsion, conflict, etc. Bring the groups back together, display the constitutions and discuss these questions:

- What was the original process of rule-making – consensus, majority decision, negotiation, etc.?
- What was the new arrival's experience of the new society?
- What were the settlements reached?
- Were any punishments given appropriate? Did they fit the crime? Who decided?
- What were the islanders' feelings when the constitution was broken?
- How do we deal with diversity, difference?
- What can people learn from this in terms of how they handle conflict?

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CLOSURE GAMES

Affirmation Exercise

Resources:

paper, felt tip pens, ribbon (for scrolls)

These exercises focus on affirmation and recognition of people's qualities, skills and the aspects that you have enjoyed about spending time / working with them. It is one part of reflecting on the programme / session you have been involved in together. It also involves interaction and movement - good after a quiet / sitting down / discussion session! It is worth noting that some people may find giving and receiving affirmation difficult so this exercise can be a challenging one. Within the group, people can be gently encouraged to help each other and all comments must be positive.

- 1 Each person gets a piece of paper, writes her / his name on it, and sticks it on her / his back.
- 2 Everyone then has the opportunity to write on each other's pieces of paper, a skill or quality they have noticed that person has, or something s/he has contributed to the group, or something they have enjoyed about spending time / working with her / him. Try to write something on everyone's piece of paper.

One variation of this exercise is to get people to sit in a circle and draw around their hand on an A4 page, putting their name at the top. The hands can be passed round the group in a clockwise direction and each person writes an affirmation for the named individual on her / his sheet.

Another variation is to have an envelope with each person's name on it pinned on a noticeboard with slips of paper available so that people can write affirmations and put them in each person's envelope either in a structured session, or in their own time.

Where literacy may be an issue, the facilitator can gather the ideas verbally about each person and write them on a piece of paper which can then be turned into a scroll and presented to the person. Children and young people can then be encouraged to take these home to share with parents / carers who can re-read the affirmations to them.

Wool Web

Resources:

large ball of wool

A Wool Web can be used to explore all kinds of questions and discussion, and ensures that each person in the group has the opportunity to speak. One session it can be used for is a group evaluation.

- 1 Each person in the group thinks about a key question such as the following:

- *What has been the highlight of the session for you?*
- *What have you learned from / through the session?*
- *What have I enjoyed about this session?*
- *What have I learnt from other people in the group?*

- 2 One person takes the ball of wool, and gives her / his answers to the questions. S/he twists a bit of the wool around her / his finger (not too tight!), and throw the ball to the next person. This person then gives her / his answers, twists a bit of the wool around her / his finger, and throws the wool to someone else, and so on.

5.5

The Importance of Closure

3 When everyone has spoken, you will all be linked up by a web of wool. This is a valuable way to talk about a subject which ensures that everyone in the group gets the opportunity to speak, and also provides a symbol of our inter-connectedness, i.e. that everyone is in relationship with each other at different levels - a good way to finish a session or a programme.

4 Now somebody has the fun of rolling the wool up again - the easiest way is if everyone lays it down on the floor as it is, and lets one person get on with rolling it up!

Closure, the act of bringing things to an appropriate end, is important both for individual sessions / lessons and for finishing programmes / modules. In each case, people need to be supported to reflect on past experiences and to move on to whatever will be next for them.

In any session exploring controversial issues, there is the likelihood that people's emotions will be touched, some tension and anxiety may be experienced and some strong, conflicting views may be discovered. In order to ensure that people are able to leave the session feeling relaxed, with their relationships affirmed and the discussion appropriately brought to a close, it is important that sufficient time is always allocated for closure. In some cases, this will mean resisting the temptation to let the 'fantastic discussion' continue for 'just another five minutes'!

Achieving Closure

WAYS OF ACHIEVING CLOSURE AT THE END OF A SESSION / LESSON CAN INCLUDE:

- giving the group a brief (verbal or written) outline of the session / lesson plan at the start so that they know what to expect in terms of timing and the things which need to be covered before the end of the session;
- calling the group's attention to the time five to ten minutes before the end of the discussion / exercise so that they have a clear conception of the time-frame in which they are working and can bring it to an appropriate close;

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- using a closure activity which allows group members to say something about how they are feeling at the end of the session;
- using a closure activity which allows group members to affirm their relationships with each other;
- using a closure activity which allows the release of any tension, for example, a game which involves having fun together.



Questions for Reflection

Have I left sufficient time for closure within my lesson / session plan?

Would it be useful to have a timekeeper other than myself to ensure that enough time for closure is left?

What are likely to be the key learning points that need to be drawn together at the end of the session?

Is this session likely to raise strong emotions? Will there need to be some form of closure relating to this?

What will be the most appropriate closure activities for this group at the end of this session?

WAYS OF ACHIEVING CLOSURE AT THE END OF A PROGRAMME OR MODULE CAN INCLUDE:

- The use of an entire session at the end of the programme / module for affirmation, reflection and looking ahead.
- Affirming what each person in the group has learnt and contributed, through giving certificates or prizes. The affirmation will be most effective if it is person specific, naming the particular learning and skills which have been evidenced.
- Celebrating the end of the programme / module – inviting guests to see the work that has been done, presenting certificates, having a special meal / cake, going on a relevant visit / trip, etc.
- Evaluating what has happened within the programme / module. As a form of closure, it allows group members to reflect on what they have been doing, the feelings they have experienced, what they have learnt, etc. and to contribute to the planning of future sessions, both for themselves and for others. Evaluation and reflection processes and tools are discussed more fully in Developing a Model for Self-evaluation (Section Six).

Ways of achieving closure at the end of an entire programme / module could also involve some of the suggestions for closure at the end of a session.



5.6

Other Groupwork Tools and Strategies



Questions for Reflection

Have I planned sufficient time into the programme / module for effective closure?

What closure elements are likely to be most useful for this particular programme and group:

- *affirmation;*
- *celebration;*
- *personal reflection;*
- *programme evaluation;*
- *looking ahead?*

What are the key learning points from the programme / module that need to be drawn together at the end?

Have I included sufficient time for group members to give me feedback on their learning and on the programme / module?

How will this feed into the overall evaluation of the programme / module?

What support or further learning / development opportunities may group members need beyond this particular programme / module?

Will group members be able to leave the final session with a sense of achievement, well-being and completion – and an openness to new challenges and learning?

For examples of Closure activities, see sample Games, page 130

In addition to games and similar activities, there are a wide range of other tools and strategies which can contribute to the learning possibilities within a particular programme. A variety of styles and ways of working will allow the facilitator to cater for the breadth of learning styles within a group.

Some of the ways of working may be new to group members (and possibly to the facilitator), and this trying out of new experiences can be in itself a very valuable part of the learning process. In order that people feel able to take appropriate risks in trying something new, it will be especially important that the boundaries of safe space are securely in place and that clear introductions and explanations are given. It may also be appropriate to use other activities to build up to the new exercise / way of working rather than plunging straight in.

If the facilitator is trying something for the first time with a group;

- *thorough preparation;*
- *observing another facilitator using the activity / way of working (for example, on video);*
- *the opportunity to try the activity first as a participant (for example, with a group of colleagues);*
- *the support of a co-facilitator;*

can all help to build her / his confidence.

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Questions for Reflection

How do I feel about trying out new ways of working, or activities that are in a different style to what I normally use?

Are there opportunities I can take to try them out first as a participant or facilitator?

- *through a training / development session?*
- *with a supportive group of colleagues?*

Is there anyone I know who has used them before who I could talk to, or who could work with me?

A whole range of ways of working and activities are listed in the box below. Some of these are largely self-explanatory, but longer explanations are given for others. As explained in Using Games (Section Five), it is important to think carefully about which way of working / activity will best fulfil the purpose of the programme you are planning and will be most appropriate for the group with which you are working. There is some overlap between the different types of activity: for example, the learning from the more practically based activities will often need to be drawn out through a debriefing style discussion at specific points throughout or at the end of the activity.

- Wordstorm
- Group Debate
- Worksheet
- Puppets and Masks
- Circle Time
- Participant-led Discussions
- Collage
- Question and Answer
- Paired Work
- Journals
- Story
- Silent Personal Reflection
- Facilitator-led Discussions
- Role Play
- Reportage
- Small Group Work
- Walking Debate
- Facilitator roles, e.g. 'Devil's Advocate'
- Think, Write, Share
- Art-based activities
- Scenarios
- Presentations
- Practical Tasks or Challenges

Maximising Participation within the Group

As well as having different preferred learning styles, individual group members will also have different personalities, experiences, skills and levels of confidence / self-esteem.

These factors will impact upon the ways of working with which they feel most comfortable, for example, some people feel confident speaking within a large group, while others prefer to share ideas with one other person. If all of the activities take place within the large group, some people may never contribute their ideas and experience to the group. An appropriate mix of groupings could include the following:

INDIVIDUAL WORK

Giving people time and opportunity to think and reflect for themselves through thinking time, drawing or writing, etc. Sometimes it will be appropriate for them to share their thinking afterwards in pairs, small groups or the large group. You also need to consider whether it is appropriate for everyone to share their thoughts or whether it should just be volunteers.

PAIRED WORK

Encouraging people to work in twos can be of value in itself, or can give people the chance to test out their ideas with one person before sharing them with a larger group.

SMALL GROUP WORK

As well as being more comfortable for some group members, working in groups of three to five people allows the participation of a

greater number of people within a limited time-frame. Where appropriate, the small groups (or a nominated speaker from each one) can feed back or show what they have discussed / made / learnt to the large group. If their work is visual (for example, ideas on a flipchart, a piece of art), these could be spread out on the floor or put up on the wall for other groups to walk around and look at instead of (or as well as) using verbal feedback.

NB. The nominated speaker from within the small group needs to be willing, not someone who has been negatively pressurised into taking it on.

LARGE GROUP WORK

The large group includes everyone who is involved in the process, for example, the whole class, the whole staff team, etc. The advantages of work in the large group are that everyone is aware of and part of each stage of the process together. However, within a set time-frame and given people's different personalities and levels of confidence, it may limit participation and the wealth of contribution which people have to make to the process. It is useful for smaller groupings to feed back to the large group at various points during the process so that the learning can be gathered and there is a shared sense of purpose and direction.

CIRCLE TIME

This structured form of groupwork can enable everyone to participate, even in a large group. See Working in a Circle (Section Five).

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Discussion-based Activities

FACILITATOR OR PARTICIPANT-LED DISCUSSIONS

In planning a programme or session, you do not need to assume that the facilitator will always be the person leading. There will be times when it is valuable to give group members opportunities to facilitate and lead particular activities and sessions. In all cases, it is important that the opportunity is appropriate and open to any group member who might benefit from it. This opportunity can:

- promote the concept of a democratic setting / classroom;
- give individual group members the opportunity to develop new skills;
- allow group members to share their knowledge, skills and interests;
- give group members the opportunity to receive feedback from the facilitator and from their peers;
- build confidence and self-esteem;
- give the facilitator a structured opportunity to learn from group members;
- allow the facilitator to take a break!



Questions for Reflection

Am I willing to consider handing over the facilitation of a particular activity or session to a group member?

Will this be appropriate:

- *in the context of the intended learning outcomes of the programme?*
- *for this particular group?*
- *for the broader personal development of the individual group members?*

What might be the specific learning outcomes from this particular experience for the individual concerned?

Are there particular feedback and reflection opportunities that I need to put in place for the individual and for the group when planning the programme?

Who would I consider offering the opportunity to? Am I restricting the opportunity inappropriately?

NB. Some children and young people (and adults!) whose behaviour is difficult within a group can rise to the challenge of being given this kind of responsibility, and demonstrate skills and maturity that might not otherwise have been evident.

FACILITATORS' ROLES

At times, it may be useful for facilitators to take on a particular role in order to challenge the group's thinking and to take their learning further. See The Facilitation Process (Section Three).

WORDSTORMING / IDEAS GATHERING

A simple way of getting a lot of useful ideas about a subject in a short period of time. It provides the opportunity for maximum participation and should increase self-esteem by valuing the contributions of everyone involved. It can be done in the large or small groups with feedback to the large group.

People are encouraged to say whatever comes into their head – it doesn't matter how silly / funny / odd the ideas are. Each person should only speak a couple of times on each idea. All ideas are written up on a large sheet of paper / flipchart with a felt tip pen / marker so that everyone can see the suggestions.

After five minutes or so (when the ideas stop flowing) you will end up with a list to start working on. You will engage the group in deciding which ideas have possibilities and which ideas are unrealistic in this situation. An alternative way to reach consensus on the ideas is to engage the group in voting for ideas that could be worked upon.



**Example wordstorm
results for the phrase:
Community Relations**

RELATIONSHIPS
SHARING IDEAS
CONFIDENT
DIFFERENCE
CONFLICT
OUR HISTORY
PEACE
FAIRNESS
PERSONAL HISTORY
RECONCILIATION
DIVISION
NORTHERN IRELAND
SECTARIANISM
HARD WORK
OPPORTUNITIES
EUROPE
FLAGS AND EMBLEMS
CULTURE
RACISM
POLITICS
RELIGION

DEVELOPING PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN,
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This provides the group with a formal structure in which to discuss the different ways of looking at a particular theme or issue. Where the issue may be contentious, this has the advantage of 'containing' it. On the other hand, its focus can be reasoning-based and may limit people's reflection on how they feel about the theme in question.

The group selects the topic for discussion and volunteers are sought for the roles of protagonist (arguing the case for the motion), antagonist (arguing against the motion), chairperson, timekeeper, etc. The room needs to be laid out so that the group is in a semi-circle with the main speakers at the front. Following presentation of the case for each side and facilitated by the chairperson, group members can ask questions of the speakers. At the end, a vote can be held for and against the motion.

Explain that you will be reading out statements and they must respond by choosing a place along the line depending on their strength of feeling, or go to the corner that most closely represents their view. It is important to encourage the group members not to go along with the crowd, but to follow their own instinct. Once they have taken up a position, you can ask questions of the individual members, encouraging them to explain to others in the group why they have taken up this position. This can lead to a group discussion on the issues raised – remember there are no right or wrong answers, the activity is all about discussion and debate. It is important to inform individuals that, it is okay for them to change their mind and to take up a different position. At some stage, it is possible that the discussion may become difficult to facilitate in a line and you may find it more useful to form a circle.

WALKING DEBATE

A walking debate works best with at least ten people and space is required for the whole group to stand in a line. Label one end of the room 'Agree' and the other 'Disagree' to create an invisible continuum. Alternatively, label the four corners of the room, 'Agree', 'Disagree', 'Don't Know' and 'Don't Care'. When using this exercise for the first time, begin the session with a light, non-controversial statement that invites opinion on a current television programme, football team, etc. If you are not going on to further discussion about the debate themes, it can also be useful to end the session with a similar statement. The Walking Debate can be used to support participants, for example:

- to explore their opinions and feelings about different issues / themes;
- in evaluation of a session / programme;
- in resolving a classroom dispute;
- in gauging interest in a particular topic.

**Sample statements:**

- Reality TV shows should be banned.
- Football players should have to give 30% of their income to charity.
- The legal voting age should be lowered to 16.
- People should have the freedom to fly the flag of their choice over their door.
- Class A drugs should be legalised.
- It is important for us to learn about other people's opinions.
- Changing the curriculum / our training programme to include this subject has been worthwhile.

PRESENTATION

This is a useful way of giving the group a chunk of information about the particular theme which they are exploring. It can be delivered by an individual or a small group using Powerpoint, an overhead projector, a flipchart, a whiteboard, etc. However, it is important:

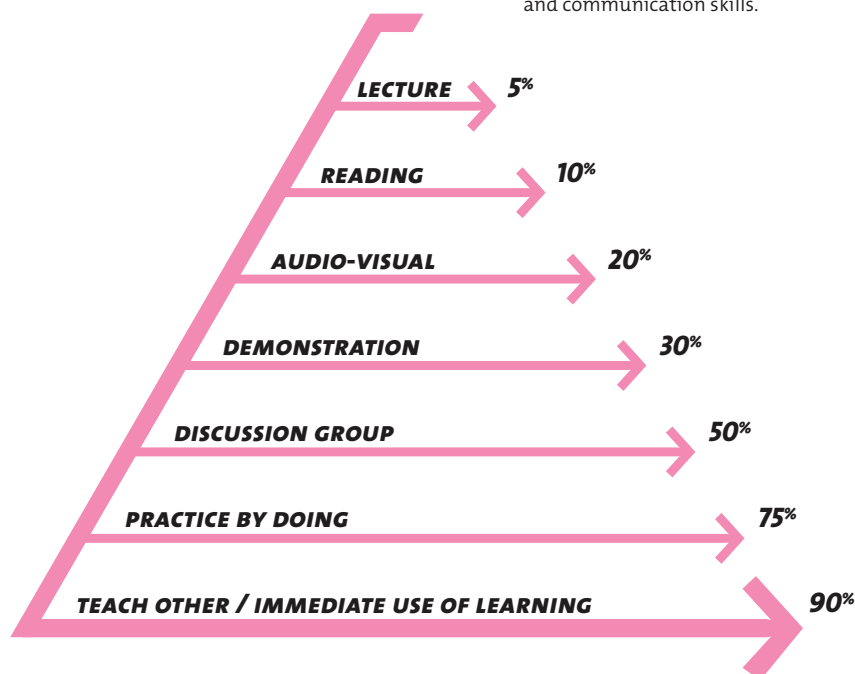
- to enable group members to understand the relevance of the input and how it fits in with what they are doing in the programme as a whole;

- to make sure that the input fits within group members' concentration spans (for example, depending on the time of day, group age, energy levels, etc.);
- that you do not overload people with too much information at a time.

With this in mind, set yourself a time limit, and stick to it.

Breaking up the input with discussion and other activities may help with this. In addition, bear in mind that often people learn and remember most effectively by 'doing': a more useful way of working may be to set small groups the task of finding out about aspects of the particular theme, and for each of them to give a presentation to the large group. As well as learning about the theme, they will also be developing other investigative, thinking and communication skills.

LEARNING PYRAMID ⁷



⁷ Adapted from National Training Laboratories, Bethel, Maine.

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DEVELOPING PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN,
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This allows the group(s) to focus on a particular theme through the structure of questions and answers, rather than through open discussion. The questions may be addressed to the facilitator, to an individual group member or to a particular small group within the group. This may be in response to a presentation, in the light of the specific experience or expertise a group member is known to have, etc. It is essential to check that the individual or small group is comfortable with being the focus of questions and is happy to have a go at answering them. As the facilitator, it is also important to know when to end such a session, perhaps because enough time has been given to it or because the person fielding the questions seems to have had enough. One way of doing this is to check with her / him now and again, for example, by asking, 'Would you like to leave it there, or are you OK to take a couple more questions?' Remind the questioners to keep their questions focused and the responder to keep her / his answers succinct. It is always important to work within the context of the group contract, so that both questioning and answering are respectful, even when challenging someone else's perspective.

SCENARIOS AND STORIES

Particular scenarios can often give a context for understanding life implications that might otherwise seem theoretical or irrelevant. A fictional story can give groups a fantasy space in which to safely explore a theme within their own life context. There are many excellent children's stories that can be used in this way, including with adults. Alternatively, you can create your own scenario or story to suit the situation. Scenarios and stories in picture or video / DVD form are also useful.

In order to develop an understanding of the theme and to relate it back to 'real life', some ways of using scenarios and stories include:

- considering the situation / theme from the perspective of different characters;
- developing alternative endings or outcomes;
- thinking about what might have been happening just before the story / scenario;
- thinking up questions you would like to ask particular characters, and their possible answers;
- examining the possible positive and negative ways characters relate to and interact with each other, and considering alternatives;
- considering where I would put myself in the scenario / story? What would I have done the same / differently?

It can be valuable to use fairy tales and to look at the situation from the perspective of different characters, not just the 'hero / heroine', for example, the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, the ugly sisters in Cinderella.

Stories for exploring identity:

- Inkpen, M. (1996), *Nothing*, London, Hodder Children's Books.

Stories for exploring fear and conflict:

- Long Neck and Thunder Foot, London, Puffin, Piers, H. / Foreman, M. (illustrated) (1984);
- For further examples, see CCEA (2002), *Primary Values*, Belfast, CCEA.

Scenarios are often developed directly or indirectly from the facilitator's or group members' own experiences. Telling your own story can be an important part of understanding your experiences, just as listening to others' 'real life' stories can provide a way of learning from theirs. The very experience of being heard can be hugely affirming.





TELLING OUR OWN STORY: LIFELINES

This exercise allows individuals to tell their own story based on key events in their lives to date. It allows us to see our lives differently: pictorially and in positives and negatives. You can do it in different ways – you could take it from birth until now, from age 15 until now, over the past year, etc.

Give participants a large sheet of paper and pens / crayons, ask them to find a space on their own and to work for 15 – 30 minutes (depending on the group). They can illustrate their 'line' using words, pictures, symbols, newspaper / magazine cuttings, etc.

Participants can then share their Lifeline with a partner or in a small group. Make sure that you allow time for everyone in the group to tell their story. The Lifelines can also be displayed, if participants are happy with this. Be aware that Lifelines can be emotive and contain very personal information, so always work within the contract framework and ensure that people know that they choose what they want to illustrate and share with others.

You might want to give the group some specific guidelines to work with, for example, 'a time ...':

- *I felt proud*
- *I felt happy*
- *I felt embarrassed*
- *I became aware of difference*
- *I felt aware of belonging*
- *I felt (un)fairly treated*
- *I was aware of divisions in Northern Ireland*
- *I was aware of global conflict*

These possibilities can also be explored through drama, writing and arts-based activities.

Drama-based Activities

ROLE-PLAY

Role-play can be an exciting technique where you encourage people to play the role of another person or indeed a position they themselves have previously experienced. It can also be valuable for people to take on a role they have not previously experienced, particularly a role reversal, for example where they take on the role of someone they have different views from or with whom they have been in conflict. They will take up this role for a certain period of time (to be specified at the start of the role-play) and should be encouraged to play this role to the best of their ability. You could introduce the concept of role-play by outlining the different roles you undertake in every day life, for example, son, daughter, father, mother, teacher, pupil, caretaker, governor, tutor, etc.

You can prepare for role-play in advance by preparing role cards, but be conscious not to make them over-complicated so that players do not become over-anxious about trying to remember everything. It is important that you set realistic boundaries, and the scene for the role-play so that everyone understands what is happening.

Role-play can encourage people to appreciate that our behaviour, feelings and self-image may vary depending on the role we are playing. We can also develop self-confidence through an increased awareness of our capacity to cope with different roles. There is no script for role-plays and you need to be prepared for the unexpected, for example:

- *emotional issues emerging;*
- *players drying up;*
- *the need to challenge negative stereotypes.*

After the role-play, allow as much time for follow-up as for the role-play itself. Feelings that arise during role-play are very real and should not be discounted. Give players time to come

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out of their role and talk about their feelings now and those during the role-play. This can be done in small groups or in the large group.

Simple 'de-roling' techniques enable people to leave their roles and become themselves again. Explain that the role-play is over and get them to think of who they are, for example, turning to the next person and saying their name and favourite football team / food / music etc. It is important to create time so that there is a definite break for the group to debrief – how did they feel, what did they learn, linking the role-play to real life situations, etc.

NB Some people feel deep anxiety about 'role-play'. It is always important to be clear about what is involved, that no fantastic acting skills are required and that this, as with everything else, takes place within a supportive, respectful space. There is a big difference between being asked to role-play a particular conversation with a partner while everyone else is doing the same, and being asked to do a role-play in front of the rest of the group which they will then discuss afterwards. You need to consider:

- that it is appropriate to give people a choice as to whether or how they participate;
- giving people time to think about the role-play before they act it out;
- asking for volunteers when it is for role-play in front of the large group;
- approaching people to allow them to prepare in advance of the session if it will help them to feel more confident;
- giving people the option of taking on an observation and feedback role;
- building up to role-play by doing other, lower key drama-based activities first.

USING PUPPETS AND MASKS

Puppets and masks allow people to take on roles within a discussion or drama, but often also give them confidence to say things or to explore things which they might not do while 'being themselves'. On a basic level, shy children can use a puppet to speak through, where they might not speak within the group by themselves. On another level, group members can express feelings, thoughts, concerns, etc. that the puppet or mask persona is experiencing where they might not have said it directly about themselves. Using puppets to act out stories and scenarios is a valuable experience in itself, and can also be a way into group members engaging in role-play.

The experience of actually making the puppets or masks and of writing stories / scenarios can also be an extremely useful part of the process.

Other Arts-based Activities ⁸

As with drama-based activities, these can be very effective with group members who are less confident about their verbal communication and literacy skills. They:

- encourage a range of other creative skills;
- can provide an important outlet for the expression of emotions;
- enable people to express things that they might not be able to put into words.

As with drama, it is important to allay people's concerns by emphasising that we all have creativity within us, and it is not about being good or bad at art, music, etc. as we may have previously been told. Encourage people to consider the importance of the process and learning rather than the product.

Before moving into the main activities, it may be useful to do a couple of short introductory

⁸ See Craig, C. et al. (2002), *Different Tracks – Experiential Learning: A Practical Resource Guide for Community Relations Work*, Belfast, Corrymeela Community.

activities to help build people's confidence.
For example:

- Ask people to use only marks or lines (no pictures, symbols or letters) on a page to represent different feelings.
- Ask people to think about which colour / shape they associate with different feelings, places, experiences, etc., for example, 'think of a colour which represents ...':
 - *how you see the world;*
 - *your motivation;*
 - *how you see yourself.*
- Give people a piece of clay and ask them to simply feel it in their hands with their eyes closed. Keeping their eyes closed, they could then go on to make something (anything at all, it does not have to be complicated!) of their choice.
- Ask people to sit in silence for two to three minutes and to listen to the sounds which they can hear around them.
- Develop a simple clapping rhythm within the circle, possibly beginning with everyone clapping once, passing the clap around the circle. As the group becomes confident, divide people into several small groups with different rhythms.
- Play a piece of music (any style!) and ask participants to write / draw what the music meant to them, the feelings it raised or what they thought about.

COLLAGE

Participants spend approximately 45 minutes searching through old magazines and newspapers cutting out relevant material relating to the subject of the collage. It is a good idea to write up about four relevant headings as a guide to the content of collages. These headings will not restrict the contents of the collage as participants soon become engrossed and are merely a support to get everyone started. Upon completion of their collages participants / small groups display them around the room. Each person / group in turn explains their collage to the others with time allocated to ask questions, discuss and affirm each collage.



Collage Headings Example: Conflict

- *Words and images associated with conflict*
- *Personally, locally, globally*
- *Resolving conflict: the ideal and the reality*
- *Consequences of conflict:*
for example, intimidation, refugees, famine, unemployment, etc.

Group members often feel great pride in their collage, and the depth of content displayed can be surprising. For this reason it is important that collages, as with all creative work, are treated with a certain amount of reverence – allowing them to stay on display for a period of time, or be taken home afterwards. It is important to create a safe space and this means that there are no spectators in this activity, including the facilitator. You and the group will benefit greatly from your participation – you might even be surprised by what you learn about yourself!

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ART SPIRAL

Lay out a large spiral of paper / card, spread widely enough so that group members can access different parts on which to work. Provide crayons, paints and pens.

Everyone, including the facilitator, selects a spot on the spiral and in the space they have chosen, draws / paints something which represents their thoughts in response to the question. You may want to encourage them not to use words in their art, and you may also want to ask everyone to work in silence. After a time (for example, ten minutes), ask them to find another space, and respond to a follow-on question. This can be repeated as is appropriate and according to space on the spiral.



Sample questions could include:

- *How would you represent important aspects of your past?*
- *How would you represent important aspects of your present?*
- *What are your hopes for the future?*

Afterwards, allow time to stand back and look at the spiral, walking around to see other people's contributions. Follow this by de-briefing as a group, talking about what people can see on the spiral or what they chose personally to depict, and considering the process of working together. For example:

- How did people feel if someone used 'their' space and developed or added to their work?
- How did it feel to work in silence?
- How comfortable were they with an art-based activity? When had they last done something like this?

Writing-based Activities

These activities are useful because they require people to articulate their thoughts and feelings and, therefore, help to build all kinds of literacy, including emotional literacy. It is important to be aware of literacy levels within the group. Using only or mostly writing-based activities can reduce the opportunities for participation, contribution and learning for those who are not confident about their literacy. At worst, they may opt out of activities or stop coming to the group altogether.

REPORTAGE

A similar exercise to the collage, where individuals / small groups are asked to design a news report for a specific communication medium such as radio, television, newspaper or the internet to explain the work they have been doing. They should consider to whom the report is to be made available. The report could include:

- the value of the work, including both positive and negative points;
- what they have learnt and what action needs to be taken;
- interviews with people who have views on the issue in question;
- examples of written or artwork;
- celebration of the group, the learning, etc.;
- future plans.

WORKSHEET

Using worksheets individually, in pairs or small groups can help to focus people's thinking because they need to express it clearly in writing and often in response to

particular questions. It can be limiting, however, if the questions are not open enough, if there is no opportunity to share their learning and depending on the size of the sheet. (For sample worksheets, see end of section.)

SILENT PERSONAL REFLECTION AND JOURNALS

It is important that people have the opportunity to develop skills of personal reflection and to be comfortable with themselves. There will also be those within the group who will learn most effectively in this way. It is useful to develop silent reflection when you want people to give a considered response within a discussion rather than simply their first reaction.

Similarly, using a journal can help to focus thoughts and reflections, whether it is done through writing, drawing or a combination of the two. A journal also allows people to reflect back on their learning over a period of time. This provides useful reminders and can be hugely affirming as they see what they have learnt, the skills they have developed, etc. To help give a sense of the purpose of journals when working with children, Jenny Mosley calls them 'Think Books',⁹ and this, or a similar name may be more appropriate for your particular group.

It is crucial that before people begin using journals there is a very clear understanding as to whether they are totally personal or whether they will be shared with the facilitator and / or the group. People are likely to record very different things depending on who is going to see them. Where the facilitator is going to have access to them, it may be appropriate to write responsive comments which will give affirmation, assist reflection and learning, etc. However, again, it needs to be made clear that this is going to happen at the start.

⁹ Mosley, J. (2000), *Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom*, Wisbech, LDA.

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THINK, WRITE, SHARE

This allows people time to think and reflect, to focus their thoughts in writing or in a picture / symbols and then to share them with a partner or group. It is especially useful for people who may feel 'put on the spot' when an instant response is expected from them. A worksheet could be used as the starting point for this.

Group Tasks and Challenges ¹⁰

These could include many of the activities outlined above and many of the games described in Section Five (Using Games). There is a valuable group-building purpose within such activities, and they can also be arranged to suit the particular theme of the programme / session. Setting the group a shared task or challenge, for example, to solve a problem together, to make something together, to undertake a community-based project, to investigate and respond to a particular social or global issue, etc. is a useful way of embedding learning. A good example of this is the action component within Local and Global Citizenship.¹¹ As with the other practical activities, this can be emphasised by debriefing questions.

¹⁰ Craig, C. et al. (2003), *Different Tracks – Experiential Learning: A Practical Guide for Community Relations Work*, Belfast, Corrymeela Community.

¹¹ CCEA (2003), *Local and Global Citizenship: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools*, Belfast, CCEA.



SAMPLE DE-BRIEFING QUESTIONS:

- Did your group worked well together?
- Did your group elect a leader?
- Did a leader emerge?
- Was there any attempt at planning how to perform the various tasks?
- Was enough time spent on planning the tasks? Did this save time later?
- How did the group operate as a team?
- Was there conflict, differences of opinion, etc.?
- What skills did you need to use?
- Did anyone monitor the time available?
- Did everyone understand what was going on and what was expected of them?
- Did different personalities emerge, for example, analyser, peacemaker, etc.?
- Were the later tasks better organised by the group than the earlier ones?
- What kind of atmosphere was there?
- Did you use the time between tasks to review progress and plan improvement?
- Was everyone involved? How were the tasks shared out?
- Did the task get so complicated / disorganised that it had to be started again?
- List four strengths your group demonstrated.
- Did your approach have any weaknesses?
- What would you do differently if you could do the task again?



Questions for Reflection

Have I chosen a wide enough and appropriate range of ways of working and activities for this particular group and programme?

Are there ways of working which would be new to me, but that I would like to try?
Where can I gain experience or get support for doing this?

Are there ways of working that I feel wary about? Would it help to see them in action, or experience them as a participant? How can I do this?

Is there someone else with particular skills who could work with me for specific activities?
(Make sure that it's appropriate – having told the group that they do not need to be drama or art experts, it may undermine that to bring one in!)

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Worksheet: Similarities and Differences

**Three things about me which are the same
as everyone else in the room:**

- _____
- _____
- _____

**Three things about me that I feel make me
different from everyone else in the room:**

- _____
- _____
- _____

**Five things which are the same as some
other people in the room:**

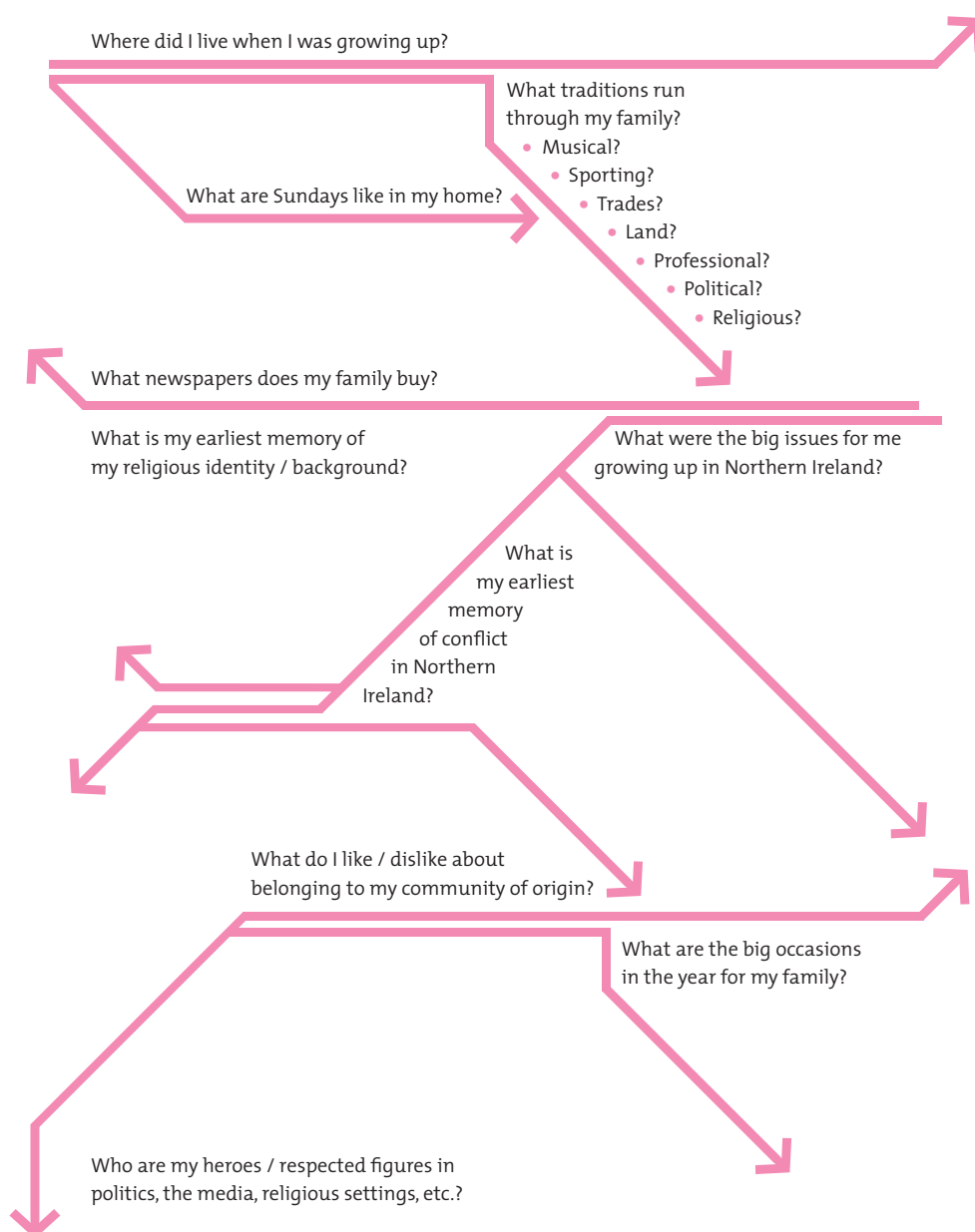
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

**Three qualities that I feel other people in
the room have that I do not have:**

- _____
- _____
- _____



Worksheet: Heritage and Identity



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5.7

Practical Preparation for Groupwork

Although 'safe space' is about far more than the physical surroundings, these and other practical considerations will play an important part, and need to be considered by the facilitator within the overall planning. Very basic things will affect people's level of comfort, sense of safety and, therefore, their ability and willingness to participate.

THE PHYSICAL SETTING

For a class group working on their own, the best place to do the work will probably be their own classroom as this is likely to be the place in the school where they feel most at home. This also recognises that the work is integrated within the life of the classroom and is not something additional or exceptional. In a similar way, a staff team might find their staffroom the most appropriate place for this kind of work. On the other hand, if the staffroom is really only, or is perceived to be only, the 'teachers' room', this might not be the appropriate place for work involving the whole school staff team.

It is important to bear in mind that some rooms, such as a science laboratory, have fixed workspaces and it may not be possible to use these rooms for groupwork. Some aspects of groupwork may still be possible with a bit of creativity and compromise, for example, partner work and work in small groups with feedback to the large group, even though not in a circle.



Setting up a circle for group discussion:

- Does a circle need to be set up and put away for each session?
- Does everyone, including the facilitator, have the same seating?
- Does everyone have eye contact?
- Do I need a 'talking object' for discussions?

Practicalities:

Have I checked with group members that:

- everyone has a seat / space (and a seat / space is left for anyone you are expecting to arrive late)?
- they are warm enough / not too warm?
- the lighting is OK (for example, no one is being blinded by sunlight)?
- everyone can see and hear everyone else?
- there is a good balance between giving people their 'personal space' and a sense of actually being together as a group?
- possibilities of interruption are minimised (for example, all mobile phones are switched off, the facilitator is aware at the start of anyone who needs to leave early)?

Other considerations:

- Is there sufficient space for any games or other activities I am planning?
- Are there any health and safety implications?
- Do I need a sign on the door so that the session will not be interrupted?
- Is there the possibility of another room if the usual workplace is not suitable?
- If the room has limitations, what are the possibilities I could still creatively develop, or adaptations I could make?

Where two or more groups from within a school or from different schools are meeting together, the co-ordinators / facilitators will need to discuss together the most appropriate place to meet.



- How many people (including facilitators / leaders) will be involved?
- Will it be possible to work in one circle, or will it need to be split up into smaller groups?
- If working in more than one group, will there need to be feedback to the whole group at points during or at the end of the session?
- What space will be needed for this – more than one room?
- What will be the most appropriate venue (in one school or external)?
- Is there sufficient space for any games or activities which we are planning?
- Have we checked out any health and safety implications?
- Have we organised consent forms for children / young people who are going to a venue other than their own school?

NB. For example: An assembly hall or gym may provide plenty of space for games and circles, but some group members may feel overwhelmed by such a big space or feel that their voice is too exposed if they express a personal view, and it can be 'echo-y' and harder to hear people.

Weighing up the pros and cons is important!

THE TIME AVAILABLE

For individual sessions, this is likely to be more flexible within a primary school than within a post-primary school context, but in both cases the balances between flexibility and other curriculum demands need to be maintained. The bell ringing for the next class / break / end of school is usually a non-negotiable limit, and it is crucial that the programme has reached an appropriate point of closure before this happens.

Aspects such as starting and finishing on time can assist children, young people and adults to see that the work is purposeful and planned, and that they and their time are valued. If group members are late for the start of a session, it is important to respond to this appropriately and respectfully. If they are late for no clear reason, it may be because they do not perceive the session to be a good use of their time, and it may be necessary to clarify the session's purpose, its relevance to them and the contribution which they can make for the benefit of the group as a whole.

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Whether planning an individual lesson, a module / series of lessons or a development / training programme for adults, it will be important to think about how much time is needed for the different aspects of:

- *introduction;*
- *relationship and trust building;*
- *exploration of the themes;*
- *evaluation and closure.*

The appropriate depth to which the discussions can be taken will depend in part on the time available to ensure that each of the introductory and ending steps is sufficiently developed. Within a longer session, and particularly if the programme / process is very in-depth or emotive, time will also need to be allocated for breaks.



- What time is available for the overall programme / module?
- What time is available for each session?
- When is the best time within the day / week for a regular session?
- How can the programme purpose best be achieved within the time available?
- What size is the group? (This will affect how long it takes to do different exercises.)
- How long is it appropriate to spend on different activities or discussions? (This may depend on the ages, abilities, and concentration skills within the group.)
- Have I allowed sufficient time for introductory activities (for example, sharing purpose and plan for the session, introductory / ice-breaker game, re-visiting contract, etc.) and for evaluation and closure?
- Have I allowed time for appropriate breaks (including meals!)?
- Have I considered how I will respond if people are late for no clear reason?

RESOURCES

There are many resources available which can support this kind of work, outlining exercises, games and activities. Such resources will enable more creative programme planning and will support the facilitator in introducing a range of learning opportunities. It is important, however, that facilitators thoroughly familiarise themselves with a particular activity before introducing it to a group, paying particular attention to its appropriateness for that group and the programme in which they are participating.

People are also an important resource, not least the group members themselves, who may have different skills and activity ideas to share. Provided it does not contravene group needs or disrupt the group in other ways, there may be times when it is useful to:

- work with a co-facilitator, see Co-facilitation: Working Together (Section Three);
- invite someone in to lead a session / programme because of their particular experiences or expertise;
- invite other members of the school or local community to participate in or lead a session / programme;
- invite a colleague, tutor, etc. to participate in the group to support you in reflecting on your own learning and skills development.



- What resources are available to me?
- Which resources might be useful for this particular group and programme?
- Do I feel confident leading this exercise?
- How will I evaluate its effectiveness?
- Do I have a resource budget?
- Do I need any support in facilitating this programme?
- Is there someone who could co-facilitate or lead a particular session?
- Is there someone who could help me reflect on my practice?
- Is it possible to bring in someone external?
- *Is there money available for this if needed?*
- *Have they completed any necessary Child Protection documentation?*

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5.8

Developing a Programme

As with all other areas of session planning, this work needs to have a clear **Purpose** and intended **Learning Outcomes** (for individuals, the group as a whole, yourself as the facilitator). The biggest challenge may be that the facilitator is less in control of the process than s/he might be in other areas of their work.

There are a number of reasons for this:

- The material for the work is drawn largely from the life experiences of group members and is dependent to a significant extent on what they choose to bring to the process.
- A commitment to a democratic way of working means that the facilitator does not come to the process as an expert with knowledge to share with the group members. While maintaining a co-ordination role, the facilitator is also a listener and a learner, recognising what each of the children, young people and / or adults brings to the group.
- There is an emphasis on the process itself, rather than on completing a specific task. This requires a high degree of flexibility on the part of the facilitator and a strong sensitivity to the needs and feelings within the group.

Given these circumstances, it is highly appropriate to involve the members in planning as they are the 'experts' on their own life story and situation, and know which issues are of interest and relevance to them.

All of these factors may challenge the facilitator's sense of safety. Feeling reasonably confident about her / his personal preparation, her / his facilitation skills and having a positive relationship with her / his group members will help to ensure that s/he feels equipped for her / his facilitation role. The consequences have the potential to be hugely dynamic and rewarding!

Group members will also feel safer and better able to participate fully if the programme:

- *has a clear purpose they are able to buy into;*
- *is genuinely relevant;*
- *provides a range of learning opportunities which match their different learning styles;*
- *is appropriate for their age group, ability range, etc. and builds from the level of previous experience.*

See Building a Positive Learning Environment: Using Groupwork and Facilitation (Section Three) and Creating Safe Space (Section Five).

Developing Learning Outcomes

The facilitator needs to consider in advance how s/he will reflect on and evaluate both individual sessions and the overall programme. Establishing the purpose of the work and the intended learning outcomes means that these can be used as indicators to measure the learning which takes place.

You will need to consider learning outcomes in relation to aspects such as:

- *factual knowledge;*
- *skills;*
- *understanding;*
- *relationships / interactions;*
- *attitudes and behaviour;*
- *making connections*
i.e. will group members be able to understand that the learning is relevant and transferable to other settings and experiences?

Gathering evidence of learning will enable everyone to see where learning has taken place, to value the work and to feel confident that it is an important use of their time.

For more information on monitoring and evaluation, see Developing a Model for Self-evaluation (Section Six).

Once the purpose and intended learning outcomes of the programme and individual sessions are set, you can begin to look at which ways of working and specific activities will be most likely to ensure that these are met and that learning actually takes place. Both within individual sessions and across whole programmes, there needs to be a sense of appropriate **progression** and **development**. This means that there needs to be:

- *a sense of continuity and connection between each activity and session;*
- *a structure of activities which allows each new level of learning to be built on further;*
- *opportunities along the way to re-visit and reinforce key learning points.*

It is important, therefore, to get a good balance between keeping the process moving and trying to ensure that key learning is in place before moving on to the next stage.

Common Mistakes ¹²

- There is a failure to base the programme on identified individual or group (learning) needs.
- A failure to link the programme objectives to the group's hopes and expectations.
- The programme is too rigid, for example, because of over-planning, failure to allow for spontaneous or unexpected incidents.
- There is an inability to use unexpected incidents to develop programme objectives or to take an entirely new course where this might be appropriate.
- There is not enough balance between individual and group needs, and the group's task requirements.
- The programme is aimed above or below the capabilities and potential of group members, leading to frustration, boredom, competition, etc.
- The programme is unimaginative, repetitive, unstimulating or inappropriate.
- There is too much focus on completing tasks / activities at the expense of attending to and learning from the process which is happening within the group.
- There is a failure to create clarity for group members in relation to the programme and its purpose.
- There is a failure to monitor and evaluate the programme as a way of fine-tuning or even redesigning it if necessary.

¹² Adapted from Benson, J. (1997), *Working More Creatively with Groups*, London, Routledge.

DEVELOPING PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN,
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS**PREPARATION QUESTIONS****Purpose and Learning Outcomes:**

- *What is the purpose of the programme?*
- *What are the intended learning outcomes for the programme / module?*
- *What are the intended learning outcomes for the session?*
- *How will learning outcomes, and the whole programme, be monitored and evaluated?*

Involving Group Members:

- *How can group members be involved in programme design and planning?*
- *How can group members be involved in programme monitoring and evaluation?*

Practical Considerations:

See previous checklists on physical setting, time and resources.

- *Bearing all of the above in mind, what will be the most appropriate ways of working and specific activities to use?*

Maximising Learning:

How can I maximise the learning opportunities for group members through:

- *the range of activities offered;*
- *repetition of key themes;*
- *re-visiting key themes using different types of activities;*
- *making clear connections with other learning environments and life experiences?*

5.9

If Things 'Go Wrong'

Given the nature of groupwork and all of the relationships and interactions within it, there is always the possibility that the programme will not go as originally planned. There can be all kinds of reasons for this, and many of these can be turned into constructive learning experiences in themselves. Some of them will be very minor and / or may be immediately positive while others may prove more challenging. There are a few basic foundations, explored in more detail elsewhere in the resource, which will enable the facilitator to respond in ways which will minimise any disruption or anxiety within the group.

These include:

- *a respectful and consistent facilitation style;*
- *taking sufficient time at the beginning of a programme to establish good relations and clear ground rules within the group;*
- *ensuring that the group are able to understand and engage positively with the purpose of the programme;*
- *flexibility in your programme – to suit the group and the circumstances;*
- *taking sufficient time along the way to reflect and evaluate;*
- *ensuring that support structures are in place for the facilitator and for group members.*

The situations which arise will be different in each unique group and will require appropriate responses. They may include:

- *a ground rule being broken;*
- *different forms of challenging behaviour;*
- *people expressing strong emotions;*
- *the formation of subgroups or cliques;*
- *rebellion or refusal to engage;*

- *'red herrings' which take the group off on irrelevant tangents (NB. sometimes they may not be 'red herrings' at all, but may be indicating something which is important within the group);*
- *the group needing to make an important decision and struggling to do so;*
- *a mismatch between the programme content and the group (for example, too theoretical, pitched at an inappropriate level, a sense of irrelevance, etc.);*
- *avoidance or denial of particular issues;*
- *conflict within the group.*

Starting Points for Responding

DON'T PANIC!

- If you have attended to the basic principles outlined above, you already have all the tools in place that you need to respond to whatever situations arise.
- Has something really 'gone wrong' or is there something in particular that is triggering your own anxieties? If possible, check this out with a co-facilitator or colleague. Positive learning may well be occurring within the group.

TAKE YOUR TIME IN RESPONDING

- Provided the physical safety of group members and yourself is assured, there is no need to rush to respond.
- Give yourself time to observe what is going on within the group and to ask the group what they think is happening.
- Consider whether this is something which needs an immediate response, whether it is

something that can be worked out through the group's ongoing activities and discussions, or a combination of the two.

DON'T ASSUME THINGS HAVE GONE WRONG

- Disruption to your carefully planned programme may not be a disaster! In fact, it may be a useful indication of immediate needs within the group which need to be explored and addressed before they will be able to move on.
- It may indicate gaps within your programme which the group feel or demonstrate are important (for example, the need for more skills development, significant aspects which had not occurred to you, relational issues which have been preventing the group from working effectively together).

CONSIDER THE POSSIBLE CAUSES

- Do not assume that whatever has happened is the responsibility of a perceived 'troublemaker' who 'always' disrupts things / leads others astray.
- Consider carefully what the genuine and practical causes for the situation may be – again, ask the group what they think. Bear in mind that things going on outside the group (within an individual's circumstances, in a peer group, another class, the wider school, the community, etc.) may be impacting on what is happening within the group.
- If there are individuals who you believe carry particular responsibility for what has happened or who have been particularly affected, consider where and when the appropriate place to respond is. It is important to keep the whole group appropriately informed.

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DON'T AUTOMATICALLY BLAME YOURSELF

- Unforeseen circumstances can arise within any group, and sometimes, because of your knowledge of a group, you can be aware that you are taking some level of risk in introducing the next planned topic.
- Take time to reflect with a supportive colleague, with your teacher tutor, or in supervision if it is available, so that you can consider all of the factors involved and use what has happened as a situation to learn from.

SHARE RESPONSIBILITY WITH THE GROUP

- Groupwork is a democratic process, and it is the facilitator's task to enable the group to learn and develop.
- Supporting group members to explore, and respond to difficulties is a key part of the facilitator's role. If the process is well facilitated, group members will be enabled to develop in a whole range of skills including, for example, self-reflection, self-expression, active listening, empathy, other aspects of emotional literacy, problem-solving, conflict resolution, etc.
- As suggested above, group members may well have the answers you are looking for as you yourself think about how to respond!

Strategies for Responding

Some specific responses to the situations suggested above are outlined in other sections in the pack. However, some general strategies which may be useful include:

TIME OUT:

for the group and for yourself. A quick break can give people a bit of space, time to re-gain perspective to reflect and think through options.

RE-VISIT THE CONTRACT / GROUND RULES:

if the issues emerging are around behaviour or relations within the group, it will be important to look again at the ground rules, to make sure that everyone is clear about their purpose and meaning. This may be sufficient to address the issue, or it may become appropriate to use the agreed warning and sanctions system.

CHANGE THE PROGRAMME:

while recognising that there may be curriculum restraints, it may be useful to alter the learning methods, or even the actual content. Pushing on with your original plan will be futile if no learning is going to take place.

RE-VISIT EARLIER STAGES OF THE PROGRAMME:

have the difficulties emerged because learning from an earlier stage of the programme has not yet been assimilated? Or because there has not been sufficient development of particular skills?

WORK WITH A CO-FACILITATOR:

if it is appropriate and possible at this stage within your programme, it may be useful to invite someone to co-facilitate with you for the next session(s).



USE AN EXTERNAL FACILITATOR:

if you feel that you are too involved in what is going on, it may be useful and appropriate to ask an external facilitator to explore the issues with the group, with you also participating. This may be particularly useful if there is a conflict which needs to be mediated.

SUPPORT STRUCTURES FOR GROUP MEMBERS:

bearing in mind that this kind of groupwork is not about counselling or therapy, occasionally it may be appropriate to encourage or enable individuals to receive this kind of support elsewhere. Equally, if Child Protection issues emerge, it is essential to follow through the appropriate procedures for responding to these.

REVIEW AND EVALUATE THOROUGHLY:

take time to thoroughly reflect on and evaluate what has happened, and build this into your planning for future sessions. Use your own support structures to help you to reflect, to check out your ideas and to obtain other perspectives and insights.

Questions for Reflection

What are my fears as to things that could 'go wrong' with this group and this programme?

What positive learning for myself and for the group could come out of such situations?

Is there anyone in this group I might have a tendency to scapegoat? Why?

Have I thoroughly planned and prepared for the work?

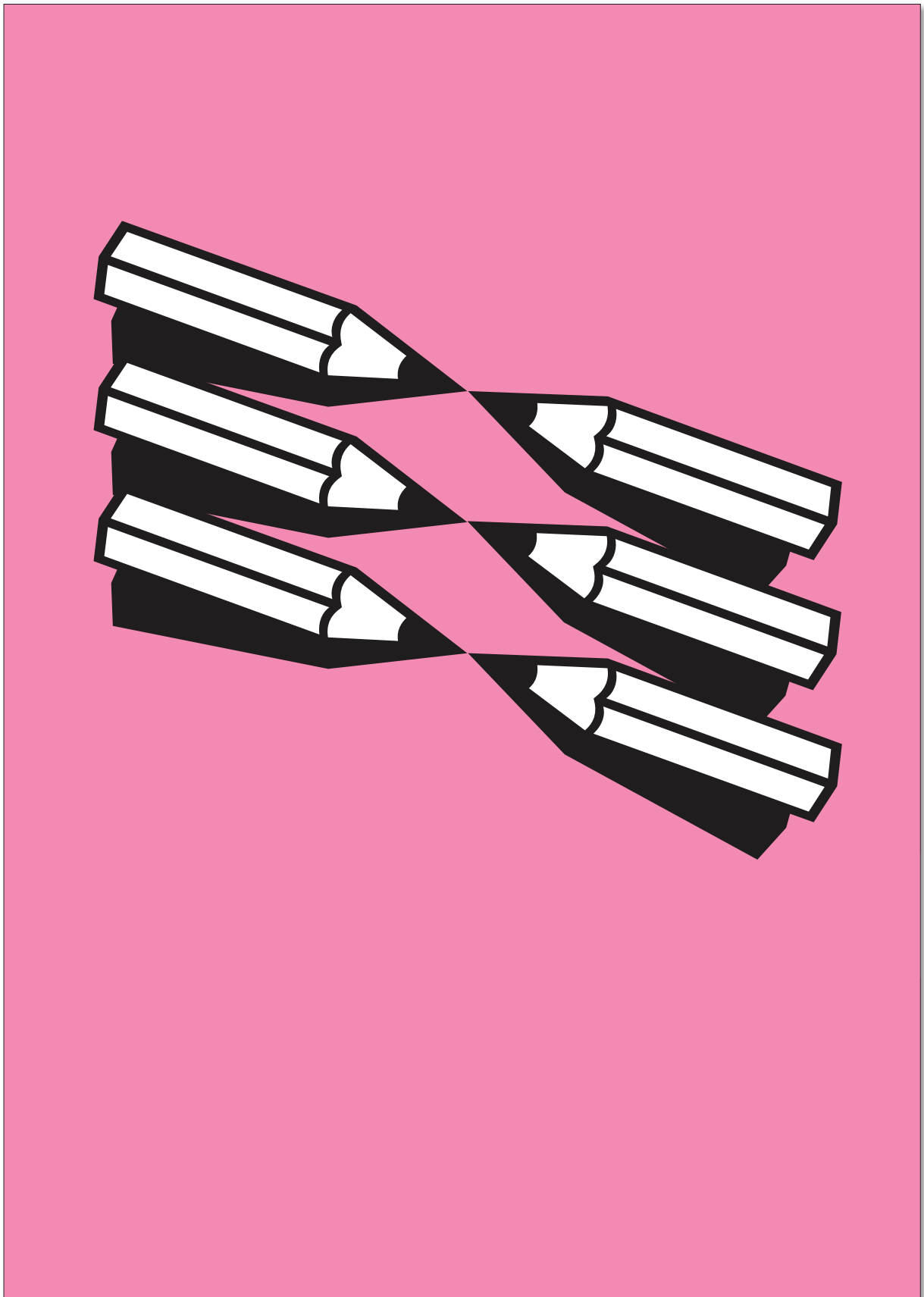
Have I allowed sufficient time for building relationships establishing ground rules, developing skills, etc.?

Is there a clear and appropriate rewards, warnings and sanctions system?

Am I prepared and confident to be flexible with the programme?

Have I some alternative possibilities ready?

What support is available to help me reflect, evaluate and plan for the next session?





Developing a Model for Self-evaluation

People talking without speaking

People hearing without listening ...

'Fools,' said I, 'You do not know

Silence like a cancer grows.'

LYRICS FROM: SIMON, P. (1964), SOUNDS OF SILENCE.

developing a model for self-evaluation



To evaluate means to collect information about the results of an action and set this against predetermined goals in order to judge the value of the results. The evaluation allows you to maintain, to change or to suspend, justifiably, a defined plan. In this way it supports you to decide the direction you need to go and the best way to get there.

A simple word 'Evaluation':

- *What for?*
- *When? In which circumstances?*
- *With whom?*
- *How to do it?*

The Self-evaluating School ¹

Self-evaluation is a process through which an individual teacher, groups of staff, the staff as a whole and senior management can:

- *reflect on their current practice;*
- *identify and celebrate the school's strengths;*
- *identify and address areas for improvement in their work;*
- *engage in personal and shared professional development;*
- *focus on improving the quality of learning and teaching.*

The process of self-evaluation:

- is ongoing and sharply-focused, and involves monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the existing provision and the pupils' achievements;
- recognises the need for the staff and governors to have a clear and agreed view of the school's current stage of development and through school development planning, to identify priorities which will have a positive effect on learning and teaching;
- informs and influences classroom practice and the quality of learning and teaching, and promotes development and improvement;
- requires staff to evaluate their work critically, reflect on the extent to which expectations are being realised in the work of the school, and establish a clear vision and future direction for the school.

This process requires a climate where all involved are encouraged to be open about their work, evaluate and where necessary improve their own performance.

¹ Adapted from the Department of Education's Education and Training Inspectorate, *Together Towards Improvement A Process for Evaluation*, Bangor, ETL.

6.1 Reviewing



In this context, reviewing is understood as a process of reflecting, asking questions and making learning connections, which is informal and integrated into the fabric of how you work.

Evaluation takes place when this process is formalised and broadened to include aspects such as structures, programme content, delivery style, numbers participating, etc.

Learning does not take place in a vacuum, but in the context of everyday life. Optimum learning is achieved when it is connected. For example, the Northern Ireland Curriculum supports the links between subject areas / themes, although this requires further integration as children / young people also need support in understanding the links between different aspects of learning. Similarly, adults need to see the relevance of any training they receive, to the work which they are required to do or the responsibilities which they carry.

Reviewing is about the link between experience and learning. Just as we need experience in order to learn, we need to use our knowledge to plan our actions and experiences.

REVIEWING INVOLVES FOUR BASIC PROCESSES:

1 Reflection

- *understanding what happened and why;*
- *judging progress in terms of the objectives within the learning programme;*
- *making connections for ourselves;*
- *relating experience gained through the learning programme and existing knowledge.*

2 Making Connections

Personal growth can be viewed as making new connections in any of several directions:

- *upward to achieve one's full potential;*
- *outward to contact and encounter others;*
- *inward to increase our awareness of who we are and what we want, need, sense and feel.*

Some activities have value in their own right, and do not depend on the kinds of connections that are made with other experiences.

We continually come to know ourselves and our worlds by making connections between past, present and future. Threads and themes help us to draw separate experiences together into stories about ourselves and who we are. This can be restricted if, for example:

- people's development is held back by others around them who will not let them change or grow up;
- whatever they do gets explained by themselves or by others in terms of labels from the past.

3 Planning

The experience and learning gained through activities is used to plan what happens next in the programme.

4 Learning Transfer

This is a process of continuous development, which focuses on identifying new knowledge, understanding and skills and thinking about how these can be used in current or future situations.



Questions for Reflection

Do I regularly consider my teaching with a view to identifying aspects that can be usefully developed?

Do I make use of systematic evaluation methods of collecting data about my current practice that may be helpful?

What do I do about what I have learned?

6.2

Assessment as Evaluation

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process through which teachers / trainers build a comprehensive picture of the progress and learning needs of each child, young person or adult in order to plan future work and improve learning. Improvement in learning through assessment is enhanced by:

- the active involvement of children, young people and adults in their learning, including:
 - *sharing learning intentions with children, young people and adults;*
 - *raising their awareness of the skills and knowledge that are being developed;*
 - *developing their awareness of strategies which they employ in their own learning;*
- the provision of effective feedback to children, young people and adults (recognising the profound influence this can have on motivation and self-esteem, both of which are crucial influences on learning) and creating circumstances whereby everyone can give feedback to the teachers / trainers about their learning experiences;
- developing their ability for self-assessment by helping them to :
 - *reflect on and evaluate their own work;*
 - *affirm their own successes and learning;*
 - *set their own goals following supportive questioning and feedback;*
 - *develop practical strategies to improve;*
- the adjustment of teaching / training to take account of the outcomes of assessment.

6.3

Evaluating Learning

ESTABLISHING A BASELINE

Several methods and techniques can be used in an evaluation, depending on the circumstances. Whatever method you choose, it is important to reflect on the starting point of the group so that you have a baseline.

This starting point could be in connection with, for example:

- *new learning;*
- *change of attitudes;*
- *development of skills.*

This baseline will enable you to see what has been achieved and can fit into what you are already doing, for example, the school development plan, monthly plans, training agendas, etc.

SETTING LEARNING OUTCOMES

Once the baseline is established, it is important to set a purpose / learning outcomes for any session or programme. These will provide you with indicators against which to measure your evidence, i.e. how far have you moved from the baseline in achieving the goals (learning outcomes) which you have set?

GATHERING EVIDENCE

A varied range of evaluation techniques need to be used as an integral part of the learning and teaching process, not just at the end of a session / lesson. Facilitators need to select techniques that best suit the nature of the work and the needs of the group members at the particular time, for example:

- *observation;*
- *discussion;*
- *oral, written, visual presentations, including photographs, videos, etc.;*
- *creative arts displays or presentations, including drama, puppetry, etc.;*
- *individual or group tasks;*
- *project work;*
- *homework;*
- *lesson and monthly plans;*
- *feedback questionnaires;*
- *reports and policy documents.*

The evidence from these activities should help facilitators:

- *evaluate the individual and group learning;*
- *plan the next stages of learning for this group;*
- *adapt the programme for a similar group;*
- *evaluate their own learning.*



Ideas for Inclusion to Ascertain Learning

Looking Back

- What have we learned so far?
- *What do we know now that we did not **know** at the beginning?*
- *What do we **understand** now that we did not understand at the beginning?*
- *What can we **do** now that we could not do before?*
- Which of these things helped us learn?
- How have they helped us learn?
 - *the group as whole;*
 - *particular group members;*
 - *the group atmosphere;*
 - *the learning approaches;*
 - *the facilitator;*
 - *the material / resources used;*
 - *specific activities?*
- Did any of these things interfere with our learning in any way? If so, how?
- What have we found out about our personal ways of learning things?
 - *methods we find helpful, for example, trying things out, using books, being instructed by others, using videos and learning aids;*
 - *the style of learning we like best, for example, working alone, working in small groups, in pairs, working co-operatively, competing against other groups;*
 - *the personal skills we use, for example, observing, listening, memorising, comparing one thing with another, making notes?*

Looking Forward

- How can we use this knowledge about the way we learn to help us with future learning?
- Where do we go next with this programme?
- If the programme is finished, is there a need for follow-up / further support for individuals or for the group?



Reflection Questions for Staff

What are the main learning methods used in the session / programme?

How interesting and useful are they?

What role do you play in the process?

Do the group members help one another learn?

Are there any changes you would make to the session / programme?

What role could the participants play in the session / programme?

How did the participants organise themselves during the activities; how were decisions made?

Did the groups work well together, how do you know this?

How good was communication, did people share ideas, information, questions?

DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR SELF-EVALUATION



Evaluation Example: Feedback Sheet

DATE OF ASSEMBLY _____

What did you enjoy most and why?

What did you enjoy least and why?

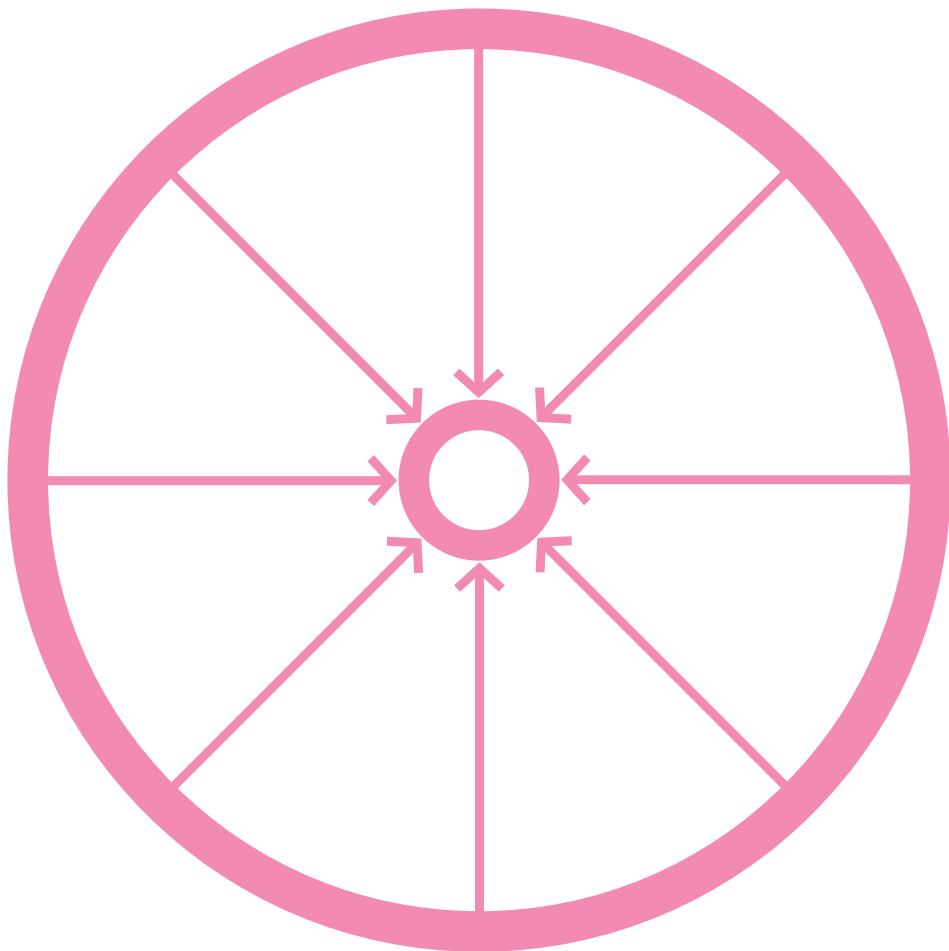
One thing you did not know before this assembly?

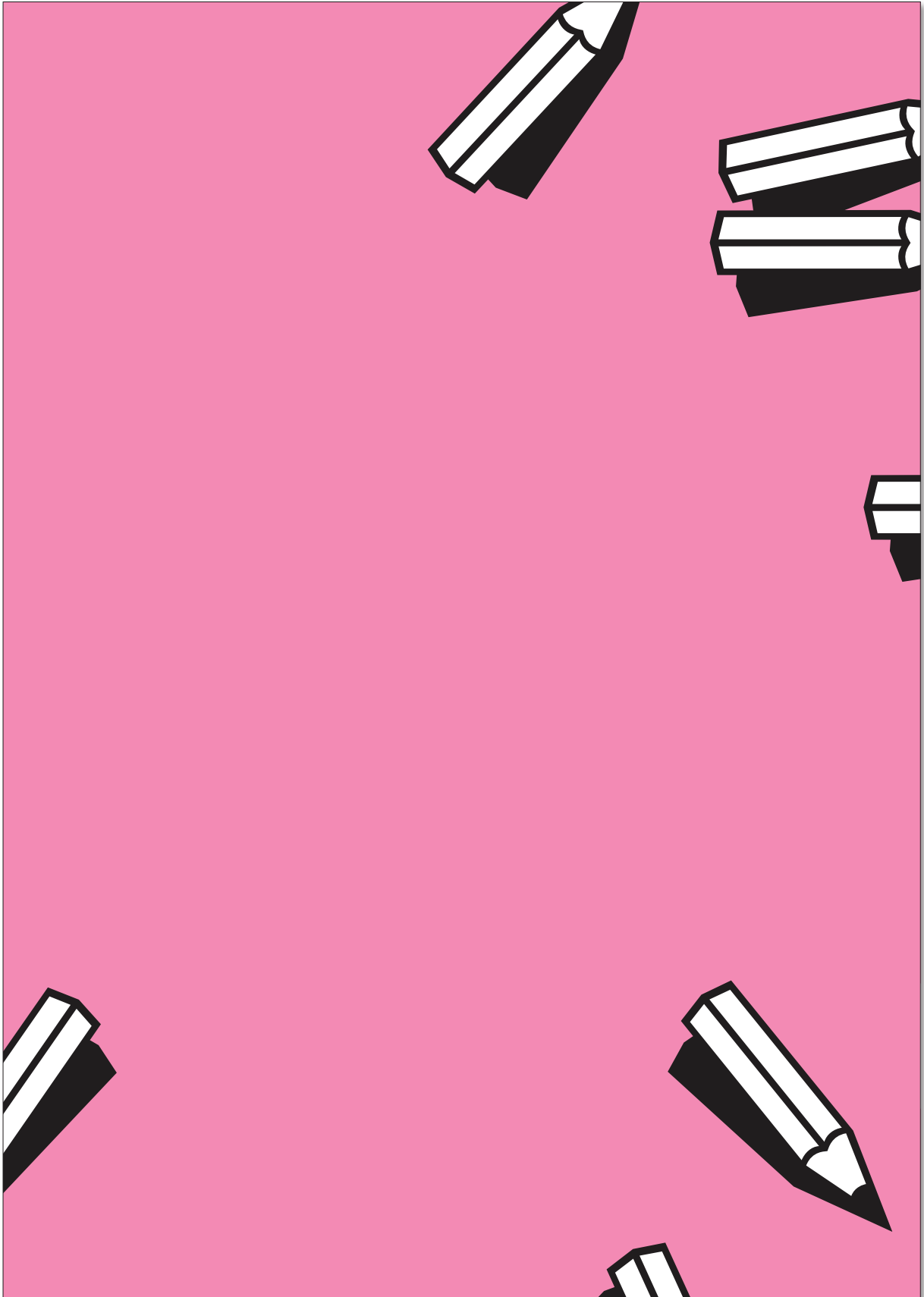
What will you remember about this assembly?



Evaluation Example: Dartboard Evaluation

Label each segment to represent an aspect of the programme, for example, different activities, venue, etc. Assuming that the centre of the circle (the Bull's Eye) is excellent and the outside is not so good, mark each section with an 'X' or a colour to show how you felt about that programme aspect.







Beyond Programmes

Learning for Life

Beyond programmes

7.0

Opportunities and Support for Group Members Beyond the Programme

All learning involves some degree of change, whether in terms of:

- *levels and areas of knowledge;*
- *new and developed skills;*
- *attitudes;*
- *breadth and depth of understanding;*
- *emotions;*

or a combination of these and other factors. Therefore, if the groupwork process has been effective, this means that people are impacted in ways that go beyond the duration of the programme itself.

This should generally be a very positive thing – after all, this learning is a key reason why people were participating in the first place. Providing people with resources and support beyond the programme will help them to remember what they have learnt, and to build on it further. Some possibilities for doing this include:

- providing handouts, resources and resource lists (for example, relevant books, videos, website addresses);
- programming follow-up sessions into the class timetable, staff development strategy, etc.;
- asking people informally, individually or in a group setting, whether they have thought any more about or done anything further with their learning;
- working as a staff team – making colleagues aware of what you are doing so that they can make connections and reinforce the learning;
- follow-up through a supervision meeting;
- referring back to key learning points in other contexts to which they are transferable and encouraging the group to discuss their relevance;
- using other opportunities such as assemblies, displays, staffroom noticeboards, etc. to highlight the key learning points;
- providing people with information about other relevant training opportunities outside the school setting, and providing support in applying for these;
- drawing on other educational and external resources, for example, ELBs, local youth workers, community-based projects, issue-based organisations, etc.

BEYOND PROGRAMMES: LEARNING FOR LIFE

People may also need support beyond the programme if the themes explored and the learning have been particularly challenging. It is important that the programme itself is structured so that closure, personal reflection and evaluation are all thoroughly attended to. Beyond that, some of the strategies listed above will provide opportunities to check how people are progressing with their learning and how it has impacted on their life experience. If appropriate, specific follow-up can be designed with them in order to meet their learning and support needs. Very occasionally, the work may raise personal issues for a particular individual, and it may be appropriate to encourage or enable her / him to seek specific external support such as counselling. As with all aspects of the work, it is essential to follow school procedures in doing this.

Opportunities and Support for Children and Young People

Hopefully, the themes explored and learning which takes place within the groupwork sessions will be genuinely relevant to the lives of the children and young people involved. If this is the case, it is unlikely that the experience will finish when they leave school at the end of the day or after the final session of a module / programme.

Most learning involves some level of change and if the facilitator looks honestly at the purpose of this kind of work, it is probable that there is an explicit element of change intended. This might include:

- *developing critical thinking skills;*
- *developing emotional literacy;*
- *challenging prejudice and discrimination;*
- *encouraging group members to relate more positively to those who come from backgrounds different to their own;*
- *approaching conflict situations differently.*

This is likely to be the case particularly when the themes being explored are controversial, and the groupwork is demanding with regard to the feelings, attitudes they touch and viewpoints which they challenge. In some circumstances, particularly for young people, there may be a number of difficult consequences to this. For example:

- They may experience a significant change in their ways of thinking and relating to other people, particularly those whose background or views are different to their own. This may be a challenging experience which raises feelings of uncertainty and even anxiety.
- They may find themselves in conflict at some level with family members, friends, peers and others in their community.
- For some, even to participate in a programme with people from a different community may make them vulnerable in their own community, regardless of whether or not they demonstrate changes in attitudes or behaviour as a result of their participation.

It is, therefore, really important for the facilitator to think clearly about the purpose of the work, the potential learning and change outcomes, and the support structures which are needed. There are limitations which a school will face within its particular community and societal context, but participants' safety and personal development must be appropriately attended to beyond the actual module or programme.

Below is a list of some possible structures and ways of working which will contribute to the physical and emotional safety and development of children and young people beyond the programme itself.

- The whole school model allows for a broader support context than an individual teacher working with a group on their own.

- Where appropriate, informing and involving parents and others (such as local youth workers) will broaden the support structure.
- Throughout the programme, the facilitator needs to hold a balance between acknowledging genuine fears and concerns, and encouraging participants to recognise the potentially positive outcomes of their participation and learning.
- The development of skills within the programme must be done in a way that is transferable to the rest of life. The facilitator needs to ensure that these connections are sufficiently made.
- The ethos of encouraging people to take responsibility for their own learning needs to be supported by discussion which helps them to contextualise this within their longer term experience.
- This will also involve developing their awareness and understanding of the relationship to the social and political context in which they live.
- The facilitator and others within the school need to be available to offer appropriate individual support on both an informal and formal basis. This will be dependent on the building of good relationships.
- There may be opportunities to provide training and support to older pupils so that they can take on a mentoring role for younger pupils.
- Informal and more formalised peer support structures can be developed through the programme (where hopefully a strong sense of team has been built) and beyond.
- Children and young people will benefit from the opportunity to articulate their learning

with others, whether their peers or adults. As well as enabling them to develop further skills, this process affirms them, and their learning and achievement as something hugely positive.

Opportunities and Support for Adults

Many of the principles outlined in the section above will also be relevant when working with adults in the school community or in a teacher education setting.

As well as application within their broader life experience in general, it is likely that their participation in the programme is intended to have specific reference to their interaction with children and young people in the school and related settings. With this in mind, some additional forms of support beyond the programme could include:

- resources which will enable them to translate their experience as a participant into the development of programmes and the facilitation of similar work with children and / or young people;
- opportunities (through supervision meetings, follow-up sessions, etc.) to reflect on this facilitation, particularly in the early stages;
- opportunities to reflect on occasions when they have had to put their training into practice in responding to specific incidents in the classroom, the playground, etc.;
- opportunities to share their learning with other adults, for example, teachers and other staff in their own school or in other schools, governors, parents, etc.;
- further training and development opportunities which will enhance their learning and confidence.

7.1

**Working in Partnership:
The School in the Community****Questions for Reflection**

Have I thoroughly considered the broader context of the programme / module which I am planning?

Have I built in sufficient time for personal reflection, evaluation and closure?

Are there likely to be physical and emotional safety issues arising from this programme?

What support and follow-up will be useful and possible beyond the programme? For example:

- *What handouts and resources can I provide?*
- *Is there scope within my time-frame for follow-up sessions?*
- *What opportunities do I have to find out informally how people are doing (for example, at the end of a class or staff meeting)?*
- *How can I ensure that future programmes for this group build on the current learning?*
- *What other appropriate external training / development opportunities can I suggest?*

Who might I need to work with to develop these options effectively?

Will this person / these people be working directly with children and / or young people? If so, what Child Protection forms need to be completed?

It can sometimes seem that schools are expected to do everything, and this can be an enormous pressure within the restrictions of the weekly timetable, the demands of the curriculum, curricular changes, etc. It is important to remember that schools are situated within communities and there are likely to be rich human and physical resources within the local and wider community which can support the work within a programme and beyond it.

Building partnerships with, for example:

- *youth workers;*
- *community projects and residents' groups;*
- *other schools and further education colleges;*
- *churches and other faith centres;*
- *the local Council;*
- *Health and Social Services Trusts;*
- *local businesses and other workplaces;*
- *homes for elderly people;*
- *the police and fire services;*
- *local charities or voluntary organisations;*
- *cultural centres and agencies, including museums, galleries, etc.;*
- *local libraries;*
- *sports centres and facilities;*

will provide the school with a valuable pool of experience and expertise across a whole range of issues and practice, and may be useful within a particular programme and beyond it.



Some specific examples might include:

- a local community project or residents' group which is able to provide teachers who live outside the area with some insight into issues affecting the local community;
- local youth workers offering to run a linked programme in conjunction with, or as a follow-up to, the programme you are running within the school setting;
- local churches and other faith centres hosting sessions as a follow-up to a school-based programme exploring themes such as diversity, sectarianism, etc.;
- older people within the community working with children and young people to help them build their knowledge and understanding of the development and changes within their local community over the past century;
- local businesses and / or charities and voluntary organisations providing people with opportunities to put their learning into practice, for example, giving teachers and others the opportunity to work within a youth work setting, or supporting young people developing an action project as part of Local and Global Citizenship;
- the school and individuals within it using local shops, businesses and services.

The school can similarly be a resource to the community in which it is situated. The time taken to build these partnerships will be a valuable investment, not least because, within and outside the school, it will increase people's understanding of the school as a part of the community. The positive relationships and experiences which form through these partnerships will enable children, young people and adults to connect with the community in new ways, becoming more aware of the richness and diversity within it and of the opinions and perceptions held of the school.



Questions for Reflection

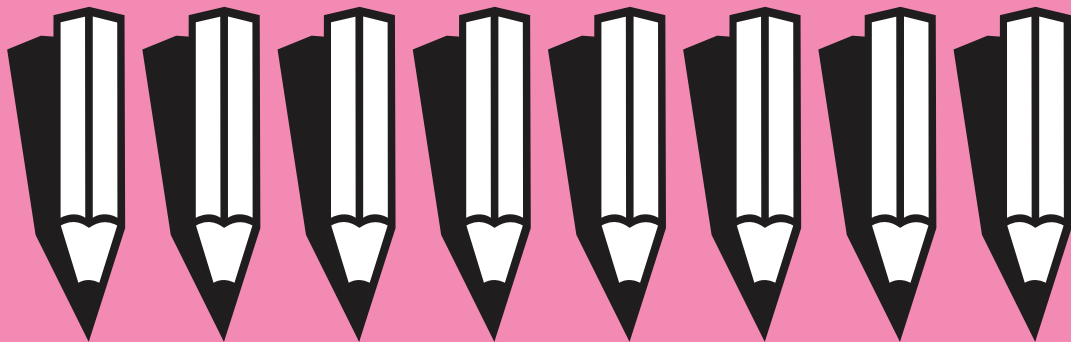
What range of partnerships can the school as a whole and I in particular build within the local community?

What opportunities are there for members of the local community to contribute to the curriculum and to school life in general?

Is there a regularly updated resources and contacts list that is accessible for everyone in the school?


Is everyone, including pupils, aware of the community resources available to them?

In what ways can the school also serve the community, so that the partnership works both ways? For example, allowing groups within the local community to book facilities within the school, such as the computer suite, playing fields, assembly hall, gym.





resources and information



Appendix One: Resource List

Background Resources

- CCEA (1997)
***Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage:
Cross-Curricular Guidance Materials***
Belfast, CCEA
- Department of Education Circular (1999 / 10)
Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection
- Department of Education (2003)
***Review of the Schools
Community Relations Programme***
Bangor, DENI
- Equality Commission (2004)
***Equality Awareness in Teacher
Education and Training in Northern Ireland***
Belfast, Equality Commission
- Smith, A. and Robinson, A. (1996)
EMU: The Initial Statutory Years
Coleraine, University of Ulster
- Volunteer Development Agency (2000)
***Our Duty to Care: Principles of Good Practice
for the Protection of Children and Young People***
Belfast, VDA

Whole School Approaches

- Baginsky, M. and Hannam, D.
***The Schools Councils.
The Views of Students and Teachers***
London, NSPCC
- Booth, T. et al. (2000)
***Index for Inclusion: Developing
Learning and Participation in Schools***
Bristol, CSIE
- Burns, S. and Lamont, G. (1995)
Values and Visions
London, Hodder & Stoughton
- Department of Education (2001)
***Pastoral Care in Schools:
Promoting Positive Behaviour***
Bangor, Department of Education
- Eyben, K., Morrow, D. and Wilson, D. (2003)
***A Framework for Organisational
Learning and Change***
Coleraine, Future Ways
- Furlong, C. and Monahan, L. (2000)
School Culture and Ethos: Cracking the Code
Marino Institute of Education

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Leadbetter, J. (1999)
 'The Inclusive Classroom: Taking Account of
 the Individual,' in Leadbetter, J. et al.

Applying Psychology in the Classroom
 London, David Fulton Publishing

Mitchell, P. (2002)
**Focus on Bullying: Guidance and Resources
 for Post-Primary Schools**
 Belfast, Save the Children

Senge, P. et al. (2000)
Schools That Learn
 London, Nicholas Brealey Publishing

Sutton, F. (ed.) (1999)
The School Council: A Children's Guide
 London, Save the Children

Taylor, M.J. (1998)
Values Education and Values in Education
 London, Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Tyrell, J. (2002)
Peer Mediation: A Process for Primary Schools
 London, Souvenir Press

Groupwork and Facilitation

Benson, J. (1997)
Working More Creatively with Groups
 London, Routledge

Kindred, M. (1995)
Once Upon a Group
 London, Roy Allen Print Ltd

Prendiville, P. (1995)
**Developing Facilitation Skills:
 A Handbook for Group Facilitators**
 Dublin, Combat Poverty Agency

Skinner, S. (1992)
Training and How Not to Panic
 Halifax, Community Development Training Unit

Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Skills Development

Gardner, H. (1993, 2nd Edition)
**Frames of Mind:
 The Theory of Multiple Intelligences**
 London, Fontana Press

Ginnis, P. (2002)
**The Teacher's Toolkit: Raise Classroom
 Achievement with Strategies for Every Learner**
 Carmarthen, Crown House Publishing

Goleman, D. (1996)
**Emotional Intelligence:
 Why It Can Matter More Than IQ**
 London, Bloomsbury Publishing

Hall, E. (2002)
Let's Be Friends: Friendship Skills in Year 3
 Belfast, The Churches' Peace
 Education Programme

Montgomery, A. and Birthistle, U. (2001)
**Primary Values: A literacy based resource
 to support the Personal Development
 Programme in primary schools**
 Belfast, CCEA

Mosley, J. and Gillibrand, E. (2001)
**Personal Power: How to Fulfil Your Private
 and Professional Life**
 Trowbridge, Positive Press

Popov, L.K. (2000)
**The Virtues Project Educator's Guide:
 Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character**
 Torrance CA, Jalmar Press

Schilling, D. (1996)
**50 Activities for Teaching Emotional
 Intelligence (Level II: Middle School)**
 Torrance CA, Innerchoice Publishing

Thompson, H. and Maguire, S. (2002)
Mind Your Head!
Get to Know Your Brain and How to Learn
 Antrim, NEELB

Whitehouse, E. and Pudney, W. (1996)
A Volcano in My Tummy: Helping Children to Handle Anger, Gabriola Island
 Canada, New Society Publisher

Exploring Diversity

BAA / Nottingham Project
Teaching Through Controversial Issues
 Nottingham, BAA

CCEA (2001)
Interlinks: Supporting intercultural education at Key Stage 2 – A CD-Rom for PC and Macintosh
 Belfast, CCEA

Community Relations Council (2004)
A Good Relations Framework
 Belfast, CRC

Connolly, P. (1999)
Community Relations Work with Preschool Children
 Belfast, CRC

Connolly, P. (2002)
Fair Play: Talking with Children about Prejudice & Discrimination
 Belfast, Barnardo's / Save the Children

Connolly, P., Smith, S. and Kelly, B. (2002)
Too Young to Notice?
The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 Year Olds in Northern Ireland
 Belfast, Community Relations Council

Council of Europe (2000)
Intercultural Learning
 Strasbourg, Council of Europe and European Commission

Liechty, J. and Clegg, C. (2001)
Moving Beyond Sectarianism: Religion, Conflict and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland
 Dublin, Columba Press

Murphy, K. (1999)
A Companion to An Ulster Wean's A – Z
 Belfast, Community Relations Council

Naylor, Y. (2001)
Moving Beyond Sectarianism: A Resource for Young Adults, Youth and Schools
 Belfast, Irish School of Ecumenics

Naylor, Y. (2003)
Who We Are – Dealing With Difference: A resource for children and young people 9–14
 Belfast, Irish School of Ecumenics

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (2002)
The Anti-Bias Curriculum
 Belfast, NICIE

NUS-USI (2000)
Promoting and Managing Diversity in Tertiary Education: A guide to implementing community relations strategies on campus in Northern Ireland
 Belfast, NUS-USI Northern Ireland Student Centre

Richardson, N. (2001)
Making Rainbows: Creative Ideas for Exploring and Celebrating Differences (Key Stage 2)
 Belfast, Enelar Publications

Richardson, N. (ed.) (2002)
A Handbook of Faiths: A Brief Introduction to Faith Communities in Northern Ireland
 Belfast, Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum

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Sands, C. (2001)
**Moving Beyond Sectarianism:
 A Resource for Adult Education**
 Belfast, Irish School of Ecumenics

Solomon, R. P. (1995)
**'Beyond Prescriptive Pedagogy: Teacher
 In-Service Education for Cultural Diversity'**
 in *Journal of Teacher Education*, 46(4)

Williams, T., McGovern, M. and Curran, C. (2001)
Creating Community
 Belfast, The Corrymeela Community

Exploring Conflict

BBC Northern Ireland
**A State Apart: Northern Ireland –
 An Interactive Chronicle of the Conflict**
 (CD-Rom)

Burrows, R. and Keenan, B. (2004)
'We'll never be the same'
**Learning with children, parents and
 communities through ongoing political
 conflict and trauma: a resource**
 Belfast, Barnardo's

Connolly, P. and Healy, J. (2004)
**Children and the Conflict in Northern
 Ireland: The Experiences and Perspectives
 of 3–11 Year Olds**
 Belfast, OFMDFM Research Branch

Fisher, R., Ury, W. and Patton, B. (1992)
**'Getting to Yes.
 Negotiating an agreement without giving in'**
 Random House Business Books

Fitzduff, M. (1999)
**Community Conflict Skills:
 A handbook for groupwork**
 Belfast, Community Relations Council

Hopkins, B.
www.transformingconflict.org

Leitch, R. and Kilpatrick, R. (1999)
Inside the Gate: Schools and the Troubles
 Belfast, Save the Children

McLaughlin, M. and Regan, C. (2000)
**A Place Apart? Exploring Conflict, Peace and
 Reconciliation: The Case of Northern Ireland**
 Glencree, The Glencree Centre for Reconciliation

Morrow, D. and Wilson, D. (1996)
**Ways Out of Conflict:
 Resources for Community Relations Work**
 Coleraine, Understanding Conflict Trust

**1916: Lest We Forget -
 The Symbols CD-Rom Interactive Experience**
 Derry / Londonderry, The Nerve Centre

Pocock, M. (2001)
**Creative Force: Arts-based exercises for work
 with young people around issues of violence**
 London, Save the Children

Smyth, M. et al. (2004)
**The Impact of the Political Conflict
 on Children in Northern Ireland**
 Belfast, Institute for Conflict Research

Circle Time

Cowling, A. and Vine, P. (2003)
**Bridging the Circle:
 Transition Through Quality Circle Time**
 Trowbridge, Positive Press

Davies, G. (ed.) (1999)
**Six Years of Circle Time:
 A Curriculum for Key Stages 1 & 2**
 Bristol, Lucky Duck Publishing

Mosley, J. (2000)
More Quality Circle Time: Evaluating your practice and developing creativity within the Whole School Quality Circle Time model
 Wisbech, LDA

Mosley, J. (2000)
Quality Circle Time in the Primary Classroom
 Wisbech, LDA

Mosley, J. (2000)
Turn Your School Round
 Wisbech, LDA

Mosley, J. and Sonnet, H. (2001)
Here We Go Round: Quality Circle Time for 3-5 Year Olds
 Trowbridge, Positive Press

Mosley, J. and Tew, M. (1999)
Quality Circle Time in the Secondary School
 London, David Fulton Publishing

Activity-based Resources

Craig, C. et al. (2002)
Different Tracks Experiential Learning: A Practical Resource Guide for Community Relations Work
 Belfast, The Corrymeela Community

Smith, A. and Call, N. (2001)
ALPS Approach Resource Book, London
 Network Education Press

Tyrell, J., Hartop, B. and Farrell, S. (1999)
EMU: The Games Book
 Derry / Londonderry, Positive Ethos Trust

Human Rights and Citizenship

Advisory Group on Citizenship (1998)
Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools
 London, QCA

Amnesty International (2002)
Learning About Human Rights Through Citizenship (Key Stage 3+)
 London, Amnesty International

Brander, P. et al. (2002)
A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People
 Strasbourg, Council of Europe

BBC Worldwide (2000)
Study Ireland: Citizenship
 (video resource for 11 – 14 year olds)

Britten, F. (2000)
Active Citizenship: A Teaching Toolkit
 London, Hodder & Stoughton

Brown, M. and Durie, D. (2000)
Local Citizen, Global Citizen: Activities for teaching citizenship and personal-social development for use with 8 to 12 year olds
 London, Christian Aid

Burca, U. and Jeffers, G. (1998)
Connected: Civic, Social and Political Education for First Year
 Dublin, The Educational Company of Ireland

Burca, U. and Jeffers, G. (1999)
Connected: Civic, Social and Political Education for Second & Third Year
 Dublin, The Educational Company of Ireland

CCEA (2003)
Local and Global Citizenship: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools
 Belfast, CCEA

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Cuthbert, C. (2001)

**Exploring Our World:
Investigating Issues of Interdependence and
Social Justice in the 21st Century**
Belfast, One World Centre

4Learning (2001)

**Sarah and the Whammi: Early Learning
For pre-school and 4–6 year olds**
(video)

4Learning (2002)

**Using Sarah and the Whammi:
Teachers' Programme**
(video)

Garlake, T. and Pocock, M. (2000)

**Partners in Rights: Creative activities exploring
rights and citizenship for 7–11 year olds**
London, Save the Children

Northern Ireland Human Rights
Commission (2000)

**Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland:
A Training Manual**
Belfast, NIHRC

QCA (2001)

**Citizenship: A Scheme of Work for
Key Stage 3**
London, QCA

Taylor, M. (2002)

**The European Convention on Human
Rights: Starting Points for Teachers**
Strasbourg, Council of Europe

Walton, J. (1993)

**It's Not Fair: A Handbook on
World Development for Youth Groups**
London, Christian Aid

Youth Work Approaches

Curriculum Development Unit (2003)

Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice
Antrim, Youth Work N.I. Curriculum
Development Unit

JEDI Practice Group (2002)

**A Framework for Reflection in Practice:
Guidelines for embedding EDI principles
in youth work practice**
Belfast, JEDI

Evaluation

Department of Education's Education and
Training Inspectorate

**Together Towards Improvement and
Progress for Evaluation**
Bangor, ETI

Greenaway, R. (1990)

More Than Activities
Glasgow, Save the Children

Further resources and links
are available from:

www.nicie.org.uk

www.corrymeela.org



Appendix Two: Whole School Audit

This general audit¹ needs to be adapted to the particular context of the individual school, which may mean adding, changing or omitting certain questions from the sample outlines over the following pages.

The questions can be changed into questionnaire format appropriate to particular groupings (for example, teachers, other staff, pupils, parents, and governors). In the questionnaire format, it can be more useful to frame the questions around 'what do you think' to elicit personal responses and views. It is also important to ensure that the language used is appropriate for the target grouping, for example, avoiding jargon / abbreviations, using a few questions with picture-based responses for younger children, etc. Too many questions can put people off – so select a number of key questions (or write alternatives) for each section, rather than including all of them.

In both the questionnaire and general audit format it is important to provide appropriate practical and / or anecdotal (avoiding use of names, etc. to maintain confidentiality) evidence to support the answers. The answers and evidence will provide the baseline from which you can develop your action plan for achieving your vision goals.

¹ Some questions adapted from Booth, T. et al., *Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools*, Bristol, CSIE.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO



Sample Outline: Whole School Audit

Leadership: Management Structures and Decision-making Processes

WITHIN THE STAFF TEAM

How many staff² make up the whole staff team?

Describe the leadership / management structures within the school.

Is it a priority of the school to have a diverse leadership team?

Are staff aware of the priorities of the school development plan?

Are staff given opportunities to be involved in contributing to the school development plan?

Do staff feel that they are sufficiently involved in school decision-making?

How are decisions communicated to the whole staff team?

What support is available to staff through the management structures, for example, in terms of supervision, in responding to challenging behaviour or incidents, etc.?

What structural support is available to the leadership / senior management team?

Are staff involved in the development of the school policies?

Does the leadership of the school encourage staff to use their full expertise, skills and creativity?

How is in-service training decided on, delivered and managed?

Are there sufficient staff meetings?

Are support staff invited to attend relevant meetings?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Is there wide participation in staff meetings?
Do all staff feel comfortable to contribute?

Do staff feel that their contribution is valued,
irrespective of their position in the school?

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Do staff understand the role and
responsibilities of governors?

Do governors share in-service training
opportunities with staff?

Do governors and staff work well together?

Do governors and staff agree about what
governors can contribute to the school?

Do governors and staff have a shared
commitment to the school's vision and
values, and support each other in their work?

Internal Relationships: Pupils, Staff and Parents / Carers

PUPILS AND STAFF

Do staff treat all pupils with respect, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, etc.?

Do pupils treat all staff with respect, regardless of their position?

Do staff attempt to counter negative views of and derogatory comments about pupils by both pupils and other staff?

Do staff promote equality of opportunity for all pupils?

Do staff treat all pupils with fairness, regardless of background, abilities, etc.?

Is there a forum for pupils to express views and to be involved in school decision-making?

Do pupils' opinions and ideas make a real difference to the school?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Do staff see the personal and cultural diversity of pupils as a rich context for learning?

WITHIN THE STAFF TEAM

Do staff treat each other with respect, regardless of their position?

Do staff feel comfortable discussing challenges and dilemmas with colleagues?

Do staff recognise how their behaviour and interactions are a model for pupils?

Do staff know whom to turn to if there is a problem?

Do staff recognise the richness of their own diverse backgrounds, skills and qualities?

Do all staff have structured opportunities for collaborative working and reflection?

Do all staff take responsibility for trying to make the school more inclusive?

Do staff demonstrate effective conflict resolution skills with pupils, colleagues and others?

Is the staffroom a welcoming and comfortable place for all staff?

STAFF AND PARENTS / CARERS

Are parents / carers made to feel welcome in the school?

Do staff and parents / carers treat each other with respect?

Do staff encourage the involvement of all parents / carers in their children's learning?

Do parents / carers take an active part in their children's learning? Are they clear about what they can do to support their children's learning at home?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Are efforts made to overcome any barriers
there may be to parents' / carers' involvement
in their children's learning?

Is there good communication between staff
and parents / carers?

What opportunities are there for parents /
carers to consult teachers about their
children's learning?

Are parents / carers well informed about
school policies and practices?

Are parents / carers involved or consulted in
school decision-making?

Are parents' / carers' skills and knowledge
utilised within the school?

Is there a Parents' / Carers' Group or Parents'
/ Carers'-Teachers Association?

BETWEEN PUPILS

Do pupils have good self-esteem?

Do pupils treat each other with respect
regardless of background, ability, etc.?

Do pupils appreciate the achievements of
others, recognising that different people
have different starting points?

Do pupils help and support each other, not just
those in their immediate friendship circle?

Do pupils work well together on group /
team activities?

Do pupils demonstrate effective conflict
resolution skills?

Is bullying being minimised among pupils?

Are there peer (pupil – pupil) mentoring or
mediation programmes within the school?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

School Policies

PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY ACROSS POLICIES

How does the school attempt to minimise all institutional prejudice and discrimination?

How do policies explicitly contribute to and support anti-discriminatory practice?

Are policies written in inclusive language?

Do policies and practice ensure that minority groups in the school do not experience prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination or exclusion?

Do staff avoid stereotyping and discrimination in choosing pupils for tasks, roles in school productions, etc.?

Is it recognised that individuals have multiple dimensions of identity, and that within a particular grouping individuals will have different beliefs, attitudes and experiences?

Are policies developed in ways which overcome barriers to participation and learning?

Is the school addressing aspects of physical accessibility throughout its buildings and grounds?

STAFFING POLICIES

Does the composition of the staff team reflect the communities in the school's locality?

Do the management posts reflect the balance of genders and backgrounds of staff in the school?

Is a commitment to the values of inclusivity, respect for diversity, enabling participation and open communication regarded as an essential criterion for the appointment of staff?

Do all appointments and promotions procedures demonstrate fairness and transparency?

Are strategies in place to develop a sense of team among the staff, particularly with regard to welcoming new members?

How democratic are the policy development processes within the school?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

**PASTORAL / LEARNING SUPPORT / POSITIVE
BEHAVIOUR POLICIES**

Are pupils, parents / carers and others consulted
in developing these and other policies?

Do pupils know who to go to if they have a
particular difficulty? Do they feel comfortable
to do this?

Is support for pupils who experience barriers
to learning and participation seen as a
responsibility of all members of staff?

Do all staff receive training and support in
responding to pupils who may approach
them because they are troubled about
something within or outside school?

Is there a pro-active approach to bullying
attitudes, language and behaviour?

Do all staff receive training and support in
challenging sectarianism, racism, sexism,
homophobia and other forms of prejudice
and bullying?

Are relational and restorative approaches
used to respond to behavioural issues?

Are pupils involved in developing school /
classroom rules as a matter of policy?

Are there clear reward, warning and sanction
systems, which enable pupils to be clear about
the likely consequences of their behaviour?

Are there clear procedures in place to respond
to the extremes of challenging behaviour?

What support structures are there for
individual staff members who have to
respond to persistent challenging behaviour?

In what ways are pupils positively involved in
overcoming behavioural issues and disaffection?

Once a behavioural issue has been addressed,
do pupils experience 'forgiveness' and the
freedom to start with a 'clean slate'?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Teaching and Learning Approaches

What does the school understand 'learning' to consist of?

How does the school understand itself as an inclusive learning community?

Are there opportunities for everyone in the school to learn and develop, and to make informed choices with regard to their learning needs and opportunities?

Do teaching approaches within the school reflect a commitment to inclusion, respect for diversity, enabling participation, and open communication?

Does the school provide support for pupils for whom English is not their first language?

How does the school value and give affirmation to people in the diversity of their intelligences, skills and achievements?

How are opportunities created for everyone to learn effectively and to experience success?

Are all pupils and staff encouraged to have high aspirations about their learning?

Are people encouraged to view mistakes / failures as positive learning opportunities?

How are opportunities created for people to be co-learners, learning from and with each other?

Where pupils have areas of particular skill and experience, are they encouraged to share these with their peers and also with staff?

Are there opportunities for learning and relational skills development for all the different groupings within the school community?

Do staff feel confident and supported to explore challenging or controversial themes with pupils, colleagues and others?

Are issues of prejudice and conflict openly, respectfully and constructively discussed?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

What opportunities are there for self and team evaluation?

Are there positive relationships in place so that people are able to give each other constructive feedback and learning support?

Other Working Practices

CLASSROOM AND CURRICULUM ISSUES

Do staff members avoid classist, sexist, racist, disabilist or homophobic and other forms of discriminatory remarks and thereby act as positive role models?

Are pupils encouraged to work with others who are different from themselves in terms of background, gender, impairment and ethnicity?

Does the curriculum seek to develop an understanding of differences of background, culture, ethnicity, gender, impairment, sexual orientation and religion?

Is stereotyping questioned in curriculum material and during classroom discussion and after school activities?

Is there a range of assessments used that allow all pupils to display their skills?

Do teachers share in planning schemes of work for lessons and homework?

Do teachers and classroom assistants share in working with individuals, groups and the whole class?

Are learning support assistants involved in curriculum planning and review?

Do teachers welcome comments from colleagues?

Do teachers share their attention equitably, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, class and culture?

Do all pupils feel fairly treated?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE) PROVISION

Is RE delivered to take into consideration the diversity of faiths?

Are world faiths celebrated within the school?

If the school has a Christian ethos is it inclusive for non-Christians?

What festivals / holy days do you celebrate in the school calendar?

Are key milestones in individual pupil's spiritual development marked by the school community?

Are religious symbols displayed in the classroom and school building?

Are the religious symbols balanced for all faiths and none?

SCHOOL DISPLAYS

How do you ensure that all the communities within the school are represented in the displays?

What is the purpose of the displays within the school?

In what way does display enhance pupils' and adults' learning?

How is diversity evident in library materials and school / classroom displays?

ASSEMBLIES

Do you have daily, weekly or monthly assemblies?

What is the purpose of assemblies in the school?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Does the whole school gather for assembly or
is it in smaller groups?

How often does a whole school assembly
take place?

What themes are selected for assemblies -
how are they selected?

Who is responsible for organising assemblies?

Are children and young people involved in
the planning and delivery?

Are guest speakers used for assemblies?
If so, how often and which organisations
are represented?

Are the speakers representative of a diverse
society?

Is attendance at assemblies voluntary
or mandatory?

Do you use prayers during assemblies?

Does the assembly have a Christian emphasis?

Is there provision for non-Christians
during assemblies?

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Is there a range of after-school activities?

Is transport made available to enable those
who have far to travel?

Are there opportunities for boys and girls to
take part in single sex activities?

Are pupils discouraged from monopolising
the play areas with, for example, football?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Are pupils who get chosen to represent the school representative of the diversity of the school?

Do sports days include activities in which everyone can take part irrespective of skill level, etc.?

What clubs, societies, charity work does the school support? How are they chosen - are they balanced?

Are religious dietary requirements taken into consideration in the planning and preparation of school meals?

Relationships with the Wider Community

Is the first contact that people have with the school friendly and welcoming?

Does the school involve local communities in activities in the school?

Do members of the local community participate equally in the school regardless of their background (religious, ethnic, economic, etc.)? Is there a positive view of the school within the local community?

Are the school's entrance criteria for pupils inclusive and enabling to all children / young people within the local community, regardless of background, ability, etc.?

Do many of the staff team come from the local communities?

Does the school view the local communities as a valuable learning resource?

Is there a regularly updated record of resources in the locality that can support teaching and learning?

Do members of the local community contribute to staff development / training and to the pupils' curriculum?

Does the school have a good relationship with individuals in the local communities who can help build an understanding of community issues / events which may be impacting on pupils' needs, learning, behaviour, etc.?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX TWO

Relationships with the Wider Education Sector

Who does the school liaise with within the sector?

Is there a record of contacts maintained in the school?

Has the school discussed the impact of the developments within the education sector?

How do you see the school responding to the changes within the education sector of which it is part?

How do you see the school responding to the changes with technology?

How do you see the school adapting to political changes?

What resources does the school share with other educationalists?

How does the school represent itself to other educationalists?

What does the school foresee to be the biggest challenge in the next three years?

Does the school have relationships with other schools? Do these support the pupils and adults to learn about diversity?

How does the school relate to and work with other practitioners who work with children and young people?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX THREE



Appendix Three: Outline Circle Time Session 1 ³

THEME / TITLE:**Exploring Identity – ‘Myself’****TIME AVAILABLE:****25 minutes****AGE GROUP:****Foundation Stage / KS1 *****INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- To enable the children to explore their awareness of themselves
- To encourage the children to relate positively to each other
- To build self-esteem and respect for self and others

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:**Purpose:**

to find out more about each other and the things that are important to us

Reminder of Circle Time Rules:

We listen to each other; we are kind to each other; we have fun together. (Use written / picture posters and / or actions to help children remember.)

‘What skills am I going to be watching out for?’ (Listening / looking / speaking / thinking / concentrating – use actions / pointing together to help children remember.)

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:**Handshake Game****Purpose:**

importance of name as part of identity, communication skills, encouraging participation

One person starts by turning to the person on her / his right, shaking her / his hand and saying, ‘Hello, my name is ...’. The second replies, ‘Hello, my name is ...’. S/he then turns to the person on her / his right, and this continues right around the circle.

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

‘Something I like doing in school / at home / at the weekend is ...’

Purpose:

thinking about myself / self-reflection, responsibility for self, communication skills, encouraging participation

Resources:

talking object – e.g. a teddy

Give the children a few seconds to think about the sentence, then ask for a volunteer to start. S/he can choose which way around the circle to pass the ‘talking object’. Encourage the children to say the start of the sentence as well as completing it as this supports them in taking responsibility for their own thinking.

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

Star Badges

Purpose:

self-reflection, creativity, affirmation, communication skills

Resources:

card stars, crayons

Give each child a star cut out of cardboard, and give them five minutes to write their name (or you can do this in advance, if need be) and draw a picture of something they are good at doing. Afterwards, go around the circle, using the sentence starter such as, 'I am good at ...' to enable the children to describe their picture. You could finish with a clap for everyone.

your fingers, or tapping one finger on each hand together, then rub your hands together, then clap them slowly and not too loudly, then get louder, then pat your hands on your knees, then stamp your feet as well, as loudly as you can. Then work backwards through the sequence until the sun comes out (make a big circle shape with your hands) and everyone is completely quiet.

5 CLOSURE:

Rainstorm

Purpose:

working together, concentration skills, using up energy, bringing group to quietness at the session end

For this game, everyone needs to keep quiet and copy the leader's actions (once the children learn it, the leader does not always have to be the teacher!). Begin by clicking

6 EVALUATION / PLANNING AHEAD:

* This outline provides ideas that might be suitable for Foundation Stage / KS1 pupils. However, it needs to be adapted to suit the specific group of pupils with which you are working. For example, with a younger group, you may need a shorter session, so include fewer activities in the middle part of the session. Alternatively, you could divide this session into three to four ten minute sessions, ensuring that you have an opening and closure point with each one.



Outline Circle Time Session 2 ⁴

THEME / TITLE:

Our Local Community *

TIME AVAILABLE:

30 minutes

AGE GROUP:

KS2 **

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- *To enable the children to become more aware of their local community and how they feel about it*
- *To build respect for each other and the people who live in their community*
- *To develop awareness of difference / diversity within their local community*

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

how we feel about living / going to school in our local community, the different things we find here, what it looks like, what there is to do, the people who live here, etc.

Reminder of Circle Time Rules

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Silent Statements Mixing Up

Purpose:

gently splitting up any cliques, encouraging different people to work together, introducing the session's theme, opportunity to observe what some key interests / issues might be

When you call out a statement, everyone to whom it applies gets up and moves to another seat. They must not move to the seat on either side of them or, within that go, return to their own seat.

Start with some fun statements, moving from the visual to things that cannot be seen – do not include statements that will only apply to one person. It can also be important to finish with a more light-hearted statement.

As an alternative, you can take away a seat, and let the person left in the middle each time come up with the next statement – if s/he is stuck, s/he can say, 'everyone change places.' You cannot determine the statements, although you can give some guidance as to the theme. Also, be aware of your group – being left in the middle may put some children under too much pressure, particularly in the early stages of the academic year, and this method may be inappropriate.

Examples, where everyone:

- *wearing blue, change places*
- *who had cereal for breakfast, change places*
- *who lives near the school, change places*
- *who walks to school, change places*
- *who buys at the local shops, change places*
- *who has friends on their street, change places*
- *who likes living in this area, change places*
- *who likes fruit, change places*

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

'Something I like about living in this area is ...'

Purpose:

developing the theme, communication skills, enabling participation

Resources:

talking object – e.g. soft toy, bean bag

Give the children a few seconds to think about the sentence, then ask for a volunteer to start. S/he can choose which way around the circle to pass the 'talking object'. Encourage the children to say the start of the sentence as well as completing it.

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

Community Maps

Purpose:

exploration of theme, communication skills, reflection, decision-making

Resources:

A3 paper, crayons / pens

Small groups of approximately four pupils are asked to draw a basic map of the area where they live, marking on it any buildings, places, etc. that they have noticed. Encourage the small groups to discuss their maps, including the things they like and dislike about their area, other things that they wish were there and where they could be located, whether they think it is a friendly place to live, etc. A volunteer from each group can then feed back to the large group two important things they talked about, and / or all the maps can be spread on the floor / desks so that everyone can walk around and have a look. The teacher can

then facilitate a general discussion, possibly gathering the main points on a flipchart / whiteboard for exploration in future sessions.

5 CLOSURE:

'Electric Shock' Game

Purpose:

bringing everyone together at the end of the session, easing out of the discussion, teamwork, concentration skills

Everyone sits without speaking and holds hands (not too hard!). The teacher squeezes the hand of the person on their right, s/he passes the squeeze on, and so on right around the circle. Variations include seeing how fast the 'shock' can be passed around, passing a 'shock' in both directions so it has to cross in the middle, etc.

6 EVALUATION / PLANNING AHEAD:

* This is a theme which it would be useful to explore over a number of sessions. It could include supplementary activities such as going on a walk around the local community, taking photographs / video, exploring local history with older people who have lived in the community for a long time, looking at flags and symbols in the area, etc. It is important to note that if all pupils do not live locally, you will need to re-frame the session as the school's local community, or look at the different areas that pupils live in.

** This outline provides ideas suitable for KS2 pupils. However, it needs to be adapted to the specific group with which you are working.



Outline Circle Time Session 3 ⁵

THEME / TITLE:

Prejudice and Stereotyping *

TIME AVAILABLE:

45 minutes **

AGE GROUP:

KS3+ ***

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- To encourage empathy and respect for self and others
- To build an understanding of the terms 'prejudice', 'stereotyping' and 'discrimination'
- To explore 'real life' examples of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

sharing intended learning outcomes, encouraging everyone's participation

Reminder of Circle Time Rules

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Pattern Ball

Purpose:

introductory game to encourage the group to work together and build a sense of team, co-operation, thinking / concentration skills

Resources:

soft ball / bean bag, flipchart, pens

Everyone stands in the circle. One person begins by throwing the ball / bean bag to another person, saying her / his own name and the second person's name. The second person then throws the ball / bean bag to someone else. Once someone has received the ball, s/he then sits down which ensures that everyone gets a turn, completing the pattern. Variations can include repeating the same pattern of throwing as fast as possible (safely!), reversing the pattern, etc.

'Today we are going to begin thinking about prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. Can anyone tell me what they think any of those words mean, or give me an example of them?'

Discussion of meanings / examples, possibly noting key points on a flipchart / whiteboard.

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Mixing Up Activity: Concentric Circles

Purpose:

developing the theme, giving people the opportunity to talk about related topics on a one-to-one level before discussing them in larger groups, gently breaking up cliques, encouraging different people to work together, thinking and communication skills

Everyone gets into pairs, labelling themselves 'A' and 'B'. The As form an outer circle, facing inwards, and the Bs form an inner circle, facing their partner. All of the pairs are then given a topic to discuss, then the outer circle moves one (or more) places to their right / left, and a new topic is given. This continues for several topics, including both fun ones and ones relating to the session theme. When the pairs have finished their final topic, they will be with someone different and they sit down beside that person.

Topic examples:

- *The best film I've ever seen.*
- *Somewhere I'd really like to visit.*
- *A time I felt different from other people.*
- *An example of prejudice / stereotyping / discrimination I've seen in the media.*
- *An example of prejudice / stereotyping / discrimination I've seen or experienced.*
- *A time I was left out / laughed at, and how I felt about it.*

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

Pairs Discussion

Purpose:

to give people time to think and test ideas with a partner before sharing them in the large group, to enable people to talk about experiences they may have had without personalising them in the large group at this stage, to develop emotional literacy, particularly empathy, reflection and listening skills

Resources:

talking object – e.g. juggling ball

Short discussion in pairs about how someone might feel if they were discriminated against.

Everyone feeds back one idea to the large group: 'When someone is discriminated against, they might feel ...'

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

Collages

Purpose:

developing the theme, building understanding of the connections between prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination, teamwork, thinking and communication skills

Resources:

A3 paper, newspapers / magazines, scissors, glue, pens

Working in groups of approximately four people, give each group 10 - 15 minutes to make up a collage of images which they

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX THREE

consider to be stereotypes. They can also draw their own examples. Give each group the opportunity to report back on their collage.

This could be followed by a general discussion, considering questions such as:

- What kinds of stereotypes came up most often? (gender, race, age, etc.)
- What other kinds of stereotypes can you think of?
- Do you think these stereotypes are positive or negative? Why?
- How might stereotypes be linked to prejudice and discrimination?

5 CLOSURE:

Sentence completion

'Something I have learnt today is ...'

Purpose:

consolidating learning, reflection and evaluation, useful feedback for the teacher / facilitator – (have the intended learning outcomes been met?), encouraging participation

Resources:

talking object – e.g. soft ball / bean bag

Pattern Ball

Purpose:

bringing the group together at the end of a potentially challenging session, helping to release any tension / heightened emotions through a physical and fun activity, concentration and co-operation skills

Resources:

talking object – e.g. soft ball / bean bag

6 EVALUATION / PLANNING AHEAD:

* This theme needs to be built up within a series of Circle Time sessions, and will need to be explored over a series of sessions in order to maximise learning and reflection.

** The time available is likely to depend on the length of class periods, so the content of this session could be divided over two sessions if need be. For example, you might focus the first session purely around definitions and the second around the feelings that might go with the experiences. This will also give pupils some time between sessions to think about their own experiences in preparation for the second session.

*** This outline provides ideas that might be suitable for secondary school pupils. However, there is a big difference between Year 8 and Year 14, so it does need to be adapted to suit the specific group of pupils with which you are working.



Outline Circle Time Session 4 ⁶

THEME / TITLE:

Values and Diversity

TIME AVAILABLE:

45 minutes

AGE GROUP:

Adult *

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- *To explore the values which underpin our work in schools*
- *To explore our attitudes to difference, and how this relates to our values*
- *To consider how we express our values in practice*

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

sharing intended learning outcomes, encouraging everyone's participation

Reminder of Circle Time Rules

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Name Game

'My name is ... and I am ... (positive adjective, starting with the same letter as name)'**

Purpose:

thinking, listening and concentration skills; getting to know each other

Resources:

talking object

It can be valuable to ask for a volunteer to start, and they choose which way around the circle to pass the talking object. However, as this is the first activity, it is appropriate for the facilitator to start in order to model the response. If the group is not too big, this can be used as a fun memory game, where people have to remember the names and adjectives of everyone who has gone before – the emphasis is on helping each other come up with adjectives and to remember.

Silent Statements Mixing Up Activity

Purpose:

gently splitting up any cliques, encouraging different people to work together, introducing the session's theme, opportunity to observe what some of the key interests / issues might be

When you call out a statement, everyone to whom it applies gets up and moves to another seat. They must not move to the seat on either side of them or, within that go, return to their own seat. Start with some fun statements, moving from the visual to things that cannot be seen – do not include statements that will only apply to one person. It can also be important to finish with a more light-hearted statement. As an alternative, you can take away a seat, and let the person left in the middle each time come up with the

⁶ Adapted from a Circle Time format by Kathryn Edgar, SEELB.

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next statement – if they are stuck, they can say, ‘Everyone change places.’ However, this does mean that you cannot determine the statements, although you can give some guidance as to the theme. Equally, you need to be aware of your group – this method may put some people under too much pressure and will, therefore, not be appropriate.

For example:

- Everyone wearing red, change places
- Everyone who likes chocolate, change places
- Everyone who has been to the cinema in the last month, change places
- Everyone who thinks pupils should be involved in designing school / classroom rules, change places
- Everyone who thinks young people should be able to give feedback to a teacher after a lesson, change places
- Everyone who thinks that they have a responsibility to promote reconciliation in the school, change places
- Everyone who thinks they have a responsibility to challenge sectarian or racist comments or behaviour, change places
- Everyone who feels confident exploring controversial issues with pupils, change places
- Everyone who deliberately includes diversity issues within their lesson planning, change places
- Everyone who is looking forward to the holidays, change places

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:**Pairs Discussion****Purpose:**

to give people time to think and test ideas with a partner before sharing them in the large group, to enable people to talk about experiences they may have had without personalising them in the large group at this stage, to develop emotional literacy, particularly empathy, reflection and listening skills, to develop responsibility for self and own contribution

Resources:

talking object, flipchart / whiteboard, pens

Short discussion in pairs about some of the values which are important to me in my work in school.

Feedback to the large group, with each person sharing one value. These could be gathered on flipchart / whiteboard for future reference / discussion.

‘A value which is important to me is ...’

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

School / Classroom Scenarios

Purpose:

to encourage people to think about how their values translate into practice, sharing and checking out ideas with colleagues, self-reflection, problem-solving and communication skills

Resources:

scenario sheets

Divide the large group into groups of approximately four people (mixing teachers and non-teaching staff, if working with a whole staff team). Give the groups a list of scenarios to choose from (you will need to draw this up in advance, based on the situation in which you are working – see following sheet for examples), and / or ask them to come up with a situation which one or more of them has experienced in school of, for example, diversity or a controversial issue, prejudice or discrimination, conflict, etc.

Ask the groups to think about how they would respond to the situation in the light of their own values / the values which have been gathered on the flipchart / whiteboard. Ask them to consider whether this is what they would actually do.

Each group can then feed back to the large group, and after a group has finished others can share ideas / questions / etc.

5 CLOSURE:

Sentence Completion, for example, 'Something I have learnt today is ...'; 'Some support / training I would like (in relation to this theme) is ...'

Purpose:

consolidating learning, reflection and evaluation, useful feedback for the facilitator – (have the intended learning outcomes been met?), encouraging participation

Resources:

talking object

6 EVALUATION / PLANNING AHEAD:

* This Circle Time is aimed at staff working in schools, with some specific examples for teachers. As well as adaptations needed to suit your particular group, the content would need to be adapted slightly for work with governors, parents and others.

** Adjectives beginning with letters like 'K', 'Z', etc. can be difficult, depending on linguistic ability, and it is especially important to encourage group members to help each other with ideas. However, other introductory sentence completions could be used instead, for example, 'My name is ... and something I am good at is ...'

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX THREE

Positive Approaches to Conflict Scenarios

1 The caretaker informs you that some of the girls in your class have been picking on another girl from the class at break and lunchtimes. This bullying has included name calling, excluding her from games and pushing past her when they are going back inside. The caretaker has spoken with them but it has had little effect.

How do you respond?

2 Among a group of boys who play football together, one of them is from a Chinese background. The other boys, who all come from White Northern Irish backgrounds, use racist language which they describe as 'a bit of a laugh' between mates, claiming, 'Sure, he knows it's just a joke'.

How do you respond?

3 You work in a maintained school which has a mainly Catholic staff. You notice that when politics or religion are discussed in the staff room the two Protestant members of staff don't participate, and often find a reason to leave the room.

or

You work in a controlled school which has a mainly Protestant staff. You notice that when politics or religion are discussed in the staff room the two Catholic members of staff don't participate and often find a reason to leave the room.

How do you respond?

4 You have been developing circle time in your classroom and have done a lot of work with your pupils around respectful relationships. In the corridor, you discover another member of staff yelling at one of your pupils in front of other pupils and staff, in a way which you feel is inappropriate.

How do you respond?

5 You are running a Schools Community Relations Programme (cross-community) event with your partner school. Some of the boys turn up wearing Rangers and Celtic tops. No one had told them not to, but you are aware of tensions within the group, and this comes to a head when you find two of the boys shouting sectarian abuse at each other while some of the others 'egg them on'.

How do you respond?



Appendix Four: Exploring Controversial Issues in Early Years *

THEME / TITLE:
Exploring Diversity /
Building Positive Relationships

TIME AVAILABLE:
five sessions, 20 minutes each

AGE RANGE:
Foundation Stage / Key Stage One **

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- To explore similarities and differences within the class group and beyond
- To develop respect for self and others
- To encourage positive relationships and empathy
- To explore positive ways of responding to conflict

Session One: Making Our Classroom a Happy Place ***

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

to think about how we can make our classroom a happy place for everyone, using Circle Time rules

Reminder of Circle Time Skills:

looking, listening, speaking, thinking, concentrating

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Pass the Rain

Purpose:

concentration skills, awareness of others, co-operation and teamwork, encouraging the participation of all

Everyone holds their hands out in front of them, palms downwards, and wiggles their fingers. This is the rain. They put their hands back on their knees. The teacher / facilitator begins by wiggling her / his fingers and pointing them in the direction of the person on her / his right / left. This person wiggles her / his fingers in response, then turns to the person on her / his other side and 'passes the rain' on to her / him, continuing the whole way around the circle. As the children become familiar with the game, you can ask for a volunteer to start, rather than always beginning yourself.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION

'I feel happy when ...'

Purpose:

self-reflection, talking and listening skills, developing confidence, encouraging the participation of all

Resources:

talking object

Then talk together about the different rules they might need on their island so that everyone could enjoy it.

What similar rules might they need so that everyone can be happy in our classroom?

These can then be written / drawn on a poster, or represented by actions so that the children can be reminded of these when need be; for example, at the start of Circle Time sessions.

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:**'Ideal Island' activity****Purpose:**

co-operation and teamwork, creative thinking, decision-making, self-reflection, empathy

Resources:

A3 paper, crayons

Draw an outline of an island. Tell the children that you want them to imagine that they have all been shipwrecked together on this island (You can make a story of this, or do a guided meditation, if appropriate and not too scary!) and they are to imagine what the island is like - what would they really like to have on the island? What would make it a really special place? What might they need on the island? Either draw on, or invite different children who come up with ideas to draw on, the various things which are suggested.

If it is appropriate, divide the children into small groups of approximately four people, and get them to draw their own maps. They can then explain them to the rest of the group, followed by the rules discussions.

5 CLOSURE:**Pass the Smile****Purpose:**

awareness of each other, concentration skills, closing on a positive note

The teacher begins by turning to the person on her / his right / left and smiling at her / him, encouraging her / him to smile in response. S/he then turns to the person on the other side of her / him and smiles at her / him, and so it continues right around the circle. As the children become familiar with the game in future sessions, invite a volunteer to start off, instead of always beginning yourself.

Session Two: Diversity in Our Classroom

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

think about things which are the same / different about people in our class

Reminder of Classroom and Circle Time Rules / Skills

Divide the children into pairs and ask them to find out two things that are the same about them and two things that are different.

Each pair then feeds back to the circle with one child saying the things that are the same, and the other saying the things that are different. This can be broadened into a more general discussion about the diversity in the class.

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Pass the Rain

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If you have more time, the children could draw pictures of the things that are the same and different, and use the pictures as the basis for their feedback to the circle.

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

'Something I like about me is ...'

Purpose:

self-reflection, talking and listening skills, developing confidence, encouraging the participation of all

3 CLOSURE:

Touch Fingers

Purpose:

awareness of each other, concentration skills, closing on a positive and calm note

Everyone sits quietly and holds out their pointer / index finger. The teacher / facilitator touches the end of her / his left index finger to the right index finger of the person on her / his right. S/he then touches her / his left index finger to the right index finger of the person on her / his right, and so on around the circle.

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

Pairs Work ****

Purpose:

self-reflection, getting to know each other, talking and listening skills, building confidence in participation

Again, as the children become familiar with the game, you can ask for a volunteer to start off rather than always beginning yourself.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

Session Three: What Makes a Good Friend?

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

think about the things that make a good friend, what do your friends do that make you feel happy, what do you do to make your friends happy?

**Reminder of Classroom
and Circle Time Rules / Skills**

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

'Simon Says'

Purpose:

concentration skills, physical co-ordination, having fun together (ice-breaker)

The teacher / facilitator calls out instructions, for example, 'Simon says, 'Touch your nose'', 'Simon says, 'Stand up,' etc. If the instruction does not have 'Simon says' at the start, the children should not copy it. Don't put people out if they get it wrong: the emphasis is on having fun together as friends (as well as developing listening and concentration skills).

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

'I am a good friend when I ...'

Purpose:

self-reflection, empathy, talking and listening skills, developing vocabulary around the theme, encouraging the participation of all

Resources:

individual cards, flipchart

If the children are able to read, write these ideas down on a flipchart page or on individual

cards in the middle of the circle as the children suggest them so that they can see all of the key words. Depending on the range of ideas which have been suggested, you may want to follow this up with a more general discussion.

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

'Good Friends' Figures

Purpose:

reinforcing new friendship vocabulary, creativity, empathy, talking and listening skills

Resources:

A4 paper, crayons / pens, scissors

Depending on time and age group, either make in advance or during the session, concertina figures joined at the arms. (For example, fold a piece of A4 paper in four, like a fan. Draw a figure on the first section, with the arms going to the edge. When you cut around it and unfold the paper, you should have four figures 'holding hands'.) Give each child a set of figures (or get them to make their own) and give them crayons to create four happy friends. If they are able to, they can write one of the key words of what makes a good friend on each figure.

Each child can then show their figures to the rest of the circle, maybe highlighting one key word, or saying why the friends are happy.

5 CLOSURE:

Rainstorm

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Session Four: Feeling Left Out

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

what it feels like when we are left out or when someone laughs at us, perhaps because we are different from others or because they think we are different

Reminder of Classroom and Circle Time Rules / Skills

laughed at / left out of a game by another. Ask the children, for example:

- *How does the puppet who is left out / laughed at feel?*
- *How does the other puppet feel?*
- *How might the two puppets sort it out / make friends again?*
- *If they find this difficult, who might be able to help?*

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Touch Fingers

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If you have more time, the children could make their own puppets (for example, finger puppets, stick puppets, wooden spoon puppets, etc.) and make up their own stories in small groups, which they could then perform for the rest of the class. This could then be followed by a discussion based on questions similar to those above.

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

'Today I feel ... because ...'

Purpose:

self-reflection, talking and listening skills, developing confidence, encouraging the participation of all, developing a vocabulary around the theme

5 CLOSURE:

Mexican Wave in the circle

Purpose:

awareness of each other, co-operation and teamwork, concentration skills, closing on a positive note

4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

Using Puppets

Purpose:

self-reflection, empathy, problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, conflict resolution skills

Resources:

puppets

Use hand puppets to create a story about a situation where one of the puppets is

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

Session Five: Affirmation *****

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION:

Purpose:

to think back over the things we have learnt over the past few weeks in Circle Time

**Reminder of Classroom
and Circle Time Rules / Skills**

Elmer's elephant friends – give them a piece of paper and get them to draw their elephant with the colourful design they would wear on the special Elmer day. They can then show their picture to the rest of the group, and the pictures can be displayed afterwards.

2 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

'Simon Says'

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5 CLOSURE:

Sentence completion

'Something important I have learnt is ...'

Purpose:

self-reflection, evaluation, assimilation
learning, talking and listening skills

3 SENTENCE COMPLETION:

'Something I enjoyed doing (in the last four sessions) was ...'

Purpose:

self-reflection, talking and listening skills,
developing confidence, encouraging the
participation of all, evaluation

'Electric Shock'

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4 DISCUSSION FORUM / SHARING MORE INFORMATION:

Elmer ⁷

Purpose:

self and group reflection, assimilating
learning, affirmation, creativity

Resources:

Elmer book

Read the story, Elmer, and use it to draw out from the children some of the key things they have learnt over the past four sessions about diversity / differences and building positive relationships / being a good friend. Get each child to imagine they are one of

* This series of sessions uses Circle Time as its structure. For information on the purpose and process of Circle Time, please see Section Five (Working in a Circle).

** As this is a general outline, it will need to be adapted to the specific age group with which you are working, and to the particular needs of the group. Sessions may need to be shortened or lengthened, activities may need to be adjusted, etc. However, it is always important to include sufficient time for introduction and closure, and to 'warm up' to more challenging topics. Some activities may need to be simplified or an alternative chosen for Foundation Stage groups.

*** The Circle Time sample outline given for Foundation Stage / KS1 (page 212) could be used as an additional session after this introductory session.

**** Ideally, this exercise will draw out in a natural way diversity such as ethnicity, (dis)ability, etc. within the class. If these do not emerge from the children's initial ideas, try to draw them out through further discussion, not in a way which creates issues, but which affirms the value of diversity within the class, and the uniqueness of each person.

***** If you have more time, it would be valuable to begin to look at specific kinds of diversity within and beyond the classroom and in the community. As well as further Circle Times picking up these themes, you could go out for a walk in the community, invite some older people in to do a session around games that they played as children, look at other cultures and religious festivals, do some work on flags and symbols, etc.



Exploring Diversity at Key Stage Two

TIME AVAILABLE:

Four week Programme for a SCRP Link

(Schools Community Relations Programme which is administered through the Education and Library Boards funded by the Department of Education Community Relations Branch)

The programme must have clear aims and objectives related to the promotion of the community relations dimension of Education for Mutual Understanding and must have clear learning objectives which can be monitored and evaluated.

NB: Each session could last three hours but the content can be changed to accommodate the time available. The programme can also be adapted for a single class.

AGE RANGE:

KS3 (8 – 11 year olds)

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- To explore similarities and differences
- To develop respect for self and others
- To explore personal identity
- To learn about aspects of difference
- To encourage healthy relationships within the class and with the other class

PROGRAMME PROCESS:

Mixture of small group discussions / physical games and learning about each other.

Session One: Ice-breaker

This Session is to encourage co-operation and teamwork, encourage those within the group to get to know each other on a personal level, to learn names, etc.

1 INTRODUCTORY GAME / ACTIVITY:

Parachute Games

Purpose:

to mix the group and to encourage individuals to come out of friendship groups

Resources

parachute

Time:

20 – 25 minutes

The group holds the parachute with both hands at chest height. A person will be asked to state something that is true about her / himself, for example, 'I am wearing black shoes', or 'I watch Eastenders'. If that statement is true for other people in the group, they walk under the parachute and go directly opposite to where they are standing.

Debrief:

The game is designed to help participants think about how people in the room can be very different or similar to themselves.

It is important to stress that it is OK to be different and that this is what can make life more interesting and healthy.

Human Bingo

Purpose:

to encourage participants to make contact with as many people as they can in a limited time

Resources:

human bingo sheets, pens

Time:

20 minutes

Participants are given a sheet with 15 boxes. In each box is a statement such as 'Find someone who goes to a different school than you', 'Find someone who plays football' etc. Participants have to get the signature of the person for which the statement is true. They are not allowed to have anyone's signature more than once, so they have to find 15 different people if they are to fill their sheet. Be aware of group members who may be shy or have difficulty writing and help them if necessary.

Debrief:

Encouraging people to think about difference and commonalities. Acknowledge that it is not always easy to talk to someone you do not know, but when you do, it can be rewarding.

Personal contracts

Purpose:

to encourage people to think about what they would like to get from the programme, what is expected from them and what they hope / expect from others in the group

Resources:

sticky shapes, card, flipchart sheets, pens etc.

Time:

20 – 30 minutes

The group will be divided into small groups of approximately four people. Everyone in the group will be given a piece of card and some brightly coloured crayons / markers. In groups of two to four they will write a rule or something important for the programme to make it fun, safe and memorable. Use different sticky shapes to decorate their contract.

The cards will be kept for the rest of the programme and displayed in the venue / classroom. The group can be asked to sign the cards they made to help them to get a sense of making and keeping a contract.

Blobs

Purpose:

to generate energy, work in small groups, teamwork and co-operation

Time:

15 minutes

The group is asked to form blobs based on a number, colour and theme called out. A 'blob' is a cluster of people touching each other. Examples: form blobs of six people, of the colour blue, of those with 'a' in their name etc.

2 SESSION EVALUATION

Sample questions for group feedback:

- Did you meet someone you didn't know?
- Would you come back?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

Session Two: Personal Identity

This aim of this sessions is to learn about others and ourselves in a positive way

Grand National

Purpose:

to have fun together, to improve concentration, to explore other means of communication, teamwork and co-operation

Time:

5 minutes

For the next five minutes everyone is a horse in the Grand National! Instructions for the leader to call out and actions for the participants to carry out are as follows:

Canter

Everyone taps their own legs lightly & slowly

Gallop

More speed tapping own legs

Left

Turn to person on left and tap their knees

Right

Turn to person on right and tap their knees

Jump

Jump out of seat like jumping a hurdle

Double jump

Same only twice in quick succession

Water jump

Jump, and hold you nose on the way down

Rickety bridge

Rattle over a bridge – with sound effects

Photo finish

Smile for camera, and say 'cheese'

Fruit Salad

Purpose:

to have fun together, appropriate competitiveness, mixing activity

Time:

10 minutes

Everyone in the group is given the name of a fruit: apple, orange or banana, etc. There is a chair less than the total number of people in the group. The person without a seat will stand in the middle and shout out a fruit. For example, when s/he shouts 'bananas' all bananas must leave their seat and run for a new one. The person left without a seat is then in the middle. Later in the game introduce 'fruit salad' - this means everyone in the group must get up and find themselves a new seat.

Rules:

You cannot get up and sit on the seat immediately to your left or right.

Health and safety:

Remind everyone to keep an eye on moving chairs, to be aware of each other and not to run so fast that it becomes unsafe.

Secret orchestra

Purpose:

to encourage teamwork and co-operation

Time:

15 – 20 minutes

The group stands in a circle and two people are taken outside the room. One person will be nominated to lead the rest of the group in performing simple actions that can be done without breaking the shape of the circle, for example, patting head, clapping hands, hopping on the spot etc. After every twenty seconds or so, the action will have to be changed by the leader. After the leader has been nominated, that person will begin leading the actions and the people outside the room will be invited back into the circle. It is the task of these two people to work out who the leader of the group is. The task of the leader is to wait until the attention of the detectives is off her / him, then change the actions - in other words s/he will be trying hard not to be caught. The task of the rest of the group is to follow the leader's actions subtly, so that the leader is not caught. The detectives have three chances to guess correctly and the game repeats as many times as appropriate.

NB. The two detectives should be encouraged to work closely together and talk about their guesses together before making them.

Same Difference:

Purpose:

to explore and acknowledge personal differences

Resources:

pens / paper

Time:

20 – 30 minutes

Pupils will be assigned into small working groups as balanced (for example, gender, ability, mix from the different schools) as possible. In these groups the pupils will have a set time (three to five minutes) to list all the things that they have in common. This can take into consideration everything about themselves, broad or specific, i.e. they are all human, in primary schools, all living in ..., etc.

They will also have the same set time to come up with all the things that make them different from each other, i.e. they may all have different birthdays, they may all have a different number of brothers / sisters etc.

Debrief:

Pupils will be encouraged to think about what they have in common. Ask about their differences: what sort of things did they come up with? Encourage the pupils to think about why these differences are important to them. Sometimes people are only encouraged to think about what they have in common but difference is really important too.

And it's OK to be different!

Get them to think about how boring life would be if everyone thought the same way, supported the same football team, was the same religion and wanted to be the same things when they grew up. Would they rather all be exactly the same or have differences from one person to the next?

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

People Jigsaws

Purpose:

personal development, self-awareness, teamwork and co-operation

Resources:

coloured card, markers / crayons

Time:

1 hour

Pupils will work in their small groups for this activity. Everyone will be given materials for this exercise including markers, crayons, coloured paper, etc.

First of all, people will be asked to pick one of their favourite colours. This will make up one quarter of their flag colour. Their name will go over this first coloured card. See diagram for clarification.

Pupils will then pick three words that describe them best, for example, friendly, patient, sporty, nice, happy, funny, etc. These should be qualities they see in themselves or that other people have pointed out to them. Instead of using the words, they have to think of a shape or an object that best describes the word.

Next, they should pick another three colours that would best go behind these words, something that they feel stands for the qualities. For example, if they feel they are friendly, maybe a bright colour like yellow or white would suit, or if they are sporty, a darker, more striking colour would be good, like red or blue. The pupils will write or stencil the words on the appropriate colour of card.

They should now have four pieces of coloured card that will make up the whole of their flag.

The flags will now hopefully represent them in some small way. They will be encouraged in their small groups to present their flags to the rest of the group and explain their shapes, colours, etc.

Debrief:

Show the group your appreciation, for taking the time to do the flags and recognise the hard work they put into the exercise. The flag helps to describe them as individuals and what they are proud of.

John (shape)

Sporty (shape)

Patient (shape)

Helpful (shape)

Session Three: Symbols

Palm trees

Purpose:

use as a 'loosening up' exercise, to get the group working as a team and using listening skills

Time:

15 minutes

The group stands in a circle. A volunteer will stand in the middle of the circle and point to someone. S/he can shout 'elephant', 'palm tree' or 'rabbit'. The person in the middle must make up the body of whichever object is called out, with the people either side making up the outer parts. For example, if 'palm tree' is called out, the person pointed to must raise her / his arms upward, and the people either side must form the branches. If they do not do the right action, the person in the middle of the object will come into the middle of the circle and nominate someone new. Try to play the game at speed, as it's a bit more fun.

Flags and Symbols

Purpose:

to explore myths and realities about flags and symbols, to explore people's feelings about flags and symbols

Resources:

flags, football jerseys etc.

Time:

30 minutes

The facilitators will present the group with the main flags of Northern Ireland / the Republic of Ireland (the Irish Tricolour, the Union Jack, the Ulster flag and possibly the Ulster provincial flag) and the European flag. You could also include Celtic, Rangers, Linfield tops, an Ulster rugby jersey and various sports supporters' scarves. The pupils will have five to ten minutes to look at the flags / symbols and discuss / write down what they feel they

already know of them. The group will get the chance to handle the flags and see them up close. After the pupils feed back their information in the bigger group, the facilitators will then spend a little more time giving some more background information on the flags, including why the specific flag colours were chosen.

Debrief:

- *What did we know about the flags?*
- *Where did we get our information from?*
- *Was our information accurate?*
- *Where can we find correct information?*
- *Where do we normally see these flags?*
- *What feelings did the flags raise for me?*

Wishing Tree

Purpose:

exploring aspirations

Resources:

willow branches, planting pots, light bulb shapes, star shapes

Time:

30 – 40 minutes

The willow branches and planting pots will make up the 'trees'. Each person will be given a cut-out of a light bulb and a star. The light bulb will have space to follow on from the sentence, 'One wish I have for my school is....' The star will have, 'If I had one wish for the future, it would be....'

Pupils will work in two mixed groups at a tree each. After filling in their cut-outs, they will go and hang them on the branch of a tree. Each school will be able to take the trees back to their class and maybe display them in their room or at the reception area of both schools. Pupils might want to share what they wrote or they can be given time to walk around the trees to read what everyone else has written.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

Session Four: Closing Activity

Spiders Web

Purpose:

to refresh group knowledge of names, to draw on the themes of teamwork and make new 'connections' within a group

Resources:

ball of string

Time:

20 minutes

The group will stand in a tight circle. The first person will be holding the beginning of a ball of string and will call out a name of someone s/he knows from the other school and something s/he likes about her / him. S/he then passes the ball of string to that individual. This person then calls out another name and says something s/he likes about that person and passes the string to her / him, the game continues until everyone in the group has had their name called out.

Debrief:

The string should make the shape of a spider's web and there are themes that can be drawn from this:

- The web is held together by hundreds of tiny silk threads and if one or two threads break, the web cannot do its job as well as it might. This relates to teamwork and everyone participating in the activities if the group is to get the most from it.
- Everything is connected in the web. Hopefully by the end of the programme people will have made new connections or friendships within the group. At the least, they will have met some people they did not know before and got to know them a little better.

Pass the hand-clap

Purpose:

to encourage teamwork and co-operation

Time:

5 minutes

The group stands in a circle. An individual will be nominated as the first person, and will start the hand-clap and they will 'pass' the clap around the group in a clockwise direction. This means that the person next to her / him claps as quickly as s/he can after the previous person. The clap must pass around the group without anyone missing her / his go, and the exercise is timed by a leader. See how fast s/he can get it down to with four to five attempts!

Evaluation

Time:

10 minutes

In small groups the individuals are asked to reflect on a number of questions such as:

- *What was useful about this programme?*
- *What would make it better for the next year group?*



Exploring Identity at Secondary Level

TIME AVAILABLE:
Four week programme

AGE RANGE:
KS3+

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES: *

- To explore the factors which shape our identity
- To reflect on how labels and judgements contribute to prejudices
- To explore and learn about prejudices

Session One

This sessions aim is to develop and prepare the group for teamwork, communication and being facilitated rather than taught

This session could be divided into two comprising forty minutes each, the natural break after paper tower exercise.

Name Game

Purpose:

exploring identity, getting to know each other, sharing personal history

Time:

10 minutes

Ask each student to say their name and what they know about their name, why they were called their name, was their name chosen for a specific individual in the family etc.

Warp Speed

Purpose:

concentration skills, teamwork and co-operation, creative problem-solving

Resources:

soft ball / bean bag

Time:

5 – 10 minutes

The group is asked to stand in a circle and to pass the ball to each person in the group shouting the name of the person the ball is being thrown to. The object of the game is for everybody to touch the ball and say the respective names in the fastest time.

Eventually someone should come up with the idea of not doing it in a circle but, for example, in a line, rolling the ball between their legs.

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION: APPENDIX FOUR

Line Up

Purpose:

team building and co-operation, non-verbal communication skills

Time:

30 – 40 minutes

The group are asked without speaking to form a line with the smallest person at one end and the tallest at the other. It is important that the group are encouraged not to speak. You can give the group several minutes to decide how they might complete the task.

Variations of this:

Ask the group to line up depending on the month they were born - so January at one end and December at the other end. Alphabetical line using the first letter of their first name. age, shoe size etc.

'And I Thought I Knew You!'

Purpose:

to allow participants to be more comfortable with disclosure, to give space to all participants to speak

Resources:

pens, paper

Time:

10 minutes

Group members are given a few minutes to write down three things about themselves they think no one in the room knows. Pieces of paper are folded, collected and re-distributed at random. A piece of paper is then read out by one of the participants and everyone tries to guess who it belongs to. Eventually the culprit identifies her / himself to the group. As participants are often quite open in this activity some closure may be required.

Paper Tower

Purpose:

team building, creative problem-solving

Resources:

newspapers, sellotape

Time:

15 – 20 minutes

The group is split into teams of three. Each group is given newspapers and sellotape and are given the instructions 'to make a free standing tower made with only paper and sellotape, and it has to be as high as possible'.

Debrief:

- *How did individuals complete the task?*
- *Who came up with the design?*
- *Was everyone involved?*
- *Were everyone's ideas heard?*
- *Was there a natural leader?*
- *How were decisions made?*

Session Two

Counting to 20

Purpose:

to encourage the group to work together as a team; to improve communication within the group

Time:

5 – 10 minutes

The group sits / stands in a circle. As a group, the aim is to count to 20. There are two rules:

- No person is allowed to speak after the person sitting either side of her / him.
- Two people cannot call out the same number at the same time.

If these rules are broken, the count restarts at one. If someone has played the game before, ask her / him not to tell the group the solutions.

Debrief:

- *How did people know when to speak?*
- *What signals were people watching for?*

Trust Exercise **

Purpose:

to explore the value of trust and to reflect on how it can be developed within the group

Resources:

blindfolds if possible

Time:

10 minutes

In pairs, one person is 'A' and the other 'B'.

OPTION ONE

A closes her / his eyes and is led around the room avoiding others and obstacles by B, placing their hands on A's shoulder. B should

reassure A about the environment. Switch so that both have had the experience. The space the group has to move around is limited, for example, you may move chairs around to make a confined space for the group to work in. *Highlight health & safety considerations!*

OPTION TWO

Again, one person is A and the other is B. A has to lead B around by hooking fingers with her / his and avoiding others and obstacles. Switch so that both have had the experience.

OPTION THREE

Again, one person is A and the other is B. A closes her / his eyes and is led about the confined space. When you shout, 'Stop,' B moves to find another partner whilst all the As keep their eyes closed. You shout, 'Stop' again and B moves again to another A. Then the exercise is repeated with the As leading and the Bs with their eyes closed.

Debrief:

- *How did it feel to be 'blind' and to have to trust another person?*
- *Did you open your eyes at any time? Why?*
- *Did your partner make you feel safe?*
- *What was it like to have different partners?*
- *How was the trust built between you and your partner?*
- *In talking about yourself in a group, what do you need to feel you can trust the group?*

Using the last debrief question write up some of the points the young people stated and remind the group that these are something to work towards.

Contract ***

Purpose:

a set of ground rules for people to consider and remember when working with each other, it aims to provide boundaries within which the group can feel comfortable

Resources:

flipchart, markers

Before the contract, ask individuals to identify any of their hopes and fears regarding the day. What people expect gives you an idea of interests, and the fears will give you an idea of what could be done to make people comfortable.

Review

The group are encouraged to reflect in small groups or individually:

- *What did they find useful about the previous two sessions?*
- *What did they learn about each other?*
- *What did they enjoy about the sessions?*
- *What would they change?*

The feedback can be recorded by you and is a useful way of reviewing the process.

Session Three: Identity

All Change

Purpose:

warm up activity and to lift energy

The group sit on chairs in a circle with you as teacher / facilitator standing in the middle. The purpose is for the person in the middle to say, for example, 'anyone with jeans change places' however individuals cannot move immediately to her / his right / left when they move.

It is useful to encourage individuals to think of invisible features such as believing in God; liking / disliking something; thinking integrated education is a good idea; cannabis should be legalised etc.

Possible statements: "All change if you ..."

- *have met a politician*
- *have hair*
- *watch the news*
- *go to church*
- *like pizza*
- *have been involved in a cross-community project*
- *like your name*
- *been to America*
- *have a wish for your country*
- *own a pet*
- *want to do something for N.I.*
- *know whom you would vote for*
- *liked school*
- *want to be on T.V.*
- *vote*
- *enjoy sport*

Paper not Floor

Purpose:

to encourage individuals to work as a team,
to encourage individuals to problem-solve

Resources:

newspaper

Lay out enough sheets of newspaper for the entire group in the room to comfortably stand upon. Facilitator explains that there is one rule.

All participants have to simultaneously be in contact with the paper but not in contact with the floor. Inevitably the group all stand on the paper provided. Facilitators should check that no part of anyone's foot is touching the floor. Once the group has successfully completed this, the facilitator asks individuals to get off the paper then takes the paper away. This is repeated until the group has difficulty standing on paper.

Health and Safety:

Remember that sitting on someone's shoulder is not allowed, because, in doing so, they are not in contact with the paper.

They cannot use any furniture so push the group to achieve the task.

The solution is for all group members to be holding one piece of paper between them and jump in the air at the same time.

Debrief:

- *How did the group reach a solution?*
- *Were everyone's ideas heard?*
- *Who found the task frustrating?*
- *Did anyone think the exercise was impossible?*

Variety is the Spice of Life:

Purpose:

to encourage participants to value diversity

Resources:

paper, pens

Time:

20 minutes

Divide the group into small groups and ask them to list as many things which make the group different. Below are some examples, which you can mention to stimulate examples.

- *For each colour of hair*
- *For each different BT Number*
- *For each different school attended*
- *For membership of each different uniformed / youth organisation*
- *For each different religious denomination represented*
- *For each different football team supported*
- *For each different favourite sports personality*
- *For each different favourite hobby*
- *For each different nationality represented*

Commonalities

Purpose:

to discover how much participants have in common

Resources:

paper, pens

Time:

10 minutes

Break larger group into small group to instil some competition. Teams get one point for everything they write down that each person in their group has in common. They must not be visible commonalities, for example, colour of shoes. Inform teams that there are big bonuses for the most unique and funny commonalities.

Debrief:

- Which list was easier to put together?
- Are people more comfortable with differences or similarities?

Session Four: Prejudice Awareness ****

Not up my Street ***** ⁸

Purpose:

to explore how prejudices are part of life, to reflect on how we make generalisations that can lead to prejudices being formed

Resources:

paper, pens, flipchart

Time:

30 – 40 minutes

The key element of this exercise is the process the young people engage in; that is, how they make their decisions, what did they find themselves saying in relation to judgements they were making about the individuals in the exercise.

- Explain to the whole group that a house in their street has become vacant. The local council has decided that they will consult with the resident's i.e. you, on who should be allocated the house as they have eight prospective tenants.
- You have been given a list of eight people with limited information at this point and have been asked to rank from one to eight people you feel should be given the house individually.

- In small groups (five to six) ask them to come up with a group ranking using the information on each prospective tenant. This may take some time as individuals will have to negotiate and make compromises.
- The group feed back their choices and these are noted on flipchart paper.
- Then each group are given additional information on each tenant.
- Ask the groups to reconsider their ranking based on the new knowledge.
- The groups feed back their reconsidered lists and these are noted on the flipchart.

Debrief:

- *How easy were the tasks?*
- *What were your initial assumptions?*
- *Was this information based on knowledge or perceptions?*
- *As a complete group reflect on the ranking and check if there is a comparison between the first and second lists on the flipchart?*
- *With the new information did people change their lists – why?*
- *Why do we make judgements based on limited knowledge?*
- *Why is it helpful to gain more knowledge before making judgements?*
- *How and why do we label people?*

PROFESSIONS OF PROSPECTIVE TENANTS:

Reformed Drug Dealer

Unemployed Youth

Retired Bank Manager

Member of the Orange Order

Gay Nurse

Head Teacher

Sinn Fein Councillor

Refugee from Eastern Europe

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INFORMATION ON PROSPECTIVE TENANTS:

Reformed Drug Dealer

Helen is aged 47, and was a heroin and cocaine addict for ten years while living in Belfast. She has now been 'clean' for the past ten years, and for the past five years she has been working as an Education Officer with the Health Promotion Agency. She wishes to move to your area because she has been offered a job in the local Drug Rehabilitation Unit.

Unemployed Youth

Gary is aged 19, and was recently made unemployed after serving a two year apprenticeship as a joiner. He wishes to move to your area as a couple of new developments have started in the neighbouring town and he believes he might be able to get some work there. He also feels he might be able to help his neighbours out by doing a few odd jobs.

Retired Bank Manager

Susan is aged 52, and was recently asked to take early retirement because she was involved in fraud at her branch. Her employers did not want the case splashed all over the newspapers so they agreed to give her early retirement. She now wishes to start a new life in your area and get involved in a scheme to provide financial advice to her new neighbours.

Member of the Orange Order

William is aged 74, and has been a member of the Orange Order since he was 21. He follows in a proud family tradition that has spanned generations of his family. He has been very concerned in recent years about the Orange Order's policy in not working more closely with residents' groups. He has always had excellent relationships with his Catholic neighbours. His wife, Gladys, died recently and he now wishes to move into your street to be closer to his son, Tom, who is one of your neighbours.

Gay Nurse

Jim is aged 22, and has lived with his parents until recently. He told them that he was gay and while his parents did not ask him to leave, he felt that he could not live there any longer. Jim works in the hospital in the nearest large town and is soon to gain promotion. He is a trained paramedic and has advanced First Aid training.

Head Teacher

Mary is aged 47, and has just left her job because of allegations that she has assaulted a pupil. A vacancy has come up in the local high school and she is considering applying for the job.

Sinn Fein Councillor

Frankie is 36, and has a young family. He decided to get involved in Politics three years ago and felt that Sinn Fein best represented his political views. He has always been active in the community, and has been very successful in helping elderly people access cold weather payments and in helping young people to fill out job application forms. Recently, he was elected as a councillor for your area and politicians on all sides speak very highly of his tireless work for the community.

Refugee from Eastern Europe

Rudi is 57, and has recently come to Ireland from the conflict in Kosovo. Rudi is a Serb and was the manager of the local factory in his town. He had to escape because his factory was burnt down by the local Albanians after Nato troops liberated the town. Nobody knows why the factory was burnt and there are stories that Rudi had moved most of his money out of the country. For now he is a refugee and needs somewhere to live.

Session Five: Labelling / Perceptions

The aim of this session is to explore how we make assumptions, to understand how our perceptions influence our decisions

Perception Exercises

Purpose:

to highlight that we will see many things differently because of how we interpret information. These interpretations are because of who we are, where we were brought up, our histories etc.

Time:

10 minutes

OPTION ONE

The group is told that a statement will be written onto a flipchart sheet and they will be asked to read it and count the number of 'Fs' in the statement. They will only be able to see the information for just a minute. Write this on the flipchart:

'Finished files are the final result of years and years of scientific study'.

Once they have read the statement ask participants to take a place in the room, based on the number of 'F's. For example, each corner is given the following numbers three, four, five, six.

Once they have taken a place ask them how confident they are about their decision? Did they follow another person because they thought s/he might be right? Could they convince another person that they are 'wrong'? What does it feel like to be told you are wrong?

After the discussion let the participants see the information again so they can count the 'Fs'. Remind participants it is not about getting it right or wrong but about understanding how we see the same message differently.

Follow this exercise with another perception exercise, again following the same process and review. Individuals are given a pen and piece of paper and asked to follow the instructions in Option two / three and once they have completed the task, it is useful to draw a few of the examples on to the flipchart.

Then again use the debrief questions to discuss - was someone right or wrong; why did we do things differently if we were all given the same information?

OPTION TWO

Read this out:

Fold an A4 sheet of paper in half; tear off the right-hand corner; unfold it; tear off the left-hand corner; show it to others in your group.

OPTION THREE

Read this out:

Draw a 2cm line across your page. Take the first letter of your first name and the first letter of your second name and write them on either side of the line.

Reflection

Ask the group to reflect on the following areas:

- *What do people say about your school and the pupils attending the school?*
- *Are these labels fair, accurate?*
- *How can the school and you change these perceptions?*

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Session Six: Cultural Awareness

Human Knot

Purpose:

trust, team building and co-operation, problem-solving

In a circle, ask an even number of people to close their eyes. Stretching their right hand across the circle, ask them to find another hand. Repeat this with their left hand when they open their eyes without letting go. The group has to untie their Human Knot and get back into a circle.

Remind people it is possible.

Debrief:

- *Did the group work together?*
- *Did anyone give up?*
- *Who took the lead?*

Cultural Quiz *****

Purpose:

to reflect on symbols, to explore knowledge and attitudes, to identify myths

Resources:

cultural quiz sheet

Time:

5 – 10 minutes

A sheet of symbols is passed around participants. This exercise can be done as a quiz. Individuals can be put into small teams and given five to ten minutes to identify what each symbol is; where they might see it; what they know about it and what they do not know; what makes them feel comfortable / uncomfortable?

Debrief

- *Where did we get our information?*
- *How do we get our information?*
- *Is it useful to know more about symbols?*
- *Do people feel more comfortable with some and less with others?*
- *Can symbols be shared in Northern Ireland?*

Cultural Object

Purpose:

to explore personal identity, to share personal histories

Resources:

cultural object of individual's choice

Time:

20 minutes

Individuals are asked to bring in an object, which represents something from their community. (If someone has not brought one they could have a few minutes to draw their symbol - something they see often / not.)

It might be best to allow individuals to share object in pairs or in smaller groups; but the purpose of this is to support each person to talk about the object, what it means to them and if they know any of the history of the object. You could encourage individuals to ask each other questions, but ensure people don't criticise each other and their object.

Debrief

This can be done in pairs or threes and recorded for the evaluation of the programme:

- Which symbol did they know nothing about?
- Which symbol do they know something about now?
- What is the benefit of learning about symbols?

Press Release

Purpose:

teamwork and co-operation skills, communication skills, sharing experiences and personal aspirations, critical reflection on the role of symbols

Resources:

paper, pens, cartoon board

Time:

10 minutes

Ask the group to divide into smaller groups, the task is to design a press release or a mime as a group, which will answer questions from other countries about symbols in Northern Ireland.

In the press release let the countries know:

- What symbols mean in Northern Ireland
- The role symbols play in Northern Ireland
- As young people, the relevance of symbols in your life
- What is a good response when symbols cause conflict?
- Why can they cause conflict?

Each group present their mime / press release / cartoon board and as a group agree one thing they would like to be said about symbols on behalf of the school.

Symbols in Northern Ireland

An extra exercise if you feel it is useful or if the young people are reluctant to talk about the symbol they brought.

Purpose:

to explore some of the symbols / emblems of identity in Northern Ireland

Resources:

pack of symbol cards; (refer to the template at end of this section)

- Place pupils into small groups and distribute a pack of the symbol cards (face down) to each pupil. Ask pupils to turn over one card ⁹ from the top of the pack and place it in front of them. The cards may need to be explained.
- They should then turn over a second card and compare it with the first. If they think that there is a connection between the cards then they should start to form a cluster. (For example, they might connect a flute to the Union flag or connect the flute to a bodhran; it's up to them! There's no right or wrong answer- this exercise is about exploring how pupils perceive the symbols). If there is no connection then they should place the new card a distance away from the first. (For example, a crucifix and a rugby ball may be placed apart.)

- They should continue to turn over cards, adding more to their clusters or swapping cards into other clusters or breaking their clusters into sub-clusters!¹⁰ (For example, religious symbols might be sub-divided etc.)
- When pupils have settled on their groupings, ask them to give each cluster a 'name', for example, 'music'.
- Ask each group to show the rest of the class their clusters and to explain why they have clustered the cards in this way.
- Use pupil feedback to introduce the idea of identity in Northern Ireland being religious (for example, ashes, cross etc.), cultural (for example, music, dance, language) and political (for example, national identity, political parties etc.).

CONCLUSION:

Ask pupils to identify which symbols of identity cause the most difficulty in Northern Ireland. Which symbols are used to annoy / antagonise 'others'? How are they used? Is it always just about religion? Or are religious, cultural and political issues 'mixed up together'? During the discussion, pupils will most likely mention the term 'sectarianism'. Use the discussion to define this term.

⁹ Pupils should only reveal one card at a time. This will help them to develop their own framework of connections between symbols.

Session Seven: Reflection and Recap

The programme focused on a number of areas and we want the young people to reflect on these creatively and remind ourselves of what we achieved today:

- *Team building / Group*
- *Prejudice: Perceptions / Labelling / Judgements*
- *Perceptions of your school*
- *Symbols: their role in this society*

Using leaf outline ask participants to reflect individually on and write down or draw their thought on the leaves, which will be collated and used as a display for the school:

On a leaf write / draw a symbol which is important to me and why?

On a leaf write / draw what you feel we need to challenge?

EVALUATION

Another option is to use a designed sheet which will highlight the learning for the programme.

* This series of sessions uses Circle Time as a structure. For information on the purpose and process of Circle Time, please see Section Five (Working in a Circle).

As this is a general outline, you will need to adapt the content to the ability of the group and the needs that the group presents. Sessions may need to be shortened or lengthened and activities may need to be adjusted; please feel free to use what you think will work for the group.

You will note the first session concentrates on a number of warm-up activities, this is important as it enables you to get to know the group and what would work in your context. These activities are also important as it ensures that safety has been developed within the group especially as some of the sessions will focus on sensitive issues.

** Trust exercises are important in a group as they can support an open discussion on what the concept of trust means generally and in particular within the group. The exercises support the individuals to explore what trust will mean in their group, which is important in building the safety within the group.

*** The contract is important as it supports the group members to take responsibility for themselves and the group. Most classes have group rules displayed, it is important that these do not become filled with 'Don'ts' and a positive approach to behaviour is taken. Often the contract is linked with expectations and when individuals have described their expectations this can be followed with what we need to do to achieve this, i.e. the group as a whole and as an individual.

**** This exercise provides a gentle introduction into the concept of prejudice. It is important

¹⁰ Encourage pupils to keep their clusters fairly small (for example, no more than six or seven items in a cluster). This will encourage more creative thinking.

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to encourage participants to recognise that this is a natural process for all humans as it is not possible to manage the amount of information, which we receive on an hourly basis. It is also important to support individuals not to feel ashamed about their differences.

***** This explores the concept of prejudice in more depth. Encourage individuals not to censor themselves. The key to the exercise is not the actual exercise but rather the process of how the groups made their decisions, what information they used to work out their ranking. You should encourage the group to reflect on how they made their decisions, did they compromise for example?

***** There is a range of ways of using symbols with a group, you can collect a range of symbols, use pictures of symbols, use the internet or encourage individuals to bring in their own symbols, emblems.

***** An important health warning, if young people are encouraged to bring in their symbols please notify other staff members so that there is a whole school understanding of the reasons. If flags are brought in remind the pupils to respect the flag and not to have it wrapped around their body. Also for transport home ensure that the young people put their symbol away safely for their own safety.

As the facilitator you should spend some time becoming familiar with the meanings behind flags and the historical significance of symbols / emblems.

Symbol Clustering Cards¹¹

SYMBOLS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

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The following cards can be used as templates to make your own set or may be enlarged on a photocopier and cut out.

Claddagh Ring

Rugby Ball

Fainne

IRA Mural

Shamrock

St Patrick

SDLP

Ashes

Cu Chullain

¹¹ CCEA (2003), Local and Global Citizenship: A Resource for Post-Primary Schools, Belfast, CCEA.

Easter Lily

**St Bridget's
Cross**

Ulster Flag

Lambeg Drum

Red Hand

Sash

Cross

Stormont

Ulster Scots

Policeman

Soldier

Bodhran

Flute

Bagpipes

Bible

BB Badge

**Scripture Union
Badge**

Rangers Top

Pioneer Pin

Ulster Unionist

**King William
Mural**

Sinn Fein

Celtic Top

Crucifix

Poppy

Union Flag

Irish Dancer

1916 Mural

DUP

UDA Mural

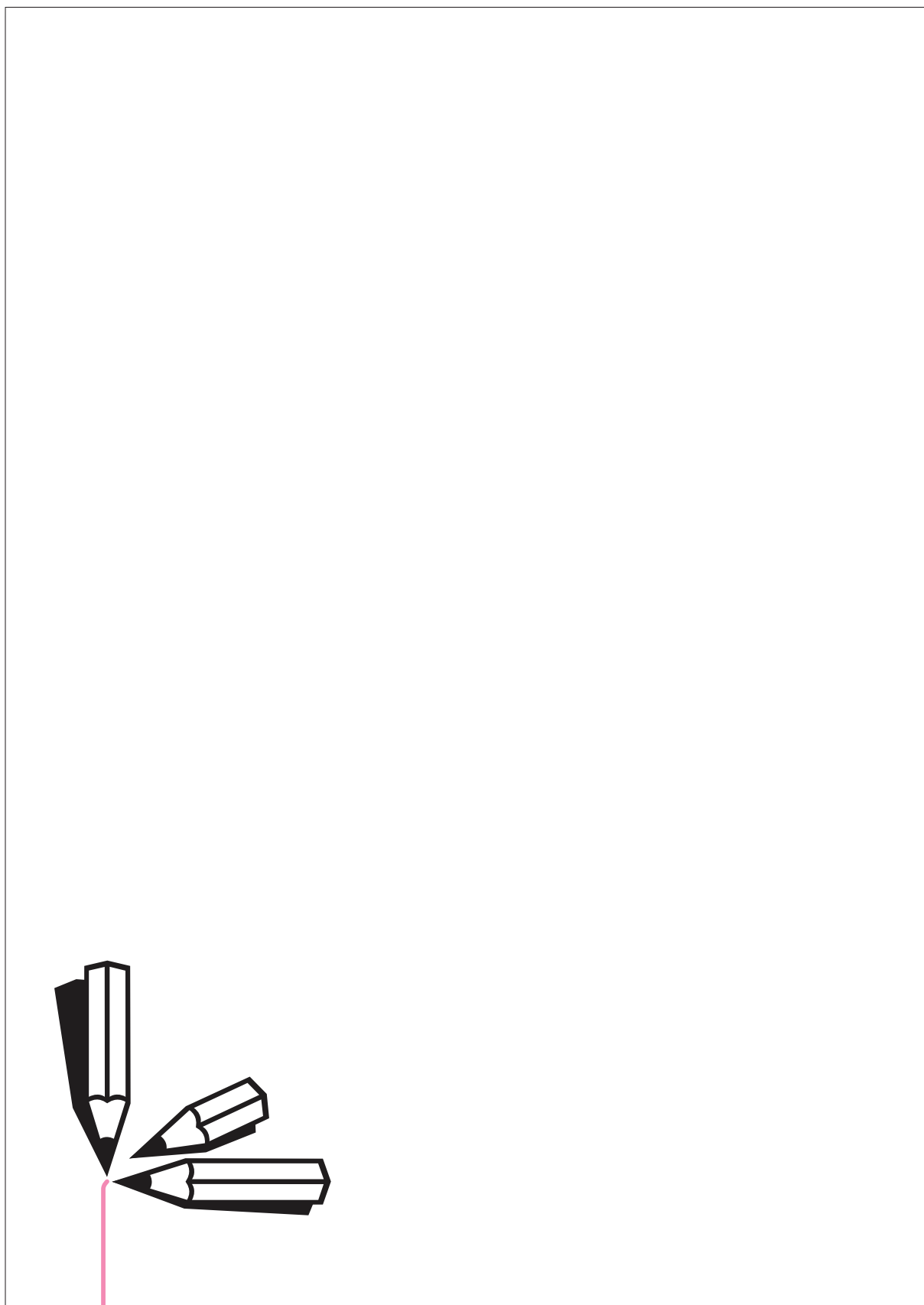
Alliance Party

Bowler Hat

Harp

Hurley Stick

Tricolour



009753126



INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND NEW BEGINNINGS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

by
FRANK WRIGHT

WORKING PAPER: SIX



**UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT ...
AND FINDING WAYS OUT OF IT**

**"Understanding Conflict ... and finding ways out of it" is supported by Charitable
Trusts and the Lawlor Foundation working through The Corrymeela Community,
The University of Ulster and The Queen's University, Belfast.**

**Published by
The Corrymeela Press**

Integrated Education and new beginnings in Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

These papers are part of an occasional series produced by
"Understanding Conflict...and finding ways out of it"

They are working papers based on our meetings with people in
a wide variety of different areas of life in Northern Ireland.

These papers are a response to some of the themes which have
been raised in the course of our work during 1990. We hope that
they will inform and encourage people working throughout the
community.

We would value any comments and views in response to the
contents. These can be sent to Derick Wilson, "Understanding
Conflict ...", Centre for the Study of Conflict, University of Ulster,
Coleraine, BT52 1SA. Tel: (0265) 44141 Ext. 4550/4666.

Integrated Education and new beginnings in Northern Ireland

Integrated Education and New Beginnings in Northern Ireland

Frank Wright

Integrated Education and new beginnings in Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

Many people in Northern Ireland want their children to be educated together with children of other traditions. There have been earlier occasions in the history of the North of Ireland when it has happened, at least in some places. Yet however much support there is for the idea of integrated education, putting it into practice seems to be exceedingly difficult. The gap between the amount of vague support there is for the idea and the actual extent of integrated education is usually wide. The purpose of this paper is to warn against over hasty plans to try to close this gap. The main reason why I am saying this is that I believe such an attempt will jeopardise what is most positive about the integrated education that exists at the moment.

While I was writing about 19th century Ulster, I learned about how educational conflict had had a very big part in the division between Nationalism and Unionism. Indeed it is hardly an exaggeration to say that at the core of each community [of Catholic and Protestant] there were fears of the threat to "Our" schools from the "Others". The National System of education in Ireland, founded in 1831, was nominally integrated. But there was a tendency for people to support integrated education most keenly when they thought their 'side' would gain from it. For example between about 1859-71 Presbyterian supporters of National Education - which they described as "Mixed secular and separate religious instruction"- were less than clear about how much control they already had over the mixed schools whose role they wished to expand. No debate about the benefits of an overall integrated education policy in the North of Ireland can ever be about the abstract advantages of mixing. There is a long history of suspicion about who controls education. For good reasons, people in the North of Ireland have been very cautious indeed about who they trust with the education of their children. The future of integrated education depends on how these anxieties are coped with.

Since the 1970s the idea of integrated education has had a new burst of life. What is really new about the integrated schools of today and different from previous ideas of mixed education is that they involve parents coming together and meeting and cooperating with each other. In Dorothy Wilson and Seamus Dunn's *"Integrated Schools- Information for parents"*, this aspect of the school is centrally emphasised. Difficulties involved in respecting each other's tradition, whether in the syllabus, the style of teaching, the use of

Understanding Conflict ... and finding ways out of it

symbols and so on... are resolved by parents and teachers together. In a school where parents have come together freely to create a shared environment for their children, knowing that there are risks and that there will be difficulties to work through together, it is very possible that new relationships will grow. But if instead children are pushed together most of the old problems which led to segregated education in the first place will resurface only slightly changed.

We can say that children are being pushed together whenever integrated education is seen as a way of changing other people rather than ourselves. This matter of emphasis is very important. There have been many occasions when people said what a good idea it would be to integrate all the schools so that children would grow up together without bigotry. But such dreams about how integrated education could change everything in Northern Ireland usually leave unanswered all the real difficulties.

To explain the point further, ask yourself who you have ever heard speaking casually in favour of integrated education. Do you know either of the following? Someone with a fantasy of Catholics and Protestants standing reverently before a Union Jack fluttering from the school flagpole; or someone with the fantasy of Protestant and Catholic children dutifully absorbing a history syllabus which puts Protestants "right about their Irishness". These kinds of supporter of integrated schools may say how they would like to see all children being educated together and brought up without bigotry, but their desire to put something across on the 'others' is a bad omen. Of course we all may have some fantasies of this kind, but there is little integrated education until parents themselves are prepared to face such possible conflicts of expectation.

The theme of this paper is that parent initiative in integrated schooling has real promise for the future, whereas if integrated education depends heavily on governmental promotion it will probably lead to big disappointment. If parents play some part in resolving the inevitable difficulties of integrated education, parental learning will go on and the school as a 'Meeting' of traditions will flourish. Whereas if integrated schools multiply as a result of favourable financial incentives, some schools may leapfrog the growing experience that the established integrated schools have been through. This will build concealed conflicts into their foundations. At worst people will end up rediscovering the advantages of separate education. So let us begin by trying to see what these advantages might be.

Integrated Education and new beginnings in Northern Ireland

ADVANTAGES OF SEPARATE EDUCATION. THE MANAGEMENT OF DISTRUST.

Throughout Northern history many people have sensed both that segregating children in different schools allowed bigotry to grow and also that separate education was the only secure way to ensure that schools respected the values of the childrens' families. Many of us know this somehow and we cannot argue away either half of it, though we are always tempted to do so.

For example opponents of separate schools have sometimes claimed that they 'cause' sectarian distrust and division. It is obvious that anything which keeps people apart, who might otherwise have got to know each other, must be doing something to sustain an atmosphere of distrust. But the argument understandably exasperates supporters of separate schools. In a society where distrust is pervasive between adults, it can be difficult to secure trust between their children. Unless people who distrust each other have some shared trust in an authority above them both, the management of that distrust can be exceedingly difficult. Separate systems of education have often been a way of making distrust between national communities manageable.

One of the few things which northern nationalists have ever praised the Stormont Government for was its handling of Education. Essentially from around 1930 onwards the Stormont government accepted an arrangement in which both communities felt their education system was secure against the encroachments of the other side. In other situations where different communities exist side by side, as they do in Northern Ireland, control over education has also been a central question. Where the communities have been more unequally placed than they are in Northern Ireland, the less powerful communities have not controlled their own education systems. Then the education systems have tended to atomise and demoralize these dominated communities. This was true for Muslims in secular schools in French Algeria and it was also true for the separate black [but white controlled] schools in the US Southern States.

By contrast, taking a long historical view from the 1830s, the separate school system in the North of Ireland has allowed Catholic society to build itself up to a level where it has not feared comparison with the dominant Protestant society. The Catholic middle class has built itself up around its teachers,

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although at the same time the boundary between Protestant and Catholic has been frozen by the parallel school systems. So even if the dual school system is a factor contributing to the present day conflict, it has also meant that the two subsocieties [roughly Catholic and Protestant] have been in a relatively more equal position in Northern Ireland than they would have been without it. There is nothing at all unusual about this: separate education has almost universally been sought by nationalist movements in Europe to build their communities and make them more cohesive. No national group ever trusts another nation to control the education of its children, if it has any choice in the matter at all. Whenever anyone proposes integrated education in these situations, it is almost invariably suspected of being a ploy to uproot the culture of the less powerful community.

Sometimes accepting the need for separate education systems has prevented struggles which might otherwise have torn up the unity of a nation. The strength of this argument for separation of schools can be illustrated by the story of Scotland. In 1918 the state school system was placed on a firmly segregated basis. Segregated schools no doubt play a part in keeping alive Celtic v Rangers feeling today, but Scotland has by and large remained tranquil, even during the last twenty years when sectarianism might have fed back into it from Ulster. The Catholic church has been content with a state system that contains a Catholic system within it. It is very probable that one of the reasons why the Labour party in Scotland has been able to span the gap between Catholic and Protestant has been that the truce of 1918 suited the Catholic clergy and a large enough part of the non-Catholic Labour supporters. Had the anti-catholic movements of the 1930's been able to seriously affect the working of the Act, it is probable that they would have been able to precipitate a religious division amongst Labour voters, and introduce politics back into the sectarian division. The essential point is that existing educational arrangements are part of an unwritten treaty in Scotland, whose full implications would only become clear if an effort was made to undo it.

No one today could argue that enforcing integrated education upon Scotland would have made for a deeper peace than Scotland has actually had. There are groups in Scotland now who are aware of how far apart religious differences keep people, and they are trying to work upon their common heritage as Christians in Scotland. In the course of their work together they might do something about the football hooliganism of the Old Firm. But the

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important point is that no one in Scotland is arguing for a global plan for integrated education to combat dangers of sectarianism at the moment. It is easy to see that a political campaign to do this would start to politicise religion and create the very problem we are suggesting it would be advocated to prevent. Because we have had so much sectarian conflict here in Northern Ireland it is tempting to blame it upon one of the factors which may have facilitated sectarian continuity. But the Scottish situation, which is in some respects very like Northern Ireland, helps us to underline the difference between people working together to promote integrated schools and a hypothetical policy decision to desegregate Scottish schools. If sectarianism in Scotland did become menacing that would be both the worst occasion to suggest imposing integrated education and the most urgent reason for those committed to it to start promoting it on a voluntary basis. It is the same for us in Northern Ireland.

THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN INTEGRATED EDUCATION.

The central difference between the two ways in which integrated education might come to pass have to do with how much of the dynamic is coming from the people directly involved. The hope behind most visions of integrated education in Northern Ireland is that if children mix together early enough, they will get so used to being together that they will be relatively immunized against sectarianism in adult life. What does this mixing together mean? Upon whom will the responsibility for creating and cherishing this unusual environment fall? When few adults have experienced it themselves how do we expect that teachers will be able to do it? There is a great danger of putting onto teachers the responsibility for achieving something by magic, something they probably cannot do for our children, if we are not in earnest about wanting to do for ourselves.

What actually happens in an integrated school will not depend on the syllabus, so much as on the human relationships within the school. Teachers are not superhuman and whether children from different national traditions can really meet as equals, sensing the acceptability of their feelings and their home experiences, depends upon how the teachers and other figures of authority in the school create the space for them. There is probably little

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chance of teachers developing these new ways unless the context they are working in is supportive. Here especially the input of parents may be decisive.

Any integration, if it is to avoid the pitfalls that made separate education attractive in the past and in so many other situations, must be a meeting on an equal basis where neither community has the upper hand over the other. What does this mean? Although there are many ways in which this problem could be formulated, we can see an example of it at the heart of the Anglo-Irish agreement. In the Agreement the British and Irish governments refer to two traditions in Ireland or two communities within Northern Ireland. The two traditions are defined as one wishing to have no change in the status of Northern Ireland and the other aspiring to a sovereign united Ireland. The two governments speak of diminishing the divisions in Northern Ireland and of recognizing and respecting the identities of the two communities in Northern Ireland. How do you diminish the divisions and at the same time recognize and respect the identities of the two communities or traditions, when they have such diametrically opposed opinions?

Much of this involves enabling children [and adults!] to experience differences as enriching aspects of the others that we just accept. But there are deep and antagonistic roots to the different traditions and although it will often be inappropriate to introduce children to the antagonistic aspects of their parents' different cultures, the occasions and ways for doing so will be better chosen if the parents and the teachers have themselves experienced real meeting with each other. Let us consider what is involved for parents and teachers.

"TOLERANCE" AND ACCEPTANCE

In the beginning I distinguished abstract support for integrated education and the growing process involved in actually creating it. This is very like the difference between just claiming to be 'tolerant' and making real relationships of trust. Acceptance comes out of meeting where we both feel secure and able to trust. In such Meetings together we hear what it feels like to be the other and we accept each other with our differences; and we change in ways we probably cannot anticipate. We hear one another telling about each others' experiences and we are not distracted with clash of opinion. We can only have ideas about what this will mean for us politically.

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We have seen that in a divided society separate school systems can make distrust manageable and allow for the growth of a polite distance between communities. This makes distrust less painful, but it also allows us to delude ourselves about how tolerant we are. Very often 'tolerance' in the North of Ireland, as indeed in any divided society, is a kind of weapon for point scoring. "We are tolerant, but there is no relationship between us and them, because of ..xyz.....which they are responsible for."

Here are some examples of this kind of tolerance: those who say that they are tolerant of Protestants, and that most of the distrust in the North of Ireland is on the part of Protestants towards Catholics, but who support the murder of [mostly Protestant] members of the security forces as part of a campaign to secure the unification of Ireland. Likewise there are those who say that there is no need for integrated schools, because the only reason the state schools are not integrated is the Catholic Church. They see no contradiction between attacking Catholic schools for creating segregation and claiming that, of course, Protestant clergy must have places on the management of state schools. These kinds of 'tolerance' are abstract theory and have nothing to do with acceptance.

In all divided societies it can be very difficult to cope with what the 'others' actually feel and say themselves about their own identity. When there are language differences as there are in many divided societies, they at least provide some tangible sign of difference which can be [sometimes reluctantly] accepted as a mark of national difference. But there are some societies of which this is one where people are nationally divided from each other by religion rather than language. In the Yugoslav Republics of Croatia and Bosnia, the Serbs [Orthodox], the Croats [Catholics] and the Bosnian Muslims all speak the same language, Serbo-Croatian, and they are three nations distinguished from each other by religion. Like ourselves they also have had difficulty recognizing each others' integrity. In the inter war years in Yugoslavia the dominant Serbians used to infuriate the Croats by treating them as though they were just Catholic Serbs. During the war the Croatian fascists attempted to wipe out Serbians by forced conversion to Catholicism and extermination. Only the victory of the cross-community Communist partisans, [despite their other drawbacks], brought any sanity to Yugoslavia.

Some insist that Ulster Protestants are part of the Irish nation, because it is

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'only' their religion that distinguishes them from Irish Catholics. Others insist that Irish Catholics in Northern Ireland are British, because they speak English and live under British rule. These approaches are similar to those which afflicted Yugoslavia before 1945 and may be about to happen again. Like the Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims in Yugoslavia, Unionists and Nationalists in the North of Ireland have a choice about whether to accept each others' identities or to deny them and thence provoke continued conflict. Just as the Protestants' Britishness can never be reduced to a matter of denominational rights of a religious minority in the Irish nation, nor can the need for the Irish Catholic school system ever be reduced to one of mere denominational rights of a religious minority in Northern Ireland.

Like the Yugoslav nations, Catholics and Protestants in Ulster have different experiences of where threat, violence and humiliation come from. I have seen this theme unfolded many times as people tell each other about themselves. When we look at violence in N.Ireland, people are often attacked for who they are, not for anything they have done themselves. This is not just something about the present troubles. It has been true for much of our history. If someone is attacked, the first thing we need to know...if we want to understand it ...is what religion were the attacker and the victim. We are very interested in the reasons for violence, even when we don't agree with it. Violence can spread from one incident in a chain reaction. For example a Protestant avenges an attack on his community by attacking a Catholic. Then another Catholic attacks another Protestant and so on. If people know that an attack upon some person is an attack upon a whole group of people, of whom that person is only a representative, it has a massive effect. This is quite unlike an isolated murder in a normal society. It isn't necessary for people to agree with violence. They only have to understand what is happening and to be frightened by it. Once a cycle is under way, some acts of violence are seen as self-defence, reprisal, preemptive strike or deterring action. "They were provoked" we say. "They had good reason for their anger" we think. An attack is on us; or it is something done by our side to them, in which case we understand it in some way. We may give reasons for it, which somehow take away from our sense of outrage. Or we may be especially ashamed of it, because we feel somehow responsible for it. What distinguishes one sort of attack from another is how we relate to the perpetrators and the victims. This reality makes us different from each other.

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Ordinary criminalization of the kind that happens in normal societies is impossible in Northern Ireland because we are so interested in the reasons why people did things, and we are not therefore united by our feelings against what they did. The Law is not an anchor, but more like an axis of conflict. Some fear that the "Law" will not protect us from "them" and others feel the law in some way tolerates or helps "them" against us. In Northern Ireland, no one feels entirely secure. Any tranquility this society has known has been more like a truce than a peace. The story of the Apprentice Boys of Derry, the marching of the Orange Order [which was once explicitly about patrolling rebellious natives], and many other aspects of Unionism, such as the permanent establishment of the 'B' Specials until 1969, show how tranquility was preserved by deterrence. Peace was never taken for granted. Just as the West and the USSR spent 40 years keeping the 'peace' by using nuclear weapons to deter each other, so Unionists always felt the need to deter the Nationalist threat. Nationalists resented the things done to deter or control them. So even when they disagree with Republican violence, they are less than enthusiastic about the British state power opposing it. Our different identities as Nationalists and Unionists largely depend upon the direction from which we expect violence and humiliation to come towards us and those closest to us.

It is because our experiences of threat divide us that there is such a strong aversion to talking about anything to do with politics or religion in mixed company. In fact it is an almost elementary aspect of keeping good relationships with people of the 'other' community that we do this. So we nearly always share our own trauma - the experiences which make us what we are - with those who are also traumatized as we are. Any cross national discussion about such experiences might turn into showing how much 'we' suffered at 'your' sides hands; and an argument about whose violence is worse. Polite avoidance of these issues and feelings both ensures that we make every day life as manageable as possible and that we go on reinforcing the differences which are always there and threatening to erupt.

When we see things in this way it becomes clearer why it is rather unfair to blame the schools we have at the moment for promoting sectarianism. As a rule schools in divided societies probably only reinforce the lessons that every other situation already teaches, including homes. Distrust of the 'others' is hinted at and intuited in countless ways, even as in this case when it becomes

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politeness and fear of offending. Schools may for example reinforce the sense that politics, religion and history are subjects to be avoided in mixed company for fear of giving offence. We make a very great mistake to imagine that schools 'teach bigotry', if by that we imagine that they have some specially malignant influence.

If our children are to have a better future, they must experience new ways of meeting with others. Then perhaps they will become free to deal with the big things that divided their parents, who were often restricted to polite avoidance of difficult subjects. If an integrated school is a meeting place where people find that their experiences are valid and that they are worth listening to, then it may give them this. The best integrated schools will be the ones where the parents have educated themselves together while creating and running the school. That can only strengthen the trusting environment of the meeting. In the rest of this text I shall suggest a few of the things this may mean in practice.

HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS

In the historical appendix, I shall develop some of the story of how 19th century efforts to promote integrated education came adrift. In 1831 the British government introduced the National Education system in Ireland. At very least for the first decade the system was integrated in spirit and it involved building trusting and cooperative relationships between clergy of all denominations. In the North this meant Presbyterian and Catholic particularly. But gradually Catholics pulled away from it, and a different kind of Presbyterian also came to support it. Eventually the defence of this system turned into a crusade against the Catholic clergy without whose cooperation it could not carry on in spirit as well as in name. This is one of the reasons why the early effort to create an integrated education in Ireland decayed.

The National Education system, introduced in Ireland in 1831, was intended to become a system of mixed secular and separate religious instruction. It came into existence after Catholic Ireland had been mobilized by Daniel O'Connell to secure Catholic Emancipation. The system was necessary because the existing, mainly Anglican, quality education was regarded as proselytizing. In the North the Catholics and a large minority of Presbyterians welcomed it and worked together to make it a success. They observed fairly

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rigorous conditions which included recognizing that each religious minister was responsible for the faith of the children of their flock.

But many Presbyterians did not accept the system until it was modified. In 1839 they were allowed to pursue their "missionary" effort towards Catholic children in 'their' National schools, subject only to a conscience clause permitting children to leave at times of religious instruction. This modification was the beginning of a process. First more and more Protestants, who regarded Ultramontane Popery as a menace, began to support the National System on the grounds that they were only required to make minimal concessions to "Popery". And once the Catholic clergy opposition to National education began to harden from the late 1840s, more Protestants began to support it because the Catholic hierarchy were against it. By the 1860s many saw it essentially as a rampart against Catholic clerical control of education. These kinds of "supporters" of National Education distracted lay Catholic attention away from the sincere Protestant advocates of school integration. In 1871 Orangemen with sashes took the platform at a meeting to defend the National Education system in Cookstown. The Ulster Examiner, a Catholic paper, said that these speakers with their sashes etc "exposed the real feelings" of the liberal clergy who spoke about the need to soften prejudices by mixing children in schools. This was probably nonsense, but it did show that for Catholics mixed schooling was increasingly likely to be judged by what its most anti-catholic advocates said about it. It had become very plain that many Protestants were now favouring mixed education precisely because they saw it as a way of breaking up the cohesion of the Catholic community. The liberal advocates of integrated education would have needed to do something to put a clear distance between themselves and the No-Popery advocates. They would have needed to look for ways of developing trusting relationships with those Catholics, who like themselves, really valued mixed education as a way of softening prejudice.

It can be argued that because the Catholic hierarchy were completely against integrated education from around 1850 onwards, it was they who killed it. It is true that once the Catholic church had a lot of National schools under de facto Catholic management, it pressed for their denominationalisation. In fact the Catholic church sought denominational education throughout Europe at this time. But the claim that they were responsible for destroying integrated education is too simple. It fails to explore why virtually all Catholics in Ireland

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vent along with the Hierarchy on this issue. This did not happen in other parts of Europe. What happened in Ireland can only be understood when we see how the choices looked to Irish Catholics in the North. Where they had experience of working together with Presbyterians on a basis of equality in national schools run according to the original plan, they had something real to choose. But when they were invited to side with those who saw mixed education as a way of breaking the cohesion of the Irish nation, that was no choice at all. Even the most anti-clerical Catholic would choose the Hierarchy position without a moment's hesitation when it became a power issue between the protectors of "our" schools and the traditional enemy.

The essential point is that in this society the meaning of any proposal for integrated education depends entirely upon the terms upon which the parties to the integration meet. Given the not unfounded Catholic suspicion of anti-Irish and proselytizing intention of schools outside Catholic control, there is always a risk that schemes for integrated education might drift into de facto British-unionist-Protestant education. If it gets into deep enough rivalry with the Catholic hierarchy, its liberalism or anti-clericalism becomes a thin veneer for unionism.

This underlines the essential difference between a mixed school where it happens that there is large minority of one kind in the other kind's school and an integrated school where pupils of both communities come together on equal terms. When integrated schools grow as a compact between the parents, who know and trust each other from their work together, the kinds of dangers outlined above become less threatening. Political difficulties are manageable if the relationships between the parents are close. But for integrated education initiatives to happen on any scale, it will be much easier if people from the two communities sense that they are coming together from positions of relatively equal power. If it is relatively easy for people from one community to become involved and much more difficult for those of the other then mixed schools will tend to be only mixed rather than integrated. If the school systems of both communities are secure, and integrated education is not being promoted in opposition to them, then paradoxically integrated education is most likely to flower.

In thinking about the need to anchor the existing school systems, there would be an obvious role for a power sharing administration or [failing that] for the

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Anglo-Irish Conference. Something is needed to anchor both the state system and the Catholic maintained system, while at the same time making support available to voluntary groups setting up integrated schools on the same basis as other maintained schools. Each national community's school system must be cherished and seen to be cherished if integrated education is to be able to flourish on a voluntary basis beside them.

INTEGRATED SCHOOLS AND RECONCILING NATIONAL DIVISIONS.

Let us now come back to the question of what education has to do with resolving national conflicts? And what part might integrated education play in it specifically. It is essential to underline the fact that integrated education will only mature if it is allowed to grow without being burdened with unrealistic expectations. There are no magical ways of overcoming national divisions through educational systems. In fact quite commonly mixed educational systems in divided societies have been seen not as solutions to conflict but as part of the problem, a source of unacceptable power of one group over another. So what passes for peace in these societies depends on entrenching separate educational systems. This does not eradicate mistrusts, but it makes them more manageable because it leaves each group with their own space. When the problem of distrust is so real, as indeed we know it is here, it is quite unreal to think that the solution is to uproot separate education and impose an impartial syllabus in mixed schools. It is quite possible to stand in front of a class with wonderfully impartial words and to teach skin deep. The content of what is formally taught is much less important than the spirit in which it is taught. As parents or teachers, we often think that we teach with our words and yet when we reflect on our own experience as children we ourselves recall the feelings we sensed in our parents and teachers, rather than their words.

Again Yugoslavia may have given us a warning about what can and cannot be done with more or less impartial "syllabus" in an mixed or integrated educational setting. Since 1945 the Serbs, Croats and Muslims seem to have lived in something like harmony in Bosnia and Croatia. The ethos of the common curriculum was provided by the Communists unifying myth, which -unlike those in other parts of Eastern Europe- had a very large core of truth. It told how all the nations of Yugoslavia had taken part in the liberation

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together. The story of the Partisans was like an umbrella [or transcendence] over all the Yugoslav nations. In 1988 I heard this story told often and with conviction, but it was combined with slightly over-anxious denials that the differences between the Serbo-Croat speaking nations mattered anymore. For example at Jasenovac, the site of the concentration camp where the Croatian Ustashi had massacred Serbians in 1941-4, I saw school children being shown a film, which told how all the various Yugoslav nations had produced criminal elements in World War 2 who had collaborated with outside forces. Without much attention to how much support or how little support each type of collaborator had had, the harmonizing message was that all the nations of Yugoslavia could get on very well, so long as they kept clear of outside troublemakers.

But history, the history of why 'we' have cause to fear 'them', seems to have been only sleeping. Today it turns out that the divisions which so much energy went into suppressing and abolishing are again alive and well. In recent times the Serbians have pushed for dominance within the communist party; and the other nations, most notably the Croats, have become increasingly anti-communist. Since the decay of Communism in 1990, fairly intolerant nationalists won an absolute majority in the Croatian parliament. Their leader explained that they wanted to reduce the influence of the "fifth column", the Serbian minority in Croatia. They proposed to ban the Cyrillic alphabet used by Serbs. Serbs rose up to assert autonomy for Serbian districts in Croatia. They explained that they took weapons with them to guard the polling stations because "when the Croats last came in 1941, we were not ready for them".

Of course we cannot know what the unifying story of the liberation of 1945 did or did not do to bring some of the younger generations of Yugoslavs together. It must have provided a shelter under which some people came to terms with the things which had divided them. But what made the difference as to whether or not it did this must have to do with what went on in particular schools and villages and towns. It is clear that by itself integrated education has not had a great impact in mixed towns like Petrinja, where ethnic polarization even runs through the school staff room. The central point is that what changes us and allows us to grow is the trust which allows repressed feelings to be expressed in relationships with those who those feelings relate to. If power merely imposes a crudely 'impartial' story of how opposed peoples are not really so divided from each other as they themselves sense,

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then a hidden agenda remains just buried. What is repressed does not change. It either lies dormant or it erupts. The communist integrated history, however well intentioned it had been, has not prepared a new generation to cope with the trauma of the past. Indeed the first outbreak of physical hostilities occurred at the Serbo-Croatian equivalent of a Celtic-Rangers match in Zagreb.

The difference between history in Northern Ireland [or any divided society, such as Yugoslavia] and histories of normal societies is that normal societies' histories are not about relationships which are charged with any anxiety or tension today. People who live in normal societies do not realize what a good fortune they have being able to see things the way they can in fact see them. Learning about how to make seriously divided societies 'normal' is like trying to teach naivety. Normal societies histories are shared stories of how peace came. The devils cast out were the same devils for all the citizenry. And that is why the past has become the past. From that time they have lived in concord, disturbed sometimes by minor divisions, oblivious sometimes of their hypocritical unconcern with certain groups of victims, but nonetheless knowing with their being the difference between the past and the present.

For separate national communities in a divided society, for whom there is no common story of how or when peace came, the easiest way to teach about history and society is from the standpoint of 'our' community. In this history the 'other' community appears as an obstacle or threat. The separate school system can then make the best of a bad job, by institutionalising the avoidance of real meeting. Feelings linked with 'our' history can run most smoothly when 'they' are not actually present with 'us'. This does not mean that we cannot acknowledge the pain of the 'others'. But however we acknowledge it in theory, we do not have to actually feel it as a lived reality. If any of 'them' are present as a minority in 'our' school, it is possible to ignore 'their' feelings, so that the story still runs smoothly. If this happens the result is a kind of assimilation of the minority to the community dominant in the school. Alternatively feelings which are at the heart of the conflictual reality are avoided, while tangential bits of the story are concentrated upon and the story ends with "what a pity" it was that the two communities ended up in confrontation. We should not understate how difficult it can be to improve on this approach, if the ethos of the school is not one of trust.

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In an integrated school different feelings would be given space to to be heard. In all probability it will be in historical learning that this is experienced most directly. Integrated learning of history will not just be a matter of finding an impartial approach. An integrated history would be like a vessel in which our different feelings can find expression and interact. Each of our versions of history in a divided society are related to our ways of explaining our feelings and especially our fears in the experience of our families and friends and indeed in our own everyday life. If we explore our histories together with people who have experienced the opposite side of the fear relationships new aspects of history will become interesting and important to us. We can only find common history together when we first treat antagonistic national relationships seriously. Having recognized their coercive power over us, we are better able to see the 'others' historic failings as mirroring our own failings. Then we begin to look at history with new eyes. Perhaps we become aware of those who stood against tides not because they thought they would succeed, but as witnesses to transcendent values, which we will need to discover as a shelter to live under together. They may provide us with role models in place of heroes of ethnic conflicts.

CONCLUSIONS

The main reason why I wrote this paper is the situation that has arisen since the Government and Dr Brian Mawhinney made a very strong commitment to integrated schooling. Because there is an objective need to rationalise school provision, especially in some of the state secondary schools, severely affected by falling numbers, some of the state school providers are feeling threatened by government encouragement for what amounts to a rival system. At the same time the Catholic hierarchy has taken the British Government to court over its supposed intention to discriminate financially against Catholic and in favour of integrated schools.

Some people who support integrated education are understandably very encouraged by what is happening, seeing the old forces of division being at last pushed aside by a dynamic reformer. They imagine that at last the sensible and moderate middle ground, Catholic and Protestant, will come forward and that something will be done to strike down bigotry at its supposed roots. I am sure that this vision is fundamentally misconceived. I predict that

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sooner or later, if the confrontation with the Hierarchy is allowed to grow, then certain other developments will occur.

First the government will have to look for allies for its schemes and the terms upon which a state school can transfer to integrated status will be made progressively easier. [In terms of the historical appendix, that will produce a rerun of 1839] Many state school providers already consider their schools to be "integrated" -and at all events not Protestant- and will be able to secure official recognition for that claim with fewer and less serious conditions. Secondly the more deeply the government becomes locked into opposition with the Hierarchy, the more likely it is that certain kinds of Unionist politicians will come out in favour of "integrated education". [a rerun of 1871] Thirdly, as these two things happen, many Catholics who have up to now looked upon integrated education, in the abstract, as a good idea, will begin to ask themselves whether in the light of the support of English ministers and Unionist politicians on the one hand and the opposition of Catholic clergy on the other, they should think again. [a rerun of 1864-71] It might become another of those tragedies like the Hunger Strikes of 1980-81, when people were divided from each other, not by their rational intellect but by their gut feeling. Catholics might find themselves asking whether integrated schools set up in this climate could really be spaces where both traditions receive equal recognition. I hope very much that integrated education will be spared this trial, which could confound its real possibilities.

At the present time the most important principle to uphold is the parents right to chose a culturally appropriate education for their children [state, Catholic or integrated..or Irish or Free Presbyterian]. It is important, wherever possible, to look for a way of expressing these needs on a united basis, as a government keen to make education more efficient [ie cheaper] may find economizing much easier if educational interests are divided against each other. Integrated education might be destroyed by excessive governmental 'incentive' to promote it, such as financial advantage not enjoyed by other maintained schools whose main effect would be to change the labels on some of the existing grammar schools with sizeable Catholic minorities. It is of paramount importance that integrated schools do not appear as a tool of government policy in opposition to the existing schools. Probably the best thing that could be done to permit integrated education to grow would be to link its access to government funding to a firm commitment to the security of the other two

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systems. It is far more important that some integrated schools grow in the way that the ones which already exist have grown, going through the creative experiences involving the parents, than that many nominally integrated schools be created.

January 1991

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Historical Appendix to "Integrated Education and new beginnings in Northern Ireland"
by Frank Wright

EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DIVISION. THE 19TH CENTURY LEGACY.

At the beginning of the main text I showed how different national groups could make relationships between themselves more manageable by accepting that each needed their own education systems. Despite the ongoing conflict between Unionism and Nationalism in the North of Ireland, by the late 1870s, Home Rulers [later Nationalists] and Conservatives [later Unionists] were tacitly accepting this kind of arrangement. But before that time a lot of people continued to support "mixed secular and separate religious instruction". What happened to these people is instructive, when we look at the difficulties facing integrated education today.

{1} **Background.** Education controversies in their 'modern' form begun in Ulster around the 1820s. Before the 1780s, Catholics had been subject to the penal laws, which were intended to prevent the growth of a Catholic middle class and intelligentsia and to ensure that Catholics remained hewers of wood and drawers of water. Education of Catholics was conducted mostly in illegal 'hedge' schools. The imposition of the Penal laws slackened after the failure of Catholic Ireland to join the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. When 'hedge' schools became legal, the Catholics at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid had nothing to match the endowed Protestant schools. But so long as quality education was still something for higher status social groups only, the Catholics in Ulster aspiring to it were very few.

Outside Ulster, only the ruling classes were Anglican Protestants and the mass of the people below them were Catholic. These Protestants tended to be very defensive about granting Catholics legal equality. But within Ulster, and particularly in the North-East, there were large areas where Catholics were a minority and there were almost no Catholics of power or consequence. In many of these areas the mass of the population was Presbyterian and had been opposed to the Anglican Landlords during the last years of the Irish parliament [1772- 1801]. Some had supported the United Irish Rebellion of 1798 for equal citizen rights. But the question of what to do about education was far more difficult than simply abolishing the anti-catholic legislation of the penal law era. Controversy over education developed as education became a need for wider social strata, and therefore for an ever greater number of Catholics.

In all divided societies, dominant groups tend to be less frightened of small groups of dominated people than of larger groups who can outnumber them. The risks of

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Slaxing the grip upon a dominated group are as small as the group is small. Small minorities of people, who were once dominated, can be treated just as a few individuals with rights like the rest of 'us'. But larger groups cannot be treated like this. After they have emerged from an experience of being dominated, they will demand sooner or later that the qualities for which they have been stigmatised are shown full respect.

During the United Irish period in Inner Ulster there was a big difference for Protestants between tolerating Catholics as individuals with rights and accepting that Catholicism as another denomination of the Christian faith, entitled to group rights and the same respect as their own denominations. Before 1820, schools in parts of Ulster were "mixed", both in the sense that pupils were drawn from Catholic and non-Catholic sources, and that frequently teachers would be found in charge of schools the majority of whose pupils were of opposite denomination to the teacher. Although it was commonly Protestant teachers with a Catholic class, in some cases [for example in the Glenavy, Crumlin and Tullyrusk district] there were schools with Protestant children under Catholic teachers. Being tolerated and not distrusted, Catholics probably did not feel provoked because no one was trying very hard to convert them to anything. That would change only when Catholics started to assert themselves as Catholics throughout Ireland and encountered defensive Protestant reactions.

] Daniel O'Connell's movement for Catholic Emancipation in the 1820s mobilised Catholics as Catholics on a scale unprecedented. Protestant opponents of Catholic Emancipation responded with a campaign to undermine Catholicism through the educational system. The so-called "Second Reformation" intended to prevent a Catholic middle class forming by ensuring that education led to Protestantization. This basically revived the idea behind the Penal Laws.

The second reformation changed Catholic attitudes towards the endowed schools. Whatever assimilation of Catholics to urban commercial [and Protestant] values may have been going on before this, it had not previously seemed to be so actively tended. It was up to Catholics who went to these schools to imbibe the atmosphere of the school; not; and even if these schools were actually far more influential than this, nonetheless they were outwardly tolerant and confident. But now some of those who were over-endowed education began to look upon the assimilation of the educated Catholics as a positive duty. Assimilation and conversion now became a conscious design, intended to detach educated Catholics from the mass of Catholic society. With the rise of an embryonic Catholic middle class whose power became visible in the Emancipation campaign, the Protestant response spurred Catholics to build an education system of their own to rebut the avowedly anti-Catholic impact of the second Reformation.

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[3] Conflicts over educational systems were the beginning of many or perhaps most modern European national conflicts. There came a point in time when dominated groups were in a position to organise behind their own middle class. While the dominant group tried to obstruct the rising group's efforts to control the education of its own children, the old mark of stigma became the badge of pride of the rising nation. If the Penal Laws had been focused against the Irish language rather than Catholicism then perhaps the different school systems in the 19th century would have been distinguished by language. This was what happened between the Germans and the Poles in eastern Germany or the Germans and the Czechs in Austrian Bohemia. But the Irish language had declined because the spread of commerce brought English in its wake. So instead of giving up Irish at the dictation of Britain, the Irish people had the freedom to abandon the use of Irish in their own way and at their own time. If the British had used much deliberate effort to try to eradicate the Irish language (as they did to Catholicism) there would almost certainly have been a reaction from the Irish which would have restored it to the status of first language. **Defending Catholic education has been seen as a sacred duty for Irish nationalists, even for ones who are not believers, because attacking Catholic education had always been seen as a way to uproot Irishness.** Theological issues have become important because Catholicism and Protestantism have become the distinguishing features of opposed national groups. Catholic institutions are assets of the Irish nationalist community and Protestant institutions are assets of the Ulster unionist community.

[4] The National System of Education In Ireland. A false start at integrated education? The first effort to create something like a system of integrated education begun in the aftermath of O'Connell's Catholic Emancipation victory. From now on no English government would willingly attempt to govern against Catholic Ireland if there was an alternative. The new Liberal government accepted the impossibility of Catholics relying on the existing Protestant educational agencies like the Kildare Place Society and the necessity of providing an educational system that would meet Catholic anxieties about proselytising.

In the National Education system [1831] they hoped to create an educational system which would service all denominations in Ireland, a proto-type of some subsequent ideas of integrated education in the North of Ireland. Central funding was the principal attraction and the rules were designed to promote interdenominational co-operation at local level. The National Board provided for two-thirds of the building costs and [after 1834] the running costs of schools that would be under local management. To begin with attempts were made to encourage applications jointly sanctioned by members of different denominations in a locality in preference to those which emanated from one denomination only. All Clergy had ex-officio visitor status (with rights of entry during school hours). And at specified times of religious instruction, all children would be withdrawn to the charge of their respective clergy. Existing schools could come under

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he scheme and receive running costs if they accepted these rules. In taking these steps the government was beginning to recognise not merely the formal equality of Catholics as citizens, but the legitimate role of the priest as leader of the catholic people.

The difficulties for Presbyterian relations with the Board arose from the ex-officio status accorded to Roman Catholic priests (especially at hitherto Presbyterian schools joining the Board system), the "restriction" on the use of the Bible in school hours, and the duty to send Catholic children to their priests at the times of religious instruction. These moves accorded a status to Catholicism equivalent to that of a participating Protestant denomination, a very big step from the abstract rights of individuals to the rights of groups. Any Presbyterian minister who cooperated with priests in educational matters was doing far more than merely accepting a technical equality of rights for Catholics. Wolfe Tone had optimistically fudged this issue, saying that when the Catholics were emancipated, the bond of oppression which bound the rapist to his priest and the priest to the pope would be undone. In much of County Antrim and North Down, where the mass Presbyterian populations had supported the United Irishmen, how did they feel about according such status to the Catholic priest?

As Catholics organised as a bloc to secure the removal of the last of the Penal laws, the touchstone of success or failure would be whether their religion was accepted as having status (at least) comparable to other religions. There has been a tendency with some writers not to see how natural it was that when Catholics became more powerful, the earlier relatively effortless Protestant tolerance of individual Catholics would give way to reaction over these kinds of questions. Thus the rise of Dr. Henry Cooke to leadership of the Synod of Ulster has been seen as a sort of personal and accidental triumph of anti-Catholic intolerance over the Presbyterian Liberalism of Dr. Henry Montgomery. But Cooke was not objecting to formal equality of Catholics as equal citizens under the law. His demands for an "open Bible" was in effect a demand for no let or hindrance, beyond that which was compatible with a minimal recognition of the rights of private judgement, to evangelise all children in schools including all Catholic children who didn't actually object to being so evangelised. Any Presbyterian opponent of Cooke's position who supported the early concept of National Education and did not try to skirt round the recognition of the priests' guardian role were accused of compromising articles of faith.

5j Priests become political as well as spiritual authorities in the North. This appened often in the mixed nationality belts of the Middle East and Eastern Europe. theocracy or clerical leadership in the North of Ireland gave the Catholic community bargaining power in dealing with local powers. The Liberal government reforms in the 1830s which were a response to the rising power of Catholics in the rest of Ireland, gave Catholic clergy in the North some leadership functions in relation to Education

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and Law and Order. Any power the Northern Catholics had depended in the first place on being part of Catholic Ireland as a whole. Once priests had such influence, they were often accorded recognition by for example landlords, which tended to build their position up yet further. Many secured sites for National schools from landlords who might not have facilitated the establishment of National Schools as a matter of right, but who stood to gain by good relationships with the leaders of their Catholic tenants.

[6] Where there is a gulf between ethnic groups, an area of anxiety, distrust, or thinly buried history of hostility, they tend to keep their distance from each other. Then "we" do not know very much about "them" and "we" tend to judge "them" by the worst things any of "them" do which the rest of "them" do not seem to repudiate. The worst things "they" do validate "our" suspicions of them. But what can become a blind spot for us is the extent to which "they" judge us by "our" worst. Dr Henry Cooke for example had a very understandable distaste for an educational system which he thought prevented schools from evangelising Catholic children. In 1833-4 two Presbyterian ministers in the Ahoghill/Portglanone districts toured the countryside with mobs vandalising schools that had been placed under the National Board. The letter "P" for Popery was scrawled on their doors. Cooke spoke of their 'excessive zeal' against Popery, indicating how far the duty to the 'open Bible' could be stretched and how it might be legitimately interpreted by anyone on the relieving end of such mob action.

[7] To create something like integrated education, minister and priest as guardians of their flocks, had to work together in trust. It seems very clear that in the early days of National education, when it could only work on that basis of mutual respect and trust, that there were lots of places where integrated education actually happened. In 1849 at least twenty-five of the sixty-one vested schools in County Antrim (where the Board's regulations as to religious instruction applied) were under Presbyterian management. There was even one in Ahoghill, the centre of the 1833-4 agitation.

But the implication of mixed education subtly changed over the next 15 years. Towards the end of the 1830s, when the Catholic hierarchy became more dissatisfied about the system, the government became more and more anxious to conciliate Presbyterian opposition. The compromise of 1840 allowed non-vested schools to merely give children of different denominations the right to leave the schoolroom during hours of religious instruction. No longer was it necessary to accept the guardian role of the priest in relation to Catholic children. Then the Presbyterian followers of Cooke began to declare the system acceptable. But this new support came from people who were not interested in working with Catholic clergy as the first wave had been. The spirit of anything like integrated education was already being undermined. This showed particularly clearly when an effort was made to extend the National

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school idea at university level. Lord Clarendon, the lord lieutenant, circulated the proposed statutes to the Hierarchy for their comments and criticisms, assuring them that Catholic clergy would have visitors status and that "in the council, professorships and other posts of such Colleges, the Catholic religion will be fully and appropriately represented". One statute provided that a student's failure to attend the place of worship prescribed by his parent or guardian would be sanctioned by the threat of expulsion. The official Presbyterian paper the Banner of Ulster described this as a provision that a Roman Catholic youth "may be expelled ... for attending a Protestant place of worship". The Banner's response indicated that an institution run according to its principles should keenly encourage Catholics to turn to Protestantism. "If the Government are determined to play into the hands of the Papists in this manner, we say, perish the Queen's Colleges. Let them be shunned by all true Protestants, let them be handed over at once to Dr. Murray and to the Pope". Fortunately for the Banner and for Presbyterian educational interests generally, they did not have to live with this anathema. The Colleges were condemned by the Hierarchy and two years later the Banner suggested that Presbyterians should now "take possession" of the Queen's colleges "so as to obtain a practical establishment within their walls". This, at least as far as the Belfast college was concerned, was what actually happened. And in later years when many Presbyterians were defending the principle of 'united secular and separate religious education', this slogan was often a smokescreen for a "practical establishment" of Presbyterians.

5] The Catholic church had been glad of National Education when it was first created because it was the only way to secure Catholics education outside formally Protestant institutions. This changed as more de-facto Catholic but nominally National schools were built and once they saw the compromises the Presbyterians extracted.

The Catholic church in mid-century moved towards a denominationalist position as it did every where in Europe. The bishops' demands were highly disagreeable to anyone who wanted to preserve mixed education as a form of integrated education. In 1859 the Hierarchy issued a Pastoral Letter stating the necessity of separation in the educational sphere and they made explicit demands that the Government finance a wholly denominational Catholic system. Included in the demands were the chartering and endowment of the Catholic University in Dublin, the dividing up of the National Schools between the various denominations, and the total and unrestricted oversight of all such Catholic educational institutions by the clergy.

There were then a lot of Catholics still going to Protestant managed National schools and some going to higher level endowed schools. There were others attending the model schools for teacher training and some at the Queen's Colleges. But the fact that

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within twenty years Catholics almost unanimously had followed the spirit of the 1859 Pastoral cannot be explained without looking at the actions of the movement to preserve mixed education.

[9] The Defence of Mixed Education up to 1871.

This section underlines our earlier theme that any attempt to preserve the National Education system as a genuine cooperative venture could only work so long as there was no question of it being a proselytising agency. Clergy had to accept that a Catholic was a Catholic by birth, and likewise a Presbyterian was a Presbyterian by birth. But this could only happen when there was local trust between the clergy and the educational providers. As the Catholics promoted more and more Catholic national schools, the integrated idea was under threat. But to respond to this danger by any other means than to concentrate upon preserving relations of trust locally, was to make matters worse.

Some Protestants started to see the Hierarchy as the obstacle to mixed education, and as actual relationships between Protestants and Catholics grew more distant, they made more and more noise about mythical "Intelligent Catholics", meaning ones who were prepared to ignore the Hierarchy's pronouncements. Just how counter-productive this approach could be for promoting cooperative relationships with Catholic liberals can be gauged from the story of the Catholic Institute in Belfast.

In the 1860s, the Catholic middle-class in Belfast was still fairly small and in a great measure its existence depended upon service of its own community. Just as today when such a large part of the Catholic middle class is involved in the Catholic teaching sector. The wealthier Catholics, far from being rejected, were treated as an asset by the Catholic Community. The interdependence between Catholics was very strong and perhaps best expressed in Bernard Hughes' remark about Catholic opposition to the Indemnity Bill of 1864. The only Catholics, he said, in favour of it were "those out of the church, such as Freemasons and those holding government appointments".

In 1865 Bishop Dorrian was involved in a dispute with the lay trustees of the Catholic Institute over which he sought to impose direct control, including the supervision of the books and newspapers provided within it. The lay trustees refused to give ground. After several months of quite bitter argument the Bishop threatened to withhold the sacraments from those who would not bow to his demands. In the end the trustees signed over the deeds to him. Whether or not they would have done so under other circumstances is an open question. But the dispute drew the attention of other parties whose interest in the welfare of Catholicism was to say the least questionable. For example the 'Carrickfergus Freeman' had had this to say of the dispute:

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"The firm stand taken by the laity against the tyranny and usurpation of their Bishop prove that we were mistaken . . . and that the Roman Catholics are not such serfs or poltroons lying under the feet of their clergy as we supposed"

A.J. McKenna editor of the 'Observer' was profoundly embarrassed by the support coming from quarters such as this. He was opposed to the Bishop's actions, but seeing what "allies" the laity were collecting, he could hardly afford to say so. In fact, during the period rumours were widely circulated that he was writing anonymously against the Bishop in the 'Newsletter', a charge that hurt deeply and which he was only given the chance to refute when the rival 'Ulster Examiner' printed the innuendo three years later. The 'Newsletter's' intervention drew these words from him;

"We hardly need say that Catholics can settle their own affairs, without any interference on the part of their enemies. They require no instruction from the ignorant, no assistance from the hypocritical.... That subject will be settled by Catholics themselves, who are not accustomed to make scandals, or to perpetuate them, and whose unbroken unity is the best guarantee of their continued concord.....The only effect which the comments of our Orange contemporary could have on the Catholics of Belfast would be to make them adopt exactly the opposite course of that which it had the presumption to recommend. . . . The feeling of apprehension entertained by the Romans of the gift of the Greeks, was no more natural than is Catholic alarm at Tory approval and Orange advocacy".

The message to Protestant Liberals about how to keep alive cooperation with Catholic Liberals ought to have been clear enough. It was utterly fatal to mix up non-sectarian causes with opportunities for pot-shots at the Hierarchy. You could not expect to build trusting relations with Catholics on a basis of hostility to their church leaders. In other words all windows of trust had to be looked into however dim the promise might be. But as the Catholic Church became increasingly adamant in its support for denominationalization, Rev John MacNaughton pioneered a new tendency to make the Presbyterian Church a political force for defence of the status quo in the National system, the Queen's College and the Model Schools (for teacher training).

Very few Catholics availed themselves of the opportunity to go to Queen's College, Belfast, which the Hierarchy had condemned. In 1865 only 22 of its 405 students were Catholic. When agitation began for a charter for the Catholic university in April 1865, the Presbyterian 'Banner' denounced it because, if it was granted, Roman Catholics could withdraw from the Queen's Colleges. Initially there seemed little chance of the charter being granted, but then the Presbyterian General Assembly voted to approve an application from its own Magee College in Derry to apply for affiliate status to the Queen's University. The proponents of the Roman Catholic university shelved their demand for a charter and seemed to be negotiating instead for affiliate status on the same basis that Magee was asking for. Here was an opportunity for a compromise to

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resolve the very difficult issue of denominational safeguards at university level, or was it?

How did the Presbyterians regard the prospect of affiliation not merely of Magee College but of the Roman Catholic university also to Queen's? A special meeting of the General Assembly was held in February 1866 to discuss the issue. This meeting, which withdrew the Magee application for fear of it being a precedent for the Catholic application, was greeted by both the 'Northern Whig' and the 'Banner of Ulster' as a "Liberal victory". MacNaughton opened the debate by arguing that the Presbyterian church was committed to the system of united secular education as a matter of principle; that the denominationalization of the National Education system through the introduction of the principle of sectarian representation on the Board was dangerous; that the Magee College application would be employed as a "wedge" to secure changes in the Queen's University Senate constitution which (in the process of affiliating Magee and the Roman Catholic university) would permit the denominational principle to creep in here too.

Much was said of the need to defend the rights of the Catholic laity to education that was not dominated by clerics. If Roman Catholic colleges were affiliated this, it was said, would reduce the incentive to go to the Queen's Colleges "and mix with their brethren of other denominations". At the moment Catholics went to these colleges "in the face of priestly denunciations". The Roman Catholic university was "an institution which was to regulate the Roman Catholic youth of the country in such a manner that it would not be possible for the superstitions which they advocate to be touched by the enlightenment of the present age". Put simply, defending "non-sectarianism" meant keeping "Popery" out of higher education.

Today we might well remember the small minority in the Presbyterian Assembly who, while they supported non-sectarian education, had some grasp of how the issue looked to Catholics. They understood the dangers of alliance with anti-Catholics. And they grasped quite clearly that the prospect of Catholic university affiliation to Queen's, rather than the granting of a separate charter, might be a viable solution to a very real difficulty. Most of the time there did not seem to be much chance of compromise in dealing with Ultramontane educational demands, but here were the promoters of the Catholic University doing something unusual and something which promised a possible route to a compromise. Admittedly Rev Richard Smyth, as a professor in Magee College, had a vested interest, but his speech sums up the knots that the advocates of "united non-sectarian education" had tied themselves in.

"I warn you that if you follow the view put forward by these ardent defenders of the status quo, it will land you in embarrassment and perhaps disgrace. No one has yet attempted to show what is wrong with the Government proposal. The students who

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will be admissible for degrees under the new charter can get them now in London University (by external examination) at additional expense. And what I want to know is whether what is right in London can be wrong in Dublin? What right have you to banish our students to London for degrees? Will you tell young Irishmen of education that if they wish to be admitted to the right of literary citizenship they must go to England and there they will find a door open which is shut against them here? 'Liberty of conscience', say these its latest expounders, does not include an Irish University degree. They can afford to be generous, comprehensive and liberal in England, but Ireland would not be Ireland if it did not retain some remnant of intolerance. But I now push the battle into the enemy's camp, and I tell our opponents that they are the worst friends of United Education, for when a great crisis does arise, is some day it shall when United Education will be in real danger, these noisy brethren will be regarded as consistently discontented, hard to please, and their influence will be lost. Concede what is right without reference to wedges and resist where you should offer resistance."

Although it is almost certain that the Catholic proposal to follow the Magee precedent was only tactical, there is no way of knowing what might have followed if they had been successful in pursuing this tactic. An open hand from Presbyterianism then might have changed the way Catholics pursued educational questions. Someone had to change and here was a possible starting point. Instead Protestants carried on the farce of 'defending the rights of the Catholic laity' against clerical despotism. At a Queen's College Convocation meeting, the Vice Chancellor was hissed and groaned when he mentioned the charter. The debate that followed was of such a character that 45 Roman Catholic graduates walked out. And the Presidents of the Colleges refused to co-operate with the Senate in giving it effect until its legality was tested.

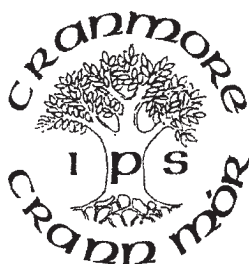
The tendency for the defence of Mixed education to slip over into Hierarchy bashing grew stronger and stronger, as the cause attracted the support of more and more anti-Catholics. In early 1867 a meeting in Belfast of "Friends of United Education" was called to oppose the use of convents as alternatives to the Model schools as teacher training establishments. Rev. J.S. Porter, a Unitarian and one of 19th century Belfast's most active promoters of what we would today call integrated education, said that teachers would emerge "with strong prejudices having never seen a Protestant child or teacher". The Catholic paper the 'Observer' said "There were Whigs, who would be insulted or pretend to be insulted, if you called them bigots, who stood on a common platform with men who glory in their bigotry, and who espouse the 'mixed system' of education simply because they believe it inimical to Catholic interests". The 'Observer' found the meeting discreditable to Belfast Protestants and offensive to Irish Catholics.

In late 1871, there were rumours that the Powis commission proposals in favour of denominationalisation were to be acted upon. Even the [Anglican] Church Education

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society moved toward the National Education League. So great was the seeming conversion of hitherto denominational Protestants to "non-sectarianism" that some Liberals became alarmed at the prospect of national education becoming the "pet" of Irish Toryism. Alex Johns, J.P. a moderate Conservative from Carrickfergus warned against letting the issue become a "Protestant question" and permitting its meetings to be infected with talk of "Romish errors". Yet William Johnston, the Independent Orange MP for Belfast spoke at a meeting of the League in Cookstown. He and other local dignitaries appeared wearing Orange sashes. The meeting, said the Ulster Examiner, threw off the non-sectarian disguise of the League. "The Orange sashes and paraphernalia of the Cookstown education meeting will carry this question beyond the domain of non-sectarianism, exposing as it does the real feeling which animates the Presbyterian and Unitarian ministers on the subject". This was nonsense but it illustrates the way in which, once an issue develops a hint of a sectarian colour, it is in danger of being judged by the most sectarian statement or action made on its behalf. Only actual relationships of Trust across sectarian division, and their preservation as the primary consideration, can be a foundation for work whose aim is to promote cross-sectarian understanding.

Cranmore Integrated Primary School



Principal: Mr W Doherty
 Cranmore Integrated
 Primary School
 47 Finaghy Road North
 Belfast BT10 0JB
 Telephone 028 90664410
 Fax 028 90665216
www.cranmoreips.co.uk

Evidence for Education Committee Shared and Integrated Education

Introduction and Background

Cranmore Integrated Primary School was established in 1993 as an all-ability integrated primary school. The school initially opened with 37 pupils and 3 teaching staff in rented accommodation off the Lisburn Road, Belfast.

Demand, Growth and Expansion

In the last two decades the school has grown and developed beyond the imagination of the founding Principal staff, governors and parents. In September 2001 the school relocated to a new purpose built school on a site off Finaghy Road North. The school is a very popular choice both in the local community but also across south Belfast and beyond. The school has a current enrolment of 208 with a further 24 children attending the attached pre-school setting. Year on year we are oversubscribed for places in the school and pre-school.

Parental demand for integrated education has been growing steadily over the last two decades. In the transforming Northern Irish society many parents are opting to have their children educated together in an integrated context, in an effort to heal many of the sectarian divisions that have caused so much trauma in Northern Irish society. Indeed many of the pupils in our school come from areas where periodic inter community difficulties are a regular feature. However our parents have a great desire for their children to experience tolerance, respect and understanding of difference. They recognise that these aspirations are delivered by integrated schools like Cranmore. Indeed, many of our parents deliberately choose to drive past local schools and in many cases schools with excellent reputation so that their children can attend Cranmore.

Shared Education vs Integrated Education

Shared Education and Integrated Education cannot be seen as one and the same. They are two different models, with different aspirations and with varying degrees of success. Integrated Education has at its core the desire to see young people from Protestant, Catholic, other or no religious background educated together. Opportunities for achieving this are presented to the staff and pupils on a daily basis, sometimes in a formal way and at other times informally.



...a creative education for the modern Belfast child.

Cranmore Integrated Primary School Ltd Company Registration No: NI027338



In recent years it has become fashionable for other schools to market themselves as 'integrated'. In doing so these schools hope to attract additional pupils based on claims they are 'a naturally integrated school'. Integration is not about 'mixed' schools nor is it about children from different backgrounds sitting in the same classroom. Integrated education is about a much deeper commitment to providing our young people with a child-centred education in the context of a school where everyone is driven by the values of the promotion of equality and good community relations.

While there are good examples of collaboration between schools these projects are mostly ineffective as they focus on the issues at the time and provide nice encounter sessions between schools but they are rarely followed up when funding is no longer available. Any attempt to define shared education must not be an opportunity to propagate this model at the expense of integrated education.

Integrated education is a project for the long term stability of Northern Irish society. Attempts at shared education and providing funding for short term projects merely tinkers at the edge of the problems of sectarianism and division. Integrated schools have survived and prospered despite community tensions, a reluctance to challenge and change the status quo, issues with enrolment, accommodation and finance in the early days of existence.

Integrated education in many parts of Northern Ireland has shown that with tenacity we can overcome the barriers. However, integrated education is not as widespread an option as it should be nor could be due to those barriers.

Barriers and Enablers for Integrated Education

Barriers	Enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of integrated education in Belfast is very small and yet 66% of parents want to see the percentage of pupils attending integrated school rise from 4% to 33%. (Belfast Telegraph survey) • DE cap on enrolment numbers for integrated schools. (Cranmore IPS is currently capped at 203 and all classes are full) • Integrated primary schools have never been able to open with nursery provision. This is the reason why many of our schools have voluntary playgroups. The Minister has resisted several attempts by integrated schools to change from playgroup to nursery status – the argument of displacement. • The Shared Education agenda could impact on Integrated Education. Parents and the wider community may think that provision for sharing is the same as integration. • Development proposals are considered on the basis of impact on nearby schools. This ignores parental demand and also that the ethos, philosophy and general character of schools is different depending on the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental demand for integration is strong as indicated by many surveys and opinion polls. • Demographic change has led many to see the importance of educating children together. • The number of newcomer families in Belfast has created a greater desire to see children educated together. • Changing mind-sets – parents no longer send their children to the school they attended. • Increasing number of parents have the experience of having attended an integrated school themselves. • Commitment between stakeholders to the school ethos. • Performance of many integrated schools during ETI inspections. • The model of Integrated Education is held in high esteem across the world. • Cranmore IPS like many other integrated schools has hosted delegations of students, teachers and philanthropists from around the world who are keen to find out more about our good practice.

Barriers	Enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area based planning focusses on consolidating and a rationalising of the existing segregated system of education. • DE failure to fulfil the statutory duty to facilitate the development of integrated education as set out in article 64 of the 1989 Education Reform Order. • Pre-school settings seen as non-sectoral and non-denominational. This is not the case for the vast majority of these settings the children in attendance are predominantly from one religious background. • The decision to form a single Education and Library Board is a lost opportunity and a lost voice to promote integrated education. The new ELB will have no direct representation from the sector. 	

- Please note the Board of Governors of Cranmore IPS have submitted two development proposals to change our PEAG funded playgroup to nursery status. Despite being oversubscribed year on year and with an established building which would require little capital spend from DE the Minister has refused the proposals. The Minister has cited his reason as displacement of existing PEAG placement. We dispute this and see a change to nursery status as a way of enhancing early years education in our area.
- Playgroup and Nursery provision is not a level playing field. A voluntary playgroup is funded differently, professional staff have no access to services provided by the local ELB such as psychology, Education Welfare and SEN support.
- A further inequality exists in that the early years curriculum is the same for both settings but a voluntary playgroup is inspected both by ETI and annually by Social Services. The restrictions on staff ratio and vetting procedures required by Social Services is a bureaucratic nightmare for the leader of a voluntary playgroup.

Conclusion

It is firmly our belief that planned integrated education offers the following benefits:

- Integrated education provides a united community wherein difference is celebrated, diversity and respect are at the core of the school ethos. Opportunities arise informally and formally on a daily basis to explore difference and celebrate our shared traditions and beliefs.
- Good examples of community cohesion is delivered without the difficulty of reaching agreement across different schools. There is no impact on timetabling, no need for the added expense of a neutral venue and additional transport.
- Financially integrated schools meet the needs of the whole school community without over duplication of resources.
- Educating our children together allows pupils to experience good practice in relation to conflict resolution, peer negotiation, CRED, PDMU and citizenship on a daily basis with their own peer/friendship groups.

Yours faithfully

Mr William Doherty

Department for Employment and Learning



Department for
**Employment
and Learning**

www.delni.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee
Committee for Education
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Adelaide House
39/49 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FD
Tel: 028 9025 7791
Fax: 028 9025 7919
email: private.office@delni.gov.uk

Our Ref: COR/390/14

Your Ref: PMcC/JW/1606

3 November 2014

Dear Peter,

Committee for Education – Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Committee for Education wrote to the Department for Employment & Learning on 12th September 2014 requesting information on how the Department believes that the further and higher education sectors currently interact with shared education programmes and the integrated education sector.

Please find enclosed the Department's written submission in response to this inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

FIONA STANLEY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



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COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION – SHARED AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION INQUIRY

Written Submission from the Department for Employment and Learning

The Department for Employment and Learning thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide evidence to this inquiry. The provision of education to all learners regardless of their background is an unwritten tenet of the further and higher education (FE and HE) sectors in Northern Ireland, and the Department is entirely supportive of the delivery of professional and technical (vocational) education as part of the core school curriculum through the entitlement framework. We set out below some relevant features of the FE and HE sectors in relation to shared and integrated education, how they have engaged in this area in the past and what role they may usefully play in the future.

Further Education

An Integrated Sector

All six further education colleges offer fully integrated education and training. They are required under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to promote good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group, and report to the Equality Commission on their progress.

The FE sector has played a significant role for over 30 years in providing education and training for members of all sections of the community in a society divided by social and political conflict. Divisions continue to be evident in politics, cultural expression, education, employment and many other aspects of daily life. However, by enabling students from different traditions and cultures to come together to work and learn with others from different backgrounds further education has made an important contribution to the development of a stable and more harmonious society, and has the potential to make further contributions.

The statistics relating to the section of the community from which further education learners are drawn is shown in table 1. This demonstrates clearly that the further education sector as a whole is integrated, with learners from all backgrounds

studying in FE. Colleges are also reflective of the geographical areas they serve, with their intakes closely reflecting the breakdown of the communities in their areas.

Table 1: Accredited Enrolments⁽¹⁾ at NI Further Education Institutions by Background - 2008/09 to 2012/13

Background ⁽²⁾	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Catholic	52,919	60,728	55,902	55,726	56,206
Protestant ⁽³⁾	46,625	51,988	46,744	46,643	50,566
Other Religion	583	1,266	486	548	621
No Religion	6,080	6,349	6,550	7,126	9,088
Not Stated/Not Known	36,279	43,019	45,743	43,033	40,325
Not Stated/Not Known (%)	25.5	26.3	29.4	28.1	25.7
Total	142,486	163,350	155,425	153,076	156,806

Source: Further Educational Statistical Record

Notes:

1. Enrolments are for courses leading to regulated qualifications.

2. Background is not a mandatory question and has a high non-response rate.

3. Protestant includes other Christian.

Working with Schools

Formal and informal links between schools and colleges have been a feature of the educational landscape for many decades. However, the more recent policy of school and college collaboration has its origins in the Costello Report – “Future Post-Primary Arrangements in Northern Ireland: Advice from the Post-Primary Review Working Group” (January 2004). Between 2004 and 2008 DEL and DE worked together to deliver the Vocational Enhancement Programme (VEP), with DEL being the lead department and budget holder. The VEP was developed to progress the recommendations contained in the Costello Report and in the Further Education Means Business strategy to enhance the profile of professional and technical education, and to promote the need for collaboration among schools and FE colleges in the interest of all pupils.

The VEP grew from fewer than 2,000 pupils in the 2004/05 academic year, to around 10,000 pupils in the 2007/08 academic year who were enrolled on over 12,733 professional and technical education courses. Of the 12,733 courses, around 72% were taken up by 14 to 16 year old school pupils, and around 28% were taken up by 16 to 18 year old school pupils. By 2007/08, 220 post-primary schools (including 32

special schools), nine training organisations and all six FE colleges were involved in the VEP.

The VEP ended in June 2008, being replaced by the Entitlement Framework, which was also intended to take forward the recommendations in the Costello Report. Since September 2008, funding has been channelled through DE to schools through the Entitlement Framework funding formula, with schools 'buying' provision from colleges. The Entitlement Framework aims to provide access for pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum to enable them to reach their full potential no matter which school they attend or where they live. Under the Entitlement Framework, one third of the curriculum made available to pupils must be general (academic) in nature, one third must be professional and technical (DE use the term applied) in nature, while the remaining third is at the discretion of the school. However, pupils can still choose to follow a 100% academic course of study, the 'entitlement' being that applied courses have to be made available to all pupils. The Entitlement Framework is enshrined in legislation, and is being implemented by DE on a phased basis.

Currently further education colleges work together with schools in the delivery of the Entitlement Framework. Colleges are in the main tasked with the provision of high quality applied (professional and technical) education. The school and college collaboration aspect of the Entitlement Framework has worked well since its introduction, and colleges have had school pupils from different backgrounds attending their campuses to avail of the high quality courses on offer, delivered in state of the art facilities and led by industry expert lecturers. For example, in 2012/13 around 11,500 pupils availed of applied opportunities delivered by further education colleges under the Entitlement Framework policy.

School and college collaboration is important for two main reasons. Firstly, because of the enriched and industrially relevant courses that are made available to pupils as part of their wider curriculum. Secondly, as indicated above, colleges are recognised as being genuinely cross-community integrated educational establishments and, in addition, when attending colleges as part of the Entitlement Framework classes are often a mixture of pupils from different schools and from different backgrounds. Therefore, colleges' involvement in the delivery of the Entitlement Framework can contribute substantially to the shared education policy intent.

It is also important to highlight that college and schools work together on the area planning of provision to be delivered under the Entitlement Framework.

While school/college collaboration has worked well, there is a considerable risk that changes to how the Entitlement Framework is funded, in particular the removal of the 'ring fenced' budget allocation, may reduce schools' willingness to collaborate with colleges. Evidence is emerging that the view of many schools is that they will not be able to afford to collaborate with colleges to the extent that they have in the past when the funding model is changed from the 2015/16 academic year. If schools collaborate less with colleges, there is a risk that the lecturing capacity that has been built up over a number of years will be lost.

All of this is bound to have an adverse impact on the delivery of the shared education agenda, as colleges are fully integrated environments where school children would be studying professional and technical qualifications in classes made up of people drawn from all sections of the community. Additionally, we believe that further education colleges are much better equipped than schools to deliver these qualifications due to their facilities and expertise, so any retrenchment from colleges to schools of the applied section of the Entitlement Framework is likely to jeopardise the shared education outcomes and, indeed, the qualifications outcomes and wider education experience of school children, from whichever part of the community they are drawn.

Shared and Integrated College Estates and Facilities

As indicated, further education colleges, as cross-community institutions that cross all educational boundaries and welcome all ages and backgrounds, are at the forefront of shared education. This continues to be manifested through the continuing development of the college estate. For example, Southern Regional College has an approved outline business case to build a new college in Craigavon which will open up integrated education for a wider section of the population of the area than is currently the case in the existing separate campuses in Portadown and Lurgan. Also relevant is the recent progress of the Lisanelly Education campus in

Omagh which would open up opportunities for South West College to further develop engagement with the post-primary education system.

Colleges also continue to work together to share resources and facilities between themselves through the implementation of a shared services programme. While shared education is not a direct aim of this approach (it is more concerned with realising potential organisational efficiencies and bringing colleges together as a more coherent sector), the lessons learned from these processes may well be of interest to the schools sector when planning their own collaborative arrangements to deliver the shared education agenda.

Higher Education

The majority of Higher Education provision in Northern Ireland operates largely on a shared and integrated basis. The sector is comprised of five institutions, Queen's University Belfast, University of Ulster, the Open University, Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College. The institutions are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of staff and students. The institutions are supported in their efforts by their respective Students' Unions.

Students enrolled at the institutions include all sections of the community as illustrated in the extract from the most recent HESA data below:

Religion ^{(2) (3)}	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Protestant	14,200	13,570	14,415	14,740	14,505	14,065
Catholic	19,820	19,380	20,995	21,380	21,275	21,115
Other	1,345	1,395	2,270	2,765	3,510	4,115
Not known	6,720	7,355	5,990	5,070	3,970	4,085
Non NI Domiciles	6,110	6,540	7,320	8,040	8,645	8,335
Total	48,200	48,240	50,990	52,000	51,905	51,715

Source: HESA

2 Information on religion, marital status and dependents is only collected for NI domiciled students studying at NI HE institutions.

3. Religious affiliation is not a mandatory question and therefore can have a high non-response rate.

Initial Teacher Education

Within the initial teacher education sector, i.e. the two universities and university colleges, accommodating faith based education provision within current structures leads towards religious imbalances in student enrolments at the teacher training colleges. This is also reflected in the table of NI domiciled enrolments at the university colleges below:

Religion	Stranmillis University College			St Mary's University College		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2010-11	2011-2012	2012-2013
Protestant	715	820	895	5	5	10
Catholic	355	400	445	930	975	1,045
Other	25	30	30	5	5	5
Not known/available	160	40	45	10	5	10
Total	1,250	1,290	1,415	950	990	1,070

Source HESA

Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 in line with HESA Policy.

The principle of shared and integrated education was a key issue in the recent Stage Two Review of Initial Teacher Education Infrastructure. The Minister recently commissioned this review to consider how best to develop teacher education to a world-class standard; to enhance and improve sharing and integration; to examine whether the funding provided could be used more effectively; and the structural changes that need to be made achieve that. The Review Panel invited submissions from across the teacher education sector and held meetings with key stakeholders including representatives of the integrated education sector.

The final report reflects the evidence provided to the Panel, demonstrating commitment throughout the teacher education sector to the principle of shared education, and also the commitments outlined in key public documents such as *Programme for Government, Together: Building a United Community*; and the *Department of Education Ministerial Advisory Group 'Advancing Shared Education'*.

The Panel commented:

"It is clear from evidence submitted to us, and from our discussions with the teacher education institutions, that all subscribe to the principle of shared education, that all make a contribution at present to what shared education entails, and that all are

willing to contribute to the further development of shared education. Moreover, shared education is a key policy objective supported by all political parties in Northern Ireland and therefore has important implications for initial teacher education.

As the recent report to the Minister of Education defined it, shared education involves two or more schools or other institutions from different sectors working in collaboration in a way that “delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion”. Moreover, just as faith-based teacher education is accepted to require active participation in and personal experience of what it means to teach in a particular faith tradition, so we maintain that all teacher education students should, as part of their total programme and experience, engage in shared education activities of the kind we have mentioned.”

The Review Panel also draws attention to the future sustainability of the current Initial Teacher Education system and acknowledges that although this can build on the existing high quality provision, there is a need “to accelerate those developments in a way that will ensure financial sustainability. The report provides examples, such as encouraging providers to diversify their provision through perhaps greater collaboration and jointly offered undergraduate degrees between the Universities and the University Colleges, drawing on their different expertise.”

The Panel concludes:

“Underpinning all of these considerations is the need to make the best use of limited financial resources in training and developing a teaching force for Northern Ireland that is truly world-class. Given what we have learned about the commitment to achieving that objective that already exists in Northern Ireland, we believe there are good grounds for being hopeful.”

This is consistent with the Stage One Study of Initial Teacher Education (2013), conducted by independent consultants, which analysed the financial stability of the two university colleges and demonstrated that the colleges are heavily reliant on maintaining intake numbers and grant levels per student in the future to remain

financially viable and concluded that both colleges are unlikely to be financially viable unless significant efficiency savings can be obtained or additional income earned.

The Review Panel has included in the '*Conditions for Change*' section of their report that it recommends for any new Initial Teacher Education infrastructure, that each institution should ensure that every teacher education course should include a programme of shared education. The Review Panel acknowledged that this was a matter for the Department of Education however it believed that,

"initial teacher education has a vitally important role to play in the achievement of effective shared education and we hope that DE will agree to make the preparation of new teachers in shared education a significant and compulsory element for all programmes. Such an element is an integral feature of all four policy options outlined in the report."

Work is underway on engaging with the HE institutions about the detail of the report including the focus on shared education.

Conclusion

Taken together, the further and higher education sectors in Northern Ireland have a good track record in delivering education to all citizens, regardless of their background. In the light of the FE sector's remit for delivering the Entitlement Framework, the Department believes that there is the potential for the schools sector to learn from the experience of FE in delivering this approach successfully, whether it is through direct engagement with colleges or engagement at a departmental level. Engaging colleges as partners in delivering the Entitlement Framework will also assist greatly in achieving the aims of the shared education policy, as well as ensuring that the best professional and technical education is available to all school-age learners.

We wish the Committee well with its inquiry.

Drumlins Integrated Primary School



Drumlins IPS

43 Lisburn Road
Ballynahinch
Co Down
BT24 8TT
Tel: 028 9756 3755
Fax: 028 9756 3755

Principal: Mrs Janice Marshall

24th October 2014.

Dear Mr McCallion

I am writing in response to your request for written evidence with regard to Shared and Integrated Education.

I am principal of Drumlins Integrated Primary School, in Ballynahinch. Our school opened 10 years ago due to parental demand; parents in Ballynahinch wanted the choice of integrated education for their children in this town. Drumlins met all necessary criteria for the school to receive full Department of Education funding and approval. The school opened in September 2004 with 12 Primary 1 pupils and currently has over 170 pupils and is one of the most oversubscribed schools in the area.

This oversubscription has certainly not been achieved through the school having better resources and physical structure than other schools; indeed the school currently sits in an industrial estate, in a number of mobiles on our third temporary site. Our school has faced a number of very significant challenges since opening; outgrowing each site, having poor physical accommodation, facing uncertainty as to where – or even if – a permanent school site could be identified and having low admissions and enrolments set for the school causing difficulty for the school's growth. Despite these obstacles the school has remained a popular choice with parents and in most years has been oversubscribed.

We were delighted on 24th June 2014 when the Minister for Education, John O'Dowd, announced that Drumlins was to receive a new purpose built school to serve the children of the Ballynahinch area – but our success has not been dependant on this announcement.

In Ballynahinch sharing occurs successfully across sectors at both primary and post-primary level; we are fully in support of this and are often involved in sharing activities with the other schools. However the parents in the town still wanted to have the choice of integrated education for their children. A huge amount of work had to be undertaken over several years for the parents to achieve this goal and I personally have a huge amount of respect for the school steering group as I had the privilege of joining them at a later stage, when so much of the work had already been done. I do however have the shared goal with those early parents and our current parents of achieving academic excellence for our pupils through learning in an integrated setting.

Our pupils have opportunities to learn about and develop respect and understanding of one another's culture, religion, beliefs and abilities. I have no doubt that this happens in other educational settings which are not integrated but we value having 'Integrated' in our title as it clearly states our intention in both learning and ethos.

Sharing is a term which can be open to much misinterpretation; for example, how much sharing? In what ways are things shared? What is shared? How is the sharing regulated? Integrated schools clearly state what integration is and how it is regulated in the schools

by adopting NICIE's Statement of Principles and by adhering to the legal structures set out through the Scheme of Management and the adherence to the Department of Education's requirements for Integrated Schools.

Integrated schools allow children to learn, play, develop friendships and set in place the building blocks of respect and understanding for the adults of Northern Ireland for our future. There is no ambiguity or misunderstanding in this goal; it is one which clearly sets out the intention – to educate children together side by side in the same classrooms with clearly set out aims and objectives.

Our concern is that Shared Education would be seen as the same as, or equivalent to, Integrated Education when these two systems are entirely different, with totally different goals. There is no doubt that many schools and educational establishments would benefit from greater sharing – but this does not equate to integrated education, integrated education exists in Integrated Schools. We do not want to see the excellent work which exists in Integrated Schools being undermined by a separate system albeit one with good intentions and positive elements.

I would be happy to add to this submission or discuss this further if required.

Yours sincerely

Janice Marshall

Drumragh Integrated College - Student Council

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Submission from The Student Council of Drumragh Integrated College

24th October 2014

1. Factual Information

- 1.1 Drumragh Integrated College has two Student Councils. The Junior Council is for KS3 and the Senior Council is for KS4 and KS5. The remit of both councils is to canvas the opinion of the student body on a range of issues and feed back to the Senior Leadership Team via regular Student Council meetings. The students can if they wish, ask members of staff to attend their meetings, and the council attend SLT meetings to present their opinions.
- 1.2 Each council consists of one representative from each form class.
- 1.3 Both councils met recently to consider their submission to the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

2. The Student Voice

- 2.1 'I came to this school because it's the better type of school, because no matter what you believe or where you're from you can make friends with anyone... It is important to meet people from different backgrounds so you can learn about other people's point of view.'
 - 2.2 '... my best friend is a different religion and I'm glad she is because I learn about her and she learns about me and we learn to accept each other.'
- Rachael*
- 2.3 'An integrated school is good because you have more of a community.'
 - 2.4 'The friends I meet inside of school are now some of my best friends outside of school.'
- Harry*
- 2.5 'Stop worrying about the political side of this. Worry about the thousands of lives that depend on integrated education.'
- Mark*
- 2.6 'In today's society integrated education is fundamental to safe and settled students. The Belfast flag riots are in my opinion a direct result and a fantastic reminder of how people cannot get on... 20,000 people can make a dramatic difference... integrated education has never been more relevant in today's society. Take a look around you.'
- Elliott*
- 2.7 'Genuinely, I am all for Integrated Education. I find this school to be very calm in terms of everyone being together in the one building, mostly because it's widely understood by the students in this school that we are all individual people to be respected as you would anyone else. Every student is offered the same opportunities here and we are encouraged to do our best. There is no bias towards any certain ethnic or religious groups because we as students are all just children who come here to learn in a place we feel safe. It would be wrong to force a child into a situation where they feel insecure about their physical attributes or name, because they don't fit into a certain religious ethos. I really value Integrated Education

because in a sense it teaches children to unlearn any personal grievances against groups of people, which mostly makes the difference as they grow older and are able to develop their own tolerance and understanding. School is about learning, becoming a more educated person and academic growth. To me it seems wrong to stunt that growth with the segregation of people.”

Kellie

- 2.8 “I think Integration is the only way we as a country can move forward, away from the “troubles”. It truly is the only way to move forward and personally I think the government should be doing more to support Integrated Education”.....”Integration teaches that everyone’s viewpoint and opinion matters and that everyone should be treated equally no matter what.”

Lauren

- 2.9 “A shared education is when different schools come together and be with each other for like two hours, then go different ways and forget about it. Integrated Education is when we are all together like two streams meeting into one”

Courtney

- 2.10 “The difference between Shared Education and Integrated Education is that in Shared Education you still have the different schools with different uniforms only sharing some things for a while, but Integrated Education has the one uniform and the one school and your together all the time.”

Morgan

- 2.11 “Integrated stay united together for work, play and education. Integrated are stronger together. Shared means retreat back to your own separate schools.”

Jamie

- 2.12 “Attending a school that promotes an integrated ethos will help to benefit society as it will encourage everyone to embrace and accept people of all parts and religions of the world. Not only will it benefit the society of today, it will also help the future generations to come...being educated in an integrated atmosphere is helping to break the old traditions, helping to benefit the future of Northern Ireland..”

- 2.13 “Integration promotes equality and diversity which I feel is important because all members of the community should be accepted. In my friendship group we have different religious backgrounds and that doesn’t seem to be a problem because we are all human beings... Disagreeing with Integrated Education is promoting the conflict that has been inflicted upon people in earlier years...Integrated education provides a model of education fit for building a prosperous and peaceful 21st century.”

Racel

- 2.14 “Please take our views into consideration as we are the students in the school.”

Drumragh Integrated College

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Submission from Nigel Frith, Principal of Drumragh Integrated College

23rd October 2014

'We have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes, but have yet to learn the simple act of walking the earth like brothers.'

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Drumragh Integrated College is a grant-maintained, integrated, post-primary 11-19 college. It opened in 1995, having obtained the minimum number of pupils required for commencement. It was based in the Victorian Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital building until 2009, when it moved into its present, much-appreciated new accommodation on the Crevenagh Road, Omagh. There are currently just over 660 students on roll.
- 1.2 The College's ethos is genuinely and pro-actively integrated, as evidenced for example by its effective approaches to Ash Wednesday, Remembrance and responding to conflict. Drumragh IC was one of the first schools in Northern Ireland to achieve the 'Excellence in Integrated Education Award', in 2010. Its mission statement is 'Excellence for Everyone'. We strive to offer a shining example of integration in practice and to provide a quality of education that is second to none.
- 1.3 I have had the privilege of being the principal of Drumragh Integrated College since September 2005.

2. The nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education, including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education

- 2.1 A working definition of shared education, endorsed by the Ministerial Advisory Group in their March 2013 report, 'Advancing Shared Education', is this:

Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.
- 2.2 Integrated schools are based, amongst other things, on the 'Statement of Principles'. This Statement declares that:

The integrated school provides a learning environment where children and young people from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds, as well as those of other faiths and none, can learn with, from and about each other. The promotion of equality and good relations extends to everyone in the school and to their families regardless of their religious, cultural or social background. Integrated education is value-driven and child-centred. It is delivered through a holistic approach with an emphasis on developing every aspect of a child's or young person's potential.
- 2.3 High quality shared education and integrated education both have the potential to transform society, based on contact theory; the more time children spend together side by side, in a mutually respectful safe space, the more transformation of values is possible. Wherever

shared or integrated education can achieve these goals, it should be led, encouraged and facilitated; because this is what NI needs for the future. But this should only apply to quality shared or integrated education, where conditions are pro-active, where much more is happening than children from different communities or schools being introduced to each other; where in fact they are immersed in a learning experience that encourages the development of mutually respectful values on a day-by-day, moment-by-moment, practical and meaningful basis. This is about quality contact, in other words, not lip service nor superficial and ineffective approaches.

- 2.4 Quality shared education and quality integrated education should both be formally defined, with a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage them – as is currently specified in Article 64 of the 1989 Order. The obligation should however be very clear and insistent in distinguishing between quality and ineffectiveness. Every school should be required to fulfil one and/or the other duty, and facilitated in doing so with excellence. All educationalists and politicians should be united in seeking not just academic success, but the effective shaping of young people's values so that they can lead Northern Ireland out of its dark past.
- 2.5 Integrated schools are not the only solution to society's ongoing problems but they are a key part of the solution. It is the responsibility of us all to work together to resolve these difficulties, for the sake of our children, society and the future of Northern Ireland.

3. The design and aims of integrated education; 'the thing works'

- 3.1 Some people have a limited or flawed understanding of integration, thinking it is just a mixing of cultures and at worst encourages a 'watering-down' of one's own beliefs. In fact integration encourages young people to respect difference, to define themselves and to present themselves confidently. It is an all-ability, inclusive approach to education, thereby reducing barriers to learning and encouraging excellence.
- 3.2 The integrated sector has defined expectations and requirements regarding religious and cultural balance amongst the student body, the staff and even the governors. These are largely to create a sense of community wherein no-one feels isolated and where mutual respect can flourish.
- 3.3 Looking beyond the importance of balance and admissions, an essential difference between an integrated and a mixed learning environment is what happens after the student body has been enrolled. We do not simply admit students from different traditions and expect them to 'muddle along', nor to pretend that everyone is the same. Our approach counters sectarian, divisive messages and positively promotes mutual respect.
- 3.4 The ethos of an integrated school is deliberately planned. It involves tolerance, not simply toleration of someone from another tradition or culture. We are alert to the dangers of sectarian attitudes and actions. Difference is not 'swept under the carpet' but rather is recognised and embraced, with respect. This is all done strategically and staff are aware of how to both encourage and monitor its effectiveness.
- 3.5 Some examples based on approaches taken at Drumragh IC will perhaps prove helpful. First of all, the delivery of the curriculum is carefully handled. In Religious Education, students are given a balanced, respectful presentation of different religions and beliefs, encouraging them to accept difference and to explore what they believe themselves. In History, different views of historical events and perspectives are recognised, with an emphasis on thinking skills and analysis. Elsewhere, where the curriculum is perhaps less sensitive in a sense, teaching is still deliberately mindful of the views and backgrounds of those present.
- 3.6 Important events in the Drumragh Integrated College calendar also illustrate the distinctiveness of an integrated ethos. Remembrance involves a proactive education programme in the weeks running up to it, where staff help students to understand the college's view of this annual event. Remembrance is seen in the college as a time to remember and respect those who have died in war, but also to strive to learn the lessons of

history; that dialogue and understanding, not violence, are the keys to a peaceful society. This perspective is also presented in whole-college assemblies, and students are then invited to wear poppies or not, as they choose.

- 3.7 Another example of the integrated ethos in action at Drumragh IC is Ash Wednesday, a central event for the college every year. Here the whole college community is brought together for the Ash Wednesday service. Clergy from both Catholic and Protestant denominations are welcomed, to speak during the services and, in the case of the priest, to administer the ashes. The service opens with the principal stating that for all of us the service is an opportunity to consider how we are living our lives and, if we see the need, to resolve to make changes for the better. The terms 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' are not used, but later in the service it is explained that those who would like to receive ashes are welcome to do so. It is emphasised that equally, those who would prefer not to receive ashes may remain seated, to listen to the quiet music, consider the quotations being shown through the projector, to think, or to pray as they choose. The whole college community is together in this often beautiful service, respecting each other's differences.
- 3.8 When something significant is going on in wider society, the college will often explore it with its student body. During the Queen's Jubilee, for instance, the college held a tea party, including a fun fashion parade, despite the fact that there are more Catholic than Protestant students in the college. During the flags protests the college explored what was going on, in assembly, explaining the background, talking about what was happening and drawing the conclusion that while protest can be justified, violence and rioting cannot.

4. What do young people say about integration?

- 4.1 There is a variety of research studies, reports and surveys on the impact of integrated education. The following however are the views of a number of students who attend Drumragh Integrated College, where the voice of students – the major stakeholders of our education system – matters:
- 4.2 'I really value integrated education because in a sense it teaches children to unlearn any personal grievances against groups of people... School is about learning, becoming a more educated person and academic growth. To me it seems wrong to stunt that growth with segregation of people.'
- 4.3 'I came to this school because it's the better type of school, because no matter what you believe or where you're from you can make friends with anyone... It is important to meet people from different backgrounds so you can learn about other people's point of view.'
- 4.4 '... my best friend is a different religion and I'm glad she is because I learn about her and she learns about me and we learn to accept each other.'
- 4.5 'An integrated school is good because you have more of a community.'
- 4.6 'The friends I meet inside of school are now some of my best friends outside of school.'
- 4.7 'The difference between shared education and integrated education is that shared education you still have the different schools with different uniforms only sharing some things for a while but integrated education has all the one uniform and all the one school and you're together all the time.'
- 4.8 'Stop worrying about the political side of this. Worry about the thousands of lives that depend on integrated education.'
- 4.9 'In today's society integrated education is fundamental to safe and settled students. The Belfast flag riots are in my opinion a direct result and a fantastic reminder of how people cannot get on... 20,000 people can make a dramatic difference... integrated education has never been more relevant in today's society. Take a look around you.'

5. What do some parents say about integration?

5.1 The following are comments made by two parents of students at Drumragh

Integrated College:

5.2 'Although some progress has been made politically, Northern Ireland is, in many ways, still a divided society. This has an enormously negative effect on individuals, families, and communities. On a very real level, economical and social advance is compromised, which negatively impacts both on a national as well as on an international level. Real, tangible positive change is badly needed and long overdue. The only way true change can take place at grass-root level is through altering the perspective and perceptions of our young people. Prejudice and stereotypes need to be broken down and fear of "otherness" eradicated. This is a gradual process which can only happen when communities mix on a daily basis.

Integrated schools have a unique opportunity to be at the forefront of this long-term effort by educating young people from all communities together. They need to be given full support by DE in their endeavours to provide co-educational facilities for as many pupils as possible.

The management and staff at Drumragh Integrated College are doing an excellent job at providing the best possible integrated education, with a strong leadership, vision and passion. The teaching body are equally motivated and motivating, forward thinking, advocating inclusion, tolerance and acceptance of all and embracing of differences. I feel very thankful and privileged that my daughter has been able to obtain a place at the school a few years ago. She is thriving academically and personally, is very happy there, and has developed a very mature social attitude. The more children are given such an opportunity, the better for their future and for the future of Northern Ireland.

Sincerely,

Dr Dagmar Corry, PhD, CPsychol, AFHEA, AFBPsS'

5.3 'I think deciding to send a child to a different type of education is difficult here. Both my husband and myself were educated in grammar schools, so our parents made that decision. There is always that worry, are we sacrificing something else because we believe in Integrated Education? We have never regretted sending Ellen here, even after she did both sets of tests for the other schools and had the choice of where to go. Rather mean of us! She is pushed and challenged as we had hoped. Even more importantly, she is also very happy.

Gayle Hegarty
Programme Manager
Drug and Alcohol Training Programme
Western HSCT'

6. Key barriers, potential enablers and priorities for developing integrated education

6.1 Lack of vision, tribal politics and systemic inertia have restricted the further growth of integrated education; and that is a disgrace.

6.2 Inertia is dangerous when in fact change is needed so urgently, for our legacy to the young people in our schools to be the right one - comparable to the myth of Nero fiddling while Rome burned.

6.3 A key solution is to facilitate integrated education wholeheartedly and actively; for DE and the Assembly to embrace as never before a vision of the potential of education to lead the way in shaping a unified, diverse and peaceful society.

6.4 Parent power has achieved a remarkable 6-7% of the NI school population in integrated education, either by starting new schools from nothing or through transformation. So what could be achieved if both the Department of Education and our political leaders supported it

fully? At present the integrated sector largely continues to move forward despite, rather than because of, full encouragement and facilitation.

6.5 Support that could and should be given to integrated education includes:

- Pro-active, practical support where there is demand for an integrated school in a particular area, either to build from nothing or to transform to integrated status;
- Helping over-subscribed integrated schools to grow;
- Promoting choice and gauging public demand for integrated education, as part of area planning;
- Giving the integrated sector a statutory seat and voice on area planning groups;
- Giving the integrated sector a statutory seat and voice within the new single education and library board;
- In other words, giving each sector a statutory voice and role within the educational system.

7. Conclusions

7.1 We all need a strong vision and committed focus not on the past nor on the status quo, but on how to make life better in the future.

7.2 The integrated sector is well defined and very clear about what it strives to achieve.

7.3 Integrated education should be given equal emphasis, political support and resourcing with quality shared education – two routes to the same vision.

7.4 In a society that is scarred and struggling toward real peace, it seems completely obvious that young people should be educated together – all day, every day. A central goal of integrated education is the transformation of young people's hearts and minds. This is achieved by actively helping them to respect difference and encouraging them to form friendships that break down barriers. This is not always easy, but it matters. And so we can shape a future that includes tolerance, peace and healing.

Nigel Frith

Principal
Drumragh Integrated College

October 2014

Duneane and Moneynick Primary Schools

Duneane Primary School

166 Church Road

Toomebridge

BT41 3RD

Tel: 02879650854

Principal: Mrs Donna Winters

Moneynick Primary School

104 Moneynick Road

Randalstown

BT41 3HS

Tel: 02879650331

Principal: Mrs Emer Hughes

Moneynick Primary and Duneane Primary working together in Shared Education

Our Partnership

Moneynick and Duneane are two rural primary schools which lie on the outskirts of Toomebridge and are situated 1.7 miles from each other. They had been working together over the last ten years and joined the Primary Integrating Enriching Education Project (PIEE) which began in 2009 and were funded by the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies. Both Moneynick and Duneane are small schools and since the cessation of the PIEE project, have continued to grow and develop as a confederation.

The principals saw how PIEE impacted positively on all areas of their school communities: principals, staff, pupils, parents and governors. For principals and staff, being in PIEE meant that they were able to avail of opportunities to train and plan together.

The Boards of Governors play a vital role in the continuing development of the partnership, supporting joint events showcasing pupils' work. In 2012 a joint subcommittee of Governors was formed. They have overseen the running of the Partnership including the appointment of a shared teacher in 2012 and have played an integral part in our development to date.

The Governors made a joint submission to the Area Plan for Primary Schools in Northern Ireland the outcome of which called for the schools to work together in shared education. Initially our intention was to seek a shared space through investment in a mobile classroom, where our children could learn together and our communities could meet.

After a visit from the Minister of Education to our Partnership in September 2013, we submitted a business plan to the Department of Education outlining our vision for the shared space. The Principals were aware of the existence of Shared Campus Schools in Scotland and visited four schools in Lanarkshire in September 2013. The visit confirmed that the direction our schools were taking could lead to a successful shared future on one campus.

Following an announcement by OFMDFM in early 2014, with full support of governors and parents, we submitted an Expression of Interest in a Shared Campus for our schools. Prior to this the whole school community was involved in a stringent consultation process the outcome of which gave 100% commitment from governors and staff, and over 90% commitment from parents.

What Shared Education means for us?

Over the last number of years, our pupils have taken part in regular shared classes which have now become part of normal school routine. In 2012-2013 we had PEE funding for a full time shared teacher and since then the two schools have been funding a part-time shared teacher from their own budgets. Funding for transport between the two schools has come from Shared Education at Queens, through Atlantic Philanthropies. Each Monday and Tuesday our pupils work together in single year groups. Our aim is to raise standards across both schools and give our children an opportunity to cement friendships and become comfortable working side by side.

Both schools currently have three composite classes. Shared classes provide our children with the opportunity of being taught in joint, single year groupings. This also benefits the pupils who are left behind with their own class teacher who are also left as a single year group or smaller composite class. The majority of the shared lessons are literacy and numeracy based and areas targeted are identified from both school development plans in line with Count, Read; Succeed. Raising standards in both schools is the priority for our children.

Our current Y7 children have been involved in shared classes since they were in Y1. Sharing is now accepted as a normal part of their school routine. Although harder to quantify, our involvement in shared education has delivered wonderful opportunities for developing friendships and building relationships pupil to pupil, teacher to teacher and family to family. The children have also had the opportunity to reach out to the wider community and develop links with a local Residential Home and with local Sports Clubs.

Our children now have a joint School Choir who performed on Radio and last year achieved second place at Ballymena Festival. Last Christmas they sang for the residents of the nearby Nursing Home. We have also fielded joint Sports Teams at local competitions and would see this developing further on a shared campus.

Moneynick Mothers & Toddlers has welcomed parents and younger siblings from Duneane Primary School, enhancing community cohesion at its most fundamental level. We hope to expand the Mothers & Toddlers provision if we move to a shared campus.

Parents have enjoyed attending joint showcase events and have even taken part in joint parent-only events such as salsa dancing. They have been consulted at every step along our journey and are very supportive of the partnership. Links have been established between both Parent Teacher Associations with joint events to enhance social cohesion and raise some funds for joint activities.

Barriers

- We feel that the biggest barrier to the development of Shared Education and our partnership in particular, is the lack of support and acknowledgement at department level. For a number of years we along with other principals within the PEE project were under the illusion that the Education Committee at Stormont were aware of the different Shared Education projects that were running within Northern Ireland. Following a visit to both schools by a local MLA we discovered that this was not the case. Our partnership has been seen as 'pathfinding' and yet the education committee was unaware of our existence.
- We feel there is a lack of vision at government level. We hear the words 'SHARED FUTURE' but there is a lack of process in achieving this within education, eg. through our business plan submitted in 2013 it became evident that there was no application process for a shared space. Even though both schools had the support of their managing authorities, there appeared to be no system to follow or no particular individual within the department that we could take advice from.
- For our partnership the biggest barrier to date has been the rejection of our bid for a shared campus announced in July 2014. Without a doubt we are the most pro-active

primary partnership in Northern Ireland and are seen as pathfinders in Shared Education, yet we were told that our bid appeared to be more about co-locating than sharing.

Enablers

- Tremendous support and advice from our local MLAs who have encouraged us to have a voice at Education Committee level. It is important for all partnerships to have cross-party support.
- Pro-active thinkers at education board level who have the vision to create successful projects such as PIEE and have the business acumen to secure funding from external bodies.
- Support from authorities who give encouragement and recognition and source funding for shared partnerships eg. Shared Education at QUB.
- Positive leadership with energetic and enthusiastic staff and governors who share the vision and are aware of the bigger picture.

Priorities and Actions needed to move forward

- Committee for Education who engage with shared education partnerships in Northern Ireland. The Committee would benefit from visiting successful partnerships to witness sharing first-hand.
- Cross party agreement on making shared education a priority.
- A team of active educational practitioners who have first-hand experience of Shared Education directing DENI policy and contributing to decision-making for future programmes of sharing.
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with shared education partnerships and clear guidelines and criteria for any application process.
- Development of a continuum of good practice in sharing with guidance for schools on how to move forward.

Early Years



Early Years Headquarters

6c Wildflower Way
Apollo Road
Belfast
County Antrim
BT12 6TA

T +44 (0)28 9066 2825
F +44 (0)28 9038 1270
info@early-years.org
www.early-years.org

Registered in Northern Ireland No: 23257
Inland Revenue Charity No: XN48519
Formerly known as NIPPA

22/10/2014

Committee for Education

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

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II. Summary

Early Years – the organisation for young children warmly welcomes this opportunity to submit evidence to the Committee's Inquiry. In 2015 the organisation will celebrate 50 years of working to promote and develop high quality, evidence-informed, cross community early childhood services for young children, their families and communities.

We have successfully worked in all communities across Northern Ireland including some of the most divided interface areas in Northern Ireland in delivering projects and activities relating to child focused community based health and education; tackling social and educational inequalities; working with young Traveller children and their families; shared spaces, community development and working with children, practitioners, management boards, parents and carers to develop a culture of respect to the various forms of difference in our society

This submission, in the advancement of approaches to shared and integrated education, emphasises the following:

- Adopting an approach beginning at the earliest levels of education and building on this consistently up through the tiers of the education pathway

- Embracing an ecological approach actively incorporating wider support networks involving parents, families and all communities as well as staff and leadership within schools and education providers
- Focusing on challenges specific to urban and rural areas
- Effective linkages and commitment to resourcing of key policies and strategies
- Capacity building, training and evaluation
- Utilisation of current best practice and evidence locally and internationally

1. Introduction and context of submission

- 1.1 Early Years¹ is the largest voluntary organisation working with and for all young children 0-12 in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It is a non-profit making organisation and in 2015 will celebrate 50 years of working to promote and develop high quality, evidence-informed, cross community early childhood services for young children, their families and communities. Our vision is that children are strong, competent and visible in their communities; physically and emotionally healthy; eager and able to learn and respectful of difference. We have currently over 1,000 members across the statutory, community, voluntary and independent sectors supporting the child care and early education needs of over 30,000 children on a daily basis. We have a leadership role in 10 Sure Start projects supporting 15,000 children 0-4 and their families
- 1.2 Currently Early Years provides a range of information, training, and advice and support services for parents, early childhood care and education providers, management committees and boards, employers, local authorities, departments and agencies. We have successfully worked in some of the most divided interface areas in Northern Ireland. Projects and activities relate to child focused community based health and education; tackling social and educational inequalities; working with young Traveller children and their families; community development and working with children, practitioners, management boards, parents and carers to respect the various forms of difference in our society.
- 1.3 These and other local and cross-border evidence-based services and projects offered by our organisation also have proved to be internationally applicable through our participation in a number of international partnerships and networks designed to 'export' and share knowledge and best practice concerning peace building, shared spaces and early childhood education and care.
- 1.4 Early Years welcomes this opportunity to submit written evidence. We participated previously in the study of the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Advancement of Shared Education². This included both the submission of written and oral evidence and facilitating site visits by the Advisory Group members to Hobbyhorse Playgroup and Roden Street Playgroup in Belfast to receive an insight into shared education and the application of the principles of the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme at pre-school level. There is much to be commended in both the recommendation report released by the Group and also in the Minister's statement to the Assembly in October 2013 responding to the recommendations³.
- 1.5 The organisation would also be willing to further participate in this process by giving oral evidence to the Committee on anything contained in this submission. 1.6 Commentary on elements of the Terms of Reference set for the Inquiry relevant both to our remit as established above and our practice based experience is as follows.

1 For more see <http://www.early-years.org/>

2 <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/>

3 http://www.deni.gov.uk/advancing_shared_education_-_22_october_2013_docx.pdf

2. The nature and definition of shared and integrated education

- 2.1 The Committee's undertaking within the set terms of reference to review and explore shared and integrated education across all educational phases is greatly welcomed. The shared/ integrated education pathway begins in our pre-school settings, groups, day nurseries, parent and toddler groups and Sure Start programmes operating across the region. This work has always been delivered on a cross-community basis and been underpinned by sound equality of opportunities policies.
- 2.2 It is vital that the approach to shared and integrated education embraces an ecological framework approach beginning in the earliest years and continuing through primary and secondary education levels. In developing a positive sense of self and others it is essential to address issues of inclusion and exclusion from an early age. It is well documented in early childhood research that children as young as three years old are aware of difference and by age six can develop negative attitudes and behaviour towards others who are different⁴. Such work must be underpinned by a clear perspective on children's rights and universal services to promote accessibility and inclusion of all children towards the best outcomes.
- 2.3 Relevant approaches must then also embrace wider support networks involving parents, families and communities as well as schools and education providers. In this area opportunities must be provided for parents from diverse backgrounds to share their beliefs, concerns and positive learning experiences across socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and gender borders with other parents and agencies. Furthermore, there needs to be outreach work built in to reach hard to access or hard to engage families in order to address barriers to participation and ensure equality of opportunity. Such approaches must be fully understood and supported by Management Committees and Boards of Governors.
- 2.4 Engaging with parents and other adults is also vital in order to address the intergenerational transmission of prejudicial attitudes to young children. Engaging with parents, carers and practitioners courageously therefore allows for attitudes and behaviour to be explored, including addressing prejudices and stereotypes. It is vital that space is created that is both safe and challenging for exploring these issues.

3. Key barriers and enablers for shared and integrated education

- 3.1 Barriers- Potential barriers include:
- Lack of recognition of the impact that emotional development and feeling excluded can have on children's ability to learn.
 - Failures to actively engage or adequately collate the views of hard to reach communities.
 - Lack of training and support for practitioner staff to actively and reflectively implement a shared education approach.
 - Lack of value placed on vital role practitioners in the pre-school sector play in establishing cross-community relations and advancing shared education.
 - Lack of understanding of and between the various roles (teachers, practitioners, policy makers) that have a key part to play in this process.
 - Impact of conflict on attitudes and behaviour in Northern Ireland and continuing inter group and intra group tensions.
 - Prejudicial attitudes and beliefs at child, parent, community and governance levels.
 - Fear of loss of cultural/political/religious identity by participation in shared education.
 - Vested interests in maintaining the status quo.

4 Too Young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 Year Olds in Northern Ireland Connolly, P, Smith, A. & Kelly, B. (2002)

- Bad or poor experiences from previous initiatives that have not worked which dissuade people from coming on board again due to a belief that their voice is not being satisfactorily heard.
- Programmes not being sufficiently large in scale or developmental enough to be effective and being more than just bringing children together for short periods of time.
- Agencies working in isolation.
- Short term funding of certain projects which does not lend well to the in-depth work that needs to be done or the necessary time required.
- Schools being seen as autonomous, separate units instead of interdependent networks from a policy and funding perspective.
- Overemphasis on creating new programmes rather than looking at what is currently operating well.

3.2 Enablers

- 3.2.1 Early Years has designed, developed and implemented a flagship programme focused on developing respect for diversity and inclusion in the early years which is informed by and includes all of the principles outlined in section two above.
- 3.2.2 This is highly innovative in that the approach addresses inclusion in all its aspects focusing on ability, race, cultural ethnic and religious identity through age appropriate programmes. The Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme has been externally evaluated⁵ through a randomised controlled trial and found to have a positive effect on young children's attitude towards and respect for others who are different.
- 3.2.3 The MIFC Respecting Difference Programme is currently linked to relevant curricula for children aged from two to seven years and consideration is being given to further development of the programme covering the timeframe right through to the end of primary school.
- 3.2.4 Through shared parent workshops and in management committee/board of governors workshops, adults have the opportunity to share their own experiences including experiences which as children shaped their identities and attitudes. They also have opportunities in an informal way for discussion and sharing with others who have been raised with different perspectives and attitudes. In this way parents, teachers, pre-school staff, governors and management committee members are themselves engaging, reflecting and building their own understanding of others who are different.
- 3.2.5 Many elements associated with the MIFC Respecting Difference programme make clear links into not only the pre-school but also the Foundation Stage curriculum (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) and Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) by addressing such themes as self-awareness, similarities and differences, relationships and feelings and emotions.
- 3.2.6 The key strengths of MIFC Respecting Difference are that it places a strong emphasis on promoting socio-emotional development as the foundation upon which diversity work can be undertaken and it looks at diversity and inclusion in all its aspects focusing on ability, race, cultural ethnic and religious identity through age appropriate programmes. The programme looks first at sameness before addressing difference. This is done using persona dolls where a character is developed which incorporates different aspects of identity. The children see the points of similarity and subsequently the points of difference. The persona dolls are an ideal practical tool to encourage the development of empathy, to see a situation from another's perspective.

5 Evaluation of the Media Initiative for Children: <http://www.early-years.org/coral/research.php>

- 3.2.7 It is vital therefore that children's identity is validated in the school or pre-school setting. One of the innovative aspects of the MIFC is that it explicitly addresses issues of identity with young children rather than ignoring or attempting to neutralise identity. In this way the ethos and identity of individuals, families and communities are respected and validated while children also grow in awareness of the identity of others.
- 3.2.8 Practices that foster multiple identities need to avoid two pitfalls – colour-blindness and tokenism. Colour-blindness is the denial of differences, very often out of an honest concern to treat 'all children equally'. The message children get from this is to be silent about difference. Tokenism is an effort to be inclusive in a limited time-bound way such as acknowledging cultural difference but only on a particular day e.g. Chinese New Year. Such activities risk being both patronising and stigmatising, in that they overlook the complexities of children's personal histories and family cultures and ignore socio-economic and other differences.
- 3.2.9 An example of this reflection from evaluation was that parents from the Unionist tradition participating in the MIFC programme in the Derry/Londonderry area commented positively on the fact that the programme actively engaged in open, honest dialogue with aspects of their tradition, for example in portrayal of marching bands. They felt that this contrasted sharply with other programmes which attempted to neutralise identity: "Looking at this town, people from the British tradition do tell their children not to mention certain things because of the fear factor. I've even encountered this in integrated education where people are not encouraged to talk about things like the Orders, the parades, it's a no-go area."

4. Approaches and good practice models

- 4.1 Engagement and partnership working
- 4.1.1 In addition to many of the core principles associated with the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme outlined above we would further draw attention, concerning engagement and partnership working best practice with a shared focus to improve outcomes for children, to the Toybox Project⁶ strategic partnership implemented by Early Years - the organisation for young children.
- 4.1.2 The Toybox Project is a rights-based outreach service development model which aims to significantly reduce social and education inequalities experienced by young Traveller children aged 0-4, maximise participation in available programmes and services and strengthen capacities, engagement and partnership working.
- 4.1.3 The Toybox project also was subject to an independent evaluation⁷ which stated that in terms of service delivery, the project has been very successful in terms of engaging families and supporting the development of children through play. Furthermore the evaluation found that the project has been very successful at filling the gap, and being a catalyst, between families and statutory support services, health visitors, social workers and others in the statutory sector. We believe that this innovative project represents a successful outreach model for enhancing child development outcomes for disadvantaged groups. By using the above practical strategies, informed by a robust programme design, the principles of equality of opportunity and access to education are translated into inclusive practice in the classroom.
- 4.2 Focusing on challenges specific to both urban and rural areas
- 4.2.1 Many communities in rural regions can encounter invisible community division lines with fewer opportunities for rural interfaces and have high levels of new immigrants in the area due to employment opportunities. A greater level of detail and focus is also required in these respects to promote social inclusion, equality and respecting difference in the areas of gender, religion, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.

6 <http://www.early-years.org/toybox/>

7 'Toybox: Early Years development through play for Traveller children'; <http://www.early-years.org/toybox/toybox-evaluation.pdf>

- 4.2.2 Over recent years our organisation has been involved in a range of success initiatives and projects in this area.
- 4.2.3 One practical example of this has been delivery of the Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme through the Fermanagh Shared Education Programme, to schools in Co Fermanagh to provide a vital foundation for teachers, boards of governors, parents, children and local communities to successfully engage in the provision of shared education. Every primary school in County Fermanagh has used the Media Initiative Respecting Difference Programme as the basis of their shared education initiatives.
- 4.2.4 Furthermore, the organisation has been involved in the implementation of a 'Faces and Spaces' project, funded by Atlantic Philanthropies/OFMDFM's Contested Spaces programme, in schools and early years settings in five contested/interface communities in Northern Ireland including urban interfaces in Belfast and Derry and rural contested spaces in Castlederg and Newtownstewart. Such work has given us a model in designing and implementing a robust evidence-based approach with pre-school, primary, youth, parents and the wider community. This project has been robustly evaluated by the University of Ulster.
- 4.2.5 The project was overseen by both a regional steering group and importantly by four local partnerships which ensured that the schools, playgroups and SureStart projects had ownership of the project and that a shared community development ethos underpinned the programme.
- 4.2.6 This approach enabled the development of a community of learning based upon shared beliefs and approaches to inclusion to be created around the needs of all children aged between two and seven in the area. The local partnerships met on a rotational basis in each other's premises to plan the development of the programme. In addition to implementing MIFC within their own settings, the schools and pre-school groups came together for shared implementation, for shared parent workshops and for shared management committee/board of governors workshops.
- 4.2.7 The shared implementation was very different from a basic contact approach to shared activity. Settings came together to plan purposeful activities that engaged with the programme themes around inclusion. Together, they had opportunities to participate and reflect on issues of identity, culture, race, ethnicity and ability communicated in an age appropriate way.
- 4.2.8 In further reflection of the significance of such issues in and for rural communities our organisation, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council and the Border Counties Childhood Network implemented a Rural Respecting Difference Programme⁸ part-funded under the PEACE programme, based on the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme.
- 4.2.9 This project brings another dimension to the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme as it gives Early Years an opportunity to engage with harder to reach families in rural areas through an innovative approach to inclusion and diversity related work.
- 4.2.10 The Rural Respecting Difference Programme is aimed at rural-based primary schools and afterschool clubs in a number of geographic areas along the border in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland across counties Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Tyrone.
- 4.2.11 The Programme includes workshop based training delivered by Early Years Specialists; comprehensive curriculum resource packs containing persona puppets, cartoon/media messages, CD of songs and rhymes, age appropriate jigsaws and games; a Teacher/Leader Service Design Manual; ongoing on-site support from an Early Years Specialist to assist programme implementation; Support for Board of Governors or Management Committees

8 <http://www.early-years.org/rural-rd/index.php>

in practical delivery of equality opportunities and anti-bullying policies and opportunities to participate in good relations workshops and develop tailored good relations plan for school or after school.

- 4.2.12 The Rural dimension of the MIFC Respecting Difference programme has recently been further enhanced with the addition of a new message, persona doll and associated resources addressing issues from a rural perspective⁹.
- 4.2.13 The content for these was developed by a steering group consisting of representatives from the Rural Development Council, Early Years and the Border Counties Childhood Network alongside the GAA, Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, Southern Education & Library Board, South Tyrone Empowerment Programme and South Armagh SureStart. This programme has been independently evaluated as a very successful model for shared approaches in rural areas.

5. Priorities and actions

5.1 Capacity building, training and evaluation

- 5.1.1 The considerable capacity building in the initial phases and on-going support elements of this work cannot be understated. The work of Early Years has always been underpinned by a strong community development, grass-roots mobilisation ethos focused on helping communities to assess the need for, develop and manage their own early years setting.¹⁰
- 5.1.2 Here we would advocate reference to many of the required principles and skill-sets as reflected in the work of a Community Development Team within our organisation which works directly with independent and voluntary organisations in the sector by building capacity and empowering local communities and services; providing start-up support and information and ongoing training, information, coaching and mentoring in governance, leadership and management to develop quality sustainable childcare services.
- 5.1.3 Shared and integrated education must facilitate the acceptance and inclusion of children from all backgrounds and of all abilities. It would also be suggested, based on practical experiences and engagement, that there is a need for greater awareness raising and training around the Section 75 legislative provision as not all who have a key role to play in this would be fully aware of the categories included in Section 75.
- 5.1.4 Shared and integrated education can potentially provide opportunities for developing a wide range of knowledge and life skills. Examples relevant to the early years include the development of empathy and the ability to socially and emotionally understand the position of others, problem solving and the ability to reflect on the best course of action if someone is excluded. Equally fairness, sharing and taking turns develops not only social skills but early mathematical experiences for young children and identifying sameness and differences encourages a respect for diversity as well as encouraging children to explore and understand the world around them.
- 5.1.5 To fully develop and foster such essential life skills practitioners and parents need to be skilled in order to support their children, their setting and each other and adequate time and resources have to be allocated for this.
- 5.1.6 In relation to initial teacher education, there is a need to ensure that knowledge and understanding of diversity issues inform all aspects of the curriculum. In addition, specific components of training are required that seek to provide teachers and practitioners with the knowledge and skills required to deal skilfully and effectively with issues of diversity in their own classrooms and settings. Regular evaluation of programmes must also be carried out to review services and make any necessary changes.

9 <http://www.early-years.org/rural-rd/meet-lucy.php>

10 <http://www.early-years.org/committee-mgt/>

- 5.1.7 A practical example of this is again provided by the Fermanagh Shared Education Programme which has involved our organisation carrying out training with teachers from year one and two to implement principles associated with the MIFC Respecting Difference programme and come together with partner schools to carry out related activities with children in the area.
- 5.2 Adoption of an ecological approach: participatory whole-community engagement
 - 5.2.1 Early Years firmly endorses participative approaches whereby the active participation of relevant members and the children, families and communities and agencies they represent form an essential part of the development, evaluation and ongoing monitoring of progress on the implementation and delivery of any plans, policies or strategies. Early Years is in the process of implementing and establishing a robust focus on participatory evaluation pedagogy and practice.
 - 5.2.2 Prior to the adoption of this approach, research on and evaluation of the work of Early Years had been carried out by external evaluators and in the main focused on quantitative research methodology. The evidence gathered has provided greater credibility and visibility for the work of Early Years locally and nationally. Building upon this culture of evaluation and research, Early Years now wish to develop a capacity for participatory evaluation within the organisation and sector so that Early Years staff become skilled in on-going evaluation and reflective practice and develop the ability to use this evidence to further improve practice and programmes.
 - 5.2.3 The enhanced and more developed usage of more participatory approaches to evaluation will not only help us understand how our projects and programmes are improving outcomes for our youngest citizens but it will also enable us to assess our impact and embrace a more fuller and participative method of engaging with our members, customers and stakeholders in truly finding out from them the types of the information, support and materials they need and how best to provide that to them.
- 5.3 Effective linkages and adequate resourcing of key strategies
 - 5.3.1 The effective linkage and adequate commitment to resourcing of such key strategies as Delivering Social Change, Together: Building a United Community, the Programme for Government, the Racial Equality Strategy and other policies and strategies is strongly encouraged. To these we would further add the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Child Poverty Strategy, the Traveller Child in Education Action Framework, the Early Years Learning to Learn Framework, CRED and, given not only the considerable developmental benefits for young children but also wider employment, economic and social opportunities and benefits¹¹, the Bright Start Child Care Strategy, presently under development.
- 5.4 Consideration of best practice and evidence both locally and internationally
 - 5.4.1 Early Years continues to build upon a significant knowledge base derived from practical experience and evidence-based research relating to diversity and inclusion with our youngest citizens, their carers and families and the communities in which they live.
 - 5.4.2 We feel that it is vital that practice is informed by impact based evaluations of previous initiatives and through international and local best practice and partnerships. We support the development of such measures and see this as vital in the growth of future social and economic developments.
 - 5.4.3 Services and projects provided by our organisation also extend to the Republic of Ireland, through HighScope and other cross-border initiatives, and beyond though a number of international partnerships and projects designed to 'export' knowledge and best practice. Some recent examples of this include:

11 See 'Contribution of the Voluntary, Community and Independent Early Years Sector in Northern Ireland' report; Early Years; 2011 <http://www.early-years.org/policy/state-of-sector.php>

- An International Network on Peace Building with Young Children¹² project leading the sharing of best practice across countries experiencing conflict and post-conflict situations through the use and development of internationally applicable programmatic tools and resources and contribution to the ongoing implementation of a Masters Programme on Applied Peace and Conflict Studies with early years, in partnership with the International Conflict Research Institute (INCORE) at the University of Ulster;
- Participation in the Network for the Quality in Early Childhood Education from 0-6 years (NetQ6) , which is a cooperative network with educative and training institutions in Europe. The project aims are to compare, analyze and face the socio challenges that arise in the growth of early childhood and compile the best practices in the field to find solutions for the new realities and special needs found in a range of education systems;
- Contribution to the work of the Partnership for Reconciliation through Early Childhood Education and Development in Europe (PRECEDE)¹³ which aims to support civil society influence over reconciliation process and cohesion through education in early years in the Balkan region and Europe. It will develop a sustainable Balkan Region Network of civil society organisations concerned with young children and promoting acceptance of others and respect for diversity; develop sustainable country level networks of civil society organisations promoting acceptance of others and respect for diversity through early childhood education (ECD) in the Western Balkan region countries; and will link country level networks and the PRECEDE Network of civil society organisations with the International Network for Young Children in Conflict and Post-conflict Countries;
- Participation in the Determinants to Reduce health Inequity Via Early childhood, Realising fair employment and Social protection (DRIVERS) project funded by the 7th Framework Programme to promote health equity through policy and practice in early childhood development, employment & working conditions, and income & social protection;
- Supporting the delivery of pre-school programmes within Serbia and Turkey;
- Hosting annual Service Learning Trips in partnership with Wheelock College, Boston to allow students from the College undertaking disciplines in psychology and early childhood development a unique opportunity to experience the work that is currently underway in Northern Ireland and study exemplary peace building efforts in early childhood settings;
- Hosting visits by Turkish delegates from the Ministry of Education and UNICEF to view models of good practice, visit settings and participate in round table debate; and
- Advocating, along with other members of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium¹⁴, UNICEF and the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace, for the next Millenium Development Goals and a new UN Resolution to include peace building through Early Childhood Development.

5.4.4 Such activity enables Early Years to both consolidate and extend its international relationships and to continue to work to develop practice materials, training, advocacy tools and strategies on reconciliation and peace building through early years programmes to the benefit of local and international service providers.

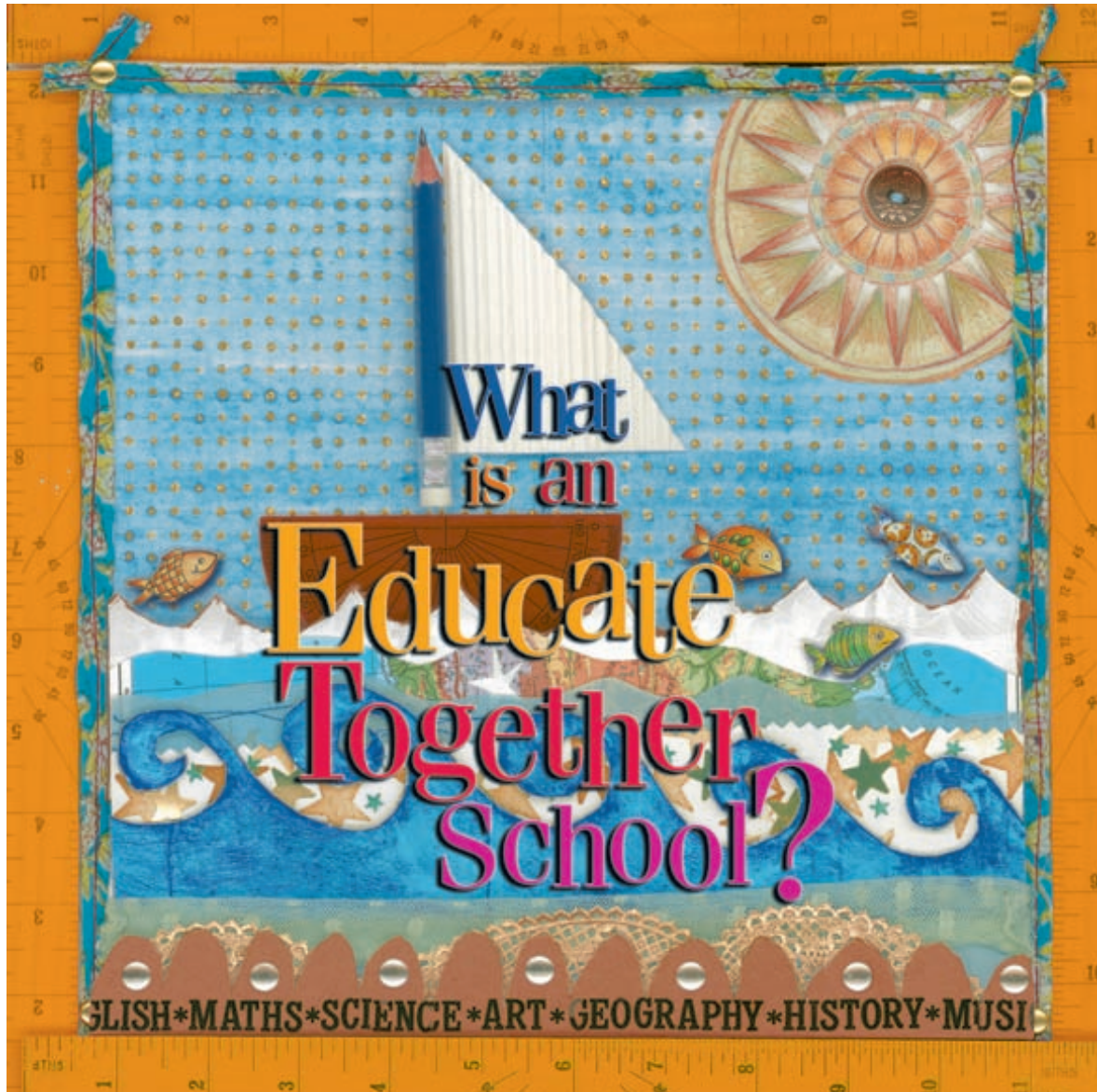
6. Expression of interest in the further submission of evidence 6.1 Early Years welcomes this opportunity to submit written evidence. The organisation would also be willing to further participate in the process by giving oral evidence to the Committee on anything contained in this submission.

¹² <http://www.early-years.org/international/>

¹³ <http://www.tacso.org/doc/PRECEDE%20corrected.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://childstudycenter.yale.edu/international/peace/ecpc/index.aspx>

Educate Together



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What is an Educate Together National School?

A Brief Introduction

Educate Together National Schools are a specific type of state-funded primary school in Ireland. They are part of the National School system that was established in 1831 and which, together with the Special Schools, comprise all State-funded primary education in Ireland.

All National Schools, whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, Islamic, Jewish or Educate Together schools are funded by the State on an equal basis. They operate the same National Curriculum, follow the same Rules for Boards of Management and are staffed by teachers who have the same level of professional qualifications and recognition.

What Makes Educate Together Schools Different?

Where schools differ from each other is in their “ethos”. The ethos of a school describes its spirit and character. This is built upon its aims and objectives, its policies and procedures and should be reflected in all interactions within the school community. Thus, the ethos of a school impacts strongly on the kind of education delivered to its pupils.



What is an Educate Together National School?

The Patron and the Board of Management

Within the Irish National School System, responsibility for determining the ethos of a school rests with the “Patron”. The main legislation that governs education in Ireland (the Education Act 1998) confers significant powers on school patrons.

Amongst other powers, the Patron:-

- establishes a new school
- sets up its Board of Management
- selects the first Principal before the school opens
- directly appoints two members of the Board, approves the selection of other members and appoints the Chairperson
- approves the appointment of all teaching staff
- lays down the fundamental ethos base of the Board.

Under the Education Act, the Board of Management must undertake to run the school according to the ethos determined by the Patron. In addition, one half hour period of teaching per day for children in the school is reserved for the Patron’s exclusive religious curriculum.

In the denominational schools that constitute the majority of National Schools in Ireland, the Patron is usually the Bishop of the religion concerned, but in an Educate Together National School, the Patron is a company limited by guarantee whose activities are regulated by its Memo and Articles and the Companies Acts and whose decisions are made at General Meetings of its members. This has created a modern, transparent and accountable model of patronage that is defined in clear legal terms.

The fundamental legal concept of Educate Together’s patronage is that the Board of an Educate Together school is bound to operate a school that delivers equality of access and esteem to all children, irrespective of their social, cultural and religious backgrounds.

What is an Educate Together National School?

This very simple idea is the foundation of all policy and practice in the school, whether it is the enrolment policy, the way that the Board carries out its work, the way that a code of behaviour is developed or the manner in which the curriculum is delivered.

The legal documents of Educate Together commit both the Patron and the Board of all schools to uphold the following principles.

All schools should be:

Multi-denominational i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected

Co-educational and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities

Child centred in their approach to education

Democratically run with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers

Ref: The Educate Together Charter

Commitment to the Educate Together Charter

It is important to note that these principles are not 'mission statements' or merely statements of aspiration or intent. They form real commitments to deliver an education that reflects these binding principles. The Board of Management of an Educate Together school must judge its performance against these core principles at all levels of school activity.

It is worth considering these commitments in some detail.

What is an Educate Together National School?

Multi-denominational

From its formation in the mid-1970s, Educate Together has defined this term to include all denominations of all faiths. Thus Educate Together schools are committed to the principle that all religious backgrounds should be equally respected in the operation of the school. Included in this definition are humanist, agnostic and atheistic viewpoints and a generic concept of 'personal creed'.

The term 'respect' is carefully chosen. There is a clear distinction made between the concept of accommodation or tolerance of difference and the concept of respect. Toleration and accommodation inherently imply that a majority view must make allowances for minority views and minorities must make requests to achieve this accommodation; respect implies care and equal treatment as of right.

In practice, the objective of an Educate Together school is to create a school culture and practice in which the identity of every child is guaranteed active support. Neither the child nor parents or guardians should have to ask for that respect to be given.

The school works hard to create a positive, comfortable atmosphere. The underlying concept is that human diversity enhances life, enriches cultures and provides huge educational resources for current and future generations.

The Ethical Education Curriculum

In an Educate Together school*, the daily period of time set aside for the patron's religious education programme is used to deliver our Ethical Education Curriculum. This programme is called the "Learn Together" curriculum and is published by Educate Together. It is subject to review and development by the Education Committee and decisions at Annual General Meetings of the organisation. A copy of the curriculum is available from the school or from Educate Together.

The programme is divided into four strands 'Moral and Spiritual Development', 'Justice and Equality', 'Belief Systems' and 'Ethics and the Environment'. The curriculum specifically addresses the Educate Together ethos and it is here that the values that the school seeks to model in its 'characteristic spirit' are articulated and explained in greater depth.

Please note: In some Educate Schools opened before 2000, this programme may operate locally under different names and headings.



What is an Educate Together National School?

In the strand called 'Belief Systems', the programme explains and explores the major belief systems in the world in an educational manner, teaching children about these faiths and beliefs without endorsing any particular one as religious truth. During the year, an Educate Together school may mark - in an age appropriate way - festivals such as Chinese New Year, Easter, Bealtaine, Hindu Festival of Lights (Diwali), Harvest Festivals, Samhain (Halloween), Ramadan and Eid, Hannuka and Christmas. The programme allows the school to explore the similarities and differences with the older celebrations that underlie many of these festivals. Examples would be the Celtic festivals and practices that underpin Easter or the solstice festivals that occur around Christmas.

It is normal that the treatment of these events becomes integrated into the whole school programme, involving drama, art, music, history and geography and also in many cases, parental and community participation. This may mean exploring wider cultural themes such as cuisine and family celebrations. The range of such activities within an individual school will be determined by local conditions.

The educational aim of this work is to model positive information about world faiths in a respectful atmosphere which highlights rights and responsibilities.


Doctrinal Instruction

In addition to offering the ethical education programme, Boards of Management of Educate Together schools enable any group of parents who wish to use the facilities of the school outside school hours to organise specific doctrinal instruction classes. In most Educate Together schools, for instance, Roman Catholic sacramental preparation is available in these out-of-hours programmes; these are organised by Roman Catholic parents often with the direct participation of the local parish. These classes mix naturally with other extra-curricular activities of the school. Parents of other faiths are similarly facilitated. It is important to note however, that the Board is not responsible for the establishment of such classes and is only involved in so far as to ensure that they are responsibly organised, covered by insurance and that the necessary steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the children attending. There is never any obligation placed on a child, parent or staff member to become involved in doctrinal instruction.



What is an Educate Together National School?

This approach to 'multi-denominationalism' has a number of consequences:

- 
- When this model of school ethos is conscientiously implemented, no child is ever placed in a position in which they feel themselves an outsider in the school programme because of their family or individual identity. The approach minimises the situations in which parents or children feel the need to absent themselves from aspects of school life.
 - It maximises the school's ability to address the religious rights of all families without favour or discrimination.
 - Responsibility for religious formation of children is assumed to be that of the family and religious organisations, while the responsibility of the school is to provide a safe, caring and respectful environment for all children. This encourages children to have a strong and secure contact with their own identity and comfort in interaction with people of different faiths and persuasions.
 - The human rights of teachers and other workers in the school are addressed, as staff are never placed in a position in which they may be required to put forward as religious truth a viewpoint that they may not themselves hold.

Whilst Educate Together holds that this way of treating religious difference in an Irish school context offers many advantages, we appreciate that there are families for whom this model may not be suitable. For instance, an Educate Together school depends on parents who are happy to allow their children to explore and be exposed to different religious views and who do not regard it as their religious duty to seek to persuade others of their beliefs. In the case of families who observe strict guidelines around their children's exposure to artwork, games or sports of other faiths, a denominational school of their conscience, or a recognised programme of home education may well be a more appropriate choice. If such options are not available in the locality, however, Educate Together schools will attempt to handle these questions as sensitively as possible.

From an educational perspective, the inclusive nature of the Educate Together ethical programme permeates and influences all teaching in the school. The focus is on an explorative approach to learning that is managed and facilitated by the teacher. Children are encouraged to gain personal understandings in a creative and supportive learning environment. They are encouraged to evaluate

What is an Educate Together National School?

information, form judgements and articulate these judgements in a supportive, respectful and safe environment.

Educate Together schools promote an approach to education which is based on the core values of mutual respect, self-esteem, dignity and critical awareness.

The child is formally recognised as a participant in the education process and a valued part of the learning organisation that is Educate Together. Participation in school affairs and listening to the voices of the children is part of the democracy that underpins the school. This core value of partnership aims to nurture a deep appreciation of the concepts of participation and rights in society, organisations and the world.

The approach taken to ethical education in Educate Together schools aims to directly promote the life skills that are essential to a generation of children, growing up into a diverse and varied social environment. Their adult experience will be genuinely global in scope.

Co-educational

The co-educational principle was included in the Educate Together Charter at a time when co-educational schools were in a minority. Today, this is no longer the case and the significance of this element of our charter has changed. It now obliges the Board of an Educate Together school to work to ensure that all children are empowered to fulfil their potential irrespective of gender.

Co-educational education is far more than simply putting girls and boys into the same classroom and teaching them the same curriculum. Instead it should ensure that the school develops a comprehensive programme to counter gender stereotyping in all its forms. Schools should be proactive in promoting an approach to learning that encourages and supports the wide variety and range of talents among the children irrespective of gender.

This is a complex issue that a school cannot solve on its own; nevertheless it must be addressed and discussed within schools in partnership with parents, teachers and students. The significance of this element of a school's work should not be underestimated. The rebalancing of gender roles based on



What is an Educate Together National School?

equality and respect is central to the growth and development of society and Educate Together is committed to ensuring that children are given every opportunity to explore and develop an equitable approach to gender. As a result of its place in Educate Together's Charter, active encouragement of children of both sexes, and the combating of gender-based discrimination is an important part of the 'school plan' in an Educate Together school.

Child-centred

The Curriculum of National Schools and the approach adopted in the training of National School teachers has been defined as "child-centred" for many years. However, the inclusion of this term in the Educate Together Charter as a founding principle means rather more than the definition of a teaching philosophy or the articulation of the national curriculum. It defines another element of the policy formation of an Educate Together school. It obliges its Board to take decisions primarily based on the broad educational and developmental needs of the children over and above other external factors. This for instance, would influence decisions on opening hours, school holidays, code of behaviour and allocation of funds. Many of these decisions involve striking a balance between conflicting obligations. Nevertheless, this aspect of Educate Together's Charter ensures that the needs of the children of the school strongly influence the decision making process.

It should be noted that we refer to the "children of the school". A school is a collective organisation that strives to address the individual needs of every child. However, any school must balance these needs with the general interests of all the children.





What is an Educate Together National School?

Democratically-run

All Educate Together schools have been set up by volunteer groups of parents in a community. As patron body, Educate Together facilitates this process and empowers those involved by providing advice, training and support in negotiating with relevant organisations, including the Department of Education and Science. The key stakeholders in the process are the parents and supporters who tackle the difficult and complex task of establishing the school. As a result, parents have a vital role in the operation of the school and its ethos reflects this. High levels of parental involvement in the work of the school are encouraged. The Charter of Educate Together obliges the school's Board to encourage and welcome this involvement whilst balancing it with an equal obligation to "positively affirm the professional role of the teacher".

Educate Together schools have been pioneers in the development of the concept of partnership between parents and teachers in the operation of schools. A critical element of this lies in the involvement of parents and guardians in the educational process itself. This is achieved through the provision of support for the teacher inside and outside the classroom and in providing educational activities that are not available to the school in the normal way.

Examples of such support include:

- participation in classroom activities
- the organising of extra-curricular activities
- participation in educational support activities such as paired reading.
- help with the artistic, musical, dramatic, linguistic or science and technology programmes
- support in the delivery of the ethical curriculum
- support in the maintenance of the school building
- serving on Boards of Management and other school committees.





What is an Educate Together National School?

Educate Together and the Community

Once a school opens itself up to the participation of parents, guardians, grandparents and the community, it has access to a wide and rich range of resources that would be impossible to provide by funding alone. This is of great support to the teachers in the school and of immense educational benefit to the children.



It requires skill and care to operate a primary school which respects the delicate balance between the intense individual commitment of parents to their child's education and the professional, objective care and attention of highly qualified teaching professionals. Educate Together is committed to ensuring that schools nurture this partnership and provides training and support for school Boards in order to maximise the potential of this approach.

The involvement of parents in partnership with the staff provide children with examples of practical community co-operation. This is a powerful support to the values articulated in the classroom. Children thrive in this atmosphere and are similarly inspired to work together in diverse settings in order to achieve common goals.

This approach to education promotes the democratic involvement of children in the school. We have found that it is possible to operate effective Students' Councils in primary schools and that it is vital to the success of codes of behaviour that children and parents directly participate in the drawing up of such policies. Once children have a safe space in which they can participate, assured of support of teachers and parents, they can influence the growth of many other school policies and have done so very successfully. In recent years, for instance, many school environmental policies have been successfully driven by children's committees and have resulted in the awarding of Green Flags to many schools.





What is an Educate Together National School?

Conclusion

This is a very brief overview of some of the key concepts involved in the Educate Together model of National School in Ireland.

Educate Together does not claim any exclusive rights to these ideas. Many of them are implemented in other schools in Ireland and abroad and we fully endorse the efforts of dedicated educators operating in schools of different patronage.

We do not see our future as an exclusive or niche provider in the Irish system. Rather we see the sector as part of a complementary development, providing choice where there has been no choice. We are committed to work with other providers to bring the structure of primary education into balance with the needs of our rapidly changing society and to address the human rights of children, parents and teachers.

We hope that this booklet has been helpful in answering some of the questions about an Educate Together school and our aims as an educational charity. If you would like to know more, would like to enrol your child in an Educate Together school or help us with our work, further information is available from our website or from our national office.

We look forward to meeting and working with many people and organisations to provide an educational system that is inclusive and respectful of all.

For more information, check out our website on:- <http://www.educatetogether.ie>

or contact us at:-

Email: info@educatetogether.ie

Post:- Educate Together, 8HA CentrePoint, Oak Drive, Dublin 12

T: Int + 353 (0)1 4292500

F: Int + 353 (0)1 4292502

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This revised edition printed 2006

No Child an Outsider



Design by Slick Fish Design, Illustrations by Sarah Cunningham

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland



EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Inquiry into Shared Education and Integrated Education

October 2014

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Education Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly, to assist in their Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.
- 1.2 The Commission's response is confined to those areas of the inquiry that are core to our remit, responsibilities and expertise¹.
- 1.3 The Commission intends the positions set out in this paper to be forward facing, mindful of the past but not bound to it. The Commission has referenced evidence on sharing in education and educational inequalities throughout the submission. The submission also makes some suggestions as to how existing education policy may afford additional opportunities to advance shared education.

2 Summary of Recommendations

- 2.1 The Commission considers that societal mixing and social cohesion is limited by separation in our education provision. It is the Commission's view that a system of shared education has a central role to play in advancing a shared society. The Commission also recognises the important role that education can play in cultural development.
- 2.2 Aligned to the focus of the enquiry our submission, in summary, includes:

With regards to a definition and obligation in statute:

- The Commission's recognises the benefits of an **agreed definition of 'shared education'**, supported by clarity on the **inter-relationship between 'shared' education and 'integrated' education**; and how they will collectively interact to achieve overarching policy goals.
- We consider that such a definition and policy framework must:
 - Ensure that sharing **impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner**
 - Ensure that a shared experience should be **central to the education system as a whole**, encompassing at **all stages of educational provision** – pre-school;

¹ See **Annex 1** for further information on our remit.

early years; primary; post-primary; special needs; and tertiary levels.

- routinely teach learners together via **a shared curriculum in shared classes**.
- better provide learners with **shared awareness**, understanding and experience of the **value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds** in Northern Ireland; while also enabling learners from different cultures/communities to **experience a shared society**.
- We **recommend** that the above is taken into account in the development of a definition of 'shared education'
- We recommend that any definition providing for a continuum of sharing ensures that sharing is central to the system of education as a whole and that it impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner.
- We consider that 'Shared Education', once appropriately defined, and its inter-relationship with 'integrated education' made clear, **is likely to benefit from an appropriate obligation in statute, supplementing but not replacing the existing Article 64 obligation** on integrated education.

With regards to barriers,

- we **highlight separateness** in the education system and summarise research regarding **a range of barriers to shared and integrated education**. We recommend that the Department **utilises lessons** drawn from the existing body of research² regarding sharing in education
- we recommend action to address wider issues linked to sharing in education (including **academic selection** at age 11; **teacher training** to advance shared education; the removal of the **teachers' exemption under FETO**; and to gain a better understanding of the reasons for, and impacts of, any **differential patterns of enrolment** to education providers).
- that action is taken to ensure **coordination** across relevant policies and programmes.

² Our 2012 Submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education summarises a range of research regarding integrated education and the QUB Shared Education Programme.

With regards to **enablers**, we continue to highlight the clear opportunities to **build upon existing education policy** – including:

- How **Area Learning Partnerships** / Communities might effectively encourage sharing between providers from different sectors / management types – including those not already involved in community relations work.
- How funding can be used to incentivise increased sharing on cross-sectoral and ability lines, including via the common funding formula.
- The importance of key school level enablers including high-quality contact; school leadership; links between teachers; a focus on the curriculum and the sharing of resources between teachers.
- The importance of **guidance** for schools who wish to embark on shared education and for those who wish to move toward greater interdependency.
- The importance of **Indicators and Evaluation** to measure and review sharing and collaboration in education provision and governance – both to acknowledge success and promote improvement.
- The importance of **data collection, across all Section 75 grounds** and FSM eligibility, for all educational projects, including key Delivering Social Change projects.

With regards to the specific areas raised in the Inquiry terms of reference

- We note the potential offered by the **Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy** and the calls for it to be reviewed. We **encourage** steps to maximise the effective use of CRED and available funding to support the advancement of equality of opportunity and good relations, via CRED and the school curriculum.
- We reiterate the importance of **engaging with pupils, parents, education providers and wider stakeholders** to communicate the rationale for the proposed system - to take account of barriers and enablers; to improve associated policy proposals and to incentivise any moves.
- We reiterate our recommendation that the Department explore how a shared experience can be central to the education system as a whole, encompassing at all stages of educational provision – including **routine sharing and**

collaboration between pupils and staff at special and mainstream schools.

3 Advancing Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations via Education

- 3.1 The Commission is mindful that any consideration of the role of the education system in maximising good relations must also take account of the important role of education in maximising equality of opportunity across the full range of equality grounds, including the need for a particular focus being on the steps required to assist those groups identified as being at particular disadvantage³ to facilitate delivery of improved educational attainment for particular groups.
- 3.2 While this submission focuses on the importance of education in advancing good relations it also recognises that sharing in education, across the full range of equality grounds, not only has the potential to provide meaningful and sustainable relations between pupils of different cultures and backgrounds, but also has the potential to tackle inequality and improve educational outcomes for pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities.
- 3.3 As part of our ongoing work to highlight key inequalities, we have commissioned Queens University to undertake in-depth research into educational inequalities in Northern Ireland which we hope to publish early in 2015.

4 Inquiry into Shared Education and Integrated Education

- 4.1 The Equality Commission has long advocated support for a shared system of education in Northern Ireland. In the Commission's (November 2008) publication "Every Child an

³ See Annex 2 for a summary of key findings from ECNI (2010) 'Inequalities in Education: Facts and Trends 1998-2008'. The Commission also notes 2014 research undertaken by the University of Ulster which highlights access and performance inequalities in post-primary education between grammar and secondary schools, between Catholic and Protestant Schools and for those on FSM; and which also highlights the potential for shared education to address a range of educational inequalities. (Borooah and Knox (2014) Access and Performance Inequalities: post primary education in Northern Ireland. Journal of Poverty and Social Justice - vol 22, no 2, 111-35).

Equal Child: An Equality Commission Statement on Key Inequalities in Education and a Strategy for Intervention”⁴ the Commission noted that it was:

‘hard to escape the conclusion that educating children of different backgrounds together has the potential to reduce the fears and tensions between communities that are founded on ignorance. It is equally difficult to avoid the conclusion that the long experience of separate educational provision has represented a lost opportunity for everyone in Northern Ireland.’

- 4.2 In our February 2012 response⁵ to the consultation on “Building A Better Future: Draft Programme For Government 2011-2015” we recognised *“the steps taken in terms of shared resources, including the schools estate and teachers, and shared programmes”* and endorsed:

*“the development of a clear focus on shared education so as to maximise equality of opportunity and good relations, recognising that this will be facilitated through the teaching of a shared curriculum in shared classrooms”.*⁶

- 4.3 The Commission remains of the view that the overall system of education provision in Northern Ireland has an important role to play, not only in the development of the child, but in advancing cohesion, sharing and integration across all equality grounds, with particular reference to promoting good relations. We have also made it clear that we are committed to using our full range of powers across equality and anti-discrimination statutes *‘to ensure that all children and young people in Northern Ireland have the opportunity to flourish and succeed to the best of their abilities’.*⁷

- 4.4 The Commission considers that societal mixing and social cohesion is limited by separation in our education provision. It

⁴ECNI (2008): Every Child an Equal Child – An Equality Commission Statement on Key Inequalities in Education and a Strategy for Intervention, pages 5 and 6. Available at <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/ECkeyinequalities.pdf>

⁵ECNI (2012): Consultation response to the draft Programme for Government 2011-2015. Available at http://www.equalityni.org/archive/word/PfG_ECNIResponse_PfG220212.docx

⁶ECNI (2012): Consultation response to the draft Programme for Government 2011-2015, page 3. Available at http://www.equalityni.org/archive/word/PfG_ECNIResponse_PfG220212.docx

⁷ECNI (2008): Every Child an Equal Child – An Equality Commission Statement on Key Inequalities in Education and a Strategy for Intervention. Available at <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/ECkeyinequalities.pdf>

is the Commission's view that a system of shared education has a central role to play in advancing a shared society and that children should have the opportunity to be educated together regardless of faith or background.

- 4.5 This is not to undermine the rights of parents to make choices regarding their child's attendance at specific schools, or for the provision of faith-based schools. However such considerations cannot overshadow the importance of a system of education seeking to maximise equality of opportunity and good relations. The Commission also recognises the important role that education can play in cultural development – providing immersion in literature, language, sport, activities, art, music etc.
- 4.6 It is for this reason that the Commission recommends a move towards a system of sharing across the full spectrum of education providers which teaches a diverse range of pupils together via a shared curriculum in shared classes. The Commission considers that sharing in education must impact meaningfully and substantively on every learner and we have highlighted the importance of sharing at all stages of educational provision – pre-school; early years; primary; post-primary; special needs; and tertiary levels.
- 4.7 We set out below a number of further key points, aligned to the specific terms of reference of the Inquiry. As noted at the outset, we confine our response to those areas of the inquiry that are core to our remit, responsibilities and expertise.

5 'the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases'

- 5.1 We draw attention again to our detailed advice to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education and earlier recommendations, which we summarise below.
- 5.2 In our November 2012 Submission⁸ to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education we advocated:

⁸ ECNI (2012) Submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education

“a move to a system of sharing across the full range of education providers at each level of provision; one which routinely teaches students together via a shared curriculum in shared classes.

The Commission considers that such an approach could better provide children with shared awareness, understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds in Northern Ireland; while also enabling children from different cultures/communities to experience a shared society.

The Commission considers that sharing in education must impact meaningfully and substantively on every child and that a shared experience should be central to the education system as a whole”.

5.3 The Commission also noted in that response that it considered that a shared system of education was aligned to the delivery and aims of a range of government strategies and programmes (for example, the Programme for Government; Good relations strategies; Every School a Good School etc) and maximising efficiencies in the school system and estate.

5.4 We specifically highlighted:

- The need to see improved equality of opportunity and educational outcomes across all equality grounds, in particular taking account of particular circumstances (e.g. Travellers; Protestant working class boys; children with disabilities and/or special educational needs; and those for whom English is an additional language etc).
- The need for advancement of sharing in education to maximise good relations across all relevant equality grounds, including community background.
- That a future based on cohesion, sharing and integration should seek to maximise sharing in a range of areas, including in education; and that we would expect to see Government investing in a shared educational experience as a route to increased social cohesion in society.
- The importance of sharing at each stage of educational provision – pre-school; early years; primary; post-primary; special needs and tertiary levels.

- The importance of sharing across the full range of education providers (ethos; identity or management / governance arrangements etc).
- That promoting equality and good relations within a school should complement school ethos and reinforce the importance of promoting equality and good relations in education.
- The importance of the rights of parents to choose individual schools (within appropriate economic constraints) - but in a context that does not impact on the development of a shared system as a whole.
- The potential to enhance existing mechanisms (e.g. the Entitlement Framework, Area Learning Partnerships, Area Based Planning; Common Funding Formula etc) using lessons learnt to date (such as from the Integrated Education Model and that emerging from the QUB Shared Education Programme), while providing appropriate mechanisms to incentivise and advance partnership working and shared delivery (e.g. via funding mechanisms etc).
- The importance of engaging with pupils, parents, education providers and wider stakeholders to communicate the rationale for the proposed system and model(s) - to improve associated policy proposals and to incentivise a move.
- The importance of agreeing and mainstreaming indicators to measure and review on sharing and collaboration in education provision and governance – both to acknowledge success and promote improvement.
- The importance of addressing wider issues linked to sharing in education – including academic selection at age 11; teacher training and the need for ‘greater sharing and collaboration between teacher training colleges’; the teacher’s exception under FETO; and better understanding the reasons for, and impacts of, any differential patterns of enrolment to education providers.

‘a) consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition’

- 5.5 We note that there is no agreed definition of shared education in Northern Ireland and note the concerns raised by some stakeholders around the absence of a definition e.g. that the language of ‘shared education’ has introduced ambiguity in

terms of what this aims to achieve in practice. For example, a 2013 report by Hansson et al⁹, noted that *‘for policy implementation to be effective a much clearer distinction between ‘integrated’, ‘mixed’, and ‘shared’ schooling needs to be drawn’*¹⁰.

- 5.6 We note that the terms of reference, which was provided by the Department of Education to the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Advancement of Shared Education, asked them to adopt the following broad definition of shared education:

“Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.”

- 5.7 We also note the May 2014 High Court decision by Judge Treacy (the ‘Drumragh’ judgment¹¹) where he considered that, upon analysis, **“integrated education”** was a standalone concept; and that the type of education that is to be supported is *“integration between Protestant and Catholic Pupils as opposed to integration within school of any other distinct sets of pupils. The provision plainly envisages education together at the same school”*; and that integrated education was *“education that is integrated throughout and not education that is delivered by a partisan board”*;
- 5.8 We also note the ‘continuum’ arguments that have been advanced regarding the potential inter-relationship between shared and integrated education. DENI, for example, have advised *‘Sharing across schools is at different levels along a continuum, and integrated education should be at the upper end of that continuum’*¹². Knox¹³ has also set out the

⁹ Hansson, O’Connor and McCord (2013): *Integrated Education – A review of policy and research evidence*, (Children and Youth Programme, UNESCO, University of Ulster). Available at http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/education/docs/ief_2013_report_unesco.pdf

¹⁰ Ibid, page 3

¹¹ http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/SummaryJudgments/Documents/Court%20Delivers%20Ruling%20on%20Department%20of%20Education's%20Approach%20to%20Long%20Term%20Planning/j_i_Summary%20of%20judgment%20-%20In%20re%20Drumragh%20Integrated%20College%2015%20May%2014.htm

¹² Hansard (2014): *Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry – DENI Briefing*. Available at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/committees/2016-2017/education/calls-for-evidence/inquiry-into-the-education-and-training-inspectorate-eti/departamental-correspondence/>

consideration that *‘shared education’ can be seen as part of ‘a graduated journey towards greater inter-dependence between schools’* and that *“there are opportunities for schools here depending on where they are now, where they want to take this and the extent to which they want to broker interdependencies with other schools”*.

- 5.9 In the context of current debates now comprising discussions regarding discrete concepts of ‘integrated’ and ‘shared’ education, **the Commission recommends** that a clear definition of ‘shared’ education is set out, supported by clarity on the inter-relationship between ‘shared’ education and ‘integrated’ education¹⁴; and how they will collectively interact to achieve overarching policy goals (including the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations).

Developing a Definition of Shared Education

- 5.10 In so far as it may assist with the development of a definition, we set out the following points for consideration:
- 5.11 While it is neither the Commission’s intent nor remit to advocate a specific model or models of education, we have set out the broad equality and good relations goals that we would expect a system to deliver.
- 5.12 Reflecting our advice to the Ministerial Advisory Group, we recommend that sharing in education must:
- Ensure that sharing impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner
 - Ensure that a shared experience should be central to the education system as a whole, encompassing at all stages of educational provision – pre-school; early years; primary; post-primary; special needs; and tertiary levels.
 - routinely teach learners together via a shared curriculum in shared classes.

[Evidence/Session-2013-2014/July-2014/Inquiry-into-Integrated-and-Shared-Education-Department-of-Education-Briefing/](#)

¹³ Hansard (June 2014): *Sharing in Education and Shared Education Programmes: International Fund for Ireland, Education and Training Inspectorate and University of Ulster*. Available at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/June-2014/Sharing-in-Education-and-Shared-Education-Programmes-International-Fund-for-Ireland-ETI-and-UU/>

¹⁴ We note the definition of integrated education contained in The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, with the interpretation as confirmed in the ‘Drumragh Judgement’

- better provide learners with shared awareness, understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds in Northern Ireland; while also enabling learners from different cultures/communities to experience a shared society.

5.13 We consider the above to be relevant to the development of policy aims associated with ‘sharing’ in education, and thus **we recommend** that it is taken into account in the development of a definition of ‘shared education’ that would seek to advance those aims.

5.14 **We further recommend** that any definition providing for a continuum of sharing also ensures that sharing is central to the system of education as a whole and that sharing impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner.

5.15 With regards to the *aims* set out in the definition of shared education supplied to the Ministerial Advisor Group (“*promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion*”) we consider that the good relations relevant aims in any definition should mirror the language used in other relevant definitions so as to promote consistency across policy goals.

5.16 However, in the absence of an agreed definition of good relations, we would highlight the following concepts for consideration alongside the above:

- In work further to the T:BUC strategy, the Commission has highlighted the importance of ensuring “*a high level of dignity, respect and mutual understanding*” as well as the importance of ensuring “*an absence of prejudice, hatred, hostility or harassment*”¹⁵
- The Equality Act 2010 highlighted the need to “*tackle prejudice, and promote understanding*”¹⁶.

¹⁵ Evidence to the Assembly Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. Inquiry into Building a United Community, October 2014.

¹⁶ Equality Act 2010, section 149 (5)

‘b) An obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education’

- 5.17 We note that Article 64(1) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 (“the 1989 Order”) provides a duty on the Department of Education to “*encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils*”.
- 5.18 As noted earlier, the May 2014 ‘Drumragh’ judgment set out that “integrated education” was a standalone concept, and did not extend to what is currently being referred to as shared education.
- 5.19 The **Commission considers** that ‘Shared Education’, once appropriately defined, and its inter-relationship with ‘integrated education’ made clear, is likely to benefit from an appropriate obligation in statute, supplementing but not replacing the existing Article 64 obligation on integrated education.

6 ‘Key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education’

Barriers

Separateness in the Northern Ireland Education System

- 6.1 In Northern Ireland, the majority of children are educated separately with little opportunity to mix with children from a diverse range of backgrounds. Recent research¹⁷ supports that post-primary provision in Northern Ireland remains mainly one of separate provision. As highlighted by Borooah and Knox, Department Statistics from 2013/14¹⁸ show that:

- In the primary sector: 6.2% of Catholics attend controlled primary schools; 1% of Protestants attend maintained primary schools; and 5.7% of primary school children attend integrated schools.
- In the secondary (non-grammar) sector: 2.8% of Catholics attend controlled secondary schools; 1% of Protestants

¹⁷ Borooah and Knox (Nov 2012) Delivering Shared Education: Knowledge Exchange Seminar

¹⁸ Borooah and Knox (October 2014): Briefing to the Education Committee

- attend maintained secondary schools; and 14.9% of secondary (non-grammar) pupils attend integrated schools.
- In the secondary (grammar) sector: 8.3% of Catholics attend controlled grammar schools; and 0.9% of Protestants attend voluntary Catholic grammar schools
- Overall, 6.7% of primary and post primary pupils attend integrated schools.

6.2 While all publicly funded schools are technically open to pupils from any background, the general pattern of school enrolment is not one of diversity and while integrated schools *‘represent a highly significant and distinctive approach to integrated education....only the minority of the school population attend them’*¹⁹. Tertiary education, where formal separation is not a feature, may thus be the first place for many students in which informal mixing occurs among people from a diverse range of equality backgrounds²⁰.

6.3 As the general pattern of school enrolment is not one of diversity, work to understand the reasons for, and impacts of, differential patterns of enrolment to education providers may therefore in itself suggest factors of relevance in the development of a more shared system of education in Northern Ireland.

Barriers impacting on Shared Education

6.4 A number of research reports and evaluations have highlighted the barriers to shared education across providers. For example, practical challenges to school collaboration include matters such as timetabling, transport and curriculum planning²¹. Some schools have also experienced challenges around the presentation of their cultural ethos or in relation to discipline policies.

6.5 Research by ARK²² in 2013 on Shared Education has highlighted concerns from Children and Young People including

¹⁹ Bain (2006): Schools for the future – funding strategy and sharing, para.13.11, page 179. Available at http://www.deni.gov.uk/review_of_education.pdf

²⁰ Hamilton, Hanson, Bell and Toucas (2008) Segregated lives: Social Division, Sectarianism and everyday life in Northern Ireland. Available at http://www.conflictresearch.org.uk/950B59D2-CE1A-4AEB-8F79-E8CF9CC61C2A/FinalDownload/DownloadId-9B96BC7D0BD0D77E405CD06536A6CAEE/950B59D2-CE1A-4AEB-8F79-E8CF9CC61C2A/Resources/Documents/P2_%20-%20Segregated%20Lives.pdf

²¹ Ministerial Advisory Group for the Advancement of Shared Education (May 2013). Report

²² ARK (2013): Shared Education - Views from Children and Young People

concerns around being bullied; having to mix with children from a different religious background; and concerns about pupils from grammar and non-grammar schools engaging in shared activities and classes. NICCY research (2013)²³ also found that whilst many pupils recognised the value of shared education for some their experiences had been a “*shared but separate experience...*”.

- 6.6 A 2013 evaluation by the Education and Training Inspectorate²⁴ of the International Fund for Ireland’s Sharing in Education Programme has also stated that there are challenges in sustaining and embedding learning on shared education. These include insufficient funding for collaboration, and for CPD; the perception from within schools around competing priorities and initiatives from DE; and changes in staffing arrangements and the loss of staff. The Commission’s response to the Ministerial Advisory Group also noted that, based on available research, there also appeared reticence to collaborate across school management types and even greater reluctance to collaborate with schools that have a different approach to academic selection. The ETI evaluation concluded that ‘*much remains to be done to ensure the experience is effective, sustained and progressive, particularly in schools that have not yet begun the process*’²⁵.
- 6.7 The Commission **recommends** that the Department utilises lessons drawn from the body of research²⁶ regarding sharing in education – including that relating to Integrated Education Model and the QUB Shared Education Programme²⁷ to overcome already identified barriers.

²³ NICCY (2013) Shared Education: The Views of Children and Young People 2013

²⁴ ETI (2013): A final evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland’s Sharing in Education Programme. Available at <http://www.etini.gov.uk/international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme/a-final-evaluation-of-the-international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme.htm>

²⁵ Ibid, page 33

²⁶ Our 201 Submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education summarises a range of research regarding integrated education and the QUB Shared Education Programme.

²⁷ The SEP encourages schools to make cross-sectoral collaborations an integral part of school life, creating enhanced educational and personal development opportunities for everyone involved. The SEP has, since 2007, involved over 100 schools at Post-Primary and Primary level in cross-sectoral collaboration concentrating on substantive, curriculum based activities. In the year beginning Sep 2010, SEP2 partnerships involved over 4,000 students across Northern Ireland. See <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/>

Barriers impacting on Integrated Education

- 6.8 While only a minority of children attend integrated schools, the integrated sector has raised a number of key concerns in relation to the Departments approach to encouraging and facilitating integrated education including a perceived failure to take into account parental demand for integrated schooling²⁸ (as evidenced by opinion polls) or to actively seek opportunities to increase the number of integrated schools places.
- 6.9 A 2013 report by Hansson et al, commissioned by the IEF²⁹, has highlighted how *'key policy documents now no longer make explicit reference to integrated education despite the statutory duty to support and facilitate it'*.
- 6.10 Representatives of the integrated sector have also raised concerns that *'public support for integrated education remains extremely high, but education policies are based on maintaining separate schools'*³⁰. For example IEF has raised concerns around the area based planning process and have criticised proposals to establish a single Education and Library Board as *'copper-fastened segregation'*³¹.
- 6.11 The Commission also notes the judgement of Mr Justice Treacy in the 'Drumragh' judicial review which highlighted that *'using an analytical tool to plan for an area is both flexible and necessary however, the inflexibility of the projections used [in relation to area based planning] will have the effect of making it difficult to accommodate the section 64 duty in future day to day decisions. The Department need to be alive to the Article 64 duty at all levels'*³².
- 6.12 We **highlight** the importance of ensuring fulfilment of the Article 64 provisions of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education at

²⁸ However, as the Committee will be aware, in recent evidence to the Committee the University of Ulster stated that the number of school places in the integrated sector "slightly exceeds demand", leaving "about 2000" places unfilled, although there are pressures in particular areas due to parental preference.

²⁹ Hansson, Bones and McCord (2013): *Integrated Education – a Review of Policy and Research Evidence*. (University of Ulster for Integrated Education Fund)

³⁰ ETI (2013): A final evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme. Available at <http://www.etini.gov.uk/international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme/a-final-evaluation-of-the-international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme.htm>

³¹ IEF (2014): Streamlining should mean eliminating division: the latest education plans reinforce it.

³² **Drumragh** Integrated College's Application for a Judicial Review [2014] NIQB 69.

all levels; and again **recommend** using lessons drawn from the body of research on integrated education to overcome already identified barriers.

Barriers in wider educational policy

- 6.13 In 2010 the Commission jointly published a challenge paper entitled *“Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts - A Strategy to meet our needs for the 21st Century.”*³³ The paper also included, *inter alia*³⁴, a number of wider recommendations to progress sharing and good relations in education, including:

- continued concern about the system of academic selection at eleven years old;
- that all teachers should be able to enjoy the same legislative protection as other workers and the exemption in FETO should be abolished at secondary level, as previously recommended, with early consideration given to urging the removal of the exemption at all levels; and
- the need for ‘greater sharing and collaboration between teacher training colleges’³⁵.

- 6.14 We again highlight the need to address wider issues linked to sharing in education - including academic selection at age 11; teacher training; and the teachers exemption under FETO.

Academic Selection

- 6.15 School collaboration is set in the context of the wider political debate on education. There is currently no agreement on academic selection with 2009/10 having seen the introduction of unregulated tests in which some 7,000 primary school pupils took part in exams set by the Association for Quality Education (largely Protestant students) and 6,700 children sat the GL assessment tests (largely Catholic students)³⁶.

³³ The Good Relations Forum (2010): Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts – A Strategy to meet our needs for the 21st century. Available at <http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Delivering%20Equality/EnsuringGoodRelationsWorkinourSchoolsCountsApr2010.pdf>

³⁴ A wider summary of relevant recommendations can be seen in Annex 3.

³⁵ Ibid, page 17

³⁶ Knox (2010) *Sharing Education Programme – Views from the White Board*, page 12. Available at <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/Views%20from%20the%20White%20Board%20May%202010.pdf>

- 6.16 The Commission reiterates our continued concern about the system of academic selection at eleven years old.

Teacher Training and Employment

- 6.17 In 2003, the Commission funded research by QUB which concluded that:

‘A significant barrier, identified by teachers, to their wider professional development in these areas was the relative lack of opportunity to teach or work outside their own community background. Aligned with this, was a concern about the unequal access for employment across the Controlled and Maintained school sectors for all teachers.’³⁷

- 6.18 This issue is inextricably linked with the maintenance of the teacher’s exception within the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO). In 2004³⁸, the Commission undertook a formal investigation and called for the removal of the teacher’s exception from posts in secondary level education. In 2008, the Commission reiterated this position and further called for *early consideration to be given to the question of urging the removal of the exemption at all levels*”.

- 6.19 In our 2013 response to the Review of the initial teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland, we noted “we consider that sharing in education must impact meaningfully and substantively on every participant and at all stages of educational provision – including tertiary levels. The Commission is mindful that, in 2013, teacher training in Northern Ireland represents the sole segregated area in the provision of third-level education in Northern Ireland.”

- 6.20 The Commission remains concerned about the impact that the separate provision of teacher training has on job opportunities, professional development and the promotion of good relations; and considers that closer collaboration between all initial teacher training providers in Northern Ireland would have a range of benefits, including in relation to good relations.

- 6.21 There is a compelling need for placing equality of opportunity and good relations at the heart of education structures.

³⁷ [Equality Awareness in Teacher Education and Training in Northern Ireland 2003 QUB](#)

³⁸ [Formal investigation under Art 41 \(FETO\) on the Teachers Exception](#) (2004)

Improvements to teacher education are an essential part of moving to the Commission's vision of a society where all children and young people are valued equally and allowed the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

- 6.22 We also consider that teachers should be equipped with a curriculum, resources and skills to deal with contentious issues in the classroom and note the evidence already given to the Inquiry that *'Developments on teacher training and teacher development will ultimately lead to the embedding of shared education as a concept in the mainstream education system'*³⁹.
- 6.23 We reiterate our **recommendation** that the exemption in FETO should be abolished at secondary level, as previously recommended, with early consideration given to urging the removal of the exemption at all levels; for greater sharing and collaboration between teacher training colleges; and for teachers to have the support and training to embed shared education in the classroom.

Alignment of Government Policies

- 6.24 Academics from Queens University have highlighted the need for greater alignment in relation to policies on education and on good relations. For example, the University of Ulster recently highlighted⁴⁰:

"We have the review of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), area planning, the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), the common funding formula, school closures, shared education and the 'Together: Building a United Community' document. To us, there does not seem to be any real alignment between some of those areas. They almost seem to be undertaken as separate processes, yet there is an interrelationship between some of them"

- 6.25 The Commission **recommends** that action is taken to ensure coordination across relevant policies and programmes so as to facilitate and encourage shared and integrated education.

³⁹ Hansard (2014): *Evidence to the Education Committee - Sharing in Education and Shared Education Programmes: International Fund for Ireland, Education and Training Inspectorate and University of Ulster*

⁴⁰ See <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/January-2014/Area-based-Planning-Queens-University-Belfast-and-University-of-Ulster/>

Enablers

- 6.26 We welcome the indication in T:BUC Strategy that the key aim relating to education is *'to enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience'*⁴¹ and the commitment to pilot 100 shared schools by 2015.
- 6.27 The Commission considers that there are clear opportunities to build upon / extend existing education policy and **recommends** that consideration is given to how this might be achieved.
- 6.28 Research⁴², for example, has pointed to the possibility of *'incentivising Area Learning Communities to deliver the entitlement framework on a cross community basis; incentivising the delivery as part of the core curriculum; promoting the reconciliation benefits as having wider societal value; and argue for the economic benefits when set alongside the costs of separate denominational provision'*⁴³.
- Area Learning Partnerships / Communities
- 6.29 Research in 2008⁴⁴ showed that collaboration through the Area Learning Partnerships offered many benefits such as the opportunity to share expertise amongst teaching staff; a wider range of curricular opportunities for young people and the opportunity to break down barriers and build informal relationships, particularly between grammar and secondary schools.
- 6.30 Despite this generally positive assessment of collaboration *'participants indicated that sustainable collaborative relationships were difficult to establish and a range of factors were reported to have an impact on the process of school collaboration'*.⁴⁵ Of relevance is that schools were more hesitant about establishing collaborative links outside of their

⁴¹ Together Building a United Community (May 2013), page 29. Available at <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf>

⁴² Bain (2006): Schools for the future – funding strategy and sharing. Available at http://www.deni.gov.uk/review_of_education.pdf

⁴³ Knox (2010) Sharing Education Programme – Views from the Whiteboard, page 55. Available <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/Views%20from%20the%20White%20Board%20May%202010.pdf>

⁴⁴ Queens University School of Education (2008) *School Collaboration in Northern Ireland – Opportunities for Reconciliation*, page 5. Available at <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/School-Collaboration-in-NI.pdf>

⁴⁵ Ibid, page 5

sector than those within it (only 35% of schools suggested that they had established collaborative links with a school which took a different approach to academic selection) or between State maintained and Catholic Controlled; or integrated and non-integrated schools. The research also suggested that schools placed *'considerable emphasis on cultural issues and sought to establish collaborative relations with schools where the culture was deemed to be compatible with their own'*⁴⁶. Further, Borooah and Knox note, in their submission to the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education⁴⁷, that *'it is claimed that ALCs are putting in place shared education. There is no evidence to support this assertion. DE claims that they do not gather evidence on the extent of sharing in ALCs, their impact on educational outcomes, and the value for money of these collaborative arrangements'*.

- 6.31 **The Commission recommends** that consideration is given to how best Area Learning Partnerships/Communities might effectively encourage sharing between providers from different sectors / management types etc in a way which could serve to advance good relations.

Sustainability and Funding

- 6.32 Those involved in shared education have highlighted the importance of funding in sustaining collaborative partnerships. As highlighted in evidence to the Committee recently, *'the uncertainty which exists around funding for the entitlement framework is unhelpful - senior Leaders and Governors need clear direction and information relating to funding which is required to sustain our collaborative arrangements'*⁴⁸.
- 6.33 An evaluation by the ETI of the Sharing in Education Programme highlighted that while the programme promoted effectively links between schools in shared education partnerships, *'the extent of the sustainability of these partnerships without additional funding remains to be seen'*⁴⁹.

⁴⁶ Ibid, page 5

⁴⁷ See <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/education-2011---2016/inquiries-and-reviews/shared-and-integrated-education/knox-and-borooah-2.pdf>

⁴⁸ Written evidence to the Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry from both Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College

⁴⁹ Education and Training Inspectorate (2013): *An evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme*, page 32.

- 6.34 Further, where viability criteria put local education provision at risk, sharing between and/or merging existing schools, may both advance good relations and help ensure that a school provides an anchor point for the wider community as envisaged in the Extended Schools Initiative.⁵⁰
- 6.35 We understand that the Common Funding Formula Review is still under consideration. Our response to the Ministerial Advisory Group noted that Common Funding Formula
- “along with area based planning creates further room for ‘creative thinking’ in relation to directing funds so as to reward sharing between schools (of different management type etc) in a way that would advance Good Relations”.*
- 6.36 Our 2014 response⁵¹ to the review of the funding formula for schools noted
- “The Commissions vision is to create an education system where children are routinely educated together, in inclusive environments, regardless of their background or ability.⁵² It will be important that the common funding formula is able to take account of the outcomes of the above considerations”*
- “Any funding mechanism can have a transformative effect on an education system and this is a clear opportunity to incentivise increased sharing of educational resources on cross-sectoral and ability lines”.*
- 6.37 We are aware that while the Ministerial advisory group recommended⁵³ a shared education premium within the common funding formula, the Minister has reserved his position

⁵⁰ Education and Training Inspectorate Report (2006). Available at <http://www.etini.gov.uk/the-extended-schools-initiative-in-northern-ireland-a-baseline-survey-by-the-education-and-training-inspectorate.pdf>

⁵¹ <http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Consultation%20Responses/2012/DEdCommonFundingFormula-2012.pdf>

⁵² Every Child an Equal Child(2008) see also Ensuring the good relations work in our schools counts (2010)

⁵³ Recommendation 3 of the MAG Group report states that “As part of the proposed revised common funding formula ... a ‘shared education premium’ should be incorporated into the funding formula for schools and other educational institutions. This premium would recognize the added value of shared education and should be weighted in terms of: The number of children and young people that are engaged in shared education activities, as defined in this report; and the proportion of school time that children and young people are engaged in such activities.”

on whether that is the most appropriate way to fund shared education⁵⁴.

- 6.38 The **Commission recommends** that consideration is given as to how best to incentivise increased sharing of educational resources on cross-sectoral and ability lines, including via the common funding formula.

School Level Enablers

- 6.39 As highlighted by the Commission in its 2012 submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group, school leadership and school ethos will be important drivers in future collaborative work as well as the schools relationship with the local community. The overall goal will be to create a system of shared education and collaboration which is curriculum- focused; has a shared educational experience at its core and is integral to the way all education is delivered in Northern Ireland.
- 6.40 A number of research reports have highlighted key school level enablers in advancing shared education including the importance of high-quality contact; school leadership links between teachers; a focus on the curriculum and the sharing of resources between teachers.
- 6.41 The report of the Ministerial Advisory Group⁵⁵ highlights that *“Research evidence from a range of studies carried out in Northern Ireland over the years ... suggests that limited contact resulting from bringing children together for short periods of time – either in school or elsewhere – has little or no long-term effects on their attitudes”* and notes *“support for longer term-sustained contact between learners”* (aligned to inter-group contact theory - Hewstone et al. 2005; Hughes et al. 2007⁵⁶), summarising that *“the contact literature makes a clear distinction between superficial and intimate contact in respect*

⁵⁴ NI Assembly (Hansard – 2nd July 2014): Inquiry into Integrated a Shared Education – Department of Education Briefing.

⁵⁵ Connolly, P., Purvis, D., O’Grady, P.J., (2013) Advancing Shared Education: Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group pp49-50

⁵⁶ Hewstone, M., Cairns, E., Voci, A., Paolini, S., McLernon, F., Crisp, R. et al. (2005) Intergroup contact in a divided society: Challenging segregation in Northern Ireland, in: D. Abrams, J. M. Marques, and M. A. Hogg (Eds) The social psychology of inclusion and exclusion, pp. 265–292 Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Hughes, J. and Donnelly, C. (2007) Integrated schools in Northern Ireland and bi-lingual/bi-national schools in Israel: Some policy issues. In Z. Bekermann and C. McGlynn (Eds) Sustained peace education in post-conflict societies, pp. 121–134. London: McMillan.

of positive outcomes. The latter refers to encounters where individuals have a more positive emotional disposition towards others and trust them enough to “self-disclose”, thereby creating an opportunity for perspective-taking and out-group empathy’ (Hughes and Donnelly, 2012: p. 191). 2010)”.

- 6.42 Research has also highlighted the importance of local solutions to cross-sectoral working; the need for shared education to enhance the delivery of core curricular activities or meet real educational need (e.g. increased access to specialist teaching).
- 6.43 Factors such as geographical proximity, levels of cross community integration and interface areas have also been highlighted as important all factors in the workability of Shared Education Programmes⁵⁷. ETI have also noted⁵⁸ that a key challenge remains “to engage schools/ organisations not already involved in community relations work”.
- 6.44 We **reiterate our recommendation** that the Department utilises lessons from the body of research⁵⁹ regarding sharing in education – including that relating to Integrated Education Model and the QUB Shared Education Programme⁶⁰ etc.

Guidance

- 6.45 The Commission recognises the importance of guidance for schools who wish to embark on shared education and for those who wish to move toward greater interdependency.
- 6.46 Both the Ministerial Advisory Group on shared education and academics from Queens University have stated that there is a lack of guidance for schools who wish collaborate to sustain a federation, a confederation or shared communities of

⁵⁷ Knox (2014):

⁵⁸ ETI (2013) A Final Evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland’s Sharing in Education Programme <http://www.eti.gov.uk/international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme/a-final-evaluation-of-the-international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme.htm>

⁵⁹ The Commission’s 2012 Submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education summarises a range of research regarding integrated education and the QUB Shared Education Programme.

⁶⁰ The SEP encourages schools to make cross-sectoral collaborations an integral part of school life, creating enhanced educational and personal development opportunities for everyone involved. The SEP has, since 2007, involved over 100 schools at Post-Primary and Primary level in cross-sectoral collaboration concentrating on substantive, curriculum based activities. In the year beginning Sep 2010, SEP2 partnerships involved over 4,000 students across Northern Ireland. See <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/>

learning⁶¹. Queens University highlighted that *‘even where the post-primary area-based plans have suggested that x number of schools should work together in a certain town for the betterment of education outcomes for all the pupils.... there is no real assistance or support for them to do that, be it actual resource or even just advice and guidance about how they would grow that particular partnership’*⁶².

- 6.47 We welcome the work being undertaken by the Department to provide guidance on the different models of shared education. ETI has also highlighted that *‘in helping to address these challenges DE officials need to work more collaboratively to ensure that school improvement policies signpost connections to, and opportunities for, shared education’*⁶³.

Indicators and Evaluation

- 6.48 In order to acknowledge success and promote improvement, sharing and collaboration between schools should be evaluated. Bain (2006)⁶⁴ recommends that all models of sharing and collaboration, from the locally evolving partnerships to the more formally structured arrangements of sharing and collaboration, can be evaluated against a set of indicators⁶⁵.
- 6.49 Evaluation of existing barriers and enablers to a shared system of education will be important. Focus will need to be placed on lessons learned to date – for example the reported difficulties encountered by teachers in teaching in shared classes, or the reported anxiety of some pupils about participating in the Shared Education Programme.
- 6.50 Over time, the relative effectiveness of different types of partnerships and activities will need to be evaluated, including establishing what type of collaboration is most effective in

⁶¹ Hansard (2014): Area Based Planning - Queens University and the University of Ulster. Available at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/January-2014/Area-based-Planning-Queens-University-Belfast-and-University-of-Ulster/>

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Education and Training Inspectorate (2013): *An evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme*, page 32.

⁶⁴ Bain (2006): *Schools for the future – funding strategy and sharing*. Available at http://www.deni.gov.uk/review_of_education.pdf

⁶⁵ Ibid, page 170 - Bain recommended indicators covering: quality and effectiveness of provision; equality and accessibility; diversity and choice; community well being and cohesion; economy and efficiency (including matching provision to need and reducing overprovision); and cross-community and cross-sector sharing and collaboration. Source:

delivering good educational outcomes and experiences as well as promoting good relations.

- 6.51 Evaluation should be through both self-evaluation and through inspection and should take account of both the distinctive character of the school and the community environment. Systems of measurement and rolling evaluation of policies/programmes will be important. Involvement of the Education and Training Inspectorate would likely provide an effective means to mainstream this process.
- 6.52 The Commission **continues to recommend** indicators to measure and review sharing and collaboration in education provision and governance – both to acknowledge success and promote improvement. The Commission therefore recognises the potential for the indicators being developed by the Education and Training Inspectorate, on behalf of the Department for Education, to assist schools in evaluating programs of shared education and inform future guidance in this area.
- 6.53 The Commission is also of the view that there is a real opportunity to progress and mainstream learning from the sharing in education and shared education programs through such projects as the recently agreed Delivering Social Change (DSC) signature project. Data should be collected on the educational impacts on Section 75 Groups and children on FSM as part of the DSC and other programmes.

Areas of Specific Interest to the Inquiry

- 6.54 Aligned to the specific terms of reference to the inquiry, we also make the following comments:
- The effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy
- 6.55 Aligned to our remit and expertise, the Commission has not undertaken a detailed consideration of the effectiveness of the CRED policy
- 6.56 The Commission however recognises the crucial role that schools have in contributing to the reconciliation of our society. This is not solely a job for schools, but schools do play a critical

role⁶⁶. The current policy environment provides a further opportunity to address persistent inequalities in education and make a substantial contribution to improved social and community cohesion within our society.

- 6.57 We note that the Department's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy commits to *"encourage greater sharing and collaboration across and between all educational settings on a cross community basis"*⁶⁷. We **welcome** that the intended outcomes set out in CRED policy; namely *"to develop learners who understand and respect the rights, equality and diversity (including linguistic diversity) of all S75 groups"* have the potential to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across the full range of equality grounds.
- 6.58 We however note that the NIHRC has recommended⁶⁸ that *"there is therefore arguably a need to align curriculum content more carefully with CRED aspirations"* and that recommendation 10 of the Ministerial Advisory Group recommends *"an independent review should be undertaken of current practice... The review should consider the effectiveness of the current Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy and also include consideration of the opportunities that are provided for children and young people to discuss and explore issues associated with divisions, conflict and inequalities in Northern Ireland."*
- 6.59 We also note the reply given by the Minister for Education⁶⁹ indicating that following the closure of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme in December 2013, schools were encouraged to apply for CRED funding but that some schools did not apply and that in some Boards the Scheme was under-subscribed. We would **encourage** steps to maximise the effective use of the CRED policy and available funding to support the advancement of equality of opportunity and good relations via CRED and the school curriculum.

⁶⁶ The Good Relations Forum (2010): Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts (2010), page 11. Available at <http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/EnsuringGoodRelationsWorkinourSchoolsCounts.pdf>

⁶⁷ Department of Education (2011): *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education*, page 25. Available at <http://soap.tibus.com/credni/filestore/documents/Final%20CRED%20Policy%20-%20March%202011%20-%20English%20PDF.PDF>

⁶⁸ Education reform in Northern Ireland: A Human Rights Review, QUB, commissioned by NIHRC, 2013 www.nihrc.org.uk

⁶⁹ Assembly Question - AQW 30553/11-15

Engagement, including with parents and carers

- 6.60 The Commission reiterates the importance of engaging with pupils, parents, education providers and wider stakeholders to communicate the rationale for the proposed system and model(s) - to improve associated policy proposals and to incentivise any moves.
- 6.61 We recommend, in line with our consistent call for effective engagement with Section 75 groups, that the Department and other key bodies also take steps to ensure effective engagement with children & young people (C&YP) in the design, delivery, implementation and review of shared education initiatives. We note that a recent NICCY report⁷⁰ has revealed an absence of robust systems by Departments for recording, analysing, evaluating and providing feedback to C&YP on the outcomes of engagements.
- 6.62 Further NICCY research (2013)⁷¹ into the views of C&YP on shared education has also reported that whilst many pupils recognised the value of shared education and its objectives, for some their experiences of sharing had been less positive; with some pupils indicating that the collaborative activities and joint classes had been a “*shared but separate experience...*”.
- 6.63 Gallagher and Duffy (2012) have also noted the importance of parental support and involvement in their analysis⁷² of the Shared Education Programme (SEP):
- “Some of the schools talked about cross-sector collaboration needing parental support and involvement. Those schools situated in contested space appeared to experience the most resistance from parents; perhaps due to concerns about safety moving through contested space or their children mixing with young people from the other side of the community. According to some Coordinators, parents were also dealing with the legacy of the conflict themselves.”*

⁷⁰ NICCY (2014) 'Walking or Talking Participation - evidencing the impact of direct participation with children and young people in the development of departmental policies, strategies, legislation and services

⁷¹ NICCY (2013) Shared Education: The Views of Children and Young People 2013

⁷² Duffy, G., Gallagher, T., (2012) Sustaining Cross-Sector Collaboration: An examination of schools involved in the first cohort of the Sharing Education Programme - <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.com/documents/Sustainability%20Report.pdf>

- 6.64 The recent evaluation of Sharing in Education Programmes, noted that when projects involved parents/carers, it lead to a more enriched experience for participants. The Commission has also noted that sharing between and/or merging existing schools, may both advance good relations and help ensure that a school provides an anchor point for the wider community as envisaged in the Extended Schools Initiative.⁷³
- 6.65 As highlighted in our response to the Ministerial Advisory Group - without unduly delaying progress, there will be merits in looking at lessons learnt from the Integrated sector; the Sharing in Education and Shared Education Programmes; and other similar initiatives to identify key lessons regarding engagement.

The Role of Special Schools

- 6.66 Aligned to the terms for reference for the inquiry, we reiterate our view that sharing in education, across the full range of equality grounds, not only has the potential to provide meaningful and sustainable relations between pupils of different cultures and backgrounds, but also has the potential to improve educational outcomes for pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities.
- 6.67 We consider that sharing in education must impact meaningfully and substantively on every participant and we have highlighted the importance of sharing at all stages of educational provision – pre-school; early years; primary; post-primary; special needs; and tertiary levels.”
- 6.68 We note that the Ministerial Advisory Group report quotes the ETI as reporting “*Other key benefits included improved social and personal skills for all learners; children from mainstream schools developing a better understanding of those with SEN and the transmission of special education staff expertise to their mainstream colleagues.*”
- 6.69 The Commission supports action that encourages routine sharing and collaboration between pupils and staff at special and mainstream schools, or actions which promote positive attitudes and challenge negative stereotypes.

⁷³ Education and Training Inspectorate Report (2006). Available at <http://www.etini.gov.uk/the-extended-schools-initiative-in-northern-ireland-a-baseline-survey-by-the-education-and-training-inspectorate.pdf>

- 6.70 We **recommend** the Department explore how a shared experience can be central to the education system as a whole, encompassing at all stages of educational provision – including **routine sharing and collaboration between pupils and staff at special and mainstream schools.**

7 ‘Alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes’

- 7.1 Aligned to our remit and expertise, the Commission has not undertaken work to evaluate education policy interventions from other jurisdictions.
- 7.2 This submission, and the further detail set out in our submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group in 2012, has however sought to point to and reference a range of literature and research regarding lessons to date from the Northern Ireland experience.

8 ‘Priorities and actions to be taken to improve sharing and integration’

- 8.1 The Commission recognises the potential for shared education to tackle inequality and promote equality of opportunity and good relations across the full range of Section 75 groups
- 8.2 We consider that any priority actions to advance shared education should be aligned to achieving these goals.
- 8.3 We summarise below the key recommendations developed across this paper.

A Legal and Policy framework

- 8.4 **The Commission recommends** that a clear definition of ‘shared’ education is set out, supported by clarity on the inter-relationship between ‘shared’ education and ‘integrated’

education⁷⁴; and how they will collectively interact to achieve overarching policy goals (including the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations).

- 8.5 Reflecting our advice to the Ministerial Advisory Group, we recommend that sharing in education must:
- Ensure that sharing impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner
 - Ensure that a shared experience should be central to the education system as a whole, encompassing at all stages of educational provision – pre-school; early years; primary; post-primary; special needs; and tertiary levels.
 - routinely teach learners together via a shared curriculum in shared classes.
 - better provide learners with shared awareness, understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds in Northern Ireland; while also enabling learners from different cultures/communities to experience a shared society.
- 8.6 We consider the above to be relevant to the development of policy aims associated with ‘sharing’ in education, and thus **we recommend** that it is taken into account in the development of a definition of ‘shared education’ that would seek to advance those aims. **We recommend** that any definition providing for a continuum of sharing ensures that sharing is central to the system of education as a whole and that it impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner.
- 8.7 We consider that that the allocation of responsibility for mainstreaming shared education needs to be explicit, and therefore **consider** that ‘Shared Education’, once appropriately defined, and its inter-relationship with ‘integrated education’ made clear, is likely to benefit from an appropriate obligation in statute, supplementing but not replacing the existing Article 64 obligation on integrated education.

⁷⁴ We note the definition of integrated education contained in The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989, with the interpretation as confirmed in the ‘Drumragh Judgement’

Addressing Barriers to the Advancement of Shared and Integrated Education

- 8.8 The Commission **recommends** that the Department utilises lessons drawn from the body of research⁷⁵ regarding sharing in education – including that relating to Integrated Education Model and the QUB Shared Education Programme⁷⁶ etc. We also **highlight** the importance of ensuring fulfilment of the Article 64 provisions of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 to ‘encourage and facilitate’ integrated education at all levels.
- 8.9 With regards to barriers in wider education policy, we continue to **recommend** action to address wider issues linked to sharing in education (including academic selection at age 11; teacher training to advance shared education; the removal of the teachers’ exemption under FETO; and to gain a better understanding of the reasons for, and impacts of, any differential patterns of enrolment to education providers).
- 8.10 The Commission remains of the view that, for shared education to be mainstreamed, it needs to be facilitated and promoted through the wider policy context. There is a need for a joined-up approach to sharing and alignment of the policies to promote and facilitate it. The Commission **recommends** that action is taken to ensure coordination across relevant policies and programmes.

Better Utilising Existing Enablers

- 8.11 The Commission continues to highlight the clear opportunities to build upon / extend existing education policy to be used to better advance shared education and **recommends** that consideration is given to how this might be achieved.
- 8.12 We **recommend** that consideration is given to how best Area Learning Partnerships / Communities might effectively

⁷⁵ Our 201 Submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education summarises a range of research regarding integrated education and the QUB Shared Education Programme.

⁷⁶ The SEP encourages schools to make cross-sectoral collaborations an integral part of school life, creating enhanced educational and personal development opportunities for everyone involved. The SEP has, since 2007, involved over 100 schools at Post-Primary and Primary level in cross-sectoral collaboration concentrating on substantive, curriculum based activities. In the year beginning Sep 2010, SEP2 partnerships involved over 4,000 students across Northern Ireland. See <http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/>

encourage sharing between providers from different sectors / management types in a way which could serve to advance good relations.

- 8.13 We note the importance of sustainability and the role of funding in that regard and therefore welcome the Departments commitment to use the shared education programme to determine how best to mainstream shared education funding for schools.
- 8.14 We continue to **recommend** that consideration is given as to how best to incentivise increased sharing of educational resources on cross-sectoral and ability lines, including via the common funding formula.
- 8.15 A number of research reports have highlighted key school level enablers in advancing shared education including the importance of high-quality contact; school leadership links between teachers; a focus on the curriculum and the sharing of resources between teachers. ETI have also noted⁷⁷ that a key challenge remains *“to engage schools/ organisations not already involved in community relations work”*. We **reiterate our recommendation** that the Department utilises lessons from the body of research⁷⁸ regarding sharing in education to advance key enablers.

Guidance

- 8.16 The Commission recognises the importance of guidance for schools who wish to embark on shared education and for those who wish to move toward greater interdependency and we **welcome** the work being undertaken by the Department to provide guidance on the different models of shared education.

Indicators and Evaluation

- 8.17 The Commission **continues to recommend** indicators to measure and review sharing and collaboration in education

⁷⁷ ETI (2013) A Final Evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme <http://www.etini.gov.uk/international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme/a-final-evaluation-of-the-international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme.htm>

⁷⁸ The Commission's 2012 Submission to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education summarises a range of research regarding integrated education and the QUB Shared Education Programme.

provision and governance – both to acknowledge success and promote improvement.

- 8.18 The Commission is also of the view that there is a real opportunity to capture and mainstream learning from projects such as the recently agreed Delivering Social Change (DSC) signature project. Data should be collected on the educational impacts on Section 75 Groups and children on FSM as part of the DSC and other programmes.

Areas of Specific Interest to the Inquiry

- 8.19 Aligned to the specific terms of reference to the inquiry, we also make the following comments:

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy

- 8.20 Aligned to our remit and expertise, the Commission has not undertaken a detailed consideration of the effectiveness of the CRED policy

- 8.21 We **welcome** that the intended outcomes set out in CRED policy; namely *“to develop learners who understand and respect the rights, equality and diversity (including linguistic diversity) of all S75 groups”* have the potential to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across the full range of grounds, but **we note the recommendations** from the NIHRC and the MAG calling respectively for alignment and review of CRED. We **encourage** steps to maximise the effective use of CRED, and available funding to support the advancement of equality of opportunity and good relations via CRED and the school curriculum.

Engagement, including with parents and carers

- 8.22 The Commission reiterates the importance of engaging with pupils, parents, education providers and wider stakeholders to communicate the rationale for the proposed system and model(s) - to take account of barriers and enablers; to improve associated policy proposals and to incentivise any moves.

The Role of Special Schools

- 8.23 We consider that sharing in education must impact meaningfully and substantively on every participant.

- 8.24 We reiterate our recommendation that the Department explore how a shared experience can be central to the education system as a whole, encompassing at all stages of educational provision – including routine sharing and collaboration between pupils and staff at special and mainstream schools.

**Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
October 2014**

9 ANNEX 1: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

1. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (the Commission) is an independent public body established under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission is responsible for implementing the legislation on fair employment, sex discrimination and equal pay, race relations, sexual orientation, disability and age.
2. The Commission's remit also includes overseeing the statutory duties on the Department to promote equality of opportunity and good relations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75) and to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
3. The Commission's general duties include:
 - working towards the elimination of discrimination;
 - promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging good practice;
 - promoting positive / affirmative action
 - promoting good relations between people of different racial groups;
 - overseeing the implementation and effectiveness of the statutory duty on relevant the Department;
 - keeping the legislation under review;
 - promoting good relations between people of different religious belief and / or political opinion.
4. The Equality Commission, together with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, has been designated under the United Nations Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as the independent mechanism tasked with promoting, protecting and monitoring implementation of the Convention in Northern Ireland.

10 ANNEX 2: Inequalities in Education: Facts and Trends 1998-2008

10.1 The Commission's 2010 publication "*Inequalities in Education: Facts and Trends 1998-2008*"⁷⁹ sought to consider patterns of educational attainment in Northern Ireland. Key findings included:

- Community background: Amongst school leavers, there has been considerable improvement in the highest level of educational attainment of both communities, although the gap between highest educational attainment of Protestant and Roman Catholic school leavers has widened. When the different equality groups are compared, community background is the area where fewest differences exist in 2007/08.
- Gender: Some differences are notable when looking at gender, particularly with regards to levels of highest educational attainment and subject choices within Further or Higher Education. While there has been considerable improvement in the highest level of educational attainment of both male and female school leavers, this improvement has been markedly more evident for females than for males.
- Those with / without a declared disability: There are still considerable differences in the highest educational attainment and in participation in Further or Higher Education between those with and without a declared disability. With regards to participation in third-level education, while those with a declared disability remain under-represented at this level, an improvement has occurred in the proportion who are accessing institutes of Higher Education in Northern Ireland.
- Irish Travellers: There has been a noticeable gap between the highest education attainment and destinations of Irish Traveller and non-Traveller school leavers. The majority of Irish Travellers left school with no GCSEs, while the majority of non-Travellers left school with GCSE or higher qualifications.

⁷⁹ ECNI (2010): *Inequalities in Education – Facts and Trends 1998-2008*. Available at http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/InequalitiesinEducation_ResearchReport.pdf

11 ANNEX 3: “Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts” (2010): Relevant recommendations

“i) Greater focus on sharing and collaboration within service delivery - the Department, ESA and other key educational stakeholders to focus on maximising value for money and avoiding duplication of educational provision, by placing a greater focus on existing drivers, policies and practices that encourage greater sharing and collaboration, particularly on a cross-community basis. These include:

- **Every School a Good School – a Policy for School Improvement** – with a focus on the best educational interests of all children, whatever the identity. This should particularly include the needs of those most at risk of not reaching their potential, such as the children of new residents and Travellers.
- **Adding good relations conditions to budgetary allocations criteria**, particularly in relation to capital builds and development plans, so there is a greater focus on cross-community relationship building.
- **The Review of Public Administration and Community Planning** – by encouraging greater local and regional clustering of services, particularly with respect to school and community resources, based on whole community need and not upon continued separate community provision. Good relations must be a direct underpinning principle within this planning process. Education should be seen in the broadest sense of the word
- **a holistic approach** which takes account of external family and community life as well as the school environment.
- **The Entitlement Framework** – encouraging schools to see what actions they can take to collaborate on a cross-community basis to meet the Entitlement Framework requirements.
- **Area Learning Communities** – the Department of Education to add a cross-sectoral and cross- community element to the funding criteria for the Collaboration Element, and to support the roll out of ALCs to all areas.”

SOURCE: The Good Relations Forum (2010): Ensuring the Good Relations Work in our Schools Counts – A Strategy to meet our needs for the 21st century.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (2)

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast BT2 7DP

www.equalityni.org

13 March 2015

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

Dear Mr McCallion

Re: Shared and Integrated Education

I write in response to your letter dated 6 February 2015, following the Commission's presentation to the Committee's Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

First, my apologies for the delay in responding to your letter but I was keen for the Commission to discuss and approve its response to the Department of Education's consultation on "Shared Education Draft Policy and Legislation" consultation before I responded. I have enclosed a summary of this response for the Committee's information and I would be happy to answer any questions the Members might have or indeed forward our full response if required.

In response to the Committee's request for sight of the relevant research into Educational Inequalities in Northern Ireland, we have commissioned Queens University to carry out this out and as noted in our written submission, as this work is still ongoing, we are not in a position to share it at present. However, when it is completed the Commission will forward it to the Committee and we would be willing to discuss the issues raised further at that stage if the Committee would find this useful.

The Committee sought further information on the Equality Commission's position in respect of religious instruction in schools. Whilst the Commission does not have a specific policy on this, it is our core position, as outlined in our written submission to the Inquiry, that we recommend a move towards a system of sharing based on teaching a diverse range of pupils together

Chief Commissioner: Michael Wardlow



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Chief Executive: Evelyn Collins CBE

through a shared curriculum in shared classes across the full spectrum of education providers. This is not to undermine the rights of parents to make choices regarding their child's attendance at specific schools, or for the provision of faith-based schools, but we consider that such considerations cannot overshadow the importance of a system of education seeking to maximise equality of opportunity and good relations.

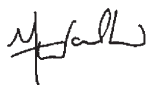
The Committee also sought further information from the Commission on the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy. As noted at the Committee session, the Commission is not aware in detail of the particular situation in the Moy thus it would be inappropriate to comment on the specifics.

However, as set out in the aforementioned consultation response, our considered view is that a system of shared education has a central role to play in advancing a shared society and that children should have the opportunity to be educated together regardless of faith or background.

We hold the view that sharing in education must impact meaningfully and substantively on every learner and to this end we have highlighted the importance of sharing at all stages of educational provision. This, we believe, mirrors the Executive's commitment to sharing becoming "*a central part of every child's educational experience*" as set out in Together: Building a United Community, a position we have already welcomed.

I trust this is helpful and again, please feel free to contact me if the Committee Members have any further queries.

Yours sincerely



Dr Michael Wardlow
Chief Commissioner

①	Direct line:	028 90 500 622 (PA)
☎	Textphone:	028 90 500 589
📠	Fax:	028 90 329 227
✉	E mail:	executivepa@equalityni.org

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Summary of Response to Consultation on 'Shared Education Draft Policy and Legislation Consultation'

March 2015

1 Summary of Response

- 1.1 The Equality Commission welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department of Education's consultation on a Bill and policy to advance sharing in education.

We welcome the draft Bill and policy as seeking to set out a definition and policy framework. We also welcome the actions in the draft policy providing for:

- co-ordinated support for schools and teachers;
- the development of a new teacher professional development strategy;
- advice and guidance on options for sharing;
- engagement with parents, carers, children and young people.

- 1.2 However, we do not consider that the proposed overall approach is sufficiently robust. We therefore set out a number of key concerns and associated recommendations.

Overarching Concerns

- 1.3 Our overarching concern is that the proposals are neither clearly nor sufficiently defined to ensure the development of a system of education with meaningful and sustainable sharing at its core, and which is aimed at positively changing the relationship between pupils, schools and the wider community.
- 1.4 We also consider that the proposals have the potential to fall short of the commitment set out by the Executive in *Together: Building a United Community* to ensure that "sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational Experience" [our emphasis]
- 1.5 We are also concerned that:

- there is a fundamental lack of coherence between the 'policy description' of shared education in the draft policy; and the definition of shared education as set out in the draft Bill.
- that the policy aim and associated outcomes for shared education have not been sufficiently developed.

1.6 In summary, while the consultation exercise and the detail provided are to be welcomed, we consider that for the potential of shared education to be realised in practice, it must be appropriately defined in legislation and clearly articulated through a coherent and co-ordinated policy framework.

1.7 To assist, we recommend that the Department take account of our full consultation response and our published recommendations on sharing in education, available via www.equalityni.org/sharededucation.

1.8 We would also welcome early engagement with the Department on their proposals.

Summary of Key Recommendations

1.9 We set out below a summary of key recommendations. Our full consultation response expands on these key points as well as providing further information in direct response to other specific aspects of the consultation.

Focus of Shared Education

1.10 It is recommended that the Department refines both the policy document and the draft Bill to ensure that there is a clear and definition of shared education and coherence between the policy document and the draft Bill.

1.11 We consider that the policy and Bill for shared education must:

- ensure that sharing impacts meaningfully and substantively on every learner.
- ensure that a shared experience should be central to the education system as a whole, encompassing at all stages of educational provision – pre-school; early years; primary; post-primary; special needs; and tertiary levels.
- routinely teach learners together via a shared curriculum in shared classes.
- better provide learners with shared awareness, understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures,

identities and backgrounds in Northern Ireland; while also enabling learners from different cultures/communities to experience a shared society.

- 1.12 We note reports that only around 65% of schools would be eligible to participate in the proposed DSC programme. We recommend that the Department makes clear that the proposed sharing will fulfil the commitment set out by the Executive in Together: Building a United Community to ensure “that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience”¹ [our emphasis]. We also highlight the requirement on the Department to assess the equality impacts of proposals.

Definition of Shared Education

- 1.13 The Commission highlights the apparent inconsistency between the Bill and the Policy, noting that the proposed definition of shared education in the draft Bill is narrower than the stated aims and objectives in the draft policy on shared education.
- 1.14 We are of the view that defining shared education only in relation to religious/political *and* socio-economic lines, limits the potential for shared education to advance equality of opportunity and good relations across other S75 grounds.
- 1.15 We recommend that the focus and wording of both the draft Bill and policy are further developed to ensure consistency in focus and clarity in implementation; including that:
- The core focus of the Bill should be centred on ensuring meaningful and sustained sharing between learners of different community background, while also ensuring that any definition is not so narrow as for other types of sharing to fall outside the legal definition.
 - The associated policy seeks to find ways, alongside the core focus on community backgrounds, to encourage and facilitate sharing across all equality grounds; and to address the socio-economic issues which are experienced by a number of equality groups.
- 1.16 We also recommend that it may be appropriate that criteria for the prioritisation of support across a range of equality grounds are set out in the shared education policy (and DSC application process

¹ OFMDFM (2013) Together: Building a United Community (p29) - <http://www.ofmdfmrni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf>

etc), rather than narrowly defining Shared Education in the Bill. For example, the Department could set criteria to prioritise support to those applications which evidenced the greatest degree of sharing beyond a core focus on community background – for instance on other equality or socio-economic grounds).

Proposal to include ‘religious belief’ and ‘political opinion’ within the definition

- 1.17 The Commission recommends that the Department gives consideration as to how the Bill and Policy will operate in practice and ensure this is more clearly articulated in the policy.
- 1.18 The Commission's Section 75 "Monitoring Guidance for use by Public Authorities"² notes that there are two options for monitoring religious belief - current stated religion or community background.
- 1.19 It is recommended that, in these particular circumstances, the Department give consideration to the potential of utilising the concept of the 'community background' of individuals for the purposes of assessing participation.

Statutory Obligations

- 1.20 It is recommended that the obligation on the Department in respect of shared education should be a duty, not a power; and that the duty should be to '*encourage and facilitate*' shared education.
- 1.21 The Commission is also currently of the view that the statutory obligation should sit with the Department. The Commission recommends that the Department sets out and further expands upon any specific rationale for proposing that certain additional arms length bodies be subject to a power.
- 1.22 We are aware that public discourse regarding the potential to further advance equality of opportunity and good relations in schools has set out a range of potential approaches - whether it be a discrete statutory obligation; Section 75 or some variant thereof; a policy directive from the Department; or mainstreaming through the curriculum.

²ECNI "Section 75 - Monitoring Guidance for use by Public Authorities" - <http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf>

- 1.23 We note the consultation proposals to designate and place an obligation on schools under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, but with proposals to *“reduce the demand... in terms of meeting their specific responsibilities”*³
- 1.24 The Commission has not to date supported the designation of schools under Section 75.
- 1.25 Whatever the model proposed, there are likely to be number of pertinent issues that require careful and robust consideration. These include, for example, key questions such as:
- whether or not a legislative approach is the most appropriate;
 - if a obligation is to be placed to schools, should it be a discrete duty; under Section 75; or via some other means;
 - what lessons can be learnt from the application of public sector duties in schools in other jurisdictions.
- 1.26 We would welcome early engagement with DENI, including on their reported work to examine options for the application of a statutory duty to schools, based on an examination of models from other jurisdictions.

Funding and Long Term Sustainability

- 1.27 The Commission recommends that the Department ensures that partnerships are sustainable in the long term.
- 1.28 We note the Department's intention to end earmarked funding for CRED and raise concern that this does not appear to be in keeping with mainstreaming shared education as a priority issue. We therefore ask the Department to clarify how community relations, equality and diversity work will be mainstreamed in the absence of earmarked funding.
- 1.29 We highlight the potential to build upon and extend existing education policy and practice (for example common funding; area learning partnerships etc) and recommend that consideration is given to how to best incentivise increased sharing on cross-sectoral and ability lines. Detailed proposals for the further mainstreaming of shared education, including through the inspection process, should be made explicit.

³ DENI (2014) – Consultation – *“Sharing Works: A Policy for Shared Education”* – page 22

- 1.30 We also recommend that, in due course, the Department undertake work to further define the costs/savings associated with the proposed DSC projects and to evaluate to what extent these partnerships are likely to remain sustainable, after the initial funding period.

Clarity needed on policy outcomes and measures

- 1.31 We also consider that the policy aim and associated outcomes and measures for shared education have not been sufficiently developed.
- 1.32 We consider that the vision should be clear that it includes raising levels of educational attainment, and also seek to encapsulate that partnerships should be sustainable and aimed at positively changing the relationship between pupils, school and the wider community.
- 1.33 It is not clear how progress towards shared education will be measured in practice. For example, while Department officials have indicated in evidence⁴ that they expect schools to move one point along a continuum of sharing in three different areas, this is not set out in the policy. We request further clarity around the focus of the continuum model and how it will work in practice. There should also be a clearer and stronger message in the final policy framework that schools should be moving towards a system of education which routinely teaches pupils together via a shared curriculum in shared classes.
- 1.34 We also highlight the importance of setting out a range of measures and goals – linking actions, outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is important that such measures move beyond describing policy outputs to consider specific measures of the outcomes and impacts that we would expect to see in society. For example, that sharing has impacted meaningfully and substantively on every learner; and provides learners with shared awareness, understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds in Northern Ireland etc.
- 1.35 We note that of the nine potential ‘types of sharing’ set out on page 12 of the consultation, only one explicitly focuses on sharing between learners (the others being centred on educator expertise, resources; professional development etc). We are thus concerned

⁴ Shared and Integration Education Inquiry: Education Committee (21st January 2015): Evidence – Department of Education and Education and Training Inspectorate.

that subsequent delivery may advance sharing which is not centred on ensuring a meaningful and substantive impact on every learner. Again, we raise concerns that this may fall short of the commitment set out by the Executive in Together: Building a United Community to ensure “that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience” [our emphasis]

1.36 We reiterate our 2010 and subsequent recommendations regarding:

- The importance of indicators and evaluation to measure and review sharing and collaboration in education provision and governance – both to acknowledge success and promote improvement.
- The importance of data collection, across all Section 75 grounds and FSM eligibility, for all educational projects, including key Delivering Social Change projects.

Engagement with Parents, Carers and Children & Young People

1.37 We recommend that engagement should seek to communicate the rationale for any proposed system; to learn from experiences to date; to inform and improve associated policy frameworks / implementation plans; and to incentivise any moves.

1.38 We also recommend, in line with our consistent call for effective engagement with Section 75 groups, that the Department and other key bodies also take steps to ensure effective engagement with children & young people (C&YP) in the design, delivery, implementation and review of shared education initiatives.

Wider Issues in Education

1.39 Finally we take this opportunity to stress the need for wider action to address the structural barriers to shared education, including our concern about academic selection at age 11; our recommendations for the removal of the teacher’s exception under FETO at secondary level; the need for greater sharing and collaboration in teacher training; and for actions to better understanding the reasons for, and impacts of, any differential patterns of enrolment to education providers. There is also a need to promote good relations and tackle prejudicial attitudes in all spheres, both inside and outside schools, so that steps taken to promote good relations in schools are supported by actions and behaviours at home and in the wider community.

Fermanagh Trust

Summary of Fermanagh Shared Education Programme

Shared Education is where schools deliver part of the curriculum jointly on a cross community basis with their nearest neighbouring school from a different sector. In practice it means pupils from different schools coming together for joint classes, usually for half a day per week, each week during the academic year. On average, this equates to approximately 50 – 60 shared hours per school year for the participating pupils.

The Fermanagh Shared Education Programme commenced in September 2009 and progress in the first 3 years of the Programme is reflected in the uptake, in terms of participating schools, pupils and the extent and level of shared classes.

No. of Participating Schools

The following table shows the high proportion of schools participating each year in Shared Education. Note, that there are 43 primary schools and 14 post-primary schools in the County.

No. of Schools involved in Fermanagh Shared Education Programme (2009 – 2012/3)

	No. of Primary Schools Involved*	No. of Post Primary Schools Involved	Total Schools Involved
Yr 1 (2009/10)	43	6	49
Yr 2 (2010/11)	41	10	51
Yr 3 (2011/12)	42	14	56
Yr 4 (2012/13)	44	14	58

* 3 Church of Ireland National Schools in the RoI are involved in the Programme

The above shows that schools wish to be involved in Shared Education and that that interest is not waning.

No. of Pupils participating in Shared Education

The following table shows the increasing number of pupils participating each year in Shared Education.

No. of Pupils involved in Fermanagh Shared Education Programme (2009 – 2012/3)

	No. of Primary Pupils Involved	No. of Post Primary Pupils Involved	Total Pupils Involved	% increase from Yr 1
Yr 1 (2009/10)	1658	202	1,860	N/A
Yr 2 (2010/11)	2404	324	2,728	47%
Yr 3 (2011/12)	2645	672	3,317	78%
Yr 4 (2012/13)	3442	822	4,264	129%

The number of pupils involved in Shared Education has increased by 2,404 pupils from Year 1, which represents an increase of 129%, demonstrating the high level of demand for Shared Education in the County. Note that the number of pupils enrolled in Fermanagh schools in 2011/12 was as follows:

- Primary School pupils: 5,372
- Post Primary School pupils: 5,149

In the region of 64% of primary pupils in Fermanagh will be involved in Shared Education this year 2012/13 and 41% of all pupils in the County will participate in Shared Education this year.

No. of Shared Classes / Projects

The number of classes getting involved in Shared Education has increased incrementally over the 4 year period, as summarized in the table below.

No. of Shared Classes - Fermanagh Shared Education Programme (2009 – 2012/3)

	No. of Classes (Primary)	No. of Shared Classes (Post Primary)	Total Shared Classes
Yr 1 (2009/10)	30	17	47
Yr 2 (2010/11)	37	15	52
Yr 3 (2011/12)	52	21	73
Yr 4 (2012/13)	57	21	78

Community Relations Training for School Staff

Training was delivered to help schools in the implementation of Shared Education. The following table shows the participation in training that was organised by the Fermanagh Trust for schools.

No. of School Staff Trained in Community Relations Fermanagh Shared Education Programme (2009 – 2012/3)

	No. of Staff Trained
Yr 1 (2009/10)	59
Yr 2 (2010/11)	114
Yr 3 (2011/12)	106
Total	279

Further staff training is planned for Year 4.

Joint Training / Events for Teachers, Parents, Boards of Governors and Families

In Year 2 & 3 of the Programme, the school partnerships were encouraged to further develop their linkages. To this end, partnerships provided joint training and events for parents, staff, members of boards of governors and also wider family members. The following table summarises the levels of participation at these events.

Partnership Building (Joint Training & Events)

	Parents	Boards of Governors	School Staff	Family Members	Total
Yr 2 (2010/11)	429	89	458	404	1380
Yr 3 (2011/12)	702	121	498	1013	2334

Again, it shows the growth in the joint collaboration taking place within the cross-community partnerships.

Respecting Difference Workshops for Parents

In addition, training was provided for parents on Respecting Difference in Years 2 & 3. The number of parents who attended the training is summarized in the table below.

**No. of Parent Attendees at Respecting Difference Training Workshops
Fermanagh Shared Education Programme (2009 – 2012/3)**

	No. of Parents who Attended
Yr 1 (2009/10)	N/A
Yr 2 (2010/11)	230
Yr 3 (2011/12)	169
Total	399

Another series of parent workshops are planned for Year 4 (2012/13).

Evaluation

External evaluations of the Programme concluded that Shared Education in Fermanagh has:

1. Helped break down barriers between communities and helped increase trust and improved relationships between different sectors;
2. Increased relationships and friendships between pupils from partner schools;
3. Reduced fear, suspicion and mistrust of the 'other' community;
4. Contributed to greater understanding of and respect for cultural diversity;
5. Increased awareness of the benefits of shared education including educational, societal and economic benefits.

Area Planning

In February 2012, the Department of Education issued Guidance on Area Planning to develop a network of viable and sustainable schools that are of the right type, right size, located in the right place and have a focus on raising standards. The Terms of Reference for this work includes the in its aims and objectives:

- To reduce duplication of provision;
- To identify realistic, innovative and creative solutions to address need, including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross sectoral basis; and

- To maximise the use and sharing of the existing schools estate.

A number of school partnerships in Fermanagh have requested that shared models are explored in the area planning process.

Programme for Government (PfG)

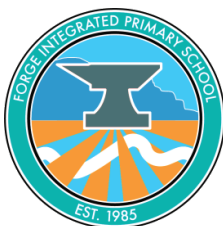
The commitments in the PfG, provide an opportunity to sustain the impact and benefits of Shared Education:

1. Establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister for Education to advance shared education; and
2. Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes and substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

Concluding Notes

1. Shared Education has strengthened curriculum delivery and enhanced educational opportunities for pupils;
2. There is a demand from school communities for Shared Education;
3. The PfG and the on-going area planning process provide opportunities to sustain and embed shared education;
4. There is a need for joined up policy planning & implementation to ensure that shared education is effectively mainstreamed, to maximise its potential.

Forge Integrated Primary School



20 Carolan Road
Belfast
BT73HE

Principal: Mr. N Watson ast
Telephone 028 90 492177
Fax 028 90 641858

Submission to the Inquiry for Shared & Integrated Education from Forge Integrated Primary School.

24 October 2014

Dear Committee,

Thank you for inviting submissions to the Inquiry on Shared and Integrated Education. I write on behalf of the Board of Governors of Forge Integrated Primary School with particular reference to key barriers and enablers for Integrated Education.

It is our view that although the development and growth of Integrated schools in Northern Ireland has been significant over the course of the past 33 years there have been inhibiting factors that have resulted in growth being much less than would have been the case in different circumstances.

To choose to send your children to an integrated school in a society with deep and established divisions requires a degree of courage. For such schools to be successful they must be accessible and supported in order to become established.

Integrated schools have been supported through the 1989 Education Reform Order (NI) and subsequently by the Good Friday Agreement 1998 both of which underline a duty at governmental level to encourage and support integrated education.

In practice however, it is our view that this duty has, at times, been interpreted and administered in such a way as to act as an inhibiting factor on the growth of admissions and enrolments at integrated schools. The process for approval of permanent increases in admissions and enrolment numbers has, in some cases, led to integrated schools remaining artificially small.

This has suppressed the number of pupils in integrated schools and in some cases helped support the maintenance of pupil numbers in schools in other sectors.

The 'needs model' as employed by DE in recent years is an example of how permanent growth in integrated schools has been allowed only on the basis of a corresponding decrease in both the maintained and controlled sectors in a given area.

We contend that the application of such a model is inequitable and has not been applied to either of the dominant sectors where need is based on the number of places available only in the sector in question. The findings of a recent judicial review taken by Drumragh College seem to support this contention.

A number of integrated schools have struggled to gain support and make progress with these issues recently. It is ironic that we see suggestion from some academics and from CCMS that the integrated model hasn't grown to the extent that may have been expected.

No model of education can realistically grow if the mechanisms for growth are structured in such a way as to give more emphasis to protecting other sectors than to enabling growth in the sector that is developing.

We are not opposed to other genuine paths towards greater integration and there may be merit in some models of shared education. However, if shared education amounts to little more than having two or more separate schools in close proximity sharing some resources then we are likely to be investing in something that has a very limited impact.

There are hundreds of examples throughout Northern Ireland of sub-communities living in very close proximity to one another but quite separately. Sometimes that separation has a physical element as in the case of peace walls. More often the boundaries are invisible but none the less real. There are also numerous examples of such divided communities sharing resources such as leisure services and community facilities to an extent, but too often superficially.

Northern Ireland has dealt surprisingly effectively with some of the issues around segregated practices in the public realm and the idea of having different publicly funded institutions in terms of public sector workplaces or services is now unthinkable. Education remains the exception.

We believe that to fail to address the fact that the overwhelming majority of government funded mainstream schools here are still single identity institutions is out of step with almost every other country in Europe and beyond.

We accept that in some areas there are continuing difficulties with community relations that makes fully integrated schools difficult to establish. However, there is much research to support the fact that in many, many areas there is a real appetite for more integrated education. Our experience and observations are that the greatest impediment is not community relations or lack of appetite for integration but inadequate support and encouragement from authority. We feel that this lack of support is often a symptom of the opposition faced by ELBs and DE from those who would like to impede change and maintain the existing situation through limiting choice.

Integrated schools are a proven and sustainable means of bringing children together, promoting good community relations and developing a more cohesive and positive society for the future.

As we look towards exploring experimental models such as shared education it is also vital that that established and proven integrated schools are allowed the freedom to grow to their true potential and those barriers and impediments to growth are removed.

There is no more reliable or cost effective way of providing a genuinely shared education in those areas where integrated schools already exist and have demand for growth.

If we fail to encourage and develop proper, meaningful integration we will be failing our children and grandchildren. Sharing things out and creating two of everything has not worked in the past. There is plenty of evidence to underline the fact that sectarian divisions are still deep and that issues such as race and hate crime are developing problems here. Why on earth are we nurturing a system that keeps our children apart from their peers and neighbours during the most formative years of their lives?

Those political leaders who genuinely want to make Northern Ireland a safer, better, more prosperous place for all of its people must have the courage to meaningfully address segregated education. Generations to come will not thank us for baulking in the face of opposition from those in positions of influence who are prepared to put short term protectionism before long term peace, stability and prosperity.

We have outlined on the pages that follow our own story as a case study that illustrates the demand there is and the challenges we have faced around the growth of our school.

We will also happily engage in any verbal/face to face evidence gathering the committee are seeking input on. We held discussions with P5-7 pupils to discuss their views on and understanding of, Integrated, Shared and Segregated Education in Northern Ireland. A collation of their comments is included in this submission at Appendix 3. We have no doubt that we could put forward a delegation of pupils who would relish the opportunity to discuss their school with members of the committee.

Yours Sincerely,



Neville Watson

Principal & Secretary to the Board of Governors

1. Background

- 1.0 We are one of two Integrated Schools serving South East Belfast the other being Loughview Integrated Primary School.
- 1.1 We opened in 1985 without DE approval and initially funded by the founding parents, some of whom re-mortgaged their homes in order to fund the start-up.
- 1.2 Forge has grown from 28 pupils in September 1985 to its current 304 pupils in September 2014. Along the way the school went through the process of becoming an officially recognised school and took on controlled status to become the province's first controlled integrated school.
- 1.3 Pupil numbers in integrated schools have grown continuously since 1981.
- 1.4 Forge IPS is currently the most over-subscribed primary school at P1 admissions level in any sector in the South East Belfast area. This is evidenced in a written response from the Minister of Education to a question asked by Dr Alasdair McDonnell on 06 June 2014 (Appendix 4)
- 1.5 Forge IPS has also experienced a greater degree of growth than any other primary school in South Belfast over recent years with Department of Education figures for the period from 2009 – 2013 showing a growth of 22%(Appendix 3). If the period of growth is extended to the start of the current school year we have seen a 7 year growth rate of 35%.

2. Current Issues

- 2.0 We are at a crucial point in our development. The school no longer has the accommodation to allow further growth. We have previously been able to source additional accommodation through support from the Integrated Education Fund and with the support of BELB.
- 2.1 Difficulties in progressing a development proposal put us at risk of being unprepared for the start of the school year in September. The explanation given for slow progress is that decisions have to be weighed carefully as change could be detrimental to other schools. This argument is well versed in terms of the possible impact of growing integrated schools on non-integrated schools. However, it is not applied in the same way to schools in other sectors. Growth in Maintained and Controlled single identity schools is measured against the impact there may be on other schools in those sectors, not all sectors.

- 2.2 To put the timescale into context, we have been operating on a temporary variation to our enrolment and admissions number because we have been oversubscribed since 2007. We have asking for support for a development proposal from BELB since the spring of 2010.
- 2.3 In December 2013 we received acknowledgement from BELB that they would accept submission of a development proposal. We immediately began the process. In March 2014 the proposal was discussed at a BELB Board meeting but deferred pending clarifying information.
- It will now be November before the BELB can next schedule the proposal at a meeting and we have been asked to carry out the pre-publication consultation exercise for a second time at DE's request due to the time lag between its completion in February and now. The pre-publication consultation exercise was completed fully in February 2014 well within the 12 month period stipulated in the most recent DE circular on Development Proposals. It is difficult to see the logic in this repetition of process.
- 2.4 Given that we need to prepare for P1 admissions process in January this lag in terms of time has the potential to obstruct our ability to meet the demand for Integrated Education in our area.
- 3. The Case for a Permanent Increase to Admissions/Enrolment Numbers at Forge IPS**
- 3.0 Enrolment and admissions numbers are decided by the Department of Education, often when a school is first officially established. At Forge these are 250 and 36 respectively. These numbers were put in place in the late 1980s when the school enrolment was still below 100. As the demand for Integrated Education has increased these numbers have become increasingly problematic for us and clearly need to be revised to take account of the significant change in demographic and parental preference over the course of more than 20 years.
- 3.2 An admissions number of 36 for P1 is not functional. If we get more than 30 applications we have to split the class. Two small classes of 18 is desirable from a learning and teaching point of view however, these small classes do not attract enough funding to pay a teacher's salary. The school could not sustain classes of 18 throughout the school. Nor can we have classes of 36.
- 3.3 For the past seven years the school's Board of Governors have applied to DE for a temporary variation in our admissions and enrolment numbers to allow us to admit all applicants who have an Integrated school as first preference if they can be accommodated within two P1 classes under DE class size policy.
- 3.4 The reasons for aiming to admit all applicants are twofold. It allows us to be financially viable in terms of pupil teacher ratio in P1 classes. Primarily though, it means that we are providing an integrated school place for those in the area who want it. It is the view of our Board of Governors that the school has a responsibility to meet that demand and this is in keeping with Article 64(1) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 which states a duty on the part of the Department of Education to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'.
- 3.5 Successfully being granted a temporary variation has allowed us to enrol most of our P1 applicants. As this is a temporary arrangement DE policy requires us to allow this enrolment number to reduce if pupils leave or do not take up offered places.
- 3.6 If we had not pursued this policy over the past seven years and instead sought a temporary variation to admit only 30 P1 pupils per year (one full class) 121 children would have been refused admission to Forge and forced to attend a school that was not of their preferred sector. This year, despite having admitted 60 children on the basis of a temporary variation, four children whose parents had elected an integrated school as first preference have had to be rejected. These children are unlikely to get a place in an integrated school in the South

Belfast area. Were we to adhere to our admissions number 24 children whose parents had chosen an integrated school place would have been rejected this year.

- 3.7 If we had not been prepared to go through this process year on year, seeking approval and additional accommodation our numbers would have remained artificially low, potentially adding weight to the misleading suggestion that integrated schools have not expanded as much as might have been expected. Our school could have grown more had there been a more encouraging policy towards growth.
- 3.8 Whatever your personal opinion on integrated education a situation where the equivalent of an entire class of children could be unable to get a place not only in the school of their choice, but also in the sector of their choice within a reasonable travelling distance of their home is inequitable. We do not believe this situation would be allowed to continue in either the established controlled or maintained sectors when the main impediment to resolving the situation is an artificial cap and concern about upset in other sectors. To be fair to the DE and our ELB such a situation has been avoided through the granting of temporary variations, however, without a more permanent arrangement we could face the same situation in 2015 but be unable to resolve it due to lack of accommodation.
- 3.9 Given that there is a legal duty for the Department of Education for Northern Ireland to facilitate and encourage the growth of integrated education the role of schools such as ours in facilitating that growth is of great benefit in helping meet that obligation and should not be inhibited.
- 3.10 As things stand we need a more permanent solution so that that we can be viable and help ensure that the demand for integrated school places in this area can be met. We want to have our enrolment and admissions numbers changed to allow the school to continue the natural growth we have seen in recent years and become a stable two form entry school.
- 3.11 We are now feeling positive and hopeful that our ELB will work very hard to support us through the development proposal process and we hope this is indicative of how things will be looking ahead for all schools in Northern Ireland. However, we know that experiences vary and ultimately the decision makers in this regard are DE.
- 3.12 Our pre-school enrolment and general trends in the area suggest that we will have another high number of applications in 2015. We also receive a significant additional number of applications from outside our own pre-school Unit. It is worth noting that up until the 2010 school year our pre-school had only 24 places meaning that in the three years prior to 2010 on average 39% of our P1 applications came from beyond our own pre-school.

4. Imminent Pressures on Forge IPS

- 4.0 Forge IPS must either continue to grow to enable class sizes that will attract income through the common funding formula that will sustain the school or, the school must reduce its staff, consequently reduce the number of classes, create composites and ultimately shrink in terms of enrolment. We found ourselves, for the first time in a decade, having to put in place composite classes for September of 2012 in order to live within our budget.
- 4.1 The reality is that our enrolment number of 250 is not and never was a number that can be sustained under the current common funding scheme. Likewise, an admissions number of 36 is nonsense given that the maximum number of children permitted in classes at Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is 30 and to split 36 pupils into two classes of 18 is not a situation any school could sustain under the current budget system
- 4.2 Reducing the enrolment number would reduce parental choice in this area specifically regarding integrated places which would be contrary to both to our ethos and the very reason the school came into existence in 1985. It would also be contrary to article 64(1) of the Education Reform Order 1989 which refers to the Department of Education's duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'.

- 4.3 It would also be self-destructive for a school to pursue a reductionist policy in the current climate. We understand that the education minister is minded to look at making significant decisions around area based planning and school sustainability in the near future and a shrinking school will not sit well with this.

5. The School's View on Future Provision and Related Challenges

- 5.0 We believe that there is very obvious potential for Forge to develop into a sustainable double intake primary school during the course of the next 2-5 years and the development proposal we have submitted to BELB is for that kind of phased growth. We submitted a proposal asking that from September 2014 or as soon as possible thereafter, to have our admissions number increased to 60 and our enrolment number increased to 320 rising to 420 by 2018.
- 5.1 The issue of under provision in the integrated sector in this area is quite straightforward. Our school and Loughview Integrated Primary School are both oversubscribed. While we know that there are local schools with unfilled places they are not integrated schools. There has been a tendency in the past for reference to made to a DE 'Needs Model' which has often been interpreted as suggesting that an increase in the Integrated sector should be matched by a decrease in other sectors. We would point out that this is not equitable, has not been applied to other sectors and is not fit for purpose.
- 5.2 The impact of growth on other schools has consistently been cited as an inhibiting factor in allowing our school to expand permanently. Our growth has been gradual and it is our view that we are not having a significant effect on the enrolment of other local schools. Many of them have also experienced some growth and it is not legitimate to suggest that other schools are declining due to our gradual organic growth. Nor is it legitimate to argue that one sector should be suppressed in order to arrest decline in another (see points 5.1 & 5.3).
- 5.3 The findings of a recent judicial review taken by Drumragh College in Omagh has underlined the obligation on the Department of Education and in turn ELB's to comply with article 64(1) of the Education Reform Order 1989 which refers to the department's duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'. The findings of this review recognise that the needs model, is an analytical tool that can aid area based planning but should not impede the implementation of article 64. It also recognised a major flaw in the model in that it assumed no growth in the integrated sector, which is clearly not the case in reality. Justice Treacy commented in his summing up that, 'The department needs to be alive to the article 64 duty at all levels, including the strategic level.'
- 5.4 At time of writing we have been told that BELB that due to the repetition of the pre-publication consultation process our proposal will not be scheduled by BELB until their November meeting. It then has to progress to DE and go through the formal post-publication consultation process.
- 5.5 This leaves the school grappling with questions around how many children to admit in January 2015? Whether intended or not, the rate of progress of the development proposal submitted nine months ago but as yet unpublished has the potential to diminish our ability to plan and prepare effectively.
- 5.6 We are very pleased that the process is moving along and that the current management at BELB are working with us to progress the matter, however the process has been slow and out of sync with the needs of schools in terms of aligning with key events in the school and financial year.
- 5.8 If we as educationalists at school, ELB and Departmental level are to continue to enhance this community then the importance of developing effective and sustainable schools like Forge that are experiencing growth and success cannot be understated.
- 5.9 It would be a travesty if a growing and sustainable school were to be arrested in its development because it was unable to obtain the necessary permissions and support from

the Department of Education and the Education and Library Boards to reach its optimum sustainable size.

- 5.10 The demand for Integrated Education in this area can most effectively be met in terms of sustainability, cost and quality of provision through the development of the resources and experience that already exist at Forge.

6. Conclusion

We hope that our case helps illustrate how demand for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland has been growing in recent years and the difficulties encountered by schools such as ours in seeking to meet that demand.

It is too difficult for integrated schools to gain support from the authority bodies in order to grow.

It is deeply disturbing to read at time of writing in media reports that there is no plan to have any representation for the integrated sector on the new single Education and Library Board. In such circumstances these difficulties will persist and policy and practice is likely to be dominated by the interests of the controlled and maintained sectors.

We appeal to the committee to work towards the provision of an equitable system that upholds parental choice and does not inhibit the growth of integrated schools in order to preserve an educational landscape that limits choice and reinforces separation.

Appendix 1

Enrolment History – South Belfast Primary Schools 2009 – 2013

School Type C = Controlled, CM = Catholic Maintained, CI= Controlled Integrated,
GMI – Grant Maintained Integrated, IMM = Irish Medium Maintained

School name	Type	Enrolment History – No. pupils at DE census in October of each year.					DE Enrol No.	Over/ Under Subscribed	Grow Factor (if over- subscribed	Empty Places	% Under subscribed	Under Subscribed 5 Years +
		09	10	11	12	13						
Belvoir Park	C	230	216	206	208	216	370	Under		154	42	Yes
Blythefield	C	94	93	85	83	82	513	Under		431	84	Yes
Botanic	C	189	178	180	176	176	210	Under		34	16	Yes
Cairnshill	C	439	458	429	429	429	583	Under		154	26	Yes
Carryduff	C	164	167	166	171	171	333	Under		162	49	Yes
Donegal Road	C	153	144	140	157	175	316	Under		141	45	Yes
Fane Street	C	137	135	152	167	187	495	Under		308	62	Yes
Finaghy	C	433	422	416	415	423	465	Under		42	9	Yes
Harding Mem.	C	227	203	195	185	195	210	Under		15	7	Yes
Knockbreda	C	136	168	162	156	160	225	Under		65	29	Yes
Nettlefield	C	205	218	243	248	268	375	Under		107	29	Yes
Rosetta	C	151	147	165	179	190	413	Under		223	54	Yes
Stranmillis	C	400	406	407	403	402	408	Under		6	1	Yes
Taughmonagh	C	153	177	171	166	170	160	Over	11%	-10	-6	No
Holy Rosary	CM	276	260	273	255	312	508	Under		196	39	Yes
St Anne's	CM	800	768	794	804	811	860	Under		49	6	Yes
St Bernard's	CM	393	400	393	403	406	446	Under		40	9	Yes
St Bride's	CM	786	776	788	807	817	809	Under	4%	-8	-1	No
St Ita's Primary	CM	397	427	453	483	508	510	Under		2	0	Yes
St Joseph's C'duff	CM	388	392	378	381	392	436	Under		44	10	Yes
St Malachy's	CM	211	202	230	248	263	350	Under		87	25	Yes
St Michael's	CM	417	413	415	416	416	409	Over	0%	-7	-2	Yes
Forge IPS	C.Int	223	231	248	265	273	250	Over	22%	-23	-9	No
Cranmore IPS	GMI	189	195	183	185	188	203	Under		15	7	Yes
Loughview IPS	GMI	393	395	401	406	412	406	Over	5%	-6	-1	No
Scoil An Droichid	IMM	105	99	113	118	120	145	Under		25	17	Yes

Collated from data sourced from Department of Education for Northern Ireland

Appendix 2

Oversubscribed Places at Primary 1 Level 2014

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of oversubscribed places at Primary 1 level in each education sector in South Belfast, that are administered by the (i) Belfast Education and Library Board; and (ii) South Eastern Education and Library Board, as of 1 May 2014.

(AQW 33701/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information requested for schools in South Belfast is set out in the following tables:

Controlled

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Rosetta PS	59	25	-
Harding Memorial PS	30	31	1
Nettlefield PS	54	45	-
Taughmonagh PS	28	25	-
Stranmillis PS	58	75	17
Finaghy PS	66	69	3
Donegall Road PS	45	24	-
Fane Street PS	71	26	-
Blythefield PS	73	7	-
Botanic PS	30	37	7

Catholic Maintained

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Holy Rosary PS	73	61	-
St Anne's PS	120	123	3
St Bride's PS	116	130	14
St Michael's PS	58	76	18
St Malachy's PS	50	58	8

Controlled Integrated

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Scoil An Droichid	21	23	2

Other Maintained

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Forge PS	36	60	24

Grant Maintained Integrated

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Cranmore PS	29	25	-

South-Eastern Education and Library Board**Controlled**

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Knockbreda PS	30	27	-
Belvoir Park PS	53	29	-
Cairnshill PS	83	61	-
Lead Hill PS	30	8	-
Carryduff PS	48	22	-

Catholic Maintained

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
St Joseph's PS	60	66	6
St Bernard's PS	60	61	1
St Ita's PS	82	95	13

Grant Maintained Integrated

School	Approved Admissions Number	First Preference Applications	Number by which over-subscribed
Loughview PS	58	77	19

Note: The figures were supplied by the Belfast and South-Eastern Education and Library Boards and reflect the position at 30 April 2014.

Source: Northern Ireland Assembly.

Pupil Voice

We want to include the views of some of the children at our school as part of our submission. We had discussions with P5, 6 and 7 children (8-11 year olds) based on the questions below. Pupils made notes and we've bullet pointed most of the main comments. We have included most (some comments that were of a very similar nature haven't been repeated) without elaboration, as the children recorded them. The comments are therefore in keeping with the age and sophistication of the children but we think that the underlying message comes through. 'Out of the mouths of babes...'

Questions about Integration

1. What do you think it means to be at an Integrated Primary School in Northern Ireland?
 - I feel good to go to an integrated school because you have a different mix of friends. P5
 - I think it means we come from different religions and countries. P5
 - What makes us integrated is that we take care of all children. P5
 - It means that people from all over the world can come P6
 - We accept any religion or culture. P7
 - It is a great opportunity as there aren't that many integrated schools. P7
 - We love learning together. P7
 - At Forge there is no discrimination against anyone who comes from a different country or is of a different religion. P7
2. What do you think makes this school different from other schools that aren't integrated?
 - I think it means that we are all different and although we come from different cultures, religions and countries we are friends. My friend is from Poland and we have fun together. P5
 - Our school is different because there is a mix of people from different countries and religions. P5
 - It makes everyone learn more and discover loads. P6
 - I think that being an integrated school is very good and can help people learn about new religions. P6
 - We are different because we share lots of things and it's better. P6
 - Being in an integrated school is different from other schools in that it doesn't matter where you are from. P6
 - Being in an integrated school is different because some schools separate the boys and girls and some schools separate religions. P6
 - You can be educated and learn from each other. P7
 - One of my best friends is Catholic and without an integrated school I wouldn't have met him. P7
 - You can believe that Protestants and Catholics can work together. P7
 - In my old school - it was perfect but it was posh and boring and everyone was the same. If you're in an integrated school everyone is different. P7
 - It doesn't matter whether you have religion or not. We have the choice to take part or not in religious activities like prayers.
 - You can make friends with children from other faiths, we are not all the same. P7

- We worry less about people getting offended, about differing opinions. We appreciate and accept that we are all different and have different thoughts on different matters. For example, football shirts aren't banned on non-uniform days because we can express our identity in a safe, secure place.
 - There are equal opportunities for all.
 - We are more relaxed/freer to be ourselves here!
3. How would you feel if you couldn't go to an integrated school because there were no places and you had to go to a school where most pupils were just Catholic or Just Protestant?
- I wouldn't like it if I went to just a Protestant or Catholic School because I wouldn't have a mix of friends. P5
 - I think it would not be fair. They might have a good education but some people would not be able to go. P5
 - It's not a good idea to separate Catholics and Protestants because you might never get to meet new friends. P7
 - I wouldn't be able to meet friends with different backgrounds. P7
 - You wouldn't have the same choice of friends because everyone's the same. P7
 - Wouldn't feel comfortable/wouldn't be as diverse so it would be boring. You would be with the same type of people as yourself. P7
 - Children who don't relate to either the Catholic/Protestant faith would feel excluded or uncomfortable. At Forge we can learn about each other's beliefs. P7
 - You would feel cross that the choice of having an integrated school has been taken away from you.
 - If you had no Faith you could be upset because people might question you – they might not be as open minded. P7
 - During religious lessons you might feel shunted aside and uncomfortable. P7
 - I'd be worried about bullying because I might be the odd one out. P7
4. What do you think of the idea of having two schools, one Catholic and one Protestant close by and those schools sharing some things like sports' halls or classrooms and maybe also sharing some teachers or lessons?
- I suppose it's alright but it would be better if they were integrated. P5
 - They might share some lessons or school trips. P6
 - I think it would be good for two different schools to use the same buildings together. They'd have to be friends.
 - I think it would be better to wait for a while to see if they like it! P6
 - I think it would be good for Catholic and Protestant schools to make friends. P7
 - Two schools would have very different ethos and wouldn't necessarily marry together well. P7
 - Building two schools and swapping teachers seems far more effort/hassle in an already busy day. P7
 - We are submerged all day in different cultures. Anything else would be watering down what we do naturally every day. P7
 - This sounds like a government money saving scheme. Do they really want us to mix or is it just a half measure to make it look as if they are addressing the issue of more integrated education? P7

5. Is there anything else you would like to say to our local politicians about integrated schools?
- Give us more spaces in integrated schools and more integrated schools. P5
 - I would like to say get more integrated places. P5
 - I think that there should be more integrated education. P6
 - I think that there should be more integrated education because everyone feels welcome. P6

Fort Hill Integrated PS and Nursery Unit

FORT HILL INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY UNIT

Principal: Mr C S Anderson, BEd(Hons) MSc DipCom PQH(NI)
 Email: canderson581@c2kni.net
 Telephone: 028 9266 4505
 Fax : 028 9266 7847
 Website: www.forthillips.co.uk



Low Road
 Lisburn
 BT27 4TJ

Mr P McCallion
 Clerk to the Committee
 Committee of Education
 Room 375, Parliament Buildings
 Ballymiscaw
 Stormont
 Belfast

22nd October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion

I wish to respond to your request for written evidence with regard to Integrated Education.

Following a successful ballot of parents and approval from the Department of Education, Fort Hill Primary officially gained Integrated Status as from 1st September 2009 and now is a controlled integrated school.

As a school we welcome children of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds while still retaining an overall caring Christian ethos where children can be educated in a safe and friendly environment. This in itself is not that different from most schools; however, as a school we have seen the beneficial impact of **TRUE Integrated Education** on our pupils, parents and staff. It is far more than rubbing shoulders with fellow human beings, whatever their size, on a daily basis who we think *may have* differences to ourselves.

Integrated Education is **not a porridge pot** where everyone is blended together and only share the same facilities. I liken true Integrated Education to a **salad bowl**, learning together but also being educated about each other's different traditions, views and faiths whilst being proud of our own individual culture and learning always, to respect others different from ourselves.

Over the last five years of gradual transition, Fort Hill's journey has totally widened and enriched adults' and children's views and why our school is now different to many others. I firmly believe this is a main reason why we have become heavily oversubscribed with 67 applications for 26 nursery places and 51 applications for 30 P1 places this year leaving many families disappointed about not getting the school of their choice. The Department of Education is currently not meeting the demand for TRUE Integrated Education within Lisburn City.

I would recommend that you visit schools such as Fort Hill to experience first-hand what we are achieving with our whole community.

We change tomorrow's world by what we build into our children today.

Yours faithfully

C S Anderson
 Principal

General Teaching Council Northern Ireland

NI Assembly Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education in Northern Ireland

Written Submission from The General Teaching Council Northern Ireland

1.1 Introduction: a neutral position

As the professional body for teachers in Northern Ireland the General Teaching Council (GTCNI) maintains a neutral position in relation to sectoral interests.

1.2 Terms of Reference

For that reason the Council as a body which represents all teachers and all sectors considers that it is not in a position to offer specific views and the Terms of Reference in relation to:

- *The nature and definition of Shared Education and integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases;*
- *The key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;*
- *Alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;*
- *Priorities and actions to improve sharing and integration.*

The Council wishes, however, to offer a view in relation to **promoting the professionalism and capacity of teachers to meet the competences outlined in specific statements in the Northern Ireland Teacher Competence Framework (GTCNI 2007) and the Revised Code of Values and Professional Practice (GTCNI 2012) that relate to the concept of Shared and Integrated Education**

This response replicates elements of the Council's response to the Ministerial Group on the advancement of Shared Education in Northern Ireland November 2012

2.1 The Northern Ireland Teacher Competence Framework

The Northern Ireland Teacher Competences statements (2007) highlight:

- *at statement (8)*
'Teachers will have developed a knowledge and understanding of the need to take account of the significant features of pupils' cultures, languages and faiths and to address the implications for learning arising from these'.
- *at statement (12) 'Teachers will have developed a knowledge and understanding of the inter-relationship between schools and the communities they serve, and the potential for mutual development and well-being'.*

2.2 The NI Code of Values and Professional Practice for teachers

The Code of Values and Professional Practice for teachers was reviewed in 2012 to include a new section called, 'Commitment to the Community' and including the following statements

- *Teachers:*
 - *promote good community relations within and between schools and across the wider society in Northern Ireland;*
 - *promote social justice and equality of opportunity as fundamental to community development and well-being.*

2.3 Review of the Northern Ireland Teacher Competence Framework and the Code of Values and Professional Practice

In line with its Corporate Plan 2013-16 and in response to recommendations from the OECD NI Report into Assessment and Evaluation Frameworks (2013) the Council is reviewing the Teacher Competence Framework and the Code of Values and Professional Practice with a view to developing them into a working tool to assist schools in school development planning, self-evaluation and planning for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD). Should a commitment to Shared Education be made statutory this may have implications for the revision of the Teacher Competence Framework.

3.1 Building Teacher Capacity in relation to ‘Community-related’ Competences and the Code of Values and Professional Practice

Building Teacher Capacity in relation to ‘Community-related’ Competences and Code of Values and Professional Practice will require that all sectors consider the nature of the ethos and identity which they promote and the extent to which their ethos and identity is welcoming and inclusive to others.

The Council considers that the limited focus and resources dedicated to these key educational priorities to date has constrained the development of teachers’ professional capacity to respond to the aspirations articulated within the Teacher Competences and the Code of Values and Professional Practice.

Deep professional engagement with these challenges is crucial. The ‘Anti-Bias Curriculum’ (ABC) and the ‘Sharing Classrooms, Deepening Learning’ Project provides models of good practice within this jurisdiction.

3.2 Evaluating teacher/school capacity building for the community-related aspects of the Teacher Competence Framework and Code of Values & Practice

A system is considered “coherent” when curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and other drivers and incentives are all ‘aligned and reinforce one another’ (Oates, 2010: 13).

To help schools to ‘self-evaluate’ the extent to which they are developing teachers’ professional capacity to respond to the aspirations articulated within the competence statements and code of values and practice (outlined at 2.1. & 2.2.above) the Council has developed and the CLASS Dynamics Matrix (set out at Appendix 1)

This matrix has been shared with the NI Council for Integrated Education; the Shared Education Project at Queen’s University; and members of ETI who will be evaluating the Shared Education project.

Deep engagement with all of the components set out in the matrix is considered to be essential for effective development of teachers’ capacity to engage with the competence framework. From the Council’s perspective, the component relating to strategic staff support –(enhancing teachers capacity to understand, embrace and respond to the potential of shared education for the good of young people, society and the economy as outlined in the teacher competence framework) – is of central importance.

The Council’s report ‘School –Based Professional Development’ suggests models of CPD that would support collaborative working between schools.

3.3 Evaluating teacher/school capacity building in relation to pupil community-related engagement

The matrix also encourages evaluation of the extent to which pupils are empowered to initiate, plan and engage co-constructively with their teachers (and pupils and teachers in other schools) in worthwhile cross-cultural and community-related activities.

Respondent Details

Name:	Dr. Carmel Gallagher (Registrar) Mr. Gerry Devlin (Senior Education Officer)
Organisation	GTCNI
Address:	73/75 Great Victoria Street
	Belfast BT2 7AF
Telephone Number:	90333390 Fax Number: 90438787
E-mail:	cgallagher@gtcni.org.uk gdevlin@gtcni.org.uk

Appendix: 1 SOLO or SHARED?

A taxonomy for evaluating the quantity and quality of schools' engagement and potential for transformation in response to Shared Education

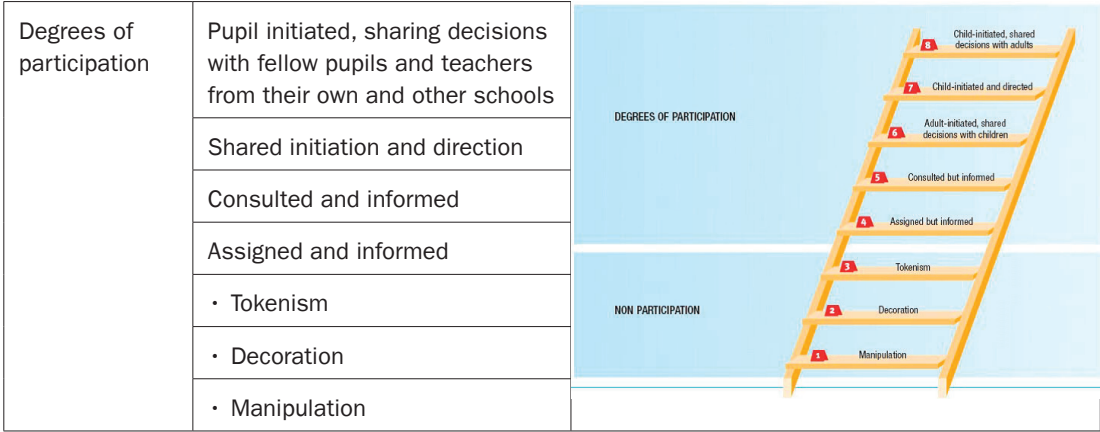
SOLO stands for the Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (Biggs and Collis 1982). The criteria have been adapted to encourage schools to self evaluate and ask deep questions about the quantity and quality of their engagement with other schools and communities. The aim is to offer reflective challenge, within the confines of logistical constraints, towards deeper engagement and sustained sharing activities that can influence the wider education policy context. Evaluation should consider:

Quantitative data: number and frequency of shared pupil, teacher, senior management, whole school, board of governor and/or community engagement

Qualitative data: breadth and depth of engagement in planned activities related to Curriculum Learning Assessment Strategic Support and its Social Significance for pupils*, teachers, senior management, whole school, board of governors, wider community

The nature of engagement is categorized as:

- **Prestructural** – schools engage in unconnected activities.
- **Unistructural** – schools make simple and obvious connections between areas of engagement
- **Multistructural** – schools make deeper connections, but do not avail of the potential for meta-connections
- **Relational** – schools demonstrate how engagements relate to one another to achieve deeper value
- **Extended** – schools make deep connections and demonstrate how learning has been generalised and transferred into new situations



Degrees of participation

(Adapted from HART, R. 1992 which was concerned with pupil-teacher sharing)

SOLO or SHARED? - Evaluation Matrix

Criteria to challenge and evaluate the quantity and quality of school engagement with other schools and communities

	Quantity, quality and 'dynamic' of CLASS engagement	Prestructural Haphazard poorly planned unsustainable (Decorative)	Unistructural Singular planned regular engagement (Tokenistic)	Multistructural More than one planned regular engagement (assigned and informed)	Relational Multiple areas of engaged, coherent regular and sustained (embedded)	Extended sustained whole school engagement with issues of equality, inclusion and cultural diversity (deeply embedded)
C	Curriculum Any shared activity to enhance breadth of provision					
L	Learning any shared activity designed to enhance active pupil learning					
A	Assessment Any shared activity to gather, analyse, interpret and use information about students' progress and achievement to improve teaching and learning					
S	Strategic Support any shared activity designed to enhance active teacher learning & CPD					
S	Social Significance measurable (educational, reconciliation, social, cultural) outputs	Impact likely to be decorative tokenistic narrow and transient	Impact likely to be lower-order, surface and narrowly experienced		Impact likely to be higher-order deep and sustained, going beyond the mechanics of sharing towards genuine working together to address shared challenges and reconciliation	

Hart Memorial Primary School and Presentation Primary School

Shared and Integrated Education

When completing this submission, Presentation Primary School and Hart Memorial Primary School have considered the following directions:

1. Review the nature and definition of Shared Education as it applies across all educational phases- including consideration of the need for formal statutory definition and an obligation to facilitate and encourage Shared Education
2. Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education
3. Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes
4. Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration –including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy. The need to engage more effectively with parents/carers

1. Background to Shared Education in Hart Memorial Primary School and Presentation Primary School

We strongly feel there is a need “*for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education*”. We believe the shared history and commitment between our schools have led us to a place where we can deliver Shared Education.

Background

Hart Memorial PS and Presentation PS have worked together in Shared Education for over 20 years firstly through Education for Mutual Understanding programmes then the Schools’ Community Relations Programme. We applied for and were accepted for Primary Curriculum Partnership Programme and we now have funding through Community Relations, Equality & Diversity. During this time, our schools have developed strong professional and personal relationships among staff and pupils.

Education for Mutual Understanding

This began with one teacher from each school working together and ensuring their sporting activity encompassed all aspects of the cross community ethos in that children were encouraged to sit together, work together and have mixed groups at all times. This project between the two P7 teachers was a success due to the commitment of both teachers who went over and above their remit to make all activities truly cross community based.

Development

In 2003 Presentation PS got a new principal and in 2005 Hart Memorial had its P7 teacher promoted to the principal’s post. This P7 teacher was the teacher who had built the initial link with the P7 teacher from Presentation Primary School.

From this budding relationship and under two newly appointed principals the schools decided to explore the initial P7 project and deepen the link between the two schools. The commitment from the principals and teachers in both schools has seen Presentation Primary School which now has an enrolment of 257 pupils (from 60 in 2003) and Hart Memorial Primary School which has an enrolment of 387 pupils work together to develop and build their link to what it is today: nine classes from each school involved in CRED partnership projects addressing real issues.

Schools' Community Relations Programme

The initial link began with sport. With SELB advice, we wished to develop the link (at that time still only between the two P7 classes) and to begin to look at real community relations issues. So, with help from BEAM, we dramatized and performed Dave Duggan's short story "The First Ship in the Sea." This play tackled deeper issues around religion and culture and was performed to parents from the two schools in Portadown Town Hall - a bold step from both schools due to the content of the play. It was very well attended by all stakeholders along with representatives from DENI and SELB.

The schools then moved to the next level by developing SCRCP connections between as many year groups as possible. This was ably endorsed and supported by Jayne Simms, SELB, who worked with and encouraged both schools to participate in a variety of activities for all year groups. Many of these joint projects used drama, art and sport as media through which issues were addressed. During one year, our P7 classes joined in developing a joint school song with Tommy Sands entitled 'Portadown' which culminated with a performance in front of the Mayor of Craigavon, parents, families and other dignitaries. Other highlights included a performance in the Market Place in Armagh comprising drama and song and which was attended by an ETI representative. Towards the end of the SCRCP, we began what has become an annual trip for the P7 children to Corrymeela, reinforcing 7 years of working together – an incredible and most memorable experience for all concerned.

Primary Curriculum Partnership Programme

The PCPP programme was introduced in 2011 and was a two year project which encouraged deeper relationships with and involvement by *all* stakeholders in both schools. Through the PCPP project we held many joint ventures such as parent sessions with Paul Grey/Peter Sherlock. Teachers and classroom assistants had more in-depth planning and training and also experienced joint workshops.

Through PCPP, we moved on to address controversial and divisive community relations issues. We were also interested in widening children's cultural awareness since 55% of Presentation Primary School's enrolment was made up of Newcomer children. For example, P3 classes explored the area of celebrations perceived to belong to specific communities - St. Patrick's Day and the 12th July - which concluded with a performance to a packed audience of over 200 parents and Governors and which included the Lord Mayor of Craigavon and ETI. A DVD was made of this show for parents and also for ETI dissemination of good practice. Primary 5 classes undertook the topic of Community which involved visits to churches of differing denominations in the neighbourhood; some parents were initially resistant to this. Primary 6 classes worked on Identity through the medium of flags. A display of their work was publically launched in a unit of the town's High Street Mall at the height of the regional 'flag crisis'. P7s looked at Sectarianism whilst the P4s examined Shared History through World War 2. The schools created a merged school choir which went to a recording studio to cut a cd.

Throughout the programmes, parents from Hart Memorial Primary School were encouraged to collect their children from the joint sessions in Presentation Primary School and vice versa. We held joint assemblies where parents from one school came together with parents from the host school in the audience.

Community Relations, Equality & Diversity

By using the model developed through PCPP and by building on already well established relationships among staff, we have continued to address the issues which need addressing. The link between the two schools continues to strengthen and develop: shared SLT meetings; joint training at Baker Days and School Development Days; inter school standardisation of levels for cross curricular assessment; regular co-ordinator meetings; shared Boards of Governors meeting...to name just a few areas where our schools come together.

2. Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education

Enablers

We believe Shared Education involves the **shared vision of all stakeholders**. It is the embodiment of all the years of building **relationships** and relies greatly on the **enthusiasm** of all staff. On a practical level, it requires **joint planning, spending time together** and **addressing the real issues** of Strand 2 of the PDMU curriculum.

It **takes time** and relationships need to be established, supported and cemented. CRED is an excellent way in which this can take place although Shared Education involves so much more, as is laid out in this submission.

We have **joint Baker Day and School Development Days**. We **share training and resources**. This only works because **we link areas in our School Development Plan** through **joint SLT meetings, reporting regularly at Boards of Governors meetings**. With regard to developing working relationships among staff, we need to build in **time for planning** as this is an essential aspect of making Shared Education work; without this dedicated time between partners, the good work we have done over 20 years would not have been possible.

We have been held as an example of good practice in Shared Education by ETI – a dvd was made of the success we experienced through PCPP. We have invested a lot of **time and effort** in getting **all stakeholders on board** and this has not always been the easiest path for both schools. Through **openness and good communication** with all stakeholders we have achieved this. The geographical proximity of our two schools has been an advantage to us in building our relationship on a genuine level.

Another important point for success in Shared Education is that both schools continue to have **strong individual identities** as well as having a **shared ethos**. This is an important feature which enables all stakeholders to feel safe to come on board.

Barriers

One barrier to Shared Education is definitely **budgets** which can restrict planned activities although worthwhile Shared Education does not require a large financial outlay. However, funding for joint planning - the major foundation for a successful relationship – is essential. **Time** for staff members to meet is essential for planning and relationship building.

3. To improve shared education

We both feel there needs to be an **obligation** placed on all schools to participate in Shared Education. To link and work effectively with another school in their area, to share vision, expertise, resources and experiences need to be a **statutory part of the curriculum**.

We believe Shared Education requires **ring fenced money** without lengthy application forms. In the past we have spent much time form-filling for small pots of funding. Planning and evaluations can be used to account for the funding received. Shared Education should be part of the ETI **inspection process** as with any area of the curriculum.

Parental involvement is vital and could be increased with help from outside agencies. Schools may not always have the expertise, time or funding available to do this. **Parental education** on Shared Education is necessary for full community support.

4. Pupils views

We would like to share with you the opinions of our current pupils who have been working together for up to seven years. We believe their opinions are the most important part of our report as Shared Education impacts on them directly.

We asked our pupils 3 questions:

1. Name 3 benefits of working with your partner school
2. Name one highlight of working with your partner school
3. How could we make Shared Education better in the future

Name 3 benefits of working with your partner school

Presentation	Hart
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We meet new friends and visit their school • We learn lots of things which make us different such as cultures, religions, schools • We get to work as part of a team • We visit many community places which we would never get a chance to see 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making new friends & getting to know each other; meeting them at clubs outside school • Doing fun activities together to learn in an enjoyable way • Learning about our own identities and others' • Learning to accept and respect people from different cultures / countries / religions – and not to fight about these things • Learning what happens in a different school

Name one highlight of working with your partner school

Presentation	Hart
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I love working with the respecting differences puppets. They really make me see how problems can be easily solved • Being creative with ICT and having different opinions when working as part of a team to create Powerpoints and videos • I enjoy working together on everything we do • I loved designing new school crests. It was really enjoyable and gave us a new identity. I had never thought of this before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating shared art and displaying the results in the town for our parents and the community to see • Presenting our shared learning at a performance for lots of schools and the Minister for Education • Making friends from other countries and talking in their language; meeting up with new friends • Making shamrocks and sashes then putting on a play

How could we make our shared education with our partner school better in the future?

Presentation	Hart
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should come together to have assemblies together in each other school as I love to see my mummy make new friends with parents just as I have made with my friends in my partner school • I would love to have Golden Time together in each other's school • We could learn new languages together • We could have more ICT tasks together • I love having a new teacher to listen to • We need to meet more often 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities to play together before lessons start; more time to complete work – sometimes activities are rushed • More shared educational trips and some just to have fun eg wall climbing • Opportunities to help younger children in our partner school, maybe as Reading Buddies • Meeting up more in other venues to socialise ; have film nights; put on a play for our parents

Email to: committee.education@miassembly.gov.uk

Hazelwood Integrated College

Hazelwood Integrated College

Specialist School in Creativity & Visual Arts



Registered Charity No. XR 22627

24 October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion,

In Celtic tradition hazel woods are synonymous with knowledge and wisdom. Hence the name 'Hazelwood' encapsulates the aspirations of the pioneering Protestant and Catholic parents who, back in 1985, wanted something different from the segregated and selective education system that existed then and still exists today in Northern Ireland. Against a backdrop of daily sectarian violence it was the dream of those courageous parents that the new Hazelwood schools would shine like beacons and be rooted in a wisdom that would spread far and wide.

Today the Hazelwood beacons shine brighter than ever. Hazelwood College is a thriving integrated, non-selective, and mixed, 11–19 secondary school of 917 students (with growing demand). It is situated on a sectarian interface on the Whitewell Road in North Belfast. Its physical campus is *truly* a shared space, but it is its unique integrated ethos that sets it and other integrated schools apart.

Ethos is often a loosely defined term and is used to describe the affective as well as cognitive learning that takes place in a school. Results and research have consistently indicated that the integrated schools can compete very favourably in the cognitive aspect of the equation. However, the same research and evidence, gathered from hundreds of parents and pupils, shows that where they excel and where they are significantly different from segregated schools is in the informal, day to day learning that takes place. In Hazelwood Integrated College our Catholic children, Protestant children and those children of other or no faith, meet, greet, and squabble, make-up, laugh and play with each other, every single day, throughout their most formative years.

If schools are to shape social change, which in a post-conflict Northern Ireland it is generally recognised they should do, and be supported by government to do so, then this change must fundamentally begin in the very institutions we educate our children in and in the way we educate them. Change of any significance will never happen when over 90% of our young people remain in a highly selective and divided education system. This is particularly illogical when that lack of will appears to be because there are already unfilled spaces in the segregated schools.

Starving the supply for parents wanting integrated education at pre-school also shows lack of will. Pre-school education provision attached to existing segregated schools disenfranchises those parents who desire integration and they are left with no choice than to send their children to these alternative segregated schools. This perpetuates the problem and normalises segregation in infants from the very earliest days of their learning experiences.



Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Principal:
Kathleen Gormley
BA. (Hons), MA., PQH

70 Whitewell Road,
NEWTOWNABBEY
BT36 7ES

telephone: 028 9077 4202
fax: 028 9077 7989

email: info@hazelwood.belfast.ni.sch.uk
website: www.hazelwoodcollege.co.uk

Doing little also appears to us to be contrary to what was agreed in the Good Friday promise which charged Government with the promotion of integrated education. It is difficult to accept that the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education should consider the need to obligate in statute the facilitation and encouragement of shared education when there is already a legal obligation to promote integrated education. 'Where there's a will there's a way' and integrated education must not be sacrificed at the expense of what at best can be described as isolated success stories of sharing, to at worst, diluted initiatives and unsustainable passing fads.

We fully recognise the merits of sustainable and meaningful movement towards any arrangement that encourages the development of mutual respect and understanding between our communities, and particularly our young people. In this context Hazelwood Integrated College has always demonstrated its willingness to lead by example and offers our wider community an already established and recognised shared space through its Extended Schools programme.

In its recent OFMDFM Shared Education bid to locate a North Belfast STEM Centre on the Hazelwood campus, support was forthcoming from practically every school in the North Belfast and Newtownabbey Area Learning Communities. The bid was rejected. Nonetheless, we remain committed and it is our intention to enter into Phase 2 of the OFMDFM Shared Space bid process. Indeed we would be pleased to be included in any initiatives that we consider would develop the extensive groundwork in integration and integrated education for which we are recognised both here in Northern Ireland, in the United Kingdom and also abroad, particularly in the United States.

Integrated education works. There is a plethora of evidence that supports what we in integrated education already know, and that is, the friendships and relationships that develop between our pupils last a lifetime and the values of tolerance and mutual respect learned side by side in the classroom are carried with our young adults into an increasingly diverse and pluralist society.

We would be delighted if the Committee for Education would accept an open invitation to visit our integrated college. We would also be more than happy to offer our shared space to them to host some of their meetings in the future.

I went out to the hazel wood
Because a fire was in my head

The Song of the Wandering Aengus, W.B. Yeats

Yours sincerely



Maurice Fitzsimons

Deputy Principal, Hazelwood Integrated College

Hazelwood Integrated Primary School

Board of Governors



Response to Department of Education Committee request for Evidence: Integrated and Shared Education

October 2014

Introduction

Hazelwood Integrated Primary School was established in September 1985 by parents who were committed to providing Integrated Education to their children in North Belfast. They believed that bringing children together (Protestant and Catholic) from an early age would help heal the divisions that had blighted Northern Ireland society for many years.

We have over 450 children attending our Primary School and Nursery, 50% of whom are entitled to Free School Meals, 30% having Special Educational Needs and over 10% are newcomer children. The religious breakdown for the school is 46% Catholic, 30% Protestant and Other/None 24%.

We are an integrated, co-educational, inclusive school. We value all our pupils as individuals and respect their right to be different and to excel in different ways. It is our intention that all children attending Hazelwood Primary School will develop an understanding, acceptance and appreciation of those from different cultural backgrounds.

Historically, the communities located within the Whitewell area have experienced sustained inter-community issues for many years. However, it is our view that Hazelwood Integrated Primary has had a positive impact on easing tensions and improving community relations.

Why Integrated Education?

A report commissioned by the Integrated Education Fund in 2011¹ demonstrated that there was strong public support for integrated education with almost nine in ten people favouring integrated schools. In fact, many surveys such as: Millward Brown Ulster (2008, 2003); Ipsos MORI (2011); Young Life and Times Survey (2003-2011); and Northern Ireland Life and Times survey (1999-2010), all highlighted that support and preference for integrated education remains high. For example the 2003 survey showed a majority of people surveyed (82%) personally supported integrated education in Northern Ireland and in 2011 this had increased to 88% of those surveyed. Respondents also seen Integrated Education as 'very important to peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland' increased from 60% in 2003 to 69% in 2011. The Northern Ireland Life and Times (1999) and Young Life and Times (2003-2010) surveys found that over one third of respondents would like to send their children to an integrated school if there was one in the vicinity.

As a Board of Governors of an Integrated Primary School we are somewhat dismayed that the recent political and policy discourse has moved away from Integrated Education – where support is extremely high – to 'shared education'. 'Shared Education' is not the same as Integrated Education. We believe 'shared' is a disguise for politicians saying that for the foreseeable future our children (from all communities) will continue to be educated separately. This is not what we want for our children and it is not what we want for future generations growing up in Northern Ireland.

1

Attitudinal Survey on Integrated Education
<http://www.ief.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Attitudinal-Survey-Final-Report.pdf>

It is unacceptable to be promoting 'shared education' while there is a complete lack of regard for the statutory responsibility on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate Integrated Education.

Many policy initiatives in Northern Ireland do not reflect many of the preferences expressed by parents from many surveys (as noted above) which consistently support Integrated Education which they see as promoting mutual respect and understanding. We would remind you that the concept of Integrated Education was endorsed in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, 1998, being seen as a way to contribute to peace and reconciliation.

Integrated Education is not about Catholics going in one door and Protestants in another – being educated in separate parts of a building. Integrated Education is about children from all sections of our community learning and sharing together, experiencing all religions, building trust, having a mutual understanding and respect for their own and each other's religion and differences.

Surely we do not need to remind you of the problems related to segregation? Integration in school from a young age has been well documented to make a positive contribution to societies in Northern Ireland. A 'shared school' lacks the deeper commitment to structural and social change for our children – we cannot allow the commitment shown to our children offered by Integrated Education to be lost.

Our school not only provides benefits for children and young people, it also offers benefits to the local area and society as a whole within Northern Ireland. Research conducted by Montgomery et al² noted that Integrated Education fostered good relations and had 'significant and positive social influence on the lives of those who experience it.' Other research³ also noted that pupils attending an Integrated School adopted a more positive position on issues such as politics, religion and identity.

An example of our integrated approach is seen day and daily in our activities. All our children celebrated the Queen's Jubilee in 2013, children take part in Gaelic sports, children are involved in projects relating to Protestant history, Irish Language as well as learning about other faiths. The school is also seen as a beacon for the community with sporting and leisure classes held in the evenings and weekends, the school has also acted as a centre for mediation when tensions have developed among local groups.

Northern Ireland is a society in transition, demographics are changing. It is no longer an issue of Catholics and Protestants but about all religions. The model of Integrated Education lends itself to ensuring newcomer children are treated with respect and mutual understanding and they feel a sense of inclusion in school and community life.

Below is a personal statement from a Governor and a Parent:

I am a mother of 4 children, who have all attended Hazelwood nursery, primary and college. As a parent from a strongly nationalist tradition living in segregated North Belfast I made a conscious decision to send them to school where they would make friends with children from other traditions and grow up with an innate awareness that there were different ways of viewing our society and 'others' were not to be feared or regarded as suspicious. Hazelwood was the right choice.

Integrated education is not just about 'throwing together' children from protestant/catholic backgrounds but has a core commitment to:

■ *Equality and diversity*

2 Gallagher, T., Smith, A. and Montgomery, A. (2003). Integrated education in Northern Ireland: Participation profile and performance. Coleraine: UNESCO Centre

3 Stringer, M., Irwing, P., Giles, M., McClenahan, C., Wilson, R. and Hunter, J. (2010) Parental and school effects on childrens political attitudes in Northern Ireland. British Journal of Educational Psychology (80), pp. 223-240. DOI: 10.1348/000709909X477233.

- *Child centred education*
- *A partnership with parents*
- *Christian ethos*

Hazelwood takes an active daily role in these principles, taking the 'whole child' into account, not just their academic ability or social standing. They explore and celebrate the traditions of different cultures throughout the year; e.g. when my children made their first communion and confirmation their whole class attended. They in turn attended their friends' cultural events and gained first-hand knowledge of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Today, they are in their 20's and still remain in close contact with the friends they made at school. While taking an active part in their personal cultural background, they have learned to express this in an informed way and are comfortable in any social setting.

Integrated Education is not just about sharing a building but giving children an opportunity to discuss history, politics and culture from different perspectives in a safe environment and seeing those with different opinions as friends first and foremost. This can only be learned by growing up together, attending the same classes and forming a close social bond with others by having similar childhood experiences; through attending Hazelwood my children have learned that difference is to be celebrated not feared.

Terry McKeown

Conclusion

It is clear that public opinion supports Integrated Education as a means of contributing to peace and reconciliation as well as promoting mutual respect and understanding. We have demonstrated that Integrated Education makes a positive contribution to children and societies within Northern Ireland, promoting positive attitudes and reducing sectarian attitudes. There is little doubt that Hazelwood Integrated Primary has made a positive impact upon the lives of all children and the community within the Whitewell area. We would therefore recommend the Education Committee makes a clear statement of support to encourage more integrated education as a way of supporting a shared future for all of our children.

The Board of Governors of Hazelwood Integrated Primary is pleased to make this response, we would be very happy to give oral evidence to the committee if needed.

Contact details:

Board of Governors
Hazelwood Integrated Primary School
242 Whitewell Road
Newtownabbey
Belfast BT36 7EN

Hazelwood Integrated Primary School



242 Whitewell Road
Newtownabbey
Co Antrim, BT36 7EN

Tel: 028 9077 0421 Fax: 028 9077 7381

Principal: Mrs Patricia Murtagh

Dear Mr Mc Callion

I am writing in response to your request for written evidence with regard to Shared and Integrated Education on behalf of the governors, staff, parents and pupils of Hazelwood Integrated Primary School.

In recent years huge investment in shared education has revealed, that it seems to the key decision makers, to be a good idea that some concession is made to educating children together. We agree that this is indeed a good idea – we feel it would be more effective if they were in a shared context all the time. There are some ‘shared projects’ that have produced useful outcomes and the integrated movement are happy to see the beginning of any relationship building – but as politicians try to sell shared education as a **viable alternative** to integrated education- those of us who see integration every day in practice know it is not.

Shared education projects that create a school in which Catholics go in one door and Protestants another - are nothing short of insane! At best it allows pupils to share some time together but in essence, whilst better than nothing, it is similar to most CRED work.

These projects are a step towards encouraging children to engage with each other for a limited time –but by returning to their own environment after a brief engagement the effects on attitudes are minimal. In our schools the positive relationships we foster go on every second of every day and beyond the classrooms into communities. These friendships are real, long lasting and make a difference.

The recent judgement by Mr Justice Treacy as part of the court Proceedings surrounding Drumragh clarified that integrated education ‘is a standalone concept’ that is to say educating together at school, protestant and catholic children.

This is sharing at its most effective and the success of this case and its re-emphasis that DE are obliged to ‘encourage and facilitate integrated education’ raises the question - is the search for a legal obligation to support Shared Education an avoidance of this obligation to support Integrated education? We continue to demand the implementation of Article 64.

Surely there is an ethical duty on all of us to recognise the potential of educating children together all the time as a means of nurturing friendships across boundaries and across generations –therefore making cultural strife and conflict less palatable- some of our schools are educating third generation children – a lasting impact made.

The nature of our society remains complex – falling levels in English and Maths, underachievement in Protestant working class boys, racist tensions, issues around flags and emblems all proving to be challenges – we should be normalising our schools in the recognition that a mix of social groups, religions, cultures and academic abilities ensures better outcomes for all. From a young age, bias and prejudice can become embedded however influencing young minds to think in a different way makes for well-balanced young people and adults of the future.

Groups from other parts of the world have come to the Integrated sector to learn from us and to apply elements of the model to their own troubled environments. Why then is it so difficult for our own politicians to see what is under their nose – a model for removing barriers,

for opening hearts, for sharing and most importantly for giving children skills to deal with difference in a respectful way.

There is a need for an explicit reference to Integrated education in Shared Education Policy – funding should be given to all on this continuum – to maximise its effects.

At Hazelwood integrated Primary we practice meaningful engagement each day and challenge all to face their own prejudices and deal with all the areas which in our society have caused conflict – open and honest engagement with each other adults and children alike creates positivity and a context for creative change.

If there is a genuine desire to move Northern Ireland forward we urge you to talk to the integrated sector in particular to NICIE and in addition we welcome you come and visit our schools - see what we do and talk to our children- we are not a gimmick or a phase – we are real and strong and determined to persist because we know that what we do is important!

Integrated Education Alumni Association

Integrated Education Alumni Association Submission to Education Committee

To the Committee for Education,

I am writing on behalf of the Integrated Education Alumni Association in response to the request for written evidence in regards to shared and integrated education.

Sixteen years on from the signing of the Belfast Agreement, Northern Ireland is enjoying a period of relative peace and stability. Yet, despite efforts to promote integration in our political and policing institutions, our educational system remains largely segregated. Of Northern Ireland's total number of pupils, a mere 7% attend integrated schools. As alumni of integrated schools, we have benefitted from an education instilled with tolerance and understanding which has positively enabled us academically, professionally and socially. However, this option is not available to all children in Northern Ireland and we believe that this is a factor which continues to promote division in our province.

This response aims to propose the opinions of past pupils of the integrated education sector and address the key areas set out in the Committee's Inquiry.

- We believe that the nature of the education system in Northern Ireland fundamentally hinders the growth and development of integrated education. Only an approximate 6% of schools, both primary and post primary, are currently designated as integrated. This poses a number of important issues which should be addressed. Firstly, the sparse nature of integrated schools in Northern Ireland severely limits both the number of pupils these schools can individually enrol each year, and also geographically limits who can attend these schools. It is difficult to accurately judge the demand for integrated schools in Northern Ireland as it is largely based on public opinion, however numerous polls, such as those carried out by the Belfast Telegraph, and research undertaken by the Integrated Education Fund among others, has shown evidence of a strong demand for the sector. The small number of integrated schools in Northern Ireland also continues to complement the opinion that integrated schools are 'special/other' instead of promoting the sector as 'normal'. The implementation of a formal definition for integrated education may be of benefit in improving the understanding of the sector and help clearly designate other schools as integrated. For an example, Botanic Primary School in Belfast could be regarded as integrated due to the diverse demographic of its pupils however it is not designated as such.
- In recent years, the Executive has attempted to develop the shared education sector in Northern Ireland. However, the development of this sector should not act as a substitute to integrated education. The demographic of Northern Ireland is rapidly diversifying which in turn provides further reason to promote and develop the integrated sector. Encouraging a Protestant and Catholic school may reduce costs but it does not develop the relationships and tolerance that are integral parts of integrated teaching. If anything, shared education campuses crystalize the division within our education system. Shared education further instils the 'us and them' mentality, a botched solution to a deep problem. If we can teach Protestant, Catholic and other faiths in the same campus, why can't we teach them in the same classes together? Within integrated education, all cultural and religious beliefs and identities are protected and championed – religious freedom is a core principle of integrated education. Not only does integrated education teach tolerance for other cultures and religions, it prepares pupils for full participation and understanding of the changing face of Northern Ireland's work place and broader society as a whole.
- To address the second area of the Committee's Inquiry regarding barriers and enablers of integrated and shared education, there are a number of important issues in regards to this. Firstly, as previously stated, there are a number of hindrances to the development of integrated education such as the small numbers of integrated schools in Northern

Ireland and geographical issues. However these are just two of a number of issues. The image and perception, whether misconceived or not, of integrated schools is something that requires addressing. For example, Lagan College, despite having high quality teaching standards and some of the highest GCSE/A Levels in the country, did not have the best facilities prior to the opening of their new school, which may have led to prospective pupils attending different schools and not benefitting from the unique educational and social experience of attending an integrated school. Another substantial issue is breaking the status quo that is prevalent in many families across Northern Ireland. The influence of family members in the choice of which school a child should attend is arguably the most important factor in this decision-making process. It is of the highest importance that integrated education is promoted as risk-free and a pathway to post-educational success, and that parents are given an equal opportunity to send their children to an integrated school. The possible domino effect that this could have would be greatly beneficial to the development of integrated education. A more concerted effort from the Office of First and Deputy First Minister to promote the benefits of integrated education beyond academic results may help address some of the misconceptions around integrated education. Another issue that hinders the growth of integrated education is segregated housing. Integrated education produces great advocates of the sector, however many pupils return to divided communities. We believe that the development and expansion of integrated education would help in the future to break down barriers, including physical 'peace' walls, and in turn help the development of integrated housing.

- In terms of the Inquiry's third area of looking to other jurisdictions for possible ideas for the development of integrated and shared education, we believe that this is unnecessary. In Northern Ireland, we already have a successful integrated system, despite its small nature, which is producing students with impressive academic qualifications and debunking ill informed misconceptions amongst some of our population. Like our policing system, many jurisdictions have come to Northern Ireland to research our integrated education system in order to adopt some of its core values and apply them in their respective educational structures. If other countries are using our integrated system as an example of how to teach those from different religious backgrounds and divided communities together, why is it necessary that we look to other nations for a different solution? We should promote the successes of our integrated education sector and herald it as something to be proud of, an example of the importance of teaching our youth together. Children born at the time of the ceasefires are now adults and their children will soon be entering the education system. It is of the upmost importance that the Executive promote integrated education – not as a distant solution or a possibility, but as a forward thinking, positive change in the now. As previously stated, Northern Ireland's demographic is constantly changing with many people from around the world coming to live and work here. Conservation of an ineffective, duplicative binary system will continue to hinder our future generations in all aspects of life. Now is the time to change this system and prevent future generations from missing out on the invaluable benefits of integrated education. It is now beyond a question of having the option to change, there is a clear need for change in our education system to prepare our citizens for being vital members of an increasingly globalised stage.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of our views in relation to integrated and shared education.

Regards,

Robert Magee, on behalf of the Integrated Education Alumni Association.

Integrated Education Fund

Submission to Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

Opening Minds

Integrated Education Fund

The Integrated Education Fund (IEF) welcomes the opportunity to make a written submission to the Education Committee's Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry. The IEF would also welcome the opportunity to present evidence to the Education Committee.

About the IEF

The IEF is a charitable trust established to provide a financial foundation for the development and growth of integrated education in Northern Ireland. It is recognized as a charity by the Inland Revenue under Reference XR52574 and is governed by its Deed of Trust. Its mandate is derived from the expressed demand of parents and individual schools who seek integrated education for their children and pupils.

What is integrated education?

Integrated education brings children, staff and governors from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths or none, and other cultures, together in one school. Integrated schools differ from most other schools in Northern Ireland by ensuring that children from diverse backgrounds are educated together every day, side by side in the same classrooms. Integrated schools are not secular but are essentially Christian in character while welcoming all faiths and none. Through their admissions criteria, schools aim to ensure a balanced number of Catholic and Protestant children. But it is also the ethos that is particularly distinctive; it is deliberately and strategically planned to promote inclusiveness and mutual respect. Integrated schools do not simply admit students from different traditions and expect them to fit in, nor to pretend that everyone is the same. For example, Catholic children are offered Sacramental preparation at P3, P4 and P7; Protestant children can generally avail of the Delving Deeper programme to develop their own faith knowledge while all pupils are introduced to the ideas, beliefs and practices of the major world religions and humanist philosophies.

In the post-primary schools the integrated ethos is apparent in approaches to Religious Education and History, for example, where sensitive and deliberate care is taken to address different, potentially contentious viewpoints in a balanced and thought-provoking way.

The integrated ethos also extends to the staff and the Board of Governors of each integrated school.

Introduction

Northern Ireland is committed to shaping a united future and one of the main tests of that commitment will be in how we choose to educate our children: largely apart, as at present, or increasingly together. The idea of educating all children together under the same roof, instead of apart in separate Catholic schools and State schools, is not new. Arguably there is more goodwill towards it now than at any stage in the past. The OFMDFM strategy 'Together: Building a United Community' (2013) recognises '...the segregated nature of Northern Ireland's education provision' and takes the view that 'achieving a full shared education system...is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of ...sectarianism...'

Northern Ireland maintains an education system that educates its children separately, by religion. 91% of Protestant primary children attended controlled (mainly Protestant) schools and 88% of Catholic primary children were enrolled in Catholic maintained primaries in the last academic year. At the same time, 88% of Catholic post-primary pupils attended Catholic maintained or Catholic managed voluntary schools and 89% of Protestant postprimary pupils attended controlled schools.¹ Only 7% of children overall attended integrated schools.

Consequently, pupil interactions are mostly with peers, teachers and others from their own community, with limited opportunity to understand other perspectives and cultures. In contrast, many parents here wish for their children to be educated together with children of other traditions. A recent LucidTalk survey identified that 79% of parents would back a move to see their children's school change to integrated education.²

Much research and analysis has been carried out about the segregated nature of schooling. A detailed insight into the cultural and political awareness of 3-6 year olds found there is a rapid increase in the proportions of children beginning to identify themselves with one particular community and to make sectarian comments at the ages of five and six. The fact that these represent the first few years of compulsory schooling is unlikely to be a coincidence. One explanation is likely to be the segregated nature of the school system itself.³

Educating all children together is an essential part of the reconciliation process and of building a society that celebrates respect, understanding and friendships across traditional divides. The IEF believes that integrated education can help all children become better citizens of Northern Ireland and of the increasingly global world we all inhabit.

Achieving quality educational outcomes for all should be the central focus for the Executive and the Education Minister. This is best achieved within a reformed education system in which children of all faiths or none, and regardless of ability, ethnicity, cultural or social backgrounds, learn and are taught together in their local area. This would make best use of scarce educational resources in a time of unprecedented reductions in public expenditure and would undoubtedly bring longer-term economic, educational and societal benefits to us all.

Successful reform of a long established education system cannot happen overnight but Northern Ireland has already come a long way and taken major steps forward. Further change is needed - and communities should be at the heart of education planning.

The current area based planning process provides an opportunity to ensure parental choice is at the very heart of the education system, by embedding a mechanism which reflects real parental demand rather than the current system, which simply ratifies the existing institutional or sectoral structures.

Northern Ireland cannot afford to wait to change how we educate our children. The cost of inaction will mean another generation of children growing up with limited contact with the 'other community' and limited experience of diversity. We need to open minds to the benefits of educating our children together, side by side, in the same classrooms. It needs to be the norm – not the exception.

1 <http://www.thedetail.tv/issues/150/religioninschools/how-integrated-are-schools-where-you-live>

2 Lucid Poll result in Belfast Telegraph, 28th February 2013

3 Connolly, P, Smith, A. & Kelly, B. (2002) Too young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 years Olds in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Review the nature and definition of Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases

On 15th May 2014 the High Court delivered its judgment in the judicial review action brought by Drumragh Integrated College. The Court clarified the statutory duty to ‘encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education’ enshrined in both Article 64 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 and the Good Friday Agreement. The Court held that integrated education was a standalone concept and plainly envisages education together at the same school. It also held that an integrated school strives to achieve an equal balance in relation to worship, celebration and exposure to both faiths. This is reflected in its constitution, and the Board of Governors must strive in its ethos to achieve this. The statutory duty in Article 64 applies to education that is integrated throughout and not education that is delivered by a ‘partisan board.’

Key paragraphs of the Judgement

‘Integrated Education is a standalone concept’ [para. 50]

‘Integrated Education must be the service of imparting knowledge to young people from all backgrounds as equals’ [para. 51]

A school which has a predominantly Catholic or predominantly Protestant ethos which is reflected through the religious events celebrated, the religious symbolism present throughout the school, the manner of worship engaged in the school cannot be said to be delivering integrated education (i.e. serving members of different religious groups equally) [para. 52]

‘[This is] because, as part of its constitution as an institution it is fundamentally oriented to one religious cannon over another. Therefore, the minority faith in any denominational school is not receiving ‘equal’ exposure to its faith as the majority faith’ [para. 52]

‘As against this, an integrated school strives to achieve an equal balance in relation to worship, celebration and exposure to both faiths’ [para. 53]

‘For these reasons it must be the case that the integrated education referred to in the article is education that is integrated throughout and not education that is delivered by a partisan board’ [para. 53]

Consider the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education

The IEF would support the need for a formal statutory definition of Shared Education because such clarity is essential for effective monitoring, assessment and accountability. Shared education is currently defined by the Department as involving two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Increased collaboration between schools is a positive development. It represents the chance to increase contact between pupils, teachers, governors and parents from different backgrounds. Shared classes should, in theory, strengthen the potential for greater integration as pupils and schools experience the benefit of learning together.

However, shared facilities and shared campuses do not equate to shared education. They may facilitate the potential for collaboration between schools but it is the level of interaction and contact between pupils that counts the most.

Shared education cannot be considered a substitute or alternative for integrated education and it must not develop as a barrier to integrated education. The choice of a fully integrated school must be encouraged and supported if that is what is desired by the local community.

Whilst shared education takes place between schools, a fully integrated school represents the most inclusive form of sharing within a school.

The IEF would therefore not support an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education as this would perpetuate Northern Ireland's divided education system.

Identify the key barriers for Integrated Education

The High Court's judgment (May 2014) in the judicial review described the Department of Education's 'Needs Model', which is the basis for long-term education planning, as *'inflexible' and provides an 'additional difficulty' impeding the progress of expansion in integrated schools. This creation of an 'additional difficulty' is the opposite of '...facilitating and encouraging (integrated education).'* The Court ruled that DE needed to be *'...alive to its Article 64 duty at all levels, including the strategic one.'*

Research conducted by Millward Brown Ulster (2003) suggested that almost three quarters of respondents (72%) would choose an integrated school if there was one close to where they live, assuming no negative differential in academic or other standards.

It is the lack of access to integrated education which ensures that only a small percentage of pupils attend integrated schools.

The current overhaul of our education system is putting in place structures that future generations will have to live and deal with. As the most recent opinion polls demonstrate, voters believe that our politicians, instead of seizing the opportunity to shape an education system fit for the 21st century, are side-stepping the issue of desegregating our education system.

Public opinion has repeatedly demonstrated a demand for moving beyond our current segregated education system and towards a united future. The Executive and the Assembly must, at the very least, match the public's vision for an education system of schools attended by pupils from all traditions.

It is unacceptable for education planning not to take into consideration citizen demand or aspiration. And whilst it cannot be left solely to existing education providers or sectors to determine the future of education in an area, equally it should not be left to pioneering parents to have to establish an alternative choice.

The current discourse on shared education assumes that the vast majority of our children will continue to be educated in separate schools for the foreseeable future. By accepting this, political parties move toward education policies that plan for separate development rather than structural change and reform of the separate school system.

Identify the key enablers for Integrated Education

Effective area planning offers the possibility to deliver real change. The process thus far has been rooted in the existing, segregated structure rather than any innovative proposals for a new approach to delivering education. Integrated schools, established through parental demand, demonstrate that it is possible to educate children together without diluting cultural identity. Increasing integrated school places would send out a powerful message that we are creating a truly shared future rather than merely managing the divisions of our past.

Overwhelming Public Support

Integrated education is seen as the most popular of a range of possible options for securing long term peace in Northern Ireland.⁴ Integrated education has widespread public backing, with the latest attitudinal survey showing support running at 79% of those expressing an opinion.

An overwhelming 79% of parents with children at school, who expressed an opinion, said they would support a request to transform their child's school to integrated status.

Young people have important opinions and ideas, and may be better equipped to challenge sectarian norms and assist society towards a shared and reconciled future. Moreover, Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UK, 1992), confirms that children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and have their opinions taken into account.

In April 2014 the IEF commissioned independent polling company LucidTalk to carry out a survey among 16-24 year-olds across Northern Ireland. A representative sample of 1,075 completed the survey and all data results were weighted to reflect gender and community background. More than 83% of those questioned agree that an education system where children of all faiths and none go to the same school would be an important step in combating sectarianism.

Societal Benefits: the Evidence

There is a growing body of evidence of the societal benefits of integrated education. Much research and analysis has been carried out about the segregated nature of schooling.

Research (Stringer et al., 2009, p.252) suggests that pupils of mixed or integrated schools had higher levels of out-of-school contact with members of the 'other' community than children in segregated schools, with pupils reporting '...significantly higher levels of contact with other group members both within and outside school than their segregated counterparts'. Carter (2004) has highlighted sustained and positive contacts between pupils from the two main communities in Northern Ireland through integrated education as crucial in fostering relationships and collaborative learning.

A detailed insight into the cultural and political awareness of 3-6 year olds found there is a rapid increase in the proportions of children beginning to identify themselves with one particular community and to make sectarian comments at the ages of five and six. The fact that these represent the first few years of compulsory schooling is unlikely to be a coincidence. One explanation is likely to be the segregated nature of the school system itself.⁵

A University of Ulster research project into the effects of integrated and segregated schooling in Northern Ireland highlights that sectarianism could be defused if more Catholic and Protestant children were sent to mixed-religion schools.⁶

A Community Relations Council and Equality Commission report highlighted the contribution made by integrated education to '...enabling and promoting continued engagement with children from different backgrounds' and the role of integrated schools in providing opportunities for interaction between individuals from the two main communities in Northern Ireland.⁷

4 Lucid Talk Attitudinal Polling 2013

5 Connolly, R, Smith, A. & Kelly, B. (2002) Too young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 years Olds in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

6 Integrated Education, Intergroup Relations, and Political Identities in Northern Ireland, Hayes, B, McAllister, I, Dowds, L (2007)

7 Community Relations Council and Equality Commission, 2010, p. 23

The Northern Ireland Life and Times survey concluded that by separating Protestant and Catholic children, the education system has exacerbated community divisions. It is argued that the separation of children leads to ignorance about the other community and, in the words of Seamus Dunn (1986), fosters ‘an atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion’. By contrast, the goal of integrated schools is to foster an understanding of both traditions and to overcome negative stereotypes. By encouraging children to understand their historical and religious differences, it is hoped that they will feel less threatened by the other community, and form enduring cross-community relations.⁸

Integrated education can be a fundamental driver for change. It develops pupils’ skills and knowledge when they learn together so that they can contribute to an open, diverse and inclusive society. When children learn together, it crucially increases positive attitudes to others, reduces negative stereotypes and encourages cross-community friendships.

Research evidence suggests that integrated schooling has a significant and positive social influence on the lives of those who experience it, most notably in terms of fostering cross-community friendships, reducing prejudicial attitudes and promoting a sense of security in religious, racial, or ethnically diverse environments⁹

The Integrated Education Fund does not want to impose any specific model of education provision on anyone; we act purely in response to parental demand and fully respect the wishes of parents who select various types of schools. The IEF seeks to ensure that all schools are wholly inclusive and provide full equality of opportunity.

It is indisputable that parents will send their children to what they believe are the best schools. They are unlikely to send their children to a school simply because it is integrated, Catholic Maintained or State Controlled, if it isn’t considered a good school. Many schools of different types perform to the highest standards and will remain popular choices for parents. All schools aim to do their best for their pupils – the question that must be asked is, would they perform any less well if they were open to, and encouraged to include pupils, teachers and governors from different religious and cultural backgrounds?

Educational Benefits: the Evidence

There has been little research on educational attainment in integrated schools beyond analysis of examination results. The evidence suggests that pupils perform as well academically at GCSE and A-level as pupils from other non-selective schools.

It should be noted that boys in grant maintained integrated schools have a better pass rate of 5 or more GCSE in comparison to other non-selective schools.¹⁰

Economic Case: the Evidence

Northern Ireland is facing challenging economic times. In addition to public spending demands, a government commissioned report on the *Financial Cost of Division* (Deloitte, 2007) estimated the cost of division in areas such as education, housing, policing and security to be in the region of an extra £1.5 billion spend every year.

The IEF commissioned a scoping paper from Oxford Economics, *Developing the Case for Shared Education*, which called for a thorough debate on new ways to deliver education in Northern Ireland in economically straitened times. The report demonstrated that the NI

8 In Search of the Middle Ground: Integrated Education and Northern Ireland Politics. 2006, The Northern Ireland Life and Times survey is carried out annually and documents public opinion on a wide range of social issues. The survey is a joint project of the two Northern Ireland universities and aims to provide an independent source of information on what the public thinks about the social issues of the day.

9 Stringer, 2009, 2000; Montgomery et al., 2003; McGlynn, 2001; Irwin, 1991

10 AgendaNI, Issue 66, p19

Executive cannot continue to fund empty desks while buildings fall into disrepair and staffing budgets are squeezed. In effect, the status quo is unaffordable and unsustainable.

Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve integration

The Department should enhance the curriculum to include the development of skills, structures and relationships that enable schools, pupils and their parents, staff and governors and the wider community to increase their understanding, acceptance and respect for political, cultural and religious difference. This should be embedded through the ethos of schools and be an integral part of the curriculum to ensure all children can contribute to the shared vision of building a united community. The Department should also develop age-appropriate primary and post-primary anti-sectarian resources and ensure that teachers are trained, equipped and supported to deliver these effectively in the classroom.

Integration should inform all future models of social infrastructure; for example the Department for Social Development and Department of Education should establish an interdepartmental strategic approach to mixed housing and integrated education.

All schools in receipt of public funding should have a duty placed on them to be inclusive spaces so that their policies and practice reflect the diverse range of religious and cultural backgrounds that make up pupils, staff and governors across Northern Ireland schools. Moreover, the Department should ring fence funding for integrated education to enable key measurable indicators to be incorporated within the funding formula for schools and other educational institutions. This financial support would recognise the added value of integrated education with particular emphasis in the curriculum and daily routines on understanding, accepting and respecting political, cultural and religious differences. It should be weighed against the quality and the effectiveness of integration provided to ensure continuous progression towards a desegregated, inclusive system. Progress would be monitored by the Education and Training Inspectorate or other objective body as appropriate.

The impact of Integrated Education

The Integrated Education Movement is a parent-led cross-community movement in Northern Ireland with little or no mainstream political backing and yet it has not been without major consequence:

Positive Social Attitudes

For the 28 children in 1981 to 22,000 attending integrated schools in 2013 (and thousands more in between), there has been a measurable impact on social attitudes. Put simply, children who attend an integrated school have more friendships with children from other religions and cultures (Hayes and McAllister, 2009).

A Shared Future

The existence of integrated schools has demonstrated that people from all religious, cultural and social backgrounds can learn and work together. Considering that not one integrated school has been established through government planning or policy, it is a great achievement that 62 schools, educating 22,000 children, now exist in Northern Ireland. But more are needed.

The development of integrated education works as a barometer of a shared society. When full integration in our schools is the norm rather than the exception, we will be truly approaching a shared future.

Challenging Separation

The growth of integrated education to 7% of the school population has had a powerful impact. It has highlighted the fact that the majority of other children in the system are unlikely to experience day to day interaction with those from different religious and cultural traditions. Addressing this has led to initiatives for schools to work more closely together in what is termed 'shared education'. Whilst a fully integrated school represents the most inclusive form of sharing within a school, the fresh drive for shared education between schools has witnessed increased support from government. This suggests a growing political acceptance that our children can and should learn together.

The IEF has had 14 years' experience of funding shared education through our Promoting a Culture of Trust grant programme, and see shared education as a valuable mechanism to bring children together. The aim of the programme is to fund projects in schools to promote the development of skills, structures and relationships that enable schools, pupils and their parents, staff and governors and the wider community to increase their understanding, acceptance and respect for political, cultural and religious differences.

The IEF launched PACT in the year 2000 and is delighted to have been able to support projects in schools of differing levels and management types across Northern Ireland which have delivered and surpassed the stated aim of the programme. Over the past fourteen years, through PACT 1 – 14, £1,034,463 has been awarded in grants for 232 projects in 530 schools, directly involving and benefiting over 13,000 children and young people. However, simply agreeing on the benefits of children learning together, or even putting this into practice through PACT or other projects, does not provide a vision for the future of education. It falls short of showing a community the possible destination of the journey that has begun.

The time has come to think about what could be achieved with full government support for an education system based on children learning together.

In order to achieve a unified, coherent education system, the NI Executive should:

- Carry out a major review of the economic cost of maintaining a segregated education system.
- Place a duty on all schools in receipt of public money to be inclusive spaces; to be open in both school policy and practice to children, staff and governors from all the religious and cultural backgrounds that make up Northern Ireland.
- Ring fence funding for integrated education to support schools in their progress towards integrated education, measured against key indicators, with particular emphasis in the curriculum and daily routines on understanding, accepting and respecting political, cultural and religious differences.
- Develop area based planning which is shaped by the community and which reflects parental choice, community needs, desire for a shared future and fiscal realities
- Establish a single authority for the administration of education.
- Establish a single teacher training system, where teachers of all faiths and none are trained together on the same courses at the same locations.
- Establish a single model of governance for all schools.
- Extend fair employment legislation to the recruitment of teachers.
- Extend the application of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to schools.

Papers and research on Integrated Education.

Integration for reconciliation? The impact of integrated schools in Northern Ireland 01/01/2004 A paper presented by Dr Claire McGlynn at the Research Initiative on the Resolution of Ethnic Conflict Conference, "Peace-building after Peace Accords", at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, September 11-13, 2003.

Moving Barriers: Promoting Learning for Diversity in Initial Teacher Education 01/01/2004 paper presented at The European Conference on Educational Research, University of Hamburg, 17-20 September 2003 by Hagan, M., McGlynn, C.W. and Wylie, K. of Stranmillis University College, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Research probing the influence of friends' friends on prejudice levels in Northern Ireland. (Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, Voci) 08/09/2004

Education in Divided Societies, Gallagher, T. (2004), Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Integrated Education in Northern Ireland in the context of Critical Multiculturalism 29/09/2004 Irish Educational Studies Vol 22 No 3 Winter 2003 Claire McGlynn

Moving out of Conflict: Integrated schools in N. Ireland 30/09/2004

Journal of Peace Education Vol1 No 2 Sept 2004 McGlynn; Niens, Cairns and Hewshaw.

As the integrated education movement in Northern Ireland passes its twenty-first anniversary, it is pertinent to explore the legacy of mixed Catholic and Protestant schooling. This paper summarises the findings of different studies regarding the impact of integrated education in Northern Ireland on social identity, intergroup attitudes and forgiveness and reconciliation. The research is discussed in relation to its implications for the theory and practice of integrated education in Northern Ireland and also for other societies with a legacy of ethno-political conflict. It proposes that integrated education in Northern Ireland impacts positively on identity, outgroup attitudes, forgiveness and reconciliation, providing hope and encouragement for co-education strategies in other countries that have suffered from prolonged conflict. Despite a number of challenges, it is clear from the research presented here that integrated education holds great potential both for building social cohesion and for promoting forgiveness and reconciliation.

Integration in Practice: Alison Montgomery, Grace Frazer, Claire McGlynn, Tony Gallagher and Alan Smith:2003 Integrated Education in N.Ireland 08/10/2004 UNESCO

The Right to Education Tomasevski, T. (2003), , Report submitted by Special Rapporteur to the Fifty-ninth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Transformation: Julie McGonigle, Tony Gallagher and Alan Smith Integrated Education in N. Ireland 2003 UNESCO

In Search of the Middle Ground: Integrated Education and Northern Ireland Politics Bernadette C. Hayes, University of Aberdeen Ian McAllister, Australian National University

Lizanne Dowds, ARK Education is often seen as a means of achieving social change. Underlying this view is contact theory, which argues that increased contact between social groups will serve to reduce prejudicial attitudes and alleviate racial and ethnic divisions. A recent study, undertaken by Bernadette C. Hayes, Ian McAllister and Lizanne Dowds, tests and extends these propositions by examining the long-term impact of segregated and integrated education on political identities and attitudes. Using a pooled sample of surveys conducted on the adult population in Northern Ireland between 1998 and 2003, it addresses, for the first time, the question of whether or not experiencing a religiously integrated education has a significant effect on the political outlooks of Protestants and Catholics within this society. The results suggest that attendance at a religiously integrated school – either one formally constituted as integrated or a religious school incorporating a proportion from

the opposite religion – has positive long-term benefits in promoting a less sectarian stance on national identity and constitutional preferences (for a comprehensive account of the study and a detailed discussion of its findings see:

- Integrated education can and does have an impact on the outlooks of pupils who attend them.
- The effects of integrated education extend into later life.
- As the numbers experiencing integrated education grows, there is the potential to create a new common ground in Northern Ireland politics.

The management of pupil difference in Catholic-Protestant and Palestinian- Jewish integrated education in Northern Ireland and Israel

Claire McGlynn and Zvi Bekerman Queen's University, Belfast, UK; Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel Compare Vol. 37, No. 5, October 2007, pp. 689–705

This paper considers issues related to integration in education, specifically those related to the integration of ethnic/religious populations in conflict. The case study we will use is the educating together of Catholic and Protestant children and Palestinian and Jewish children in two troubled societies, Northern Ireland and Israel, where children are normally kept segregated within the education system. Using a multi-theoretical approach the paper presents data collected in a parallel study of principals, policy makers and stakeholders in the two contexts. Whilst there are striking similarities between integrated education in Northern Ireland and Israel there are also clear differences around the management of pupil diversity which are critically teased out in the paper. It is argued that a cross-fertilization of theoretical perspectives is necessary both to analyse integrated school settings and to support those involved in these ventures.

Education for Peace in Integrated Schools: A Priority for Northern Ireland? Claire McGlynn 29/09/2004: Child care in Practice Vol 10 No 2 April 2004

Carfax

Although violence in Northern Ireland has been “neither halted or prevented” (Tomasevski, 2003a, p. 7), few would deny that the scale of the conflict has been reduced. This paper argues that a vital purpose of education in Northern Ireland should be peacebuilding and the promotion of social cohesion. In particular, the paper looks at the lessons that can be learned from integrated education by societies moving out of conflict. As part of a larger study of the impact of integrated (mixed Catholic and Protestant) education, former and current Principals of the two longest established post-primary (for children aged 11–18) integrated colleges were questioned about the policies and practice employed by their schools with regards to promoting respect for diversity, dealing with cultural symbols and affirming or challenging identity. The potential of integrated education to promote tolerance and understanding is discussed. This paper concludes that the needs of children and society for reconciliation through integrated schooling should perhaps take preference over the rights of parents to segregated education.

Rhetoric and reality: are integrated schools in Northern Ireland really making a difference? Claire McGlynn Irish Educational Studies Vol. 26, No. 3, September 2007, pp. 271_287

This article explores perspectives on the current contribution of integrated schools to society in Northern Ireland and asks whether there is a mismatch between what some expect from the schools and what they may be able to provide. It suggests that integrated education may for some be a magic panacea, whilst those leading the sector see the benefits of integrated education as emerging over a much longer and more realistic timeframe. Based on a series of interviews with principals and with other leaders, this article explores how integrated schools balance the practice and evaluation of integration with other conflicting priorities. It questions the extent to which the schools show variation and argues that greater coherence within the integrated sector might be helpful in the current climate.

Integrated and Faith-Based Schooling in Northern Ireland

Claire McGlynn *The Irish Journal of Education*, 2005, xxxvi, pp. 49-62

Issues are explored relating to the diversity of schooling provision in Northern Ireland in the context of the debate around faith-based schooling in England and elsewhere. The benefits to individuals from a religious point of view are off-set against any potential impact on social cohesion. Integrated schools as models for shared education are considered, as are innovative methods of co-management that may emerge in the future. In the context of a fragile society emerging from conflict and yet apparently more polarized than ever, it is argued that choices inevitably have consequences and that the long-term price of separate schooling may be further division.

Leading integrated schools: a study of the multicultural perspectives of Northern Irish principals Claire McGlynn* *Journal of Peace Education* Vol. 5, No. 1, March 2008, 3–16

This article is concerned with the sustained peace education initiative of integrated schooling and in particular with leadership responses to cultural diversity. Using a case study group of principals of integrated (mixed Catholic, Protestant and other) schools in Northern Ireland, the author explores how principals perceive and lead their visions of integrated education. A combined framework of multicultural and school leadership theory is employed to analyse the findings. The perceptions of the principals reported are consistent with liberal interpretations of multiculturalism, although there is also evidence of a more pluralist perspective. Core liberal values appear to be central to the leadership style of these principals, in line with values-led contingency models of leadership. The article suggests that a sole emphasis on common humanity is an inadequate approach to peace education. It tentatively suggests a relationship between leadership styles and approaches to multiculturalism, and argues that a synthesis of multicultural and leadership theory can usefully guide the development of peace education leadership.

Millward Brown Ulster (2001), Public Opinion Survey: Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, Belfast: MBU.

Millward Brown Ulster (2002), Public Opinion Survey: Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, Belfast: MBU.

Millward Brown Ulster (2003), Public Opinion Survey: Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, Belfast: MBU.

Millward Brown Ulster (2006), Public Opinion Survey: Integrated Education in Northern Ireland, Belfast: MBU.

International Fund for Ireland

PO Box 2000 Belfast BT4 1WD

Telephone: Belfast 9065 7000

Fax: Belfast 9065 1870

PO Box 2000 Dublin 2

Telephone: Dublin 4082130

Fax: Dublin 4705407

www.internationalfundforireland.com

Background Paper

Date: 18th June 2014

Subject: Background on the Fund's investment in Shared Education

1.0 Summary

In Northern Ireland, 93% of pupils are educated in separate schools. There many different types of school, each proud of their identity and ethos and which parents and communities value and care about passionately.

The accepted system of having children educated separately runs counter to the International Fund for Ireland's objective of bringing people and communities together and since 2007, shared education models, sponsored by the Fund and Atlantic Philanthropies, have brought together schools from different sectors in strategic partnerships.

These models have sought to make the case for sharing and provide a diverse range of approaches that enhance academic and personal development and good relations between communities.

In building a more cohesive society, shared education and integrated education are different routes to the same objective. However, communities have genuine concerns about the potential loss of school identity and ethos should they merge into or be replaced by new integrated schools.

The Fund's investment has made the case for shared education and outlined its potential to be a practical and achievable way for all schools to retain identities, respect difference and build relationships between local communities.

These models of shared education have demonstrated that schools can find and develop innovative solutions to deliver education on a cross-sectoral basis. They provide effective ways of breaking down the barriers arising from our historic conflict by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn together and reach the highest possible standards of educational achievement.

In October 2013, the Northern Ireland Education Minister, John O'Dowd MLA, recognised the Fund's contribution and signalled his intention to provide a legislative requirement for sharing and called for "sharing to become the accepted reality at every stage of education, from early years to post-graduate study" (Address to the Northern Ireland Assembly, 2nd October 2013).

2.0 About Shared Education

Shared Education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained process ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to co-ordinated timetabling and pupils taking classes across a network of schools. It looks

to work within the current system to promote opportunities for sustained curriculum based contact between pupils across the sectoral divide.

The focus of Shared Education is delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher quality educational experiences.

3.0 The Fund's contribution to Shared Education

The Fund has invested significantly in shared education. Since 2007, it has funded 22 projects (£18m) to facilitate reconciliation for a shared future through the medium of education in order to:

- promote shared education by linking schools representative of the two communities;
- build on community relations within and between schools;
- support cultural outreach amongst young people representative of the differing communities/traditions; and
- address strategic gaps in achieving reconciliation through a cross community, cross-border approach through education and the related services sector.

Some 19 of these projects constitute the Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) and the remaining three form the Shared Education Programme (SEP) operated through: Queen's University, the Northern Eastern Education and Library Board (PIEE), and the Fermanagh Trust. The latter three projects are co-funded with Atlantic Philanthropies.

The strategic relationship between the Fund and AP has led to a total investment of more than £24 million (Fund £18m and AP £6m) in 22 shared education projects.

4.0 Achievements

Over six years, the Fund in collaboration with AP has made the case for shared education and achieved much.

- (a) Outworkings from the Sharing in Education Programme provided a proven and credible evidence base for discussions between educationalists and government which helped shape commitments in the Programme for Government (PfG: 2011-2015) for shared education, viz:
 - (i) Establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister of Education to advance shared education.
 - (ii) To ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015.
 - (iii) To substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.
- (b) A June 2013 announcement by the First and Deputy First Ministers (Together: Building a United Community) stated that work on 10+ shared education campuses will commence within the next five years, offering the potential for shared classes and subjects and also adding significant momentum to the PfG commitments. They also confirmed plans to provide more opportunities for sharing within teacher training to build on initiatives underway involving the two teacher training colleges. SiEP has already made considerable gains in this area.
- (c) In May 2013 the Ministerial Advisory Group's (MAG) final report referenced the 'laudable' examples from SiEP as it put forward 17 recommendations on advancing shared education which the Fund supports. Three of which, if implemented, will move shared education from an external intervention to the mainstream, viz:
 - (i) Statutory duty on the Department of Education and the new Education and Skills Authority to encourage and facilitate shared education.

- (ii) A central unit within ESA to take lead responsibility on developing and driving forward a strategy on advancing shared education.
- (iii) A shared education premium is incorporated as part of the revised funding formula for schools and other educational institutions.
- (d) On 22nd October 2013, the Northern Ireland Education Minister, John O'Dowd MLA, responded to the Ministerial Advisory Group recommendations and outlined the way forward for shared education.

The Minister signalled his general acceptance to proposals around the mainstreaming of funding for shared education and committed to bring forward a statutory definition of shared education in the Education Bill and provisions to ensure the Education and Skills Authority would have a duty to encourage and facilitate it.

- (e) The Minister said: "Shared education is rolling out as we speak. I would like to see a legal definition put in place through the ESA Bill. However, if the ESA continues to be delayed, I will consider bringing forward legislation to introduce a definition of shared education separate from the ESA Bill, as I place such importance on it."
- (f) Speaking at the Sharing in Education Programme Final Conference in November 2013, the Minister outlined the challenges to ending separation in schools and said:

"[SIEP] projects represented at today's conference, supported by the Fund, have together addressed many of these challenges. Together they provide real and tangible evidence to support the case for Shared Education.

"Hence the education aspects of the Fund's work is of significant importance as we in government seek to advance shared education. I commend the Fund on their vision to invest in this work and one which has made a real, and lasting, difference to the young people who have undoubtedly benefited."

5.0 Conclusion

The Fund has played a key role in moving shared education from an embryonic working concept towards maturity and the point where it can become a mainstreamed aspect within the Department of Education and a part of education delivery in every classroom in Northern Ireland.

Kilbride Central Primary School

Kilbride Central Primary School
56 Moyra Rd, Doagh, Ballyclare,
County Antrim, BT39 0SQ

Principal: Mr C. Currie BEd. Hons. MEd. P.Q.H. (NI)
Tel: 028 9334 0321

Evidence for Education Committee Re: Shared Education

A Perspective from Kilbride Central Primary School, Ballyclare, Co. Antrim

This document was prepared following a request from the Stormont Education Committee as part of their inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education.

Introduction and Background

This evidence has been submitted on behalf of our school and Board of Governors by Mr C. Currie, Principal of Kilbride Central Primary School.

I am 33 years old and was appointed in September 2012 so I am now entering my third year of headship. I previously had a successful teaching career for 8 years in Loanends Primary School, Nutts Corner which included achieving a Masters in Education and a Professional Qualification of Headship (PQH). I am pleased with what I have achieved and consider myself to have a very neutral and rounded view of education (and all its foibles!) in Northern Ireland.

As a child of a Protestant mother and a Roman Catholic father (both from North Belfast) I was brought up in the controlled sector of education in Bangor but was always taught to maintain a balanced opinion and look at things from all angles before forming an opinion. I continue to do this now and consider it one of my strengths as a school leader.

The following paragraphs are my responses to the issues being debated by the Committee:

1.0 Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;

- 1.1 As the above has two clear aims I will address them one at a time...
- 1.2 As Shared Education and Integrated Education has always been the 'add on' or treated like a luxurious afterthought if one had the political foresight to see its potential since its inception some years ago I think, given the current political deadlock and fact that the country appears to be going backwards rather than forwards, this is an excellent time to review, promote and formalise this sector of education- even better if it expands.
- 1.3 There can only be good things that come from a legislative requirement to facilitate and encourage Shared Education. At the moment it is too easy for political parties to 'back their own horses' when it comes to education which results in an ever-widening gap between the maintained and controlled sectors. Nobody seems to take ownership of the integrated sector. The result? Some of the most educationally sound, popular and over-subscribed schools/ colleges in the country eg. Slemish, Lagan, Bangor Central, Ulidia etc. filled in the large part by rational-thinking masses who value a good education over political polarisation. The more this is forced upon extremist parties like the PUP/DUP and Sinn Fein, the better education will become and the better future we will have for our country.

2.0 Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;

- 2.1 Unfortunately there are more barriers than enablers however the enablers I can think of are the many, many people (the silent majority of the population I expect) who would back and support the philosophy. I also expect that the majority of professionals would also be behind it.

- 2.2 Where do we begin with the barriers? The disastrous approach by taken by successive Sinn Fein Education Ministers who appear to have pursued their own political agendas under the guise of 'Putting Pupils First'. It has been one calamity after another, I expect you don't need me to list them. All they have succeeded in doing is segregating the education system further and destroying the morale of teachers everywhere. Whilst we have two large political parties with completely opposite viewpoints and unwilling to compromise (unless a shady deal for mutual benefit has been done in a back room somewhere), it is unlikely the aims of this debate will ever be realised.
- 2.3 I would absolutely love to promote CRED (Community Relations, Equality and Diversity) and market ourselves as a 'Voluntarily Integrated' School, especially in an area like Ballyclare where pain runs deep, however myself and the staff have been so overwhelmed with changes to the curriculum (indeed some have been necessary) and getting our heads around successive failed initiatives like Computer Based Assessment and Assessment of the Cross Curricular Skills amongst the many other initiatives that constantly get fired at us that we simply don't have enough hours in the day. Whilst schools continue to be judged and inspected on failing measures of assessment these will always be the priority. As a person who has to bridge the gap between educating young children to the best of my ability and a system which has so many rotten fingers in its pie I can confirm that the whole thing is an absolute mess; it needs knocked down and started again. We are handcuffed by a failing system and until these are removed Shared Education will forever seem like an impossible dream.
- 2.4 Even as I sit and write this on a wet morning in July I still have no idea what direction assessment will go this incoming September. In the last two months I have received communications from my union that Cross Curricular Assessment (which shapes my whole School Development direction) is to be shelved; the same week I received a letter from the Minister telling me that it is clearly not working but that it will NOT be shelved. Where do we go?
- 3.0 Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;**
- 3.1 I can't comment on any detailed analysis of the sector having never worked in it. My only experience has been gained through working alongside Integrated Colleges as a feeder primary and additional experiences from parents which have always been very positive.
- 4.0 Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools;**
- 4.1 I see the solution here as very simple: remove the current failing barriers in our system such as Cross Curricular Assessment; allow schools to use their existing and effective individual approaches to assessment; inspect schools on an individual basis rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach; this will free up time for schools to pursue CRED much more freely and invest in paired/shared projects across the sectors. I don't even see much expense involved!
- 5.0 Report to the Assembly on its findings and recommendations by Spring 2015.**
- 5.1 I am happy for any of this information to be used by the Assembly and am happy to take part in any kind of further consultation to support my views or elaborate on them. I would actually be quite keen to do this as it's genuinely something I believe is necessary for the future of this country and whatever children/grandchildren I am fortunate enough to eventually have.

Best Regards,

Christopher Currie
Principal
Kilbride Central Primary School

Knox and Borooah 1

Briefing Notes for Education Committee 15th October 2014 Colin Knox and Vani Borooah

Definitions

Difference between shared education and integrated education:

Shared Education

Shared Education encompasses a number of different types of sharing, from projects and shared classes through to shared education models, such as those defined in the Bain report (eg: Federations/Confederations; Shared Campus and Shared Faith schools).

Under Article 64 (1) of The Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, integrated education is defined as “the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils (Minister of Education)

The Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education defined Shared Education as:

The organisation and delivery of education so that it: meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of, learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status; involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion (MAG Report)

By its nature, Shared Education involves more than one school type. This view has been endorsed by the Ministerial Advisory Group, which further refined the definition to “...involves two or more schools or other education institutions from different sectors working in collaboration...” (Minister for Education)

Integrated education

Integrated schools bring together children and adults from Catholic, Protestant and other backgrounds in each school. The schools strive to achieve a religious balance of pupils, teachers and governors and acknowledge and respect the cultural diversity they represent (IEF)

Integrated Education brings children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school(NICIE)

Under Article 64 (1) of The Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, integrated education is defined as “the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils” (legal definition).

Integrated education brings children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school. Integrated Schools ensure that children from diverse backgrounds are educated together (DE website)

There are two types of integrated schools. New planned integrated schools are *Grant-Maintained Integrated (GMI) Schools* which are funded directly by the Department of Education under the arrangements set out in the Common Funding Scheme for the Local Management of Schools. Existing controlled schools which transform to integrated schools are *Controlled Integrated* and managed by the Education and Library Boards through the Boards of Governors.

Justice Tracey decision

"Mr Justice Treacy has confirmed the situation as to what constitutes an integrated education. He has made it clear that integrated education is a stand-alone concept:

"the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils."

He further confirms that integrated schooling as defined cannot be delivered by schools with a predominantly Catholic or Protestant ethos. The article 64 duty therefore relates to integrated schools only — schools that are properly constituted to achieve an equal balance in worship, celebration and exposure to all faiths, with a board that is charged to strive in its ethos to achieve those aims. Our motion therefore calls on the Minister to accept and act on the duty under article 64 to facilitate and encourage, not just to pay lip service, and to accept that integrated education in the meaning of the 1989 Order has now been legally defined as a concept envisaging the education of pupils together in the same school, rather than in a school with a predominantly Catholic or Protestant ethos" (Trevor Lunn, Alliance Party).

Under Article 64 (1) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Department of Education has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. To help encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, the Department of Education provides annual funding to help schools with the process of transformation to integrated status. This supports schools in the initial stages of the transformation process and with the employment of a teacher, from the minority community in the school, to assist with religious education. The budget available for 2014/15 is £191k. In addition, Article 64 (2) of the 1989 Order allows the Department to pay grants to a body which has as an objective the encouragement or promotion of integrated education. In fulfilment of this legislation, the Department of Education provides funding annually to the NI Council for Integrated Education (NICIE). Funding of £665k has been allocated for 2014/15.

The Extent of Segregation

Education provision demonstrates the extent of division between the communities. As the Department of Education statistics (2013/14) show:

- In the primary sector: 6.2% of Catholics attend controlled primary schools; 1% of Protestants attend maintained primary schools; and 5.7% of primary school children attend integrated schools.
- In the secondary (non-grammar) sector: 2.8% of Catholics attend controlled secondary schools; 1% of Protestants attend maintained secondary schools; and 14.9% of secondary (non-grammar) pupils attend integrated schools.
- In the secondary (grammar) sector: 8.3% of Catholics attend controlled grammar schools; and 0.9% of Protestants attend voluntary Catholic grammar schools.
- Overall, 6.7% of primary and post-primary pupils attend integrated schools.

Catholics are therefore much more willing to go to schools in the controlled sector than Protestants are to attend maintained schools. The greatest movement by Catholics is into controlled grammar schools. Many young people in Northern Ireland never experience cross community education until they attend university.

Demand for integrated education

Research evidence on the impact of integrated education tends to focus on its reconciliation and societal benefits in the divided society that is Northern Ireland. These benefits accrue from intergroup contact which can positively influence social attitudes about ‘the other’ community and create a more plural society (McGlynn, 2011; Stringer et al, 2009; Hayes et al, 2007). The evidence is summarised by Stringer et al (2000:11) when they conclude that meaningful contact with peers from the other religion in school is more likely to make them ‘more accommodating to issues that have divided the two religious groups’ in their adult life.

Education Minister said:

“In any year, the popularity of a school sector is most appropriately measured by the number of parents expressing a first preference on the application/transfer form for schools in that sector.

Within the integrated sector, the number of places available in both the primary and post-primary sectors slightly exceeds demand, although there may be pressure in particular areas, or for particular schools, due to parental preference.

Where pressure on places exists at a school, the Department will consider any request from a school for a temporary increase to its admission and/or enrolment numbers. Temporary

variations will not be granted if there are other schools of the same sector within reasonable travelling distance with spaces available. Each case is considered on its own merits.

In the longer term, the Area Planning process aims to assess the demand for places in every sector based on robust and verifiable evidence. Where there is identified need the school managing authority will consider that need in the overall context of the area plan and if appropriate bring forward a Development Proposal to increase the number of places. In addition, any existing grant-aided school, with the exception of a special school, may consider transforming to integrated status.”

Table 1: Summary statistics: integrated schools 2013/14

	School type	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions/religion not known (includes Christians and non-Christians)	Minority community %	Unfilled places	Total pupils	First preference applications 2013/14	Approved admissions number
Primary Schools (Y1-7)									
	Controlled Integrated (n = 19)	1,502 (42%)	1,050 (30%)	1,003 (28%)	30%	718	3,555	593	613
	Grant maintained integrated (n = 23)	1,805 (33%)	2,356 (42%)	1,384 (n = 25%)	33%	210	5,545	855	822
Post primary schools									
	Controlled integrated (n=5)	1,681 (66%)	416 (16%)	460 (n=18%)	16%	533	2,557	347	560
	Grant maintained integrated (n = 15)	4,048 (42%)	3,910 (41%)	1,591 (n = 17%)	41%	511	9,549	1435	1556
TOTAL	62 integrated schools	9,036 (42.6%)	7,732 (36.5%)	4,438 (20.9%)	36.5%	1,972 (8.5%)	21,206	3,230	3,551

Notes:

1. In addition to the above numbers there are 539 pupils in integrated nursery and reception classes making a grand total of 21,745 pupils in integrated schools from an overall school population of 326,205 pupils. Integrated education therefore represents 6.7% of the overall school population.
2. There are questions asked about the classification of pupils attending integrated schools. Critics argue the high numbers of pupils recorded as 'other religions/religion not known' is an attempt by the sector to comply with government requirements that there should be 30% pupils from the minority community. Notwithstanding, the above statistics show that post-primary controlled integrated schools are clearly not meeting this target. See also Annex 1 (table 8) which shows some voluntary and controlled grammar schools which have a good mix of children from different community backgrounds.
3. Table 1 above shows that 8.5% of approved enrolments to integrated schools remain unfilled. Shaded rows in the tables 7 - 9 (in Appendix 1) highlight those schools where there are no unfilled places (7 primary schools and 7 post-primary schools).
4. In the overall integrated sector, there were 3,230 first preference applications for 3,551 approved places – an excess of 321 places. The sector is therefore 9% undersubscribed.

Tables 2 below show the top/bottom 3 primary and post-primary schools which were over and under subscribed respectively in 2013/14 to the largest extent are as follows:

Table 2: Extent of over and over subscription in Integrated Education Sector 2013/14

Primary School	First preference applications	Approved admissions number	Over (+) or undersubscribed(-)
Forge Integrated Primary School	60	36	+24
Glencraig Integrated Primary School	45	30	+15
Bridge Integrated Primary School	72	58	+14
Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School	28	55	-27
Rathenraw Integrated Primary School	9	30	-21
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	46	60	-14

Post Primary School	First preference applications	Approved admissions number	Over (+) or undersubscribed(-)
Slemish College ¹	161	120	+41
Lagan College ¹	236	200	+36
Drumagh College	117	96	+21
Malone Integrated College	45	130	-85
Crumlin Integrated College	11	75	-64
Fort Hill College	115	160	-45

¹ Please note that Slemish College and Lagan College are selective schools which may skew the results here.

Performance of Integrated Education

The data on the performance of integrated schools (see Figure 1 below) show that Controlled Integrated schools are the poorest performing in the post primary sector, if judged by the educational outcomes of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSEs including English and Maths. Grant Maintained integrated schools perform at a level comparable to non-selective secondary schools which, in turn, achieve significantly lower results than controlled or voluntary Catholic grammar schools.

Figure 1: School performance by management type

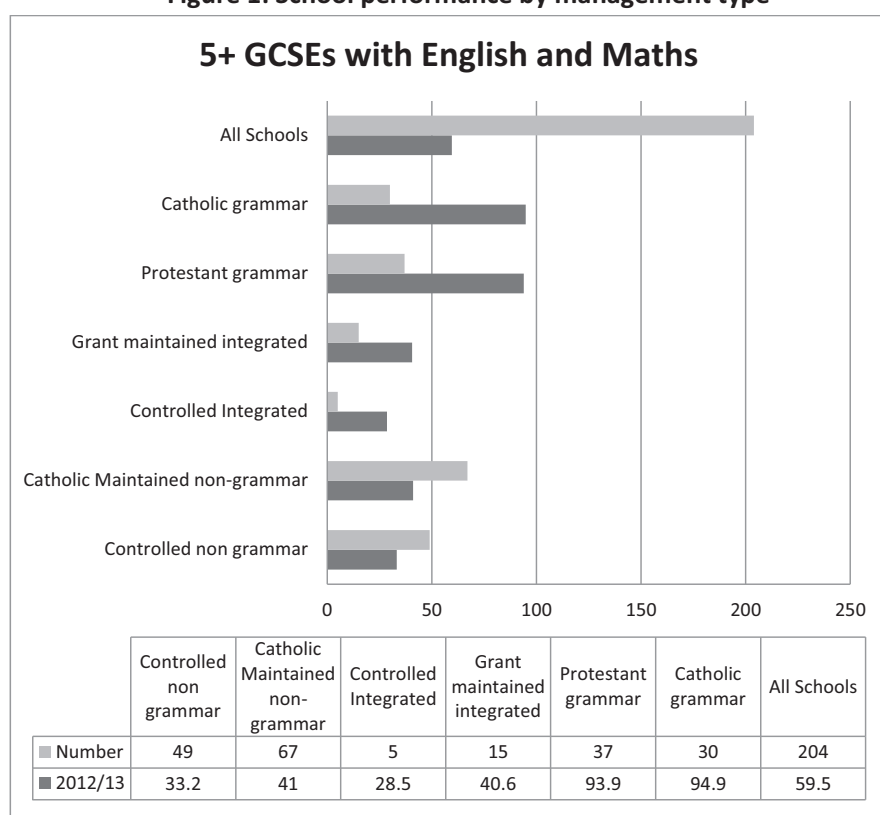
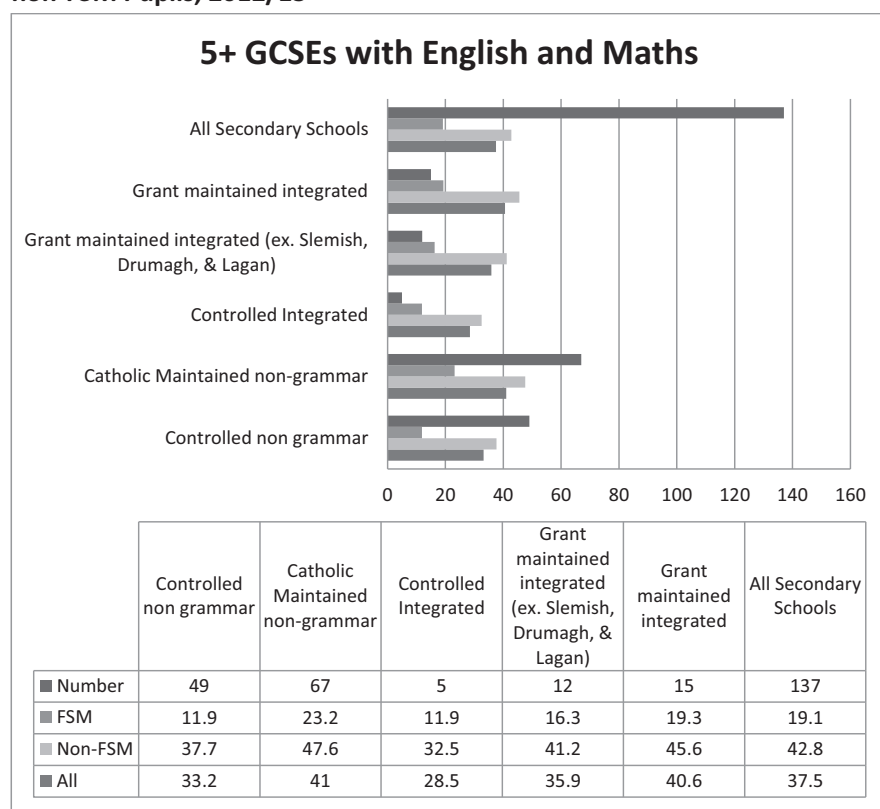
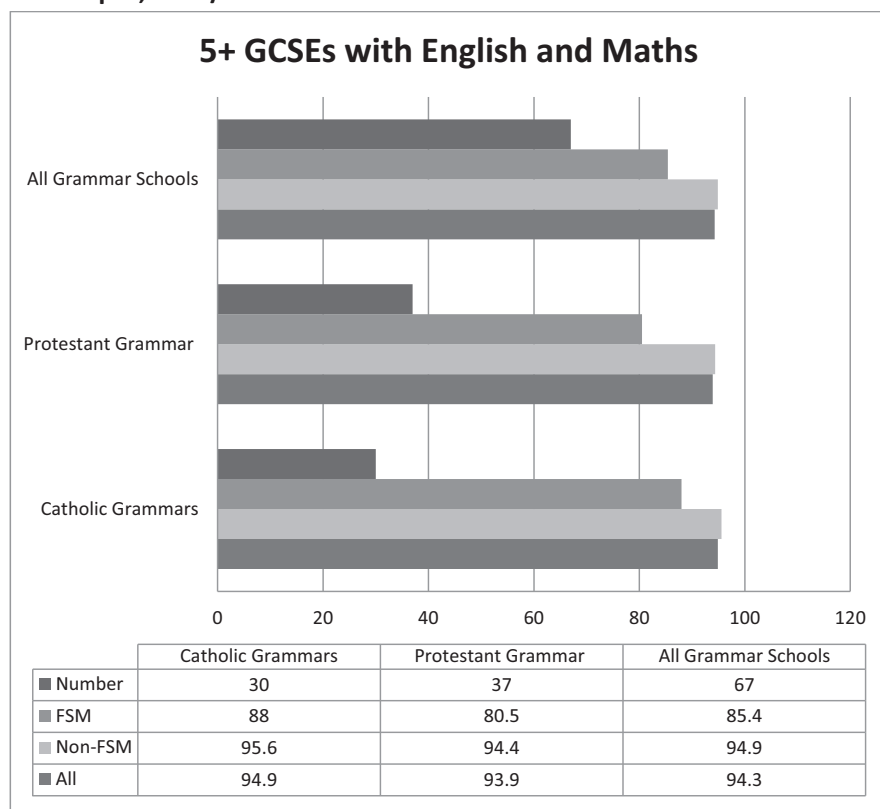


Figure 2: Non-Grammar School performance by management type, FSM and non-FSM Pupils, 2012/13*



* Note there was one 'other maintained school'.

Figure 3: Grammar School performance by Catholic Protestant, FSM and non-FSM Pupils, 2012/13*



Note that four Catholic grammars and 14 Protestant grammars did not have *any* Year 12 FSM pupils

Figure 4: Percentage of FSM Pupils in Total Enrolment by Management Type, non-Grammar Post-Primary Schools, 2013

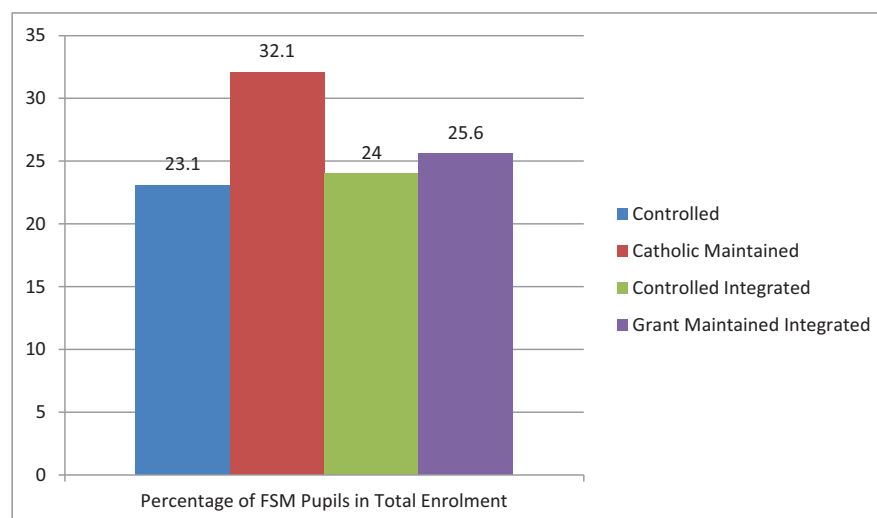
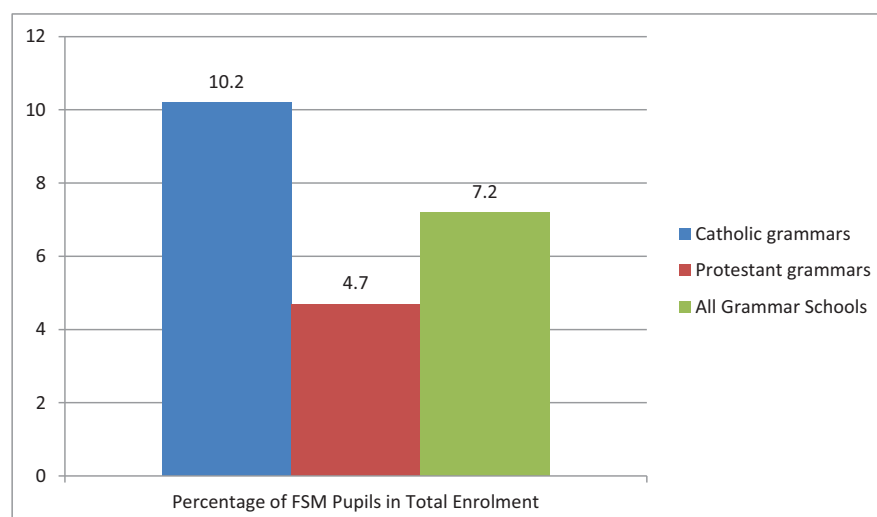


Figure 5: Percentage of FSM Pupils in Total Enrolment by Grammar School 2013



Contrary to the prior belief that in every school the performance of *FSM* pupils would not be as good as that of *NFSM* pupils, there were 22 (out of 204) post-primary schools in Northern Ireland in which the performance of *FSM* pupils, with respect to 5+ A*-C (E&M) GCSE passes, was *at least as good as* that of *NFSM* pupils. These 22 schools are identified in Table 3, below and, of these 22 schools, 18 were grammar schools (10 Protestant, eight Catholic); two were maintained; and two were grant maintained integrated. The 10 Protestant grammars had a substantially lower proportion of year 12 *FSM* pupils than the eight Catholic grammars (5.2% versus 10.5%).

Table 3: Schools in which NFSM pupils were outperformed by FSM pupils, 2013

School	Town	Type	% with 5+ A*-C (E&M)		Year 12 numbers	
			NFSM	FSM	FSM	Total
Strangford Integrated College	Carrowdore	GMI	32	45	11	91
Cambridge House Grammar School	Ballymena	Grammar (P)	90	100	10	158
Belfast High School	Newtownabbey	Grammar (P)	92	100	6	139
Rainey Endowed School	Magherafelt	Grammar (P)	94	100	6	101
The Royal School Dungannon	Dungannon	Grammar (P)	95	100	7	100
Malone Integrated College	Belfast	GMI	18	22	36	133
Lurgan College	Craigavon	Grammar (P)	95	100	8	119
Grosvenor Grammar School	Belfast	Grammar (P)	96	100	6	163
Portadown College	Craigavon	Grammar (P)	97	100	6	203
Mount Lourdes Grammar School	Enniskillen	Grammar (C)	90	92	13	91
St Dominic's High School	Belfast	Grammar (C)	98	100	15	142
St Joseph's College	Dungannon	Maintained	21	24	34	94
Banbridge Academy	Banbridge	Grammar (P)	98	100	7	194
Ballymena Academy	Ballymena	Grammar (P)	98	100	7	181
Collegiate Grammar School	Enniskillen	Grammar (P)	99	100	5	75
Loreto Grammar School	Omagh	Grammar (C)	99	100	16	123
St Mary's High School	Downpatrick	Maintained	57	58	12	73
St Louis Grammar School	Ballymena	Grammar (C)	99	100	8	146
Lumen Christi College	Londonderry	Grammar (C)	100	100	7	124
St Joseph's Grammar School	Dungannon	Grammar (C)	100	100	10	76
Our Lady's Grammar School	Newry	Grammar (C)	100	100	10	127
St Mary's Grammar School	Magherafelt	Grammar (C)	100	100	16	165

There were 23 post-primary schools in which the performance of *FSM* pupils, though worse than that of *NFSM* pupils with respect to 5+ A*-C (E&M) GCSE passes, was within 10% of the latter's performance. These are shown in Table 4 and they comprise 17 Catholic schools: 11 Catholic grammars and six Catholic maintained schools. Of the remaining six schools, 5 were Protestant grammars and one was a grant maintained integrated college.

Table 4: Schools in which FSM pupils' performance was less than 10% of NFSM performance, 2013

School	Town	Type	Yr 12 FSM	Yr 12 total	PGR
St John's High School	Omagh	Maintained	12	32	1
St Patrick's Grammar School	Armagh	Grammar (C)	12	116	1
St Paul's High School	Newry	Maintained	41	251	1
St Michael's Grammar	Craigavon	Grammar (C)	16	144	1
St Rose's High School	Belfast	Maintained	30	68	5
St Comhghall's College	Enniskillen	Maintained	19	59	3
St Brigid's College	Londonderry	Maintained	78	127	8
Slemish College	Ballymena	GMI	15	125	5
Regent House School	Newtownards	Grammar (P)	9	218	3
St Malachy's College	Belfast	Grammar (C)	15	160	3
St Columb's College	Londonderry	Grammar (C)	37	208	4
Limavady Grammar School	Limavady	Grammar (P)	16	139	4
St Colman's High School	Ballynahinch	Maintained	16	62	9
St Michael's College	Enniskillen	Grammar (C)	7	97	5
Glenlola Collegiate	Bangor	Grammar (P)	13	163	4
Dominican College	Portstewart	Grammar (C)	9	74	5
St Patrick's Academy	Dungannon	Grammar (C)	22	200	5
St Patrick's Grammar School	Downpatrick	Grammar (P)	13	95	5
Wellington College	Belfast	Grammar (P)	9	122	6
Sacred Heart Grammar School	Newry	Grammar (C)	13	121	6
Thornhill College	Londonderry	Grammar (C)	31	200	6
St Colman's College	Newry	Grammar (C)	10	135	6
Christian Brothers Grammar School	Newry	Grammar (C)	8	136	7

Parental choice and integrated education

Schools which improve their educational outcomes become more popular with parents. Using 2013 admissions data to post-primary schools² in which parents express their first preference when completing transfer forms, Borooah and Knox examined variations in popularity across schools. They examined variations in popularity across schools, as measured by the number of their first-preference applications, and asked, in particular, whether variations in popularity are associated with variations in schools' educational performance? In the analysis, educational performance is measured in two ways: (i) the proportion of pupils obtaining 5+ GCSE grades at A*-C and (ii) the proportion of pupils obtaining 5+ GCSE grades at A*-C, *including English and Mathematics*.

The results of our analysis (table 5 below) show that both types of GCSE performance significantly and positively affect the number of first preference applications expressed by parents for a school. Performance, including English and Mathematics, had a stronger effect than performance which does not include these subjects. In short, better performing schools influence parental choice for their children. This is hardly surprising but the strength of this relationship is compelling. The evidence shows the variation in parents' first preference choice for a post-primary school is explained by the school's education performance. Parents therefore 'vote with their feet' and choose schools largely based on educational performance rather than schools which might define their primary goal as reconciliation (integrated schools).

Table 5: Regression Estimates for Number of First Preference Applications to post primary schools

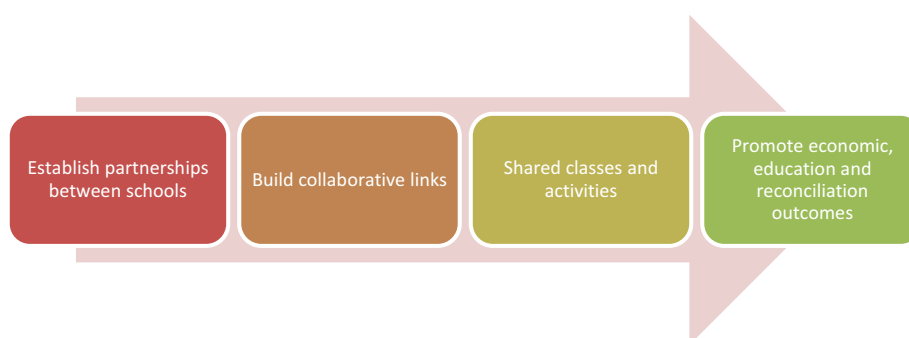
	Coefficient	Standard Error	T value	Prob>t
Proportion of 5+ A* -C including E&M	0.864	0.229	3.78	0.0
Proportion of 5+ A* -C	0.696	0.187	3.73	0.0
Equation Statistics				
Number of Observations=200	R ² adjusted=0.795		F(2,198)=389	Root MSE=52.9

² See Kathryn Torney 'The supply and demand for places: check out your local schools' *The Detail*, Issues 235, 1st July 2013

Shared Education

The focus of shared education is delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher quality educational experiences. The delivery model involves 4 basic stages (figure 6):

FIGURE 6: SHARED EDUCATION MODEL



Shared education recognises that schools have interdependent relationships and promotes positive collaboration to support the common good. Ultimately it is about creating interdependencies between schools and making boundaries porous – it isn't about threatening anyone's identity or the creation of a Catholic/Protestant hybrid.

Much of the theoretical and research underpinnings for collaborative learning draw on the extensive literature on how collaboration and networking between schools in Great Britain can enhance school effectiveness and improvement. Work by Lindsay *et al* (2005), Chapman and Allen (2005), and Chapman and Hadfield (2010) examine the potential for stronger schools being matched with weaker schools to help improve their performance. Muijs *et al* (2010) argue that networking is differentially effective in meeting different educational goals and set out the circumstances under which it is more likely to enhance school effectiveness and improvement:

Where improvements in pupil performance have been seen, this is often where more effective schools have paired with less effective schools to help them to improve, where leadership has been strong and supportive of networking, and where the number of schools involved has been limited. External support may also be helpful in cases where internal capacity or trust between schools may be lacking (Muijs *et al*: 2010: 24).

Chapman's research (2008; see also Chapman and Harris, 2004; and West, 2010) highlights key levers for improvement where networking takes place in a context of challenging circumstances which he argues should include: generating positive relationships; focusing

on teaching and learning; understanding, leading and managing changes; committing to continuous professional development; building community; and, drawing on external support.

In their latest research on using collaboration and networking as a means of school improvement Chapman and Muijs (2013) conducted a large quantitative study (122 federations and 264 comparator schools) which examined the relationships between school federations and student outcomes. They developed a typology of federations (used to describe the nature of collaborative relationships and structural arrangements between two or more schools). One category was described as ‘performance federations’ consisting of two or more schools, some of which were low and others high performing schools. The study concluded:

Federations can have a positive impact on student outcomes and federation impact is strongest where the aim of the federation is to raise educational standards by federating higher and lower attaining schools. Our study therefore primarily suggests that school improvement may result when a strong school works with a weaker school to improve the latter, and that it is this rather than a generic “collaboration effect” that may lead to improvement (Chapman and Muijs, 2013:35).

The shared education programme has so far primarily acted as a pilot for cross-community collaboration and trust building between schools. It has been able to take risks because it is externally funded, whereas the Department of Education would have been much more cautious fearing a potential sectarian backlash amongst some parents and pupils. Having demonstrated its potential for cross-community collaboration, there is now a real opportunity to adapt shared education as a mechanism for networking amongst schools in pursuit of raising education standards, tackling inequalities and contributing to a more inclusive society. The policy opportunity exists through two key commitments given by the Northern Ireland Executive in the *Programme for Government 2011-15* in which the Executive pledges to: ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; and, substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015 (Northern Ireland Executive, 2011).

In practical terms this approach offers a number of possibilities. The Education Minister’s recent proposals for school improvement focus precisely on those issues which are seen to be important in the stronger/weaker collaborative approach, *inter alia*: enhanced teaching and learning; strong leadership and management of change; and, a commitment to continuous professional development. Maintaining a focus on raising educational outcomes, through ‘partnerships for excellence’, means that all schools, regardless of pupils’ background have the opportunity to improve. There has been a review of the schools’ funding formula in Northern Ireland which offered opportunities to incentivise collaboration (Salisbury, 2012). Although the review did not support this idea, the Ministerial advisory

group on shared education did. Since schools which are currently competing for the same pupils are unlikely to want to collaborate (because they are from the same managing authority) then, by default, the collaborative partnerships will be cross-community. This, in turn, will have significant reconciliation benefits for students and society in the medium term. In short, shared education can complement the Minister's agenda on improving education standards, addressing inequalities and contribute towards a more inclusive society.

What are the educational benefits of sharing?

Education benefits:

We may analyse the benefits from sharing education in the context of individual returns to education defined as the wage premium of someone who holds that qualification over someone who does not, holding all the other educational achievements and the control variables constant. The research puts a monetary value on the lifetime earnings of those holding:

- (a) 5+ GCSEs at A*- C
- (b) 3+ A-levels but not proceeding to university
- (c) University degree

Engagement in SEP will: increase the likelihood of getting good GCSEs; of going to University; and gaining fluency in foreign language – than would otherwise be the case.

We can estimate the education returns resulting from pupils participating in the Shared Education Programme. We investigate the education returns through four education partnerships in the SEP with the following lead schools: Lumen Christi Grammar School ([London]Derry); Belfast High School; Belfast Model School for Girls; and Shimna Integrated College (Newcastle).

Research evidence based on 4 selected primary and post-primary schools involved in the Shared Education Programme concluded that involvement in the initiative would increase the likelihood of: getting good GCSEs; gaining fluency in a foreign language; and going to University. Table below sets our estimates of the total economic benefits emanating from the four partnerships discussed above. These benefits are defined in terms of the increased earnings of pupils who have benefited from the shared education intervention. Aggregating these per-pupil benefits over the total number of pupil beneficiaries obtains the economic benefit of the four partnerships. Table 6 below suggests that the **total net benefit**, aggregated over the four partnerships, amounted to **over £23 million**. This figure was obtained as the annual increase in the working life earnings per pupil beneficiary of the SEP intervention \times the number of beneficiary pupils \times 40 years working life.

Table 6: Analysis of Benefits across the 4 SEP partnerships

	Primary	Post-Primary		Strand 1	Strand 2	
Benefit	Some students will get good GCSEs*	Likelihood of good GCSEs is increased	Some students will get good GCSEs ³	Some students will go to university using 70 UCAS points	Some students will achieve 1-4 A*-C GCSE grades	Some students will gain fluency and seek work in mainland Europe
Pupils benefitting	20 out of 214	Likelihood for all 29 pupils raised from 60% to 80%	45 out of 214	6 out of 32	20 out of 60	23 out of 231
Amount of benefit per pupil over 40 year working-life	£277,393	£55,478 rise in expected earnings	£277,393	£174,440	£96,000	£138,760
Total Benefit	£5.5 million	£1.6 million	£12.5 million	£1.1 million	£1.9 million	£3.2 million
Total Project Cost over life of project	£1.8 million		£67,926	£126,479	£34,440	£277,144
Total Net Benefit over 40 year working-life	£5.3 million		£12.4 million	£973,521	£1.87 million	£2.9 million

Although the cost-benefit calculation on education is based on investing funds to secure an education return, the suggestion is that, should Shared Education become mainstreamed, it would draw on the existing DE budget and savings made elsewhere. In other words, there will be a net educational benefit which will result in higher education performance. The case studies illustrate that all types of schools can benefit – primary and post primary; secondary and grammar.

How is shared education being taken forward?

The new Shared Education Signature Project was launched in September 2014. The overall aims of the programme are to scale up the level of sharing drawing on existing evidence (see spectrum of sharing: figure 7, developed by Duffy, Baker and Stewart, QUB); mainstream financial support for any additional costs and improve the educational and reconciliation outcomes in school working collaboratively. This will be a four year project

³ The assumption is that they will achieve 5+ GCSEs at A*-C after the SEP intervention, instead of 1-4 A*-C in its absence

commencing with implementation in schools expected to commence in the 2014/15 academic year.

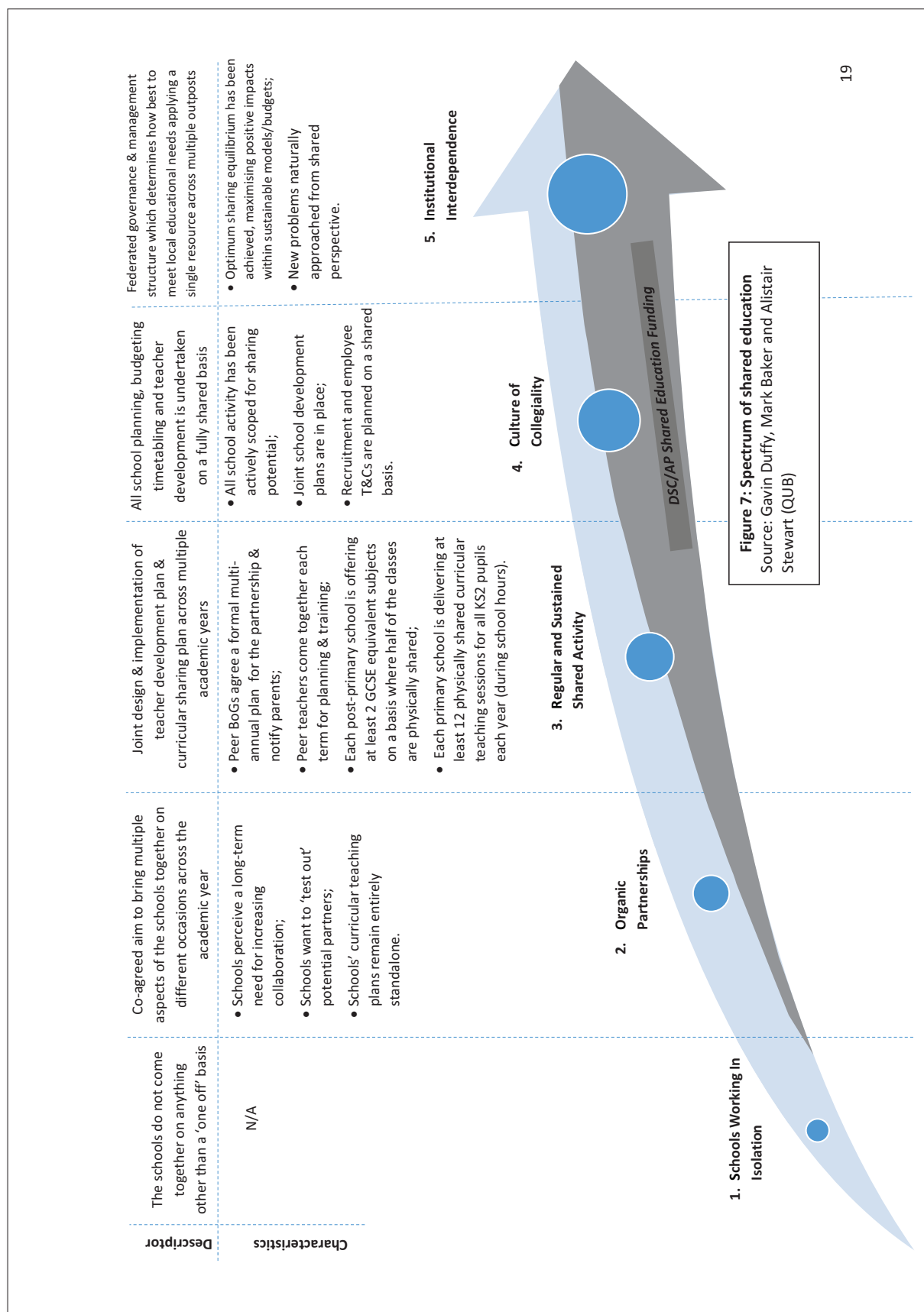
Agreement was reached with Ministers to establish a fund of up to £25m over the four year period, with contributions of up to £10m from the Atlantic Philanthropies, £10m from OFMDFM through central funds and up to £5m from the Department of Education. The availability of joint funding will be the incentive for schools to plan and have approved a shared education partnership at primary and post –primary level.

Atlantic funding in year 4 is subject to a commitment by DE (and/or Executive) to provide resources to mainstream shared education in the longer term.

Project objectives are:

- Improve education outcomes through schools working collaboratively
- Increase the number of schools participating in Shared Education
- Improve reconciliation outcomes through schools working collaboratively
- Increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education
- To work collaboratively to provide educators with professional development and develop their confidence and competence in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes
- Enable schools to implement a progressive approach to shared education
- To ensure shared education becomes a core element of strategic planning within the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards/ Education & Skills Authority and schools.

Peace IV Funding – see details in Annex 2



ANNEX 1: table 7

Primary
Grant Maintained Integrated Primary Schools 2013/14⁴

School Name	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions or religion not known (includes Christians and non-Christians)	Total (reception to Year 7) (exclude nursery places)	Unfilled places Reception to Year 7 (excludes nursery places)	First preference applications 2013/14	Approved admissions number
Acorn Integrated Primary School	125	75	32	205	<5	38	29
Braidside Integrated Primary School	125	134	101	334	21	40	50
Bridge Integrated Primary School	167	184	59	410	8	72	58
Cedar Integrated Primary School	63	101	56	195	7	34	28
Corran Integrated Primary School	65	73	56	168	<5	24	29
Cranmore Integrated Primary School	81	66	52	199	15	25	29
Drumilins Integrated Primary School	50	52	58	160	0	25	21
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School	97	121	54	245	11	37	35
Hazelwood Primary School	126	221	118	413	8	71	58
Loughview Integrated Primary School	171	147	130	421	0	64	58
Maine Integrated Primary School	46	45	24	115	<5	19	19
Millennium Integrated Primary School	87	93	74	227	0	41	29
Millstrand Integrated Primary School	69	86	52	179	61	25	30
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School	111	213	129	401	12	60	56
Oakwood Integrated Primary School	65	87	52	204	6	36	29
Omagh Integrated Primary School	90	190	79	333	0	38	46
Phoenix Integrated Primary School	44	100	25	169	<5	34	25
Portadown Integrated Primary School	61	99	111	217	0	42	29
Roe Valley Integrated Primary School	34	105	29	168	<5	21	25
Rowandale Integrated Primary School	57	76	48	181	15	31	25
Saints & Scholars Int Primary School	60	84	75	192	<5	28	55
Spires Integrated Primary School	72	78	53	203	5	25	29
Windmill Integrated Primary School	64	104	65	206	11	25	30

⁴ Shaded rows show schools where there are no unfilled school places.

ANNEX 1: table 8

Controlled Integrated Primary Schools 2013/14

School Name	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions or religion not known (includes Christians and non-Christians)	Total: reception to Year 7 (excludes nursery places)	Unfilled places: reception to Year 7 (excludes nursery places)	First preference applications 2013/14	Approved admissions number
All Childrens Integrated Primary School	53	120	41	214	0	34	29
Annsborough Primary School	16	33	6	55	<5	9	12
Ballycastle Integrated Primary School	72	81	31	158	8	24	23
Ballymoney Controlled Integrated Primary School	217	14	67	298	127	53	59
Bangor Central Integrated Primary School	337	91	176	604	19	81	87
Carrhill Integrated Primary School	42	8	14	64	30	13	13
Camrough Controlled Integrated Primary School	16	17	9	0	<5	5	9
Cliftonville Integrated Primary School	56	106	87	223	124	52	48
Crumlin Controlled Integrated Primary School	72	31	53	156	<5	34	41
Forge Integrated Primary School	78	91	123	292	0	60	36
Fort Hill Integrated Primary School	159	25	52	210	<5	28	30
Glencraig Integrated Primary School	115	57	49	221	39	45	30
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	69	121	103	293	158	46	60
Groarty Primary School	Less than 5	32	Less than 5	40	<5	3	9
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School	22	57	32	111	<5	23	20
Kircubbin Integrated Primary School	90	44	45	179	<5	26	23
Portaferry Integrated Primary School	17	33	13	63	<5	6	15
Rathenraw Integrated Primary School	26	37	11	74	168	9	30
Round Tower Integrated Primary School	80	87	101	268	<5	42	39

ANNEX 1: table 9

Post Primary

Grant Maintained Integrated Post-Primary Schools 2013/14

School Name	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions or religion not known (includes Christians and non-Christians)	Total	Unfilled places	First preference applications 2013/14	Approved admission numbers
Blackwater Integrated College	143	77	37	257	209	34	80
Drumragh Integrated College	194	378	100	672	0	117	96
Erne Integrated College	169	187	65	421	21	59	70
Hazelwood College	448	263	183	894	14	135	140
Integrated College Dungannon	140	313	86	539	0	49	90
Lagan College	548	447	265	1260	0	236	200
Malone Integrated College	315	216	125	656	189	45	130
New-Bridge Integrated College	235	268	66	569	0	98	100
North Coast Integrated College	280	100	87	467	55	41	80
Oakgrove Integrated College	244	590	37	871	4	122	130
Shimna Integrated College	186	279	81	546	0	92	80
Slemish College	338	279	180	797	0	161	120
Sperrin Integrated College	198	214	87	499	30	67	80
Strangford Integrated College	311	97	122	530	11	81	80
Ulidia Integrated College	299	202	70	571	0	98	80

Controlled Integrated post Primary Schools 2013/14

School Name	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions/religion not known (includes Christians and non-Christians)	Total	Unfilled places	First preference applications 2013/14	Approved admission numbers
Brownlow Integrated College	86	189	56	331	149	59	90
Crumlin Integrated College	53	45	43	141	270	11	75
Fort Hill College	640	85	165	890	16	115	160
Parkhall Integrated College	528	40	127	695	70	111	150
Priory College	374	57	69	500	6	51	85

Annex 1: Table 10
A selection of Voluntary Grammar Schools 2013/14 by religion

School Name	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions or religion not known	Total
Bangor Grammar School	550	34	274	858
Belfast High School	634	63	237	934
Belfast Royal Academy	767	347	295	1409
Campbell College	562	71	259	892
Coleraine Academical Institution	489	35	238	762
Dominican College (Portstewart)	146	280	86	512
Foyle College	596	153	105	854
Friends' School	685	121	182	988
Hunterhouse College	466	121	127	714
Methodist College	770	373	610	1753
Rainey Endowed School	453	200	66	719
Strathearn School	461	32	284	777
Sullivan Upper School	672	142	262	1076
Royal Belfast Academical Institution	462	90	483	1035
Victoria College	485	217	198	900

A selection of Controlled Grammar Schools 2013/14 by religion

School Name	Protestant	Catholic	Other religions or religion not known	Total
Antrim Grammar School	530	71	147	748
Bloomfield Collegiate	536	45	115	696
Carrickfergus Grammar School	566	28	206	800
Down High School	700	157	119	976
Glenlola Collegiate	745	50	270	1065
Grosvenor Grammar School	787	28	275	1090
Limavady Grammar School	528	304	67	899
Strabane Academy	366	239	34	639
Wellington College	534	48	222	804

Annex 2

Peace IV funding

The details of the PEACE IV Programme are currently under consultation but it will contribute towards the development of social and economic stability through the promotion of increased cohesion between communities. This is in line with relevant national policies including the 'Together: Building a United Community' (TBUC) strategy. In short, PEACE IV should complement the work of T:BUC.

Based on the results of a public consultation exercise and informed by the lessons of the Peace III Programme and additional research of the needs of programme area, the following strategic areas of investment have been prioritised for PEACE IV during the period 2014-2020:

- (i) **Shared Education:** The creation of a more cohesive society by increasing the level of sustained contact between school children from all backgrounds across the Programme area.

Actions to be supported:

- Joint development and planning of shared education initiatives;
- Joint delivery of the curriculum;
- Courses designed to increase good relations and respect for diversity among pupils, parents, and governors;
- Training and professional development courses designed to provide teachers with the necessary skills for curriculum planning and the delivery of lessons in relation to shared education.

- (ii) **Early Years & Young People:** The creation of a more cohesive community by equipping young people (through education, employment, training and initiatives that build respect) with a particular emphasis on NEETS from disadvantaged areas, with the tools to access opportunities in society.

Actions to be supported:

- Joint development and planning of youth work initiatives;
- Shared youth programmes focused on extracurricular sport, drama, cultural, language, entrepreneurial and volunteering activities;
- Cross-community and inter-cultural courses designed to increase good relations and respect for diversity among young people;
- Shared residential training programmes for young people, particularly those living adjacent to common interface areas;
- Peer mentoring initiatives;
- Youth leadership development initiatives;
- Cross-border professional development programmes to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, skills and experience;

- Training courses, including European placements, for NEETs to improve their employability.

(iii) **Shared Spaces & Services:** The creation of a more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services.

Actions to be supported:

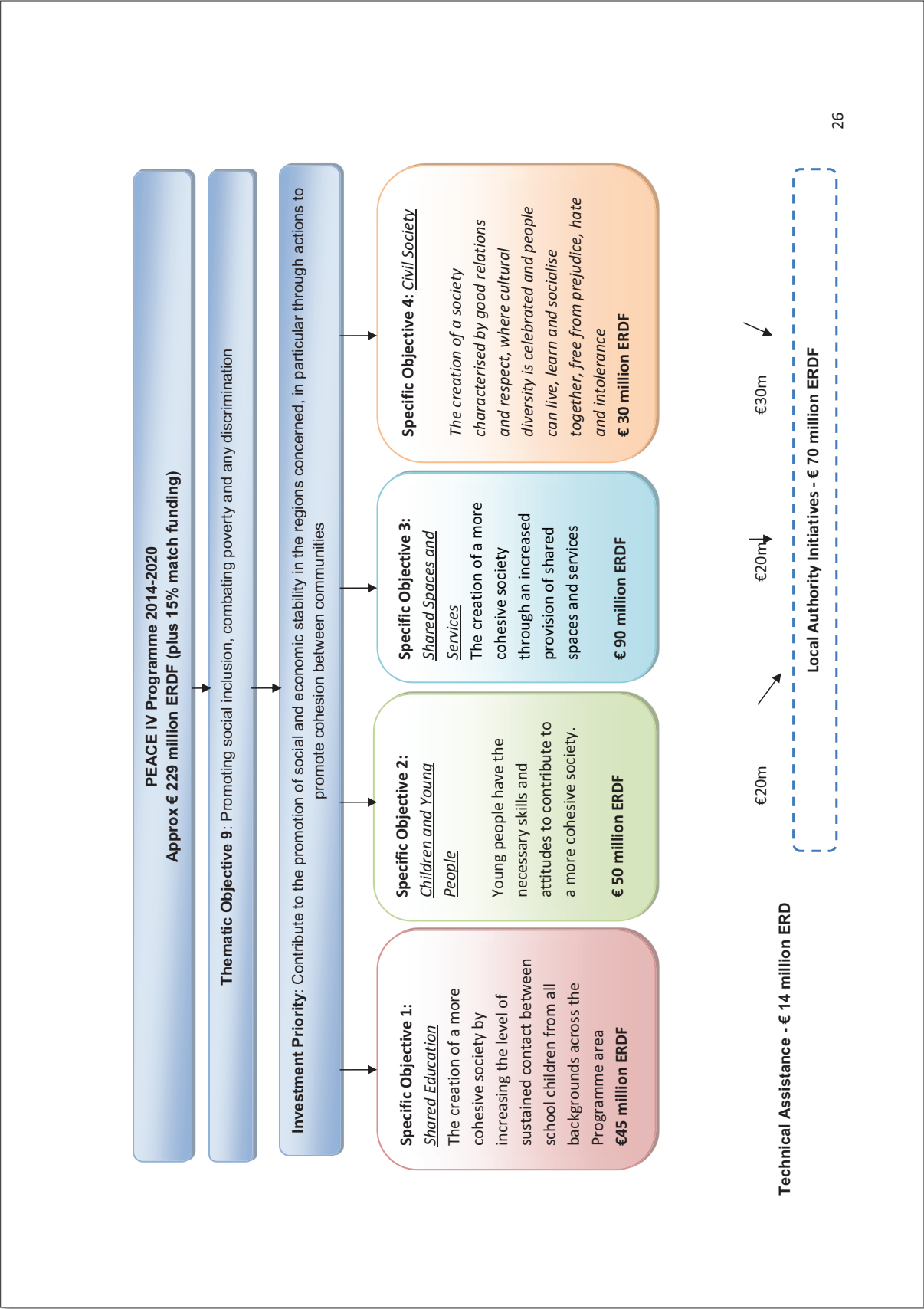
- Capital developments to create shared spaces - both urban and rural;
- Programming initiatives designed to facilitate maximum and sustained levels of shared usage within these shared spaces;
- Public/community partnerships and facilitation for programme activities for shared space;
- Protocol development programmes to facilitate greater collaboration between people and places;
- Regeneration activities to ensure that public spaces are welcoming to all and respectful of cultural identity;
- Shared services to address the trauma related needs of Victims and Survivors.

(iv) **Civil Society:** The creation of a society characterised by good relations and respect, where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

Actions to be supported:

- Structured programmes of activities involving groups from different backgrounds;
- Training and development programmes for inclusive civil leadership;
- Development of strong local partnerships aimed at addressing local problems of sectarianism and racism;
- Civil society development programmes focusing on areas such as: commemoration events; history; language; arts and culture; religion; leadership; community development; social enterprise; inclusion and equality; conflict resolution and mediation; entrepreneurial and economic activity; adult education; training and sport;
- Programmes aimed at engaging individuals and communities not previously involved in peacebuilding activities who wish to contribute to a shared society.

These 4 thematic areas have indicative allocated budgets as shown in the table below.



Knox and Borooah 2

Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee Meeting

Fermanagh House: 18th June 2014

Briefing Paper: Shared Education Programme (SEP)

Introduction

The International Fund for Ireland (IFI) supported 19 projects within the Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) which was evaluated by Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). In addition to this programme, three other projects were funded by IFI and Atlantic Philanthropies. These 3 projects comprise the **Shared Education Programme (SEP)** which was implemented through the following organisations: Queen's University Belfast; the Fermanagh Trust; and, the North-Eastern Education and Library Board (Primary Integrating/ Enriching Education Project or PIEE).

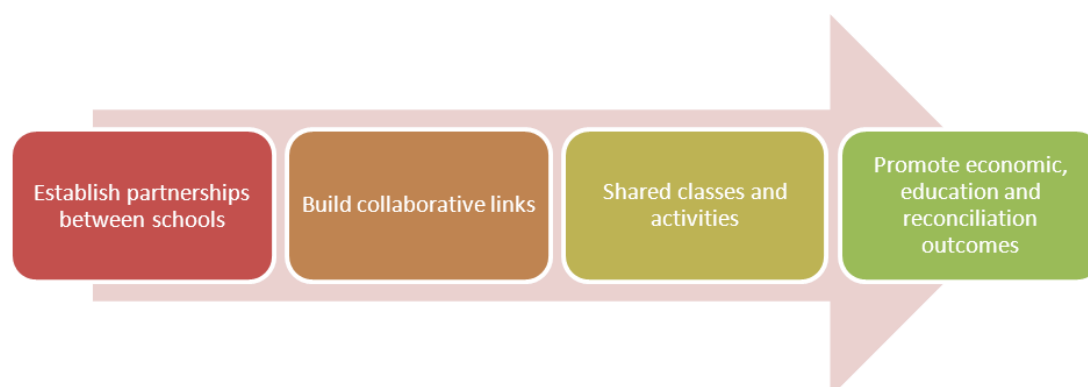
This briefing paper relates specifically to the **3 projects under the Shared Education Programme**. The Education Committee will receive a separate briefing from ETI in relation to IFI's 19 projects in SiEP.

What is Shared Education?

Shared Education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained process ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to coordinated timetabling, and pupils taking classes across a network of schools. Shared education is distinct from Integrated Education which involves the removal of sectoral differentiation in favour of unitary common schools. Shared Education has the potential to contribute to: school improvement and access to opportunity; encourage more effective use of resources; and promote social cohesion through the achievement of a shared and better society.¹

How does it work?

The focus of Shared Education is delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher quality educational experiences. The delivery model involves 4 basic stages (see below).



Shared education recognises that schools have interdependent relationships and promotes positive collaboration to support the common good. Ultimately it is about creating interdependencies between schools and making boundaries porous – it isn't about threatening anyone's identity or the creation of a Catholic/Protestant hybrid.

In practical terms, the implementation of this model is best exemplified through the Shared Education Programme which started in 2007, is funded jointly by the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies, and is managed by Queen's University School of Education, the Fermanagh Trust and PIEE (Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Project in North Eastern Education and Library Board). During the 3 Years of the SEP, its activities have encompassed the following over the duration of the programme:

- 158 schools, which formed 54 school partnerships;
- Approximately 35,800 pupils; and,
- Approximately 28,300 hours of shared activities.

Three short examples illustrate shared education in practice:

- (a) **Enhanced Qualifications Framework:** six schools in the Magherafelt area (two Maintained, two Controlled, one Integrated and one Special Education Needs (SEN) school) provide support for Year 13 pupils to prepare them for third level education by extending the post-16 curriculum provision. There are 29 different shared subjects/ courses offered to all Year 13 pupils on a weekly basis. Overall 390 pupils availed of the subjects on offer, resulting in 574 hours of shared classes being delivered. The delivery model implemented by the partnership involves the majority of subjects being taken as 'twilight' classes and the remaining subjects are embedded into the school timetable in a collaborative block.²
- (b) **Rural Primary Schools:** Two small adjoining rural primary schools (Controlled and Maintained) in Tempo, County Fermanagh came together to enhance the educational experience for pupils and teachers through collaborating with one another rather than working separately. Every pupil within the two schools (n=176) was given the opportunity to participate in shared classes in drama, dance, art & design, health related fitness, and science. All the subjects contributed to the pupils' development within the NI Curriculum. A joint shared education policy has been developed between the schools, and teachers have also collaborated for staff development (e.g. Child Protection and First Aid training) and curriculum planning. Parental endorsement has been hugely positive in an area where the legacy of the conflict is significant.³
- (c) **Shared Teacher Initiative:** Two primary schools (Controlled and Maintained) within the North Eastern Education and Library Board area whose future is at risk separately formed a education partnership and shared resources to deliver Key Stage 2 in areas such as literacy, personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU), music, art and sports. Such was the success of the collaboration that this partnership now employs a shared teacher appointed by a joint board of governors – an initiative which offers much wider potential for schools throughout Northern Ireland.⁴

What are the benefits of Shared Education?

There are at least three significant types of benefits arising from shared education: economic, education and reconciliation benefits.

Education benefits: research evidence based on 4 selected primary and post-primary schools involved in the Shared Education Programme concluded that involvement in the initiative would increase the likelihood of: getting good GCSEs; gaining fluency in a foreign language; and going to University. This translated into increased lifetime earnings for participants in study. For an investment of £2m across the four projects, the educational benefits for children involved in the 4 projects were calculated at £25m. In short, the **total net benefits** across 4 primary and post-primary schools involved in shared education amounted to £23m.⁵

Reconciliation benefits: There is a considerable body of research evidence to show the reconciliation benefits of sustained contact across school sectors in Northern Ireland.

In one study, for example, researchers examined social identity and intergroup attitudes amongst children attending a state controlled Protestant school and how they dealt with issues of diversity and difference. The findings suggest that separate schooling is more likely to contribute to 'own' group bias, stereotyping and prejudice.⁶ Researchers have also considered the impact of pupils' participation in the Shared Education Programme on cross-group friendships and intergroup anxiety. The study confirms the value of contact as a mechanism for promoting more harmonious relationships that can help promote social cohesion in a society that remains deeply divided.⁷

Economic benefits: Some schools which are 'stressed' under three of the six criteria (education performance, school enrolments, and financial viability) from the Department of Education's Sustainable Schools Policy can offer budgetary savings through shared education 'solutions'. School closures achieve limited savings to the Department of Education because the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) is a significant element of the school funding allocation (80%) which follows the pupil when his/her school closes. One study puts the savings to the Department of Education at 3.1% of their budget were they to close all primary and post-primary schools below the 'sustainable schools' enrolment thresholds. At the level of the school, shared teachers, classes and educational resources will provide schools with economies of scale.⁸

The reconciliation benefits described above have been costed for the Shared Education Programme. The study puts a monetary value on the reduction of sectarian hostility and suspicion towards the 'other' community using survey data on attitudinal and behaviour changes in SEP participants. In societal terms this would lead to: reduced police costs; increased foreign investment; and a reduction in the number of sectarian incidents. Savings are estimated at £80m per year.⁹ The reconciliation benefits of shared education can therefore contribute directly to the Government's commitment to 'building a united community' (T:BUC).

Figure 1: Tempo Controlled Primary School

Sculpture: 'From a distance we look the same, up close we are different'



Social Justice and Education

Beyond the direct and indirect education, economic and reconciliation benefits outlined above, the current education system is socially unjust. We know from research that post-primary pupils from deprived backgrounds face considerable difficulty accessing grammar

schools.¹⁰ There is a much greater problem for pupils accessing Protestant than Catholic grammar schools.¹¹ We also know that children in receipt of free school meals and those with special educational needs are disproportionately under-represented among grammar schools. The education performance of Maintained secondary and grammar schools is significantly better than their Controlled counterparts. Shared education offers a real opportunity to improve the education of those pupils from the Controlled sector and, in so doing, contribute to the wider societal reconciliation benefits associated with cross sectoral working.

Mainstreaming Shared Education

Mainstreaming shared education fits in with a number of the Department of Education's priorities. First, within DE's strategic objectives, the economics research above offers proposals which begin to 'close the performance gap and increase access and equity'. Second, within the Programme for Government (PfG) commitments, improving education performance at GCSE level with specific reference to those from disadvantaged backgrounds has been highlighted as a priority. In addition, there are 3 explicit commitments in the PfG to shared education (Lisanelly; all children should have the opportunity to participate in shared education by 2015; and to substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015). Third, the Department's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy document makes a clear commitment to sharing and collaboration across and between all educational settings on a cross-community basis. Fourth, shared education is an integral part of the devolved government's commitments in Together Building a United Community (T:BUC) policy document.

Key features of shared education

- Offers local solutions to cross-sectoral working (as opposed to a 'one size fits all' area planning approach).
- Works best where schools are in close proximity to avoid transportation costs of sharing.
- Basis of sharing is sustained contact in the delivery of core curriculum activities.
- Clear education, economic, reconciliation and social justice effects.
- Maintains the identity of communities, threatening no-one's ethos.

Evidence informed policy making

So how might the above research inform education policy? There is an opportunity in the current review of the schools estate through the viability audits of primary and post primary schools and the associated area planning process to embed shared education. The following policy recommendations are set out for consideration:

1. Cross-sectoral options should be explored as the first step in the area planning process. Only after shared solutions have been thoroughly examined should area plans move to intra-sectoral proposals, giving reasons why shared solutions will not work.
2. The proposed outcomes of the area planning process should be the subject of an open and transparent public consultation which allows for a breadth of feedback. In addition, only three of six criteria for area planning have been included in the audit process. The remaining three criteria: strong leadership, accessibility, strong links with the community should feature in the final outcomes of the area planning process.
3. The common funding formula for schools is currently under review. The new formula should incentivise sharing as an integral part of the way schools are funded.

4. Any new capital provision or significant refurbishments should be 'share-proofed'. In other words, no new schools should be built without incorporating key principles of shared education (shared budgets, teachers, administrative and learning resources).
5. Shared education should feature as a key component in the implementation of T:BUC (over and above the commitment to 10 shared campuses). T:BUC notes: 'we believe that creating a full shared education system is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational under-achievement, unemployment, and sectarianism, and improving good relations amongst young people'¹²
6. There pre-existing working models of shared education funded by external providers (Atlantic Philanthropies and International Fund for Ireland) need to feature prominently in the new Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project (jointly funded by OFMDFM, DE and Atlantic Philanthropies). There is a risk that DE will see this initiative as little more than CRED-plus.
7. Area Learning Communities [ALCs] have been supported as a mechanism through which schools can broaden the range of curricular pathways for pupils in the run-up to implementing the entitlement framework which becomes an obligation for schools by 2014-15. In addition, it is claimed that ALCs are putting in place shared education. There is no evidence to support this assertion. DE claims that they do not gather information on the extent of sharing in the ALCs, their impact on educational outcomes, and the value for money of these collaborative arrangements.

Colin Knox and Vani Borooah

University of Ulster

June 2014

cg.knox@ulster.ac.uk

vk.borooah@ulster.ac.uk

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Labour Party Northern Ireland



The Labour Party in Northern Ireland

Submission of the Northern Ireland Constituency of the Labour Party To the Education Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly's Inquiry on Integrated Education and Shared Education

“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see”

(Postman, 1982).

The Party would like to put forward the following as its contribution to the inquiry on Integrated and Shared Education

“We live in a world that is prone to many expressions of prejudice, in which religious attitudes still play a disturbingly significant part. Sometimes these attitudes are deliberate and malicious; but perhaps more often they are due to a straightforward lack of awareness and understanding – the ignorance that creates the vacuums into which the prejudices may rush! Northern Ireland is just one of the places where the negative impulses of prejudice have damaged people’s humanity. “

If racial, cultural or religious prejudice is so easily learned then surely people can also learn skills in tolerance and respect for others. It may not be so easy, but it is surely important in order to counter those learned responses which all too quickly diminish, demonise and dehumanise others. This is surely a key value in education – to enhance people’s dignity and sense of humanity and their respect for others. It is clearly expressed in Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

“the education of the child shall be directed to ... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin”.

(Richardson, N, 2008)

Northern Ireland has moved massively forward in the years since the signing of the Belfast agreement in 1998. However, there is still a long way to go before we can claim to be a normal, democratic society. There are huge divisions that still exist in our society and the kind of educational system that exists perpetuates those divisions. However, education has a powerful role in transforming societies and not least those which are emerging from years of conflict. However, we have to ask of all our sectors of education - Are we truly focussed on fulfilling the needs and aspirations of our young people for the next 20 or 30 years or are we tinkering at the edges of what is for many students a failing system? Are our schools providing the vital foundations to prepare their pupils for living in the future or are we more concerned with defending our corner?

The Party recognises the work that the Shared Education Programme, and other similar programmes have done in schools and it recognises that for a number of schools this may be the only way forward at this stage in their development. However, using the definition given for shared education as *“Shared Education is broadly defined as any collaborative activity within or between schools or other educational institutions that can: contribute towards school*

improvement, provide access to opportunity, encourage more effective use of resources, and promote social cohesion” means that it is a “weak” form of programme compared to the “strong” form for ‘Integrated Education’. This also applies to the “Shared Campus” concept. Supporters of the shared campus model argue that *“they increase the number of academic offerings, develop appropriate school sizes and more effectively use the available school buildings.”* In both schemes educational outcomes are reported as positive though are often ill-defined and difficult to quantify, and have so far only affected a very small numbers of pupils. In Northern Ireland terms they would be classified as “integration light” compared to an integrated school whose ethos and curriculum is based on there being a united community with peace and reconciliation at its core in an all-inclusive and mutually respectful shared space and with educational outcomes that, given the selective nature of the post-11 system, are very good.

Both of the ‘weak’ schemes depend very much on the goodwill of all concerned, the governance of the scheme, and its funding. Can they survive in the long-term? The learning community partnerships, as presently constituted, are generally not working to their full potential and as funding is being reduced for their operation, it will be interesting to see how long they can last.

Our present system of provision of education is very costly because of the nature of the provision. However, the present system of Area Based Planning is flawed in that its decisions were being mainly made on a sectoral basis and without the full input from all sectors. So when proposals for a particular area are being set out, communities should always be given the option to consider cross-sector amalgamations and integration as a possibility.

The party would like to make the following recommendations:-

- (1) That the Northern Ireland Executive accept its responsibility “to facilitate and encourage ‘Integrated Education in the process of reconciliation and the creation of a culture of tolerance at every level of society”.
- (2) That the Department of Education be held accountable for the implementation of its statutory duty under Article 64 of the 1989 Education Reform (NI) Order ‘ to encourage and facilitate integrated education’.
- (3) That all pre-school and nursery education be designated as integrated and that in future planning for such provision that it be placed to enable children from all communities to access it.
- (4) That targets be set, in the area-planning process for both primary and post-primary schools such that at least one quarter be integrated schools.
- (5) At the post-16 stage there should be moves towards the provision of sixth-form colleges and/or the development of post-16 centres linked to FE Colleges. Most non-grammar schools and some grammar schools offer very restricted curricular packages at this level and most are uneconomic. Collaboration can work in some cases where the schools/FE are very close together, eg Limavady, but generally the costs of collaboration are quite significant and are based on the needs of the institutions rather than the students. An integrated regional approach to the provision of post-16 education based firmly on the needs of students rather than the individual institution is required.
- (6) That for “Shared Education” the Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.
 - (a) Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.

- (b) The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and CRED programmes on a regular basis.
 - (c) The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.
- (7) That the provision of teacher training be rationalised as a matter of urgency. There are presently too many providers and professionally it does not seem sensible to have, for the needs of the service, training at 3 different institutions. The establishment of an inclusive centre of excellence to train our young teachers would help to build a united and prosperous community.
- (8) That the new single authority, when undertaking planning provision on an area basis, should not only involve all the school providers on an equal basis, but should ensure that there is proper consultation with parents and students.

The Party is very willing to amplify its comments before the Select Committee.

Lagan College



Education Committee – Shared Education Response

This response is submitted on behalf of Lagan College. Lagan College is Northern Ireland's first integrated school. Lagan College is integrated, inclusive, co-educational, all ability and an 11-18 school.

Northern Ireland currently has 62 integrated schools whose agreed mission is to educate all children together irrespective of their faith background or none, ethnicity, nationality, ability or culture.

Lagan College was founded in 1981 by a small but committed group of parents who believed in a new integrated way of educating their children together - such was their conviction and passion that some even financed the project to enable the first integrated post primary school to open against a back drop of intense trouble and conflict.

Since then, the school has flourished. Our parents/ guardians believe that their children deserve the right to attend a good school, achieve their best, enjoy and have fun growing up and developing into young men and women. That belief system is also rooted in the knowledge that sending their children to an integrated school will more fully prepare them to live, travel and work anywhere in the world. Their belief is that university, further education or the workplace will not be the first time that their children have spent any meaningful time relating to, respecting and befriending children from different family backgrounds other than their own.

Within an integrated setting children learn, grow, develop, mature, laugh and cry together. Everything is shared over a meaningful period of time. Their entire educational experience is shared - not simply a part of it or for a part of the time. The whole time the child experiences being an important and valued part of an integrated school community that welcomes all children, celebrates diversity, addresses and discusses controversial issues and is committed to enabling children to grow and learn in harmony with each other.

We believe that integration should be the normal way of educating children in our society in order to build a meaningful and lasting peace.

Lagan College is a place where children and staff can confidently and proudly state their nationality, their faith tradition other or none and their cultural background, all the while, still showing respect, understanding and kindness towards each other.

As one school community, we do everything together, be that Remembrance Day, Ash Wednesday, celebrating Chinese New Year, enjoying a Ceili night, learning about the Irish and English languages or playing Gaelic or Rugby. We are committed to breaking down the walls, the divides, the pigeon holing the compartmentalising, the labelling, the second guessing and the assumption making that goes on in our society.

"Division", "conflict", "violence", "them and us" and "segregation" must be words from our past not our present or our future. We need clear leadership to make decisions that challenge the status quo and legacy of the past. We need political leaders who know in their hearts and minds what is right, just and fair for all children.

We ask the question, "What is preventing the Government from doing more to support and further integrated education in 2014?". It has been 16 years since the Good Friday Agreement. How do we make the peace process a reality on a day to day basis? In Lagan College we believe that educating children together is one step towards that goal.

World leaders, academics and visitors both locally and globally have visited Lagan College and held integrated education as exemplary practice for building peace. Many countries and academics have used Lagan College and integrated education as a model for their own societies in dealing with conflict. Years of research has demonstrated that integrated education is successful. We now have 33 years of integrated schooling at Lagan College and we know it makes a difference.

Shared education has its merits. Any sharing by children is a positive but in our opinion, it is not enough. We believe that all parents and children should have a right to integrated and inclusive education, if that is their choice and at present that is not possible for all families.

Lagan College students have enjoyed and benefitted from shared learning experiences through CRED, the Area Learning Community School events and shared learning courses. In recent years our students have also enjoyed and benefitted from the excellent Entwined Histories School Programme marking the centenary of anniversaries.

However, ask any child who has attended Lagan College or indeed speak to any adult associated to the school, be they a staff member or a parent/guardian and they will tell you that these shared opportunities have merit but do not go far enough in providing a meaningful opportunity or a long term solution for our children to get to know and understand one another better. We believe that integrated education will further the peace process more so than shared education.

Controlled, integrated or maintained schools, there is a place for all in society at present. Lagan College does not wish to be hypocritical or misquoted. Our school is founded on the premise of equality and everyone deserves the right to have their own opinion and their choice of education.

This is Lagan College's response to the issue of shared education. We believe that shared education is not an adequate step forward for children. If anything, some of what it offers, feels akin to the EMU programmes of the 1990s.

We are happy to speak to the academics and Government officials going forward to be of help in this matter. We welcome the debate and an opportunity to contribute to it.

We invite the Education Committee to visit Lagan College and speak to the important people who matter the most, namely the young people who will hopefully live, work and enjoy a more peaceful lifestyle than their parents and grandparents have in the past.

Lagan College

24 October 2014

Limavady Grammar School



LIMAVADY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

3 Ballyquin Road, Limavady,
Co Londonderry, BT49 9ET

Telephone (028) 7776 0950
Fax (028) 7776 5183

Email office@lgs.limavady.ni.sch.uk
Website www.limavadygrammar.org.uk

PRINCIPAL

Mr R Wilson BSc (Hons), MSc, Grad Cert Ed, PGH (NI)

09 October 2014

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

Dear Mr McCallion

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

As a school my Board of Governors welcomes the concept of pupils, of all cultural and religious backgrounds, being educated and working together.

Limavady Grammar School is a Controlled Grammar School under the auspices of Western Education and Library Board. The Board of Governors is made up of DE Representatives, WELB Representatives, Parent Representatives and Teacher Representatives. As with all other Controlled Grammar Schools, there is no church representation on the Board and consequently the school is not aligned with any Transferor group.

The school has a long history of providing 'integrated' education. Indeed the demographic make-up of the school, pupils and staff, would suggest that it is probably one of the most integrated schools in Northern Ireland. It has a greater 'mix' than many schools which bear the label 'integrated'. Whilst encouraging parents to take the main lead in religious upbringing of their children, the school upholds a strong Christian ethos and facilitate pupils, whose parents request, to attend religious services during the school day on Days of Holy Obligation.

The natural process of integration as has developed in Limavady Grammar School, meeting the needs of the whole community, is undoubtedly the way forward. Initiatives like Shared Education Campuses, which attract huge financial investment, have the potential to maintain community divisions with only a small number of pupils benefiting from the elements of sharing. In the meantime schools like Limavady Grammar School will not benefit financially for the long established work that is undertaken to educate together pupils from all faiths and none.

In relation of your committee's terms of reference, I would suggest that existing models of good practice, such as Limavady Grammar School should, be given due consideration and priority.

Yours sincerely

R Wilson
Principal

Learning, Caring and Preparing for Life

Lismore Comprehensive School

Lismore Comprehensive School



Drumgask, Craigavon, Co. Armagh BT65 5DU
Tel: (028) 38314950 Fax: (028) 38314966
Email: info@lismorecomp.craigavon.ni.sch.uk

Principal: Mrs Fiona Kane, BA (Hons), PGCE, Dip.Ed, PQH (NI)

Mr Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee
Committee for Education
Room 375, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX

24th October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion

Please find below the response to your inquiry on Shared and Integrated Education on behalf of Lismore Comprehensive School.

- ***Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;***
- In the interests of clarity, we think there needs to be clearly defined descriptors of both Shared and Integrated Education as we believe these educational terms have increasingly become more coupled together despite being, in our opinion very different educational concepts and practices. We would therefore recommend clearer definition and description and would also welcome an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education.
 - Shared Education may be defined as schools and other educational establishments working in partnership to meet the needs of learners. It helps schools to manage their budget more effectively by sharing resources across schools; meet the requirements of the Entitlement Framework; protect and promote minority subjects and curriculum areas and promote professional dialogue between schools across different sectors and school types.
 - Integrated Education may be defined as a type of school outside the Maintained, Controlled and Irish Medium sectors. As defined by NICIE, “Integrated Education brings children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school.” In Lismore, we are very proud of our Catholic ethos which is an open welcoming ethos developed in school to children of all faiths. We are concerned at a perceived political agenda which may suggest that Integrated Education is ‘better than’ other educational types or a ‘solution to’ the historic political and religious divisions in Northern Ireland. We believe that parental choice must continue to be a protected freedom and in that context, we believe in the right of faith-based schools to exist and co-exist with other sectors.

■ **Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;**

● **Barriers and enablers: Shared Education**

Physical distance between school campuses, individual school self-interest and timetabling constraints can create potential barriers to the facilitation of Shared Education. However, many schools, including Lismore Comprehensive have worked with other schools and educational providers to overcome these barriers. With the establishment and development of Area Learning Communities with access to additional funding shared across the ALC, Shared Education is now a positive reality in many geographical areas with schools sharing their resources effectively to meet the needs of learners in their communities. Shared Education may also have a positive effect on community relations. Much work still needs to be done in some areas between the grammar sector sharing with their non-selective neighbouring schools where sharing has not yet been established or developed.

● **Barriers and enablers: Integrated Education**

Decreasing demand for school places, particularly in post primary education may be a barrier to developing integrated education further. We believe that without integrated housing, integrated education may well be a non-starter. Pupil outcomes in public examinations in some integrated schools are well below the NI average and therefore parent/pupil confidence in this system of education could also be perceived as a barrier. We believe that there exists positive discrimination for Integrated Education from a number of external and additional funding bodies that schools may access. Being able to demonstrate that planned work will involve working in or with integrated education providers certainly is a criteria box ticking exercise to enable successful draw down of some funding. As this appears to be the case, we believe it is an unfair practice to positively discriminate in favour of this sector over another sector to support a somewhat hidden agenda – this practice certainly does not appear to support a wider educational agenda.

■ **Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;**

- First of all, the uncoupling of Shared and Integrated Education as concepts needs to take place soon and each definition and concept developed separately. Many schools do not have any issues in theory as to benefits and practise of Shared Education – it makes sense economically and helps protect many areas of a wider curriculum menu and indeed delivery. Secondly, as educationalists, we would be very interested in any research that identifies good practice in Integrated Education as an educational approach to learning, particularly research which may suggest or conclude that Integrated Education as an ethos, pedagogy and identity, outperforms other educational approaches including that of a Catholic Maintained School.

■ **Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools;**

Recommended actions to be taken:

- The voice of parents, primary school partners, CCMS, ELBs, Youth Service and Churches should be part of this consultative process.
- Concepts should be more clearly defined in laymen's terms: 'Shared' and 'Integrated'.
- The political agenda that appears to be promoting and/or 'pushing' integrated education in Northern Ireland, needs to be defined and made open and transparent for educationalists and the wider electorate. We believe if this perceived political agenda is indeed the reality, then this manifesto should be supported by independent worldwide academic and educational research.

Should you wish for further clarity or discussion on any of these points noted above, please do not hesitate to contact me. As communicated previously, we are also happy to facilitate discussion with our Student Council should you wish to garner Pupil opinion.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Kane'. The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name 'Fiona' written in a larger, more prominent style than the surname 'Kane'.

Mrs Fiona Kane

Principal

Loughview Integrated Primary and Nursery School

Learning and growing together

October 20, 2014



Dear Mr McCallion

Thank you for this opportunity to provide a response to the Education Committee on the debate around the future in terms of shared/integrated education.

The request by the committee for information in regard to this issue is timely as there seems to be a growing misconception that integrated and shared education are one and the same thing and have the same potential benefits. They are not the same and it is my view that Shared Education as currently envisioned will fall far short of what integrated schooling regularly achieves.

Under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement our local administration is obliged to facilitate the growth of integrated/shared education, the inference being that it can help heal the breaches in what is still a deeply divided society and so help us build a shared future. The work of the integrated schools that have emerged over the last 30 years clearly evidences the vital contribution that schools can make to peace building and has had an influential 'ripple out' effect within education and wider society to the extent that most people now accept that greater sharing is a necessary and good thing. The challenge however is how to take this forward in a way that has a lasting and meaningful impact. Hence the debate on shared/integrated education!

For those of us who work within the integrated sector it seems that the 'Shared Education' model which enables schools to share sites, facilities and promotes some limited pupil and teacher contact is now regarded by DE as its preferred strategy. This is in contrast to the integrated model whereby children and staff from the two main traditions and from none are fully immersed together in a single school community. Indeed the DE's ambivalence to 'Integrated Education' can be evidenced by the fact that it required a recent judicial review (Drumragh IC) to remind it of its statutory obligation to facilitate integrated schools.

Why this strategy? Why is Shared Education being promoted as the way forward in terms of a more integrated model of schooling? I wish the answer was grounded in international research and case studies in N. Ireland which made a compelling case. Sadly it appears not to be and the reality may simply be political pragmatism.

Put simply 'Shared Education' is less threatening to the various vested interests in our education system and wider society including political parties, the Catholic Church, the Transferors lobby etc. It's the deal they can all do without really giving up anything that really matters to them.

While there may be those who believe that it can make a difference, promoting 'Shared Education' may simply create the illusion that our politicians and the educational establishment are doing their bit to promote a 'shared future', when in reality they are falling far short of what really needs to be done.

As a concept 'Shared Education' sounds fine but what does it mean in practice? The shared campus concept seems to represent the extent of the DE's ambitions in terms of shared education. My worry is that it will only serve to illustrate how different school communities can co-exist in some benign form of educational apartheid where separate uniforms, timetables and doors regulate the amount and quality of contact between the young people concerned. While for some this might be a step forward in terms of what has gone before, is it good enough?

By comparison within my own integrated school, which is diverse and inclusive in terms of race, religion, social class and ability, it is the sharing of a uniform and the time spent together in class, in the playground, on the sports-field or over lunch that helps our children grow their understanding and acceptance of one another. Moreover it is this regular and meaningful sharing which helps us grow a sense of common identity and community, whilst acknowledging the diversity intrinsic to our school.

To put my comments into context I should add that before working in the integrated sector I spent 14 years in the controlled sector including several years as a VP in a school on a loyalist housing estate where sectarian and racist attitudes were just a fact of life. While working in the controlled sector I was involved in a succession of EMU/CRED (community relations) projects between controlled and maintained schools and can report that although they did no harm that they achieved little of lasting value.

The final point worth making is an economic one. N. Ireland has an education system it can't really afford. A segregated school system has meant too many schools and an unnecessary replication of services, something clearly evidenced in the Common Funding Review led by Robert Salisbury several years ago. Area Based Planning raised the hope that a clear sighted economic appraisal would acknowledge the unsustainable cost of continued segregation and open minds to the difficult decisions that lay ahead i.e. closing non-viable schools and promoting real sharing.

Instead what initially emerged were sectoral solutions for rationalisation led by CCMS and the ELBs. Subsequently 'Shared Education' has emerged as a possible solution in some instances, but there is a lack of clarity around what is shared, with whom and to what degree. It would seem prudent that before more public money is spent on 'Shared Education' we have some agreed definition of what it is, how best it might work and what its potential is to help us build a shared future.

If we are serious about building more cohesive communities and a genuinely shared future, 'Shared Education' needs to aspire eventually to be what the best integrated educated schools already are. It is the best way forward and existing models of integrated schooling, together with the wealth of leading edge experience within our schools in how to successfully integrate school communities (children, teachers and parents) are there to be built upon. In addition to this, in other countries, including mainland UK, there are alternative models of effective shared/shared education that could be considered. A good example is the Emmaus School in Liverpool, a joint faith primary school which allows for representation on the school Board for both Catholic and Anglican clergy.

I am willing to concede that there will be no easy 'one size fits all' solution in terms of integrated education but promoting the tokenism and limited ambition of 'Shared Education' seems like a cop out.

In conclusion the narrative of many integrated schools is of how ordinary people desiring change for the better, for their children and their communities came together and worked sometimes against the odds to build a better future. It takes courage, commitment and a belief that real change is possible. The challenge for politicians and DE is to do the same!

Yours sincerely

M McKnight Principal



Published by Authority of the Northern Ireland Assembly,
Belfast: The Stationery Office

and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

TSO

PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN

Telephone orders/General enquiries: 0870 600 5522

Fax orders: 0870 600 5533

E-mail: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Textphone 0870 240 3701

TSO@Blackwell and other Accredited Agents

£39.50

Printed in Northern Ireland by The Stationery Office Limited
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ISBN 978-0-339-60591-6



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Committee for Education

Report on the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education Volume 3

**Together with the Minutes of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence
and Written Submissions Relating to the Report**

Ordered by the Committee for Education to be printed 1 July 2015

This report is the property of the Committee for Education. Neither the report nor its contents should be disclosed to any person unless such disclosure is authorised by the Committee.

**THE REPORT REMAINS EMBARGOED UNTIL
COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEBATE IN PLENARY**

Powers and Membership

Powers

The Committee for Education is a Statutory Departmental Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Standing Order 48 of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Committee has power to:

- Consider and advise on Departmental budgets and annual plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- Consider relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- Call for persons and papers;
- Initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- Consider and advise on any matters brought to the Committee by the Minister of Education.

Membership

The Committee has 11 members including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and a quorum of 5. The membership of the Committee is as follows:

Peter Weir (Chairperson) ^{2,6}

Sandra Overend (Deputy Chairperson) ⁷

Maeve McLaughlin

Jonathan Craig

Ross Hussey ^{1,8}

Nelson McCausland ³

Chris Hazzard

Trevor Lunn

Robin Newton

Pat Sheehan

Sean Rogers ^{4,5}

1 With effect from 04 July 2014 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson

2 With effect from 23 September 2014 Ms Michelle McIlveen replaced Mr Mervyn Storey as Chairperson

3 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr Nelson McCausland replaced Mr Stephen Moutray

4 With effect from 17 November 2014 Mr Colum Eastwood replaced Mr Seán Rogers

5 With effect from 08 December 2014 Mr Sean Rogers replaced Mr Colum Eastwood

6 With effect from 11 May 2015 Mr Peter Weir replaced Miss Michelle McIlveen as Chairperson

7 With effect from 15 June 2015 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mr Danny Kinahan as Deputy Chairperson

8 With effect from 23 June 2015 Mr Ross Hussey replaced Mrs Sandra Overend

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Macada- Moy Area Community and Development Association



C/o 45 Charlemont Street
Moy
Co. Tyrone
BT71 7SL

Wednesday April 2nd 2014

Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Dear John

MACADA would like to offer support to the proposed shared campus for:

- Moy Regional Primary School
- St John's Primary School
- Moy Area Playgroup

MACADA would like to pay tribute to the efforts of the Principals and Board of Governors of Moy Regional Primary School, St John's Primary School and Moy Area Playgroup in progressing the shared school campus for the village. It is felt that it will be a fantastic resource for the whole community.

We recognise that the Education & Library Board and CCMS have outlined proposals which include excellent facilities and have already accommodated ideas for community use. MACADA will make every effort to secure **additional funds** to invest in facilities that will further enhance the educational experience of children and help attract greater numbers of children to enrol in the two new schools and cross community playgroup.

We have attempted to identify the facilities that could be shared by the community, the schools and the playgroup and detail the additional requirements that might be required to allow the facilities to be used by the community outside school hours. MACADA are grateful that the SELB has already agreed to accommodate community use of school facilities and we understand that we will have to source additional funds to contribute to the overall project.

We also understand that we have no role in the selection or purchase of the site for the shared campus but we would urge you to take our ideas and suggestions into account so that the site selected can accommodate the maximum shared facilities to ensure this exciting opportunity is fully exploited.

Yours sincerely

Shared Campus in Moy

The facilities listed below are essential for the two schools but if planned imaginatively could be fully utilised by the local community and reduce the long term running costs of the facility for the Department. The table below makes some suggestions of how the shared facilities might be used by different community groups after 5pm, at weekends and during school holidays.

Shared Facility	Specification for School Use	Suggested Community Use
Sports Hall	Gym and sports hall required as a sports facility for both schools. Storage room for school equipment.	Additional adult changing facilities and showers. Storage room for equipment of external users.
Assembly Hall	Meeting facility with a stage, lights and sound system for school meetings and performances	Community Meeting Space & Events, provide pull out tiered seating
Kitchen & Canteen	Shared lunch facilities for the two schools	Facility for evening cooking classes and community events
Arts & crafts Room	Shared arts and crafts room to work with a range of materials – screen printing / pottery etc	Community education classes at night
Library	Library for use by two schools	Potential for access by local community
Outdoor Sports area	Standard soccer and rugby pitch 3G or 4G for school games.	Training and activity areas for community sports clubs, football, Hockey, rugby. Need floodlights to facilitate community use. Outside seating to encourage viewing & community events and/or potential venue. (Tiered seating 100nr)
Playgroup	Purpose built playgroup with access to own outside play -area	Playground accessible via alternative entrance after school hours.
Day-care	Day-care facility within walking distance of the school will help increase enrolment figures for the schools and playgroup. With pre-school age playground facilities outside.	Community managed full day-care facility to wrap around the playgroup and school day. The business could employ 20 staff and generate funds to meet the running costs of the community facilities on the shared site. Playground accessible via alternative entrance after school hours.

**C/o 45 Charlemont Street
Moy
Co. Tyrone
BT71 7SL**

Wednesday April 9th 2014

**Iain Frazer
Director of Development
Council Offices
Dungannon
BT71 6DT**

Dear Iain

Please find attached a copy of our letter that was sent to Dept of Education, SELB, CCMS, Office of OFMDFM & the following ministers: Michelle O'Neill, Caral NiChuilin, Stephen Farry, Arlene Foster, Simon Hamilton, Edwin Poots, Danny Kennedy and Nelson McCausland.

I hope the letter conveys to you the unanimous support that MACADA gives to the proposed Shared Campus scheme. I also hope that the table demonstrates to you what MACADA feels would fully compliment an all-inclusive local community facility.

MACADA are attempting to get involved with as many government departments in order to co-ordinate a joined-up approach to securing additional finance that would provide these reasonably modest additional facilities that will further enhance the educational experience of the children and also provide a cost effective and hugely beneficial resource for the local community.

MACADA derives its mandate from the outcome of our Village Plan that was presented and delivered to council last year. MACADA sees Moy Village becoming a model village in terms of shared education and shared facilities for everyone.

MACADA would urge local council to get behind our initiative and ensure that this exciting opportunity is fully exploited to meet the real needs of the local community and be created in such a way to be most economical in its cost of provision and more importantly, highly efficient in its long term running costs and sustainability.

MACADA look forward to council input, direction and guidance.

For and on behalf of MACADA

Eddie Toner, Chairperson

Moy Village Action Plan

Produced by



November 2013

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Introduction & Background

Introduction & Background

Introduction

This integrated village plan has been devised by Moy Area Community and Development Association (MACADA) on behalf of the Moy community. It is a working document that will support MACADA on addressing the needs of the community and village infrastructure. This document highlights the issues and needs facing the community which were identified through community meetings, questionnaires to households and consultations with business owners and church leaders. The village plan will outline a range of actions needed to address those needs.

Purpose of the Village Plan

The purpose of the Plan is to provide a strategic framework in which MACADA can co-ordinate specific development actions with a set timeframe. This village plan, with its range of actions and initiatives, will also inform Moy Community, Statutory Authorities, Developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework proposals set out for Moy. A village plan allows Moy village to realise its potential in terms of economic, cultural, social and environmental resources. It will also be used for bidding into current and future funding programmes.

“This village action plan is the blueprint to help boost the business, economic, environmental and social well-being of all within the community and assist in the sustainability and further growth of Moy”.

Citizens need to be at the heart of decision-making on local services, this plan is the input of the inhabitants of Moy Village. It is intended to be a working document.

Introduction & Background

Background on MACADA

MACADA was originally known as Moy and Charlemont Area Development Association and dates back to the 1960's when it operated as Moy Citizens Association. It did lapse in activity until October 1992, which resulted in the formation of MACADA. Again after another period of inactivity it reformed in June 2012 and was renamed Moy Area Community and Development Association. MACADA reformed to represent the village of Moy with representatives from the local community, business owners and all the local churches forming the committee. It is a fully constituted group (Appendix 1) and holds regular committee meetings within the village.

MACADA has a long term vision of promoting the cultural, tourist and economic potential of the area. Current and/or completed activities include Cross Community Summer Schemes, a new Village Snooker Club recently opened as a Social Enterprise venture with the creation of one part time job, monthly village newsletter with all activities listed (Appendix 2), production of a Village Welcome Pack, support to a 3 day Arts & Craft Fair in June 2013, a project to Re-image the Village through the Arts is underway, directed an SIF application under 'Shared Space Concept' via SELB & Moy Regional School, Annual Village Christmas Lights & Village Consultation completed in January 2013. This village plan is the progression in achieving this vision. In the meantime MACADA have considered all local church halls and the role that they can play in providing a suitable resource for the community at large.

"MACADA's aims are to promote cross community interaction and to develop existing facilities within the village. We aim to assist with getting more village activities for the good of all its inhabitants".

Policy Context

Policy Context

Overview

MACADA are producing this Village Plan with the vision that they fit into the overall plan for the future of Northern Ireland. There are various government policies and strategies developed for Northern Ireland which are specifically aimed at the sustainable development in local communities. Some of the relevant documents are detailed further.

Government Departments

Each of the Government Departments in Northern Ireland are responsible for delivering their own corporate plans and will be important in the development of the Moy Village Plan and its Action Plan. It is MACADA's intention to create a relationship with the relevant departments to assist in the delivery of the actions.

DARD - Dept of Agriculture & Rural Development

Aims to promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside in Northern Ireland. The Department assists the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the need of the consumers, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

DECAL – Dept of Culture Arts & Leisure

Responsible for arts and creativity, museums, libraries, sport, inland waterways and inland fisheries, linguistic diversity, public records, and for advising on National Lottery distribution.

DENI – Dept of Education

Main areas of responsibility are in pre-school, primary, post-primary and special education; the youth service; the promotion of community relations within and between schools; and teacher education and salaries.

DEL – Dept of Employment & Learning

Objectives are to promote economic, social and personal development through high quality learning, research and skills training; and to help people into employment and promote good employment practices.

DETI – Dept of Enterprise Trade & Investment

Responsible for economic policy development, enterprise, innovation, energy, telecoms, tourism, health and safety at work, Insolvency Service, consumer affairs, and labour market and economic statistics services.

Policy Context

DOE – Dept of the Environment

Main responsibilities are to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, to provide land use planning which balances the development needs of the region with the protection of the environment, to improve and promote road safety and ensure the proper regulation of drivers, vehicles and operators and to support a system of local government which meets the needs of citizens and ratepayers.

DHSSPS – Dept of Health Social Services and Public Safety

Main responsibilities are Health and Social Care (HSC), which includes policy and legislation for hospitals, family practitioner services and community health and personal social services; Public Health, which covers policy, legislation and administrative action to promote and protect the health and well-being of the population; and Public Safety, which covers policy and legislation for fire and rescue services.

DFP - Department of Finance and Personnel

Aims to prioritise the use of resources available to Northern Ireland, ensure that these are used efficiently and secure the reform and modernisation of public services; and to deliver efficient and cost effective services to the public in the Department's areas of executive responsibility.

DOJ – Department of Justice

Has a range of devolved policing and justice functions.

DRD - Department for Regional Development

Main responsibilities include, regional strategic planning and development policy; transport strategy; public transport policy and performance; certain policy and support work for air and sea ports; policy on water and sewerage services and management of the Department's shareholder interest in Northern Ireland Water; and provision and maintenance of all public roads.

DSD - Department for Social Development

Responsibilities include urban regeneration, community and voluntary sector development, social legislation, housing, social security benefits, pensions and child support.

OFMDFM - Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

The department's objectives include supporting Ministers and the institutions of government, building a programme for government, promoting better community relations, a culture of equality and rights, targeting social need and promoting social inclusion.

Policy Context

Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland

The aim of Government is to help create sustainable communities that embody the principles of sustainable development at the local level. This will involve working to give communities more power and influence in the decisions that affect them and working in partnership at the right level to get things done. It means ensuring that people have the skills and qualifications necessary to support and develop a thriving sustainable economy within their community and it means ensuring that they have an environment that promotes a healthy lifestyle. www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk

“The strategy recognises as a priority the need for regeneration and to build sustainable communities with objectives centred around economic well-being, attractive, healthy, high quality environments and greater community engagement and civic leadership. We will therefore strengthen the governance arrangements to ensure that sustainable development lies at the heart of mainstream Government policy making and is a central feature of the new local government arrangements to improve the quality of life for everyone and reduce the inequalities that exist across our society”.

Regional Development Strategy 2035

This document complements the Sustainable Development Strategy and sets out to ensure that all places benefit from economic growth.

It has 8 main aims: (Those of particular interest at Moy Community level are highlighted and expanded on).

- ***Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of Northern Ireland***

A growing regional economy will benefit from strong urban and rural areas. This needs a co-ordinated approach to the provision of services, jobs and infrastructure and a focus on co-operation between service providers. Balanced regional growth and tackling regional imbalance are critical issues for the region.

- Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Londonderry as the principal city of the North West
- ***Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise their potential***
Our rural areas including our towns and villages have a key role in supporting economic growth. They offer opportunities in terms of their potential for growth in new sectors, the provision of rural recreation and tourism, their attractiveness as places to invest, live and work, and their role as a reservoir of natural resources and highly valued landscapes.

Policy Context

- *Promote development which improves the health and well-being of Communities*

A healthy community is better able to take advantage of the economic, social and environmental opportunities which are open to it. Improved health and well-being is derived not only from easy access to appropriate services and facilities, although this is important, but also from the creation of a strong economy set within a safe and attractive environment. The provision of more social and affordable housing also helps to build strong balanced communities.

- Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places
- *Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake*
Protecting the environment is essential for enhancing the quality of life of current and future generations. Northern Ireland's environment is one of its greatest assets, with its stunning landscapes, an outstanding coastline, a complex variety of wildlife and a rich built and cultural heritage for the ecosystem services it provides, and its sense of place and history for all.
- Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaptation to climate change
- Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world

It also means creating a network of well-connected sustainable communities with decent homes in places with clean, safe and green public spaces, where people are able to lead healthy lives, enjoy the environment around them and where people want to come to live and work.

Policy Context

Rural Development Programme 2007 - 2013

Northern Ireland's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) adopted a Rural Development Programme (RDP) which *aims to protect and enhance our rural environment and contribute to the development of competitive and sustainable rural businesses and thriving rural communities*. This programme, which runs from 2007- 2013, is worth over £500million and represents one of the largest ever investments in rural communities in Northern Ireland.

The RDP is split into three main areas with the Axis 3 of the programme being dedicated to the quality of life in Rural Areas & Diversification of the Rural Economy. One of the measures under this Axis is:

Village Renewal and Development

In order to support integrated village initiatives which promote community development and regeneration, the RDP will support animation and capacity-building within and between villages and their surrounding rural areas. This will include the formulation of integrated action plans to define the role of the village and fully develop the potential of rural areas.

The closing applications for this RDP have been closed but DARD are finalising a new programme for 2014 – 2020. Having spoken to a representative from the RDP it was advised that the next programme will effectively have the same end objectives for rural communities.

Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has a responsibility for preparing the new RDP, and will work with key stakeholders to create a programme that meets the needs of people who live and work in rural areas of Northern Ireland.

The Europe 2020 strategy aims to see growth that is competitive, sustainable and inclusive. These aims have three objectives: **smart growth, sustainable growth and inclusive growth**.

DARD have the challenge to develop a RDP based on these draft proposals. The EU draft proposals are subject to change and the budget for the new rural development programme has yet to be confirmed by the European Commission.

Policy Context

Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council Corporate Plan 2012 - 2015

As Moy village is part of the Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council it is important to understand what the Council's plans are for the Dungannon Area. The plan represents a commitment to deliver quality services and investment in the Borough and it is outlined under the four themes; Service Delivery, Economy, Environment and Community.

Theme: Service Delivery

Aim 1 - To deliver values for money services

- 1.1 Deliver quality, affordable cost effective services as local as possible
- 1.2 Communication with all our Stakeholders
- 1.3 Value Staff and be customer focused

Theme: Economy

Aim 2 - To build prosperity and economic growth

- 2.1 Develop the area as an economic investment location
- 2.2 Develop an environment that will contribute to job creation
- 2.3 Promote and develop the area as a visitor destination

Theme: Environment

Aim 3 – To create a sustainable environment

- 3.1 Develop and regenerate our towns, villages and settlements
- 3.2 Protect and develop the natural environment and resources
- 3.3 Provide quality public spaces that are clean, safe and accessible for all
- 3.4 Support good land use planning

Theme: Community

Aim 4 - To develop the wellbeing of diverse communities

- 4.1 Proactively target areas of disadvantage
- 4.2 Contribute to the wellbeing of residents through healthier lifestyles and safer communities
- 4.3 Contribute to the development of good relations and cultural diversity
- 4.4 Support community development and work in partnership to maximise local delivery of services

It will become evident throughout this report that the aims and values of Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council fit very closely with the objectives and action plans of Moy Village.

Moy Village Background & Statistics

Moy Village Background and Statistics

Setting & Location

Moy is a Large Village and town land in County Tyrone, about 5 miles southeast of Dungannon. It is ideally located close to the M1 motorway and is the main route to Armagh making this an ideal place for both travel and tourism.



Moy is situated beside the smaller village of Charlemont. Charlemont is on the east bank of the River Blackwater and Moy on the west; the two are joined by Charlemont Bridge. The river is also the boundary between County Tyrone and County Armagh.



The settlement's core is located around the historic Square, and a wide range of local shops and services including two primary schools and a number of churches serve the village. In-depth housing development has taken place to the south of Dungannon Road and, to a lesser extent, to the north along Killyman Road.

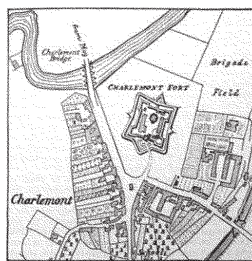


The core of the village has exceptional architectural character and was designated a Conservation Area in 1984. Development in and adjacent to the conservation area will have regard to the guidance contained in the Moy Conservation Area Booklet.

Moy Village Background and Statistics

Moy Heritage Background

Moy was laid out in the 1760s for the Volunteer Earl – the patriot and aesthete James Caulfield, 1st Earl of Charlemont (1728-1799) – opposite Charlemont Fort across the Blackwater. The formal rectangular market place, with lawns and horse-chestnut trees, was inspired by the square at Bosco Marengo in Lombardy, admired by the young earl during his grand tour of Europe. The houses lining the village square are mostly mid-18th century, though all four churches (Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist) are later.



The second and third Earl were responsible for rebuilding Roxborough Castle but after the third Earl died the castle was later demolished in 1920. The bridge over the Blackwater separating Co. Tyrone and Co. Armagh was erected by Lord Mountjoy and rebuilt by William Daragan. The Famous Soldier and Australian explorer John King was born in Moy and is famous around the world.

Moy today is probably one of the most picturesque heritage towns in Northern Ireland. It still has its basic Georgian structure and there is yet plenty of architectural evidence of its once glorious and exciting past. Moy used to hold a great horse fair, held once a month and lasting a whole week.

It has now survived the decline of the Charlemont dynasty, the death of the famous fair, the closure of the railway and canals and has once again re-established itself as a thriving community with huge future potential, not least as an attractive and important heritage town.

A further detailed history is included in Appendix 3.



Moy Village Background and Statistics

Socio Economic Profile

The following statistics are taken from the Census Report on 27th March 2011

Demographic

The population of Moy at the time of the Census 2011 was 3,009, which accounts for 0.17% of the NI total. There were 2,989 people (99.34% of the usually resident population) living in 1,046 households, giving an average household size of 2.86. Moy has a higher proportion aged under 16 years (25.59%) than aged 65 and over (10.93%). 49.58% of the population is male and 50.42% are female; and 33 years was the average (median) age of the population.

Religion

The Village of Moy has 62.31% of the population that belong to, or were brought up in the Catholic religion and 34.43% belong to, or were brought up in a 'Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)' religion.

Nationality

99.10% were from the white (including Irish Traveler) ethnic group.

32.00% indicated that they had a British national identity,

37.72% had an Irish national identity and

27.52% had a Northern Irish national identity.

Language

16.92% had some knowledge of Irish;

4.47% had some knowledge of Ulster-Scots; and

9.50% did not have English as their first language.

Health

Perhaps reflecting its age population, Moy had a relatively low percentage (16.48%) of people who had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities; 85.44% of people stated their general health was either good or very good; and 11.10% of people stated that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others.

Moy Village Background and Statistics

Housing & Accommodation

73.90% of households were owner occupied and 22.75% were rented;

39.77% of households were owned outright;

9.46% of households were comprised of a single person aged 65+ years;

6.60% were lone parent households with dependent children; and

11.09% of households did not have access to a car or van.

Qualifications & Labour

Considering the population aged 16 years old and over;

27.02% had a degree or higher qualification

36.44% had no or low Level 1 qualifications

And with the same population in mind when asked about employment;

73.05% were economically active

26.95% were economically inactive

66.09% were in paid employment, and

4.06% were unemployed. (This figure could be considerably higher today due to this economic climate).

Consultation & Findings

Consultation & Findings

Consultation

From the outset, MACADA realised that the success of this Village Action Plan would be based on the community involvement regarding the vision of Moy and delivery of services and activities. The planning process used to develop this Action Plan took the form of a bottom-up consultative style approach to ensure the Plan was based firmly on the opinions of the people of Moy for the people of Moy. MACADA undertook a series of consultations that led to the development of this Village Plan. In addition to these consultations with the local community, a range of statutory agencies and other bodies were engaged. The series of events which led to the formulation of the plan were as follows:

1. A community audit in January 2013 which was delivered to all households in Moy Village
2. Invitation to local key people and businesses to input by means of phone calls or in writing
3. Contact with local authorities and agencies
4. Background analysis
5. Presentation of final draft Action Plan on 28th October 2013

Summary of Community Audit

It is worth noting that the over 80% of the respondents questioned have been living in Moy for 15 years or over. This is encouraging as it suggests that they really know how their community has changed over the years and how it needs to change in the future.

- Half of the respondents said that Moy area was not really changing whilst ¼ said it was changing for the better and ¼ said it was changing for the worse.

Opportunity for change for Moy Area

- Over half of the community do not have a problem getting involved in community activities whilst nearly 30% have a minor or major problem with getting involved

Community involvement good but opportunity for improvement

- When asked about their opinion on alcohol abuse by people under the age of 18 there was a staggering 70% who thought there was a problem in Moy, whether it was minor or major. 12% thought there was no problem and the remainder not having an opinion.

Key issue of youth behaviour is a concern

Consultation & Findings

- The above point is also backed up as the audit has identified the lack of youth provision in the Moy community with over 60% of the people dissatisfied and only 18% of the community satisfied with what is provided for the youth in the Village.

Provision of Youth services in the community needs examined

- The majority (70%) of Moy community identified that there was a problem regarding the lack of open spaces/parks available in Moy.

Issue of open spaces/parks needs addressed

- The audit highlighted the satisfaction of the Churches service to the community with nearly 90% of the people satisfied with their churches.

Positive community service from the Churches

- On the other hand there was a very mixed opinion on the service of community centres in Moy village. Over half (55%) were dissatisfied with the community centres and only 20% being satisfied. The remaining 25% were unsure.

Knowledge and service of community centres needs consideration

- The opinion of the provision of shops in Moy is a very positive one with 91% of people either satisfied or very satisfied.

Excellent provision of shops

- There seems to be either a lack of knowledge or provision of Education and Training services as over half of the respondents answered 'don't know' when asked about these services.

Appraisal of education and training services needed

- The same thing applies for the facilities available to Senior Citizens. Over 60% did not know if there were any available.

Review of facilities and promotion of activities for Senior Citizens

- 63% of the respondents were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the leisure and sports facilities in Moy and only 18% being satisfied. These results mirror the question about play area provision in Moy. Both highlight dissatisfaction.

Lack of leisure/sports facilities a real concern

- The schools provision in Moy both Primary and Pre-School was given a very good result with 83% of people satisfied with the Primary Schools and 60% satisfied with the Pre-School. 33% were unsure of Pre-schools which may suggest that they have had no need for their use i.e. no young children.

Positive schools provision in Moy

Consultation & Findings

Key Priorities

The consultation also facilitated the community to raise their concerns and to highlight the key issues that needed to be address in Moy Village. Many opinions and issues emerged and they are analysed under the following priorities:

- **Leisure**
Parks/Open Space/Leisure Facilities
- **Community**
Community Centre/Events/Youth/Older People/Social Issues
- **Infrastructure**
Property/Business/ Buildings/Roads/Transport
- **Economic**
Tourism/Education & Training/Employment

These key priorities will become the framework for the vision and plan for the Moy Village Plan.

Leisure

Parks/ Open Space

As previously mentioned, Moy village is situated around the square with shops, schools and churches being the main focus within the community. There is no open green space which residents can walk around or meet in. This has been highlighted as a major focus for MACADA to address. For the population of Moy there is one small play park which is on the outskirts of Moy. The general feeling is that the area badly needs a park area that is easily accessed by all.

We need a purpose built park with walks, playing fields, playground etc areas for young children and families

Need for a focal point for all sectors of the community to come together

I would like to see a park for families etc. to walk safely around, without the need to walk on the roads

Consultation & Findings

Leisure facilities

Moy GAA has two excellent outdoor pitches. These are the only sporting facilities which Moy currently have on offer. These facilities are limited in terms of servicing the needs of the whole community in terms of numbers and variety of sports. What has been identified as a need is a multipurpose sports facility, namely, a multi-purpose hall and an outdoor 4g covered surface for multi sports.

It would be good to have some form of sports hall for activities such as indoor soccer, early year's group, badminton where exercise can take place for larger numbers.

Provide facilities for games/basketball/netball/handball/badminton,etc

Apart from the Moy GAA field and facilities, there are no parks and open spaces that I am aware of in the Moy area for recreational purposes

Community

Community Centre

It was identified that Moy lacks a general Community Centre, one which is for purpose and facilitates all of the community. There are several churches in the village with varying levels of community facilities for their parishioners, the majority of halls however are not equipped to offer a range of activities. It was felt that the Church halls and spaces could still offer general uses as provided today. Whilst a Community Multi-purpose Hall would be a welcome addition to the Moy as people of all ages have to travel to either Dungannon or Armagh for up to date facilities. However MACADA recognise that one centre that can combine both a community centre hall and multi sports facility is the most economical solution and one which addresses the needs of the whole community. MACADA also strongly support the need for keeping and updating existing church halls to function as a support to the main community/multi sports hall.

Consultation & Findings

I would love to see a new community centre as the Moy badly needs one that is open to all and used by all and provides all the services that other community centres provide in other areas

Modern community centre would be major asset for the community. It could encompass a lot of the issues where Moy has been left behind in comparison to other local towns and villages

Moy could be an even more welcoming village if all the different community organisations were facilitated under the one roof

Big enough to facilitate drama, musical productions

Given the rising population and size of the area, it is a real shame that there is no local centre or hall that is suitable to host community or sports events. The Moy badly needs a centre or hall that can cater for plays, musicals, dances, exercise, sporting events etc

Community Events

Community involvement was recognised as being good but with room for improvement. In previous years Moy have organised the Christmas Lights switch on organised by local businesses. This has been a success and building on this success is crucial to improving community relations and spirit. More community events being organised was a key finding in the audit.

Christmas Lights

Fun day in the square/craft stalls

Christmas event with festival, stalls and Santa!!

Bring Back Santa!!

Consultation & Findings

Youth

With over ¼ of the population in Moy being under the age of 16 there is clearly a need to cater for this sector. The issue of young people having nowhere to go in the evenings is a growing concern amongst many of the community. Underage drinking, anti-social behaviour and youth loitering in the streets therefore stems from this. The need for a purposeful youth activity provision is clear in Moy and this could take the form of youth clubs /drama /music / sports. The youth can be provided for using the existing church halls and proposed new community/multi-purpose hall. There is also a strong case for introducing youth volunteering programmes to increase their involvement in the community and to prepare them for employment.

Facilities for youth. Places for young to socialise instead of local graveyard

Somewhere for young people to go at weekend nights

More facilities for teenagers e.g. canoeing club using our river in Moy

Place for young teenagers to meet and do something constructive

Older People

It was highlighted that the older population of Moy was not catered for well in the community and often forgotten about. Many older people do not socialise in the pubs and they are not aware of any clubs or societies that they can meet socially. It was also noted that the many of the current facilities are not suitable in terms of accessibility and safety. These issues can be addressed, similar to the youth programme, by providing organised classes through the proposed new community hall and by looking at upgrading the current facilities on offer. The area of community transport is also a major issue for the elderly in Moy Village particularly those living on the outskirts of Moy. It will be important to give this consideration so that the elderly can access community facilities.

Create a safe place for elderly so we can meet up, have fun, have something to look forward to

Socials e.g. whist, bridge, tea dances

Facilities for older people to socialise who don't like pubs e.g. bingo/social evenings

Pensioner awareness/help/visiting/ respect to elderly

Consultation & Findings

Social Issues

The major social issue which was raised was the anti-social behaviour and alcohol use by the youth in the Village. How to address this issue has been covered under the youth section. The community at large felt that Moy was a safe place to live but there is still an element of vandalism and local crime that needs to be tackled. The need to further develop links with community police in the area was highlighted.

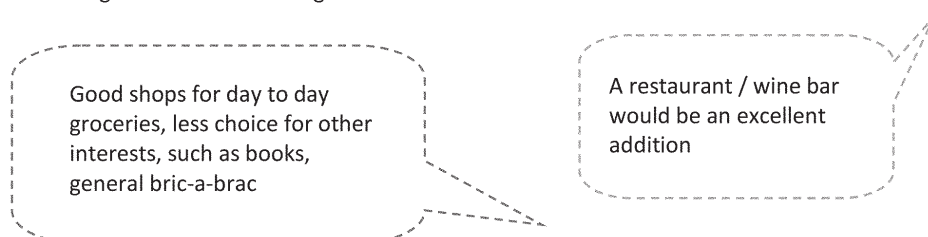


Infrastructure

Property/Business

Moy Village has a number of retail outlets which service the community for most of their needs. These include supermarkets, post office, butchers, pharmacies, hairdressers, beauty salons, gift shop, ladies clothing, lighting/electrical shops, furniture shops, builders merchants, hardware store, insurance agents, office supplies shop, antiques shop, coffee shop, a pizzeria, fast-food outlets and public houses.

In addition to the retail outlets Moy village has a guest house and family owned hotel which boasts excellent entertainment drawing big names to the Village. What has been identified as 'missing' in Moy is future use for the numerous redundant village properties located in all areas including The Square, Charlemont Street and especially Killyman Street. The need for local businesses to promote economic development is also paramount to the continued retail success in Moy. After many campaigns the village recently lost its library facilities, this building is now used for Dungannon Councils offices.



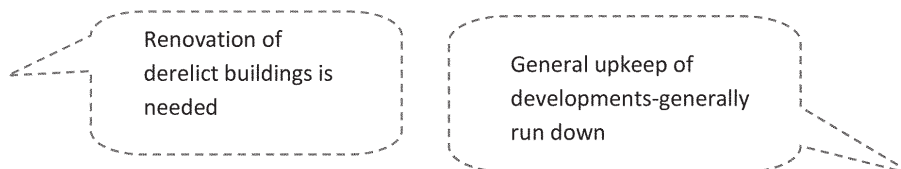
Consultation & Findings

Buildings

There are a number of buildings in Moy Village which lie vacant and several of these are verging on dereliction. It would be ideal if these properties could be brought back to commercial use, not only promoting economic development but also addressing the unsightly appearance of some of these buildings. There are a number of properties in The Square and in Killyman Street. There is a clear need to bring these buildings back into meaningful and sustainable use which will in turn improve their attractiveness for visitors coming into Moy Village, especially if we promote Moy on its heritage values.

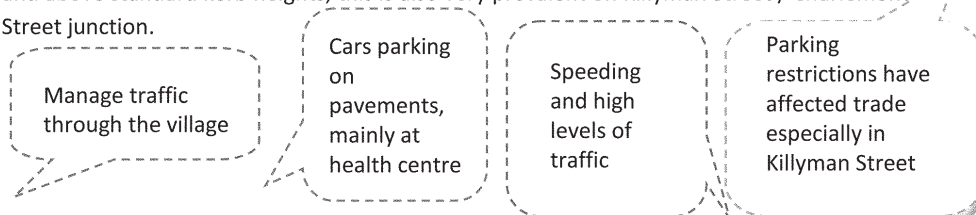
Many areas within Moy are in the conservation area and therefore any developments need to be considered carefully that they fall within the conservation guidelines.

There is a major economic need to consider Killyman Street as a project of regeneration and many suggestions of having restaurants, craft shops and shops of interest that would encourage people to stroll along, making it a social gathering for locals and visitors. There is an opportunity to open up the old court yards to provide parking. There is also an opportunity to provide awnings to the elevations of the buildings, to offer some protection from inclement weather and encouraging more and sustained social interaction.



Roads/Transport

Moy is the main route from Dungannon to Armagh and therefore has extremely heavy traffic especially at peak times. This often causes traffic congestion at the top of Charlemont Street and its junction with Killyman Street. Large HGVs do have difficulty turning from Killyman Street towards Charlemont Street and vice versa, this can cause congestion. Also parking towards the top of Charlemont Street can also be the cause of the traffic build up, this is a result of a lack of adequate parking and therefore people parking in spots where it has an effect on the flow of traffic. It is felt that there are not enough parking spaces in the village. The footpaths are also a major concern with uneven surfaces, holes and above standard kerb heights; this is also very prevalent on Killyman Street / Charlemont Street junction.



Consultation & Findings

Economic

Tourism

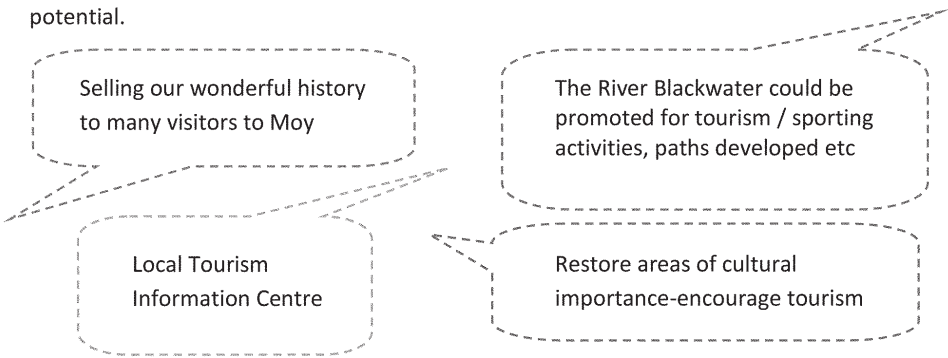
Moy Village is steeped in history and culture and is a designated conservation area (Appendix 5). Moy currently do not promote any landmarks or sites and are not utilising the potential the Village has. There are many opportunities for bringing tourism to Moy and its surrounding area which will increase visitor numbers and economic development.

The River Blackwater runs through the village of Moy and its neighbouring settlement of Charlemont and represents the divide of Co. Tyrone and Co. Armagh. There is huge potential to use the River Blackwater as a tourist opportunity. There is currently a Blackwater Project running which plans to reinvest in the rivers. MACADA are certain that there is potential for many projects; namely a river walkway as far as The Argory, picnic areas, safe purposeful areas for fishing and canoeing.

There is an opportunity to tap further into The Argory itself and link it better to Moy and attract some of its annual visitors. (1998 Argory had 25,261 visitors; by 2007 visitor numbers were still 22,700 per annum). Walkways (horse trails and footpaths) from Charlemont Bridge along river to The Argory, summer season boat trips with licenced operator. This should help The Argory also.

John King, the Australian explorer, who was born in Moy, is probably one of the village's biggest tourism opportunities that Moy could develop.

Moy is twinned with Bosco Marengo which does not appear to be utilised to its full potential.



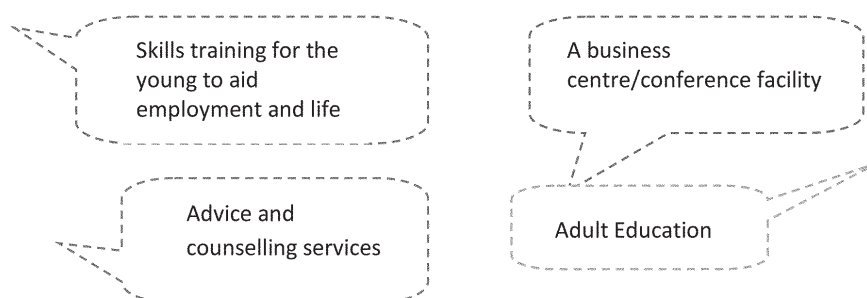
Consultation & Findings

Education & Training

The schools provision in Moy Village is well catered for with a cross community play group, St John's Primary School and Moy Regional Primary School. Although the provision of services from each of these schools is excellent, it is thought the schools facilities could be improved in terms of modern well equipped schools.

There is currently a proposal for a new shared school site in Moy. This could incorporate a school hall facility which would cater for the community also. This would be considered the perfect solution for a multi-purpose community hall.

There are currently no training centres or educational services available in Moy which, if available, could boost skills in the youth to prepare them for employment and also could be used for adult education and enterprise initiatives. There is a potential for providing young people with volunteering opportunities and subsequent qualification recognition that goes with that to prepare them for employment. Moy was also identified as lacking in advice/counselling services.

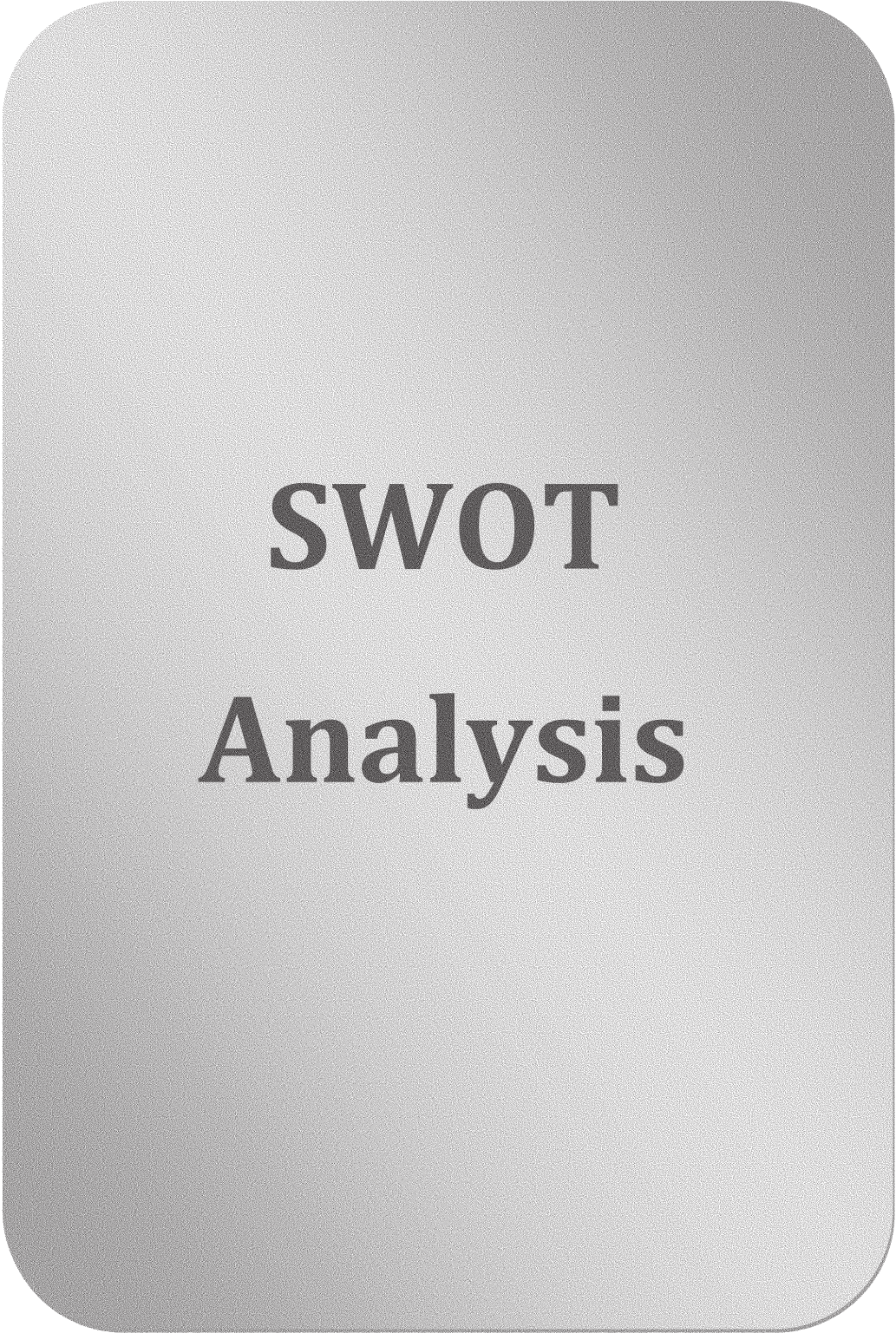


Employment

An opportunity exists to provide incubation services for start-up business ideas, which could be linked to training/educational services.

An area should be set aside for feeder business start-up units to support larger industries in the area and make Moy a destination for business to locate.

Summer season licensed boat operator and knock on tourism business spend.



SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis

The key priorities have been consolidated to form a SWOT analysis of the village.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong community spirit • Good community involvement • Safe community to live in • Clean, tidy and well kept village • Positive community services from the churches • Excellent schools both pre-school and primary • Strong heritage and conservation village with general attractiveness • Well provided GAA grounds • Presence of vast number of Historical sights, monuments, locations • Location on A29 – major arterial route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level Anti-social behaviour in public places (alcohol abuse) • Lack of open spaces • Nowhere to freely meet socially at any time • Poor maintenance of streetscape features & attractions • Absence of a Business Park • Small play park on outskirts of village not conducive for use by whole community • Lack of leisure/sports facilities especially for youth • Litter problem on Moy Square • Church halls not able to cater for all the needs of the community • Little or no provisions for older people socially or otherwise • No training or education services provided in the village • No safe access to the river for walks or sporting • No clearly signed or safe walking routes around the village

SWOT Analysis

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need and desire for change within the community • Community can therefore become more involved • Multi-purpose hall/community centre linked with Schools Shared Site Project • Promote greater inter-group/body collaboration • Opportunity to provide youth/older people services in the community • Promote community hall events • Develop an outdoor focal point for community to come together • Regeneration of Killyman Street to encourage economic development • Opportunity for more parking by opening up courtyards • Develop major community events to promote social inclusion • Further links with PSNI to protect village and reduce antisocial behaviour • Tourism opportunities promoting heritage sites and people of the past • Develop Tourism around River Blackwater and enhance local use • Need closer collaboration with Charlemont side of cluster to form a more strategic alliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derelict/vacant properties • Traffic congestion and lack of parking discourages visitors to stop • Deterioration of existing community halls. Inaccessible/safety issues • Absence of rural transport to Village • People travelling to Dungannon or Armagh for other services • MACADA members all voluntary and the need to retain position and encourage new members, manpower to consider all opportunities • Sustainability of Controlled School without Shared Campus proposal

Developments to Date

Developments to Date

Since the time that the consultation process was conducted (January 2013) until the writing of this report (November 2013), MACADA have made some progress in addressing a number of the issues.

Key Issues Addressed

- It was suggested that the community start to utilise current community halls that were available for use. Moy have in use, 4 Church halls and 2 schools halls 7 days a week for activities for the whole community.
- A very successful Cross Community Summer Scheme was supported by MACADA and occurred on both primary school sites at different times.
- An old and unused snooker club has now been refurbished and reopened and in its first month of opening have 40 members and creating one part time job.
- A youth club "Fusion" is now fully subscribed, providing a place for 11 year olds and up to go on Friday evenings instead of 'hanging about' the village. This has been a success attracting youth from both sides of the community.
- A monthly "What's On" newsletter is being produced by MACADA which highlights all of the activities available in Moy each night and also what special things are featuring that month. (Appendix 2)
- MACADA established networks with the local police (PSNI) to look at matters of alcohol and drugs within the community and to set out targets of addressing this. A CHOICE programme was offered to the youth of Moy.
- A project to create further dialogue on our past, the outcome of which is intended to Re-image the village through the Arts, is also underway at Phase I.
- Annual Christmas lights are delivered each and every year.
- Production of a Village Welcome Pack for all new comers to the village is underway.
- Early feasibility into the production of a paper-back book of approximately 200 pages defining the history of Moy and Charlemont.

This would serve as a great educator to all that live in the village as to our longer term history and it is hoped that by educating our inhabitants, that this will encourage us to uniformly promote and protect our own history

Developments to Date

Shared Sports Facilities

Moy Regional Primary School and St. Johns primary school have produced and submitted a plan to the education board regarding Shared Schools Facilities. This is now a project which will have a huge impact on the Moy Community. The element of this plan in which the wider community have vested interest in, would be the potential shared use of the hall facilities which could encompass all of the key sporting and social priorities suggested. This could potentially double up as a community centre which could host all of the additional community activities, when the local church halls are deemed unsuitable for a particular use/event.

Government/Statutory Bodies Contact

MACADA have already contacted numerous bodies to establish whether any plans for Moy are in the pipeline and also to develop the first step in creating a partnership for the future regeneration of Moy. The bodies contacted were:

Dungannon Council
Blackwater Regional Partnership
DRD
Water Service
DARD
SWARD
Rivers Agency
Historic Buildings Council
PSNI
NIHE

Action Plan

Action Plan

The tables below provide a summary of the agreed actions to be taken forward under the Integrated Village Action Plan for Moy. The time frame is split into 3 categories; short term (up to 1 year); medium term (1-3 years); long term (over 3 years)

Moy Action Plan							
Priority: Leisure							
Parks / Open Spaces / Leisure Facilities							
Initiative	Action	Current Position	Delivery Partners	Potential Cost	Funding Sources	Time Frame	Priority Level
Open Space	Create a green area with seating, kids facilities, walks, natural features, coffee kiosk (Appendix 5)	No zones, Potential site	Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	£1.5m	HLF – Parks for People up to 90% over £1m	Medium Term	High
Sports Facilities & Community Hall	Enhance offering of Shared Schools site to provide 4g covered surface outside& community hall with sports/stage/changing rooms	Awaiting announcement form D.O.E. & £300k SIF application made by SELB	DARD, SELB, DOE, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	variable	DARD, SIF, DOE, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	Long Term	High
Commercial Enterprise - Snooker Club	Provide recreation resource to the village	Delivered & created 1nr part time job	NIHE, MACADA	£5.8k	Shared Community Programme, MACADA	Delivered	High
Village Walks	Provide a safe and interesting loop for pedestrians (Option I & II) Option III would be to link with Charlemont Village to provide a larger more interesting walk (Appendix 6)	Proposed Route identified (Appendix 6)	DRD, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council, MACADA SOAR, Armagh Council, CCDA	£50k - £250k	SWARD, DSTBC, DRD, NIEA (Countryside access £120k as 75% of total) Central Good Relations Funding Programme	Short Term	High

Action Plan

Moy Action Plan						
Priority: Leisure Parks / Open Spaces / Leisure Facilities						
Initiative	Action	Current Position	Delivery Partners	Potential Cost	Funding Sources	Time Frame Priority Level
River Walk to Argory	Propose a walkway along River Blackwater from Moy/Charlemont to The Argory (2miles) (Appendix 7)	Route Identified (Appendix 6)	DSTBC, Armagh Council, Blackwater Project, Ulster Canal Linear Developments Project, SOAR, SWARD National Trust, CCDA	£500k	DSTBC, Armagh Council, Blackwater Project, Ulster Canal Linear Developments Project, SOAR, SWARD, national Trust	Long Term Low

Action Plan

Moy Action Plan							
Priority: Community							
Community Centre/Events/Youth/Older People/Social Issues							
Initiative	Action	Current Position	Delivery/ Partners	Potential Cost	Funding Sources	Time Frame	Priority Level
St James Parish Hall - community use	Upgrade facility to fit for purpose	Design stage	Church of Ireland	£500k	HLF	Medium Term	High
Moy Presbyterian Church – community use	Maintain current approach	New build serving all of the community at different events	Moy Presbyterian Hall Committee & various at events	n/a	Private	Delivered	Medium
Moy Methodist Hall – community use	Maintain current approach	Fit for day to day use for meetings & small groups	Moy Methodist Church Committee, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	n/a	Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	Current	Medium
Annual events	Re-establish an annual Christmas Lights Ceremony	Plan to establish a sub-committee in early 2014 to deliver for 2014	Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council, Shared Communities Programme & MACADA	£15,000	Community Festival Grant, Shared Communities Programme & MACADA	Short Term	High
Annual Event/ Tourism	Re-establish an annual horse related event for Moy, as 1-2 day event	Plan to establish a sub-committee to lead a workable scheme	Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council, NIHE, MACADA	£25,000	Shared Communities Programme, Good Relations	Medium Term	Low

Action Plan

Moy Action Plan							
Priority: Community							
Community Centre/Events/Youth/Older People/Social Issues							
Initiative	Action	Current Position	Delivery/ Partners	Potential Cost	Funding Sources	Time Frame	Priority Level
Youth Activity Programme	Develop a youth volunteering & Leadership Programme	For Consideration	Consideration	Not known	Not known	Long Term	Medium
Annual Event/Community Involvement	Renewal of active Participation in Tidy Garden Bloom Competition	For Consideration	MACADA, Good Relations, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	Not known	MACADA, Good Relations, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	Medium Term	Medium
Annual Event/Community Involvement	Support to Boxing day Hunt. Jaunting car hire, other traditional activities linked to hunt	For Consideration	MACADA, Good Relations, Dgn & Sth Tyrone Borough Council	Not known	Not known	Long Term	Low
Delivery of bi-monthly Village Newsletters	Electronic and paper newsletters distributed throughout the village	Active	MACADA, My Club, Southern Trust	£1.8k pa	MACADA & Southern Trust	Current	High

Action Plan

Moy Action Plan						
Priority: Infrastructure Property/Business/Roads/Transport						
Initiative	Action	Current Position	Delivery/ Partners	Potential Cost	Funding Sources	Time Frame Priority Level
Killyman St "Hillsborough Effect"	Master-plan for street-scape & uses. Actively target end users.	Concept Stage	DARD, NITB, DRD, DSTBC, MACADA, Planning Service	£550k	HLF, Architectural Heritage Fund Grant	Medium Term High
Enhance Architectural Value of Moy	Task force to co-ordinate with local council, GovtDeptesp NIEA to deliver, protect & improvements. VAT free scheme for improvements.	Key concerns identified	NIEA, DSTBC, DRD, DARD, HLF, Planning Service	Not agreed	NIEA, HLF, others to be identified	Long Term Medium
Provision of additional parking areas	Deliver more parking for day long parkers, free up parking for visitors & customers	Concept stage & property owner consultations	DRD, DSTBC, MACADA, property owners, Planning Service	Not agreed	Not clarified	Medium Term High
Traffic Congestion	Establish working group to liaise with authorities to provide workable solutions	Initial proposals with Killyman Street junction & additional parking	DRD, DOE, DARD	£30k	DRD, DOE	Short Term High

Action Plan

Moy Action Plan							
Priority: Economic Tourism/Employment/Training							
Initiative	Action	Current Position	Delivery Partners	Potential Cost	Funding Sources	Time Frame	Priority Level
Employment	Task force to identify & establish a suitable site for provision of start-up business units& training	Concept stage	DRD, DSTBC, MACADA, property owners, Planning Service, Armagh Council, CCDA	Not known	Not considered	Long term	Medium
Conservation Area Status	Ensure all public works are completed to NIEA guidelines within the Conservation Area re. Area Plan	Ongoing	DRD, Planning Service, NIEA, MACADA, DSTBC	Project related	HLF, MACADA,	Ongoing	High
Charlemont Fort	Provide a major tourist attraction	Landowner discussions	NIEA, NITB, planning Service, Armagh council, Charlemont & Collegelands DA	Not known yet	HLF – our heritage programme	TBC	Medium
River Blackwater	Provide walkway along the river & uses along the river e.g. seating	Concept Design	Blackwater Project, SWARD, NIEA, Planning Service.	£150k	SWARD, Space & Place.	Short Term	High
Tourism enhancement	Explore & promote the link with John B King, or other shared history ideas	Currently underway	Arts Council, NIEA, DSTBC, MACADA, Planning Service, DRD	£50k	Arts Council	Active	Medium
History	Production of 200page book on history c/w illustrations & photos	Research to commence	Historical society, NIHE, MACADA, CCDA	£11.5k	Shared Communities programme, Awards for All, HLF sharing Heritage	Active	High

Conclusion

Conclusion

Conclusion

This Action Plan steers a clear way forward for the delivery of comprehensive and appropriate regeneration actions/initiatives for the advancement of Moy Village. This Action Plan should bring a focus to our local priorities and should encourage engagement between different players in the Community Development Sector and interaction between different sectors e.g. local business and community groups.

As in the SWOT analysis, the strong community spirit and energy within Moy is apparent and this will be invaluable in leading the delivery of this Action Plan. The constituent members of the Group will have the capacity to lead, implement and deliver the actions within the Plan and will also have the capability to identify, apply for and manage funding streams. The actions identified clearly reflect a broad and inclusive consultation with local community, businesses and service providers. The actions emphasised are those which have been identified and brought forward from the local community, as opposed to any that could be identified on any statutory 'wish-list'. It is considered that the local community have an excellent chance of achieving the Action Plans they have identified.

The Group plan to create sub committees/task forces to individually lead and drive certain projects. Each sub group should meet once a month and feed into the larger group on a quarterly basis to update on actions/initiatives. MACADA are very committed to the future of Moy and will carry out a review on the overall progress and report on the Village Action Plan on an annual basis.

MACADA also recognise the importance of their neighbouring association for Charlemont & Collegelands Development Association (CCDA) and the value of a more collaborative approach with them, in order to enhance our collective offering. Several projects listed will require a joint approach.

MACADA at this juncture, also recognise the need to become more formal in their engagement with local council and statutory bodies. MACADA want to establish a forum for receiving information from all state bodies, so that it can consider all matters in the pipeline and hence input to these decision-making processes, so that the end result can better assist the whole of Moy Community.

MACADA want to create an interactive vibrant village community in social and economic terms, in order to protect its future and lead the way to a positive, sustainable and all inclusive village community of the 21st century and setting the new benchmark in Northern Ireland.

Conclusion

MACADA want their lead partner to be Dungannon & South Tyrone Council, especially to share their vision for their borough and to assist each other in achieving Economic Development & Tourism, rural regeneration and environmental sustainability. There will be a sincere focus on provision of community space, building good relations and cultural development.

MACADA would also welcome more formal arrangements with NIEA, DRD, DARD, DECAL, DEL, DOE, DSD, NIHE, PSNI, Southern Trust and local church bodies to help MACADA and Moy community to deliver our VISION.

MACADA feel that the perception of Moy Village is better than the reality and we want to be partners in improving the reality..... And to make Moy a better place to live.

Appendix 1

MACADA CONSTITUTION

MOY AREA COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name of the Association shall be the Moy Area Community and Development Association (hereinafter called the 'Development Association').

2. OBJECTS

The Development Association is established to -:

- 2.1** Relieve the sick and the aged and to promote the benefit of inhabitants of Moy, Charlemont and surrounding district areas of Co Tyrone and Co Armagh (hereinafter described as 'the area of benefit') without distinction of age, sex, race, political, religious or other opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants;
- 2.2** To establish or to secure the establishment of a Community Centre (hereinafter called 'the Centre') and to maintain and manage, or to co-operate with any local statutory authority in the maintenance and management of such a Centre for activities promoted by the Development Association and its constituent bodies in furtherance of the above objects.
- 2.3** In furtherance of the above objects, but not further otherwise, the Development association may:-
- 2.3.1** provide or secure the provision of social services, recreational facilities and practical assistance for elderly and disabled people within the area of benefit;
- 2.3.2** provide, maintain and equip or assist in the

provision, maintenance and equipment of premises and facilities designed to carry out the objects of the Development Association;

- 2.3.3** promote and carry out, or assist in promoting and carrying out research, surveys and investigations and publishing the useful results thereof;
- 2.3.4** organise or assist in organising meetings, lectures, classes and exhibitions, and publish or assist in publishing reports, periodicals, recordings, books or other documents or information;
- 2.3.5** obtain, collect and receive money by way of grants, donations, bequests, legacies or other lawful method, provided that the Development Association may not engage in any form of permanent trading;
- 2.3.6** purchase take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any real or personal property and any rights and privileges necessary for the promotion of the above objects and construct, maintain and alter any buildings or erections which the Development Association may think necessary for the promotion of its objects;
- 2.3.7** make any regulations for any property which may be so acquired;
- 2.3.8** subject to any consents as may be required by law, sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of the Development Association with a view to the furtherance of its objects;
- 2.3.9** receive money on deposit or loan and borrow or raise money in such a manner as the Development Association shall think fit subject to such consents as may be required by law;
- 2.3.10** invest the monies of the Development Association not immediately required for furtherance of the said objects in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought

fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law;

- 2.3.11** recruit and train volunteers with relevant skills to carry out the objects of the Development Association;
- 2.3.12** employ and pay person or persons, not being a member of the Management Committee referred to below ('the Committee') to supervise, organise and carry on the work of the Development Association and make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of remuneration to employees;
- 2.3.13** to promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the above objects and to that end to work in association with local authorities and voluntary organisations engaged in the furtherance of the above objects in the area of benefit;
- 2.3.14** do all such other lawful things as may be necessary for the attainment of the above objects or any of them;

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1** Membership of the Development Association shall be open, irrespective of political party, nationality, religion or political opinion to residents of the villages of Moy and Charlemont and their surrounding districts who shall be over the age of sixteen years. Candidates for membership of the Development Association shall be proposed by a member of the Development Association and seconded by another and their name handed to the Honorary Secretary. Membership shall be granted by a two-thirds majority of the Committee present at the Committee meeting voting on the nomination.

4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 4.1** Except as provided otherwise in this constitution the policy and General management of the affairs of the Development Association shall be directed by the Committee which shall meet not less than 10 times in a year

and shall consist of not less than 10 members of the Development Association, elected at an Annual General Meeting.

- 4.2** Nominations from full members of the Development Association for members of the Committee must be in writing, and must be in the hands of the Honorary Secretary of the Development Association at least 7 days before the Annual General Meeting hereinafter mentioned.
- 4.3** Should the number of nominations exceed the number of vacancies, election shall be by secret ballot of the members of the Development Association present and voting at an Annual General Meeting.
- 4.4** Should the number of nominations be less than the number of vacancies, further oral nominations may, with the approval of the Annual General Meeting be invited from members present and voting at the said Annual General Meeting.
- 4.5** The Committee elected at an Annual General Meeting shall have the power to co-opt further members of the Development Association who shall serve until the conclusion of the next following Annual General Meeting provided that the number of co-opted members shall not exceed one-third of the total membership of the Committee.
- 4.6** The Chairman, Vice-Chairperson, Honorary Secretary, Minutes Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, who shall be the Honorary Officers of the Development Association, and shall be elected annually by and from the members of the Committee at the Annual General Meeting. The office of Chairperson shall not be held by any one person for more than 3 consecutive years and may be rotated with the consent of all the Committee on a six-monthly basis between each Annual General Meeting.
- 4.7** Any member of the Committee who commits a breach of the Development Association rules, becomes bankrupt, insolvent or compounds with his/her creditors or becomes of unsound mind or fails to attend 6 consecutive Committee meetings without reasonable excuse shall lose his/her place on the Committee which may be filled by co-option in accordance with Clause 4.6 above.

5. FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

- 5.1** The Committee may make such regulations as they consider appropriate for the efficient conduct of the business of the Committee and the Development Association.
- 5.2** The Committee may appoint such staff as they consider necessary on such terms and conditions as they may determine.
- 5.3** The Committee may appoint such sub-committees, advisory groups or working parties of their own members and other persons as they may from time to time decide necessary for the carrying out of their work and may determine their terms of reference, duration and composition. All such sub-committees shall make regular reports on their work to the Committee.
- 5.4** The Chairman, Honorary Minutes Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of all sub-committees.
- 5.5** The proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalidated by any failure to elect or any defect in the election, appointment, co-options or qualifications of any member.
- 6. CHAIRING MEETINGS**
- All meetings of the Development Association or of the Committee or of any of its sub-committees shall be presided over its Chairperson failing whom its Vice-Chairperson, if one has been appointed. If neither the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson are present, those present may elect one of their number to take the Chair. The Chairperson of any meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
- 7. FINANCE**
- 7.1** All monies raised by or on behalf of the Development Association shall be applied to further the objects of the Development Association and for no other purpose provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment of legitimate out-of-pocket expenses to members of the Development Association engaged upon the approved business of the Development Association.
- 7.2** The Honorary Treasurer shall keep accounts of the finances of

the Development Association.

7.3 The financial year of the Development Association shall run from 1 April to 31 March.

7.4 The accounts shall be audited at least once a year by an auditor who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

7.5 An audited statements accounts for the last financial year shall be submitted by the Committee to the Annual General Meeting.

7.6 Bank accounts shall and may be opened in the name of the Development Association with Ulster Bank Limited, The Square, Moy or with such other bank as the Committee shall from time to time decide. The Committee shall authorise the Chairman, the Honorary Treasurer and one other member of this Committee to sign cheques on behalf of the Development Association. All cheques must be signed by 2 of the 3 authorised signatories.

8. TRUST PROPERTY

8.1 All the real and personal property of the Development Association shall be vested in not less than three Trustees who shall hold such property in trust for the Development Association.

8.2 The Trustee shall hold office for life unless by not less than 28 days notice in writing they resign or unless they are removed from office by the Committee.

8.3 A Trustee shall be removed from office if he/she:-

8.3.1 commits any wilful breach of the rules of the
Development Association or regulations made
there under;

8.3.2 becomes convicted of any criminal offence not
being an offence under the Road Traffic Act (NI)
1970 or any re-enactment thereof or an offence
under the Roads and Road Traffic (NI) Order 1981;

8.3.3 becomes bankrupt or compounds with her/his creditors or seeks protection of the Court with a view to making an arrangement with her/his creditors;

8.3.4 becomes of unsound mind;

8.3.5 fails to perform any function properly required of her/him by the Committee;

8.3.6 the Committee by a two-thirds majority decide in its discretion that she/he should be removed;

8.4 Trustees shall be ex-officio members of the Committee without

the power to vote.

8.5 Any vacancy in the office of Trustees shall be filled by the remaining Trustees.

9 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9.1 An Annual General Meeting of the Development Association shall be held at such place and time (not being more than 15 months after holding of the preceding Annual General Meeting) as the Committee shall determine. The Annual General Meeting shall if possible, be held on the third Thursday in January of each year, or as near as possible thereto.

9.2 The Committee shall stand down at the Annual General Meeting; all retiring Officers and members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election except those who have attended less than 75% of Committee Meetings held during the previous year.

9.3 At such Annual General Meeting the business shall include the following:-

9.3.1 the election of the Honorary Officers to serve on the Committee;

9.3.2 the appointment of an auditor or auditors;

9.3.3 the consideration of an Annual Report of the work done by or under the auspices of the Committee;

9.3.4 the consideration of the audited accounts;

- 9.3.5** the transaction of such other matters as may from time to time be considered necessary.

10 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- 10.1** The Committee may at any time at its discretion and shall upon a requisition signed by not less than 10 members having the power to vote and giving reasons for the request, call a special General Meeting of the Development

Association for the purpose of altering the constitution in accordance with Clause 12 hereof or of considering any matter which may be referred to them by the Committee or of any other purpose.

- 10.2** The Honorary Secretary may require from the persons requisitioning a Special General Meeting such sums as may be necessary to cover the expense of calling a meeting provided that the meeting shall not hereby be precluded from considering a resolution that expenses of the meeting be met by the Development Association.

11 RULES OF PROCEDURE AT ALL MEETINGS

Voting

- 11.1** Subject to the provisions of Clause 12 and 13 hereof all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote thereat. In case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

Minutes

- 11.2** Minute books shall be kept by the Committee and all the other sub-committees and the appropriate Honorary Secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings be 6 or such other numbers as the committee may from time to time determine.

Quorum

- 11.3** The quorum at the annual General Meeting and any Special Meetings of the Development Association shall be 10 and at meetings of the Committee shall be 6 or such other numbers as the Committee may from time to time determine.

Standing Order

- 11.4** The Committee shall have the power to adopt and issue Standing Orders and/or Rules for the Development Association. Such Standing Orders and/or Rules shall come into operation immediately provided that they shall be subject to review by the Development Association in General Meeting and shall not be inconsistent with their constitution.

Notices

- 11.5** Notice of the Annual General Meeting and any Special General Meeting specifying the business to be conducted thereat shall be given in writing by the Honorary Secretary to each member of the Development Association at his/her last known address not less than 7 days prior to the date fixed for the meeting or, if the Committee so decides, notice shall be duly given if advertised twice in a newspaper circulating throughout Northern Ireland not less than 10 days prior to the meeting. Notices sent by post shall be deemed to have been served 2 days after posting and in proving such service it shall be necessary only for it to be proved that such notice was properly addressed, that postage was prepaid and that the envelope was delivered to the Post Office.

12. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 12.1** Any alterations to this constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Development Association present and voting at the Annual General Meeting or a meeting specially called for the purpose provided that notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the Honorary Secretary in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which the alteration is to be brought forward.
- 12.2** At least 14 clear days notice in writing of the meeting setting forth

the terms of the alteration to be proposed shall be sent by the Honorary Secretary to each member of the Development Association provided further that no alteration shall be made which would cause the Development Association to cease to be a charity at law.

13. DISSOLUTION

13.1 If the Committee by a simple majority decide at any time that on the grounds of expenses or otherwise it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Development Association they shall call a meeting of all members of the Development Association who have the power to vote of which meeting not less than 21 days notice (stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat) shall be given.

13.2 If such decision shall be confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at such meeting the Committee shall have the power to dispose of any assets held by or in the name of the Development Association.

13.3 Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Development Association as the Committee may decide.

14. INDEMNITY

The Development Association shall indemnify and keep indemnified every officer, member, volunteer and employee of the Development Association from and against all claims, demands, actions and proceedings (and all costs and expenses in connection therewith on arising there from) made or brought against the Development Association in connection with its activities, the actions of its officers, members, volunteers or employees, or in connection with its property and equipment. The Honorary Treasurer shall effect a policy of insurance in respect of this indemnity.

Appendix 2

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

What's On!

May/June

NEW SNOOKER CLUB

Help Required

MACADA are currently seeking an active person with interest in snooker to help run proposed new snooker club in Jockey Lane. (May suit retired person) If you are interested in this position, please contact: info@macada.org.uk

If you have any ideas on events that can be run in any of the above halls please contact MACADA at info@macada.org.uk

May

May Playgroup Pub Quiz
9pm P&S, Dungannon St Moy
byrne20@btinternet.com

June
Art Exhibition & Craft Fair
20th to 22nd June
Moy Presbyterian Hall

Health & Safety at Work
First Aid course
3 day course £100
date & venue to be confirmed.
limited to 12 places
contact Teresa Sutton for details

Multicultural International Big Breakfast
June 15th
St. John's PS Moy

SQUARE WHEELS CYCLE CLUB

May - Tyrone/Armagh

Club Open Day
Sunday May 12th, 10.30am

Speeds & distances for all rallies.
First coffee & cake in Tyrone 3.15 after lunch.
facebook.com/52440440
www.squarewheels.org.uk

weekend or reduced rates, 77.
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Youth

What's On!

May 2013

Newsletter of
Moy Area Community
and Development Association



Newsletter of
Moy Area Community
and Development Association

What's On!

May 2013

Monday

Moy Quilting Club
11am-1pm
Methodist Hall

**After schools multi
sport games &
activities (P6/P7)**
3.30-4.30pm
St. John's P.S. / £1
Karol McQuade / 07825 859705

U6 Funstart (4-6yrs)
6pm
St. John's P.S. / £1
Karol McQuade / 07825 859705

Yoga
6.45pm
St. John's Primary School /
£5 Karol McQuade / 07825
859705

Circuits
7pm-8pm
Moy Presbyterian Hall / £4
Arlene Burke / 07799 321994

Junior Badminton
6.30pm-7.45pm
Church of Ireland Hall £1
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312

Senior Badminton
8pm-10.30pm
Church of Ireland Hall
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312

Craft Club
7.30-9.30 pm
Church of Ireland Hall
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312
(Starts 8th April)

Tuesday

**Early Morning Spin
Class**
6.30-7.15am
St. John's Parochial Hall £5
Paddy Dillon / 07976 435095

Slimming World
9.30-10.30am
5.30-6.30pm
7.30-8.30pm
St. John's Parochial Hall
Gill 028 3885 1124

Bowling Club (Over 16s)
8pm
Church of Ireland Hall
Rev A. Mayes / Annual Club
Membership

Monthly Bible Study
8pm only
Church of Ireland Hall
Tuesday 7th 8pm / Rev A.
Mayes

Wednesday

Moy Cosy Club
2-4pm Methodist Hall

French Club
4.30-5.30pm Methodist Hall

Walking Club
10am
Church of Ireland Hall
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312

Carroll Irish Dancing
6.30-8pm
St. John's Parochial Hall
Gerard / 07871 600260

Anchor Boys (5-8yrs)
6.30-7.45pm
Church of Ireland Hall £1
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312

Keep Fit

8-9pm
Church of Ireland Hall
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312

Thursday

Weight Watchers
6.30-8.30pm Methodist Hall

**Early Morning Spin
Class**
6.30-7.15am
St. John's Parochial Hall £5
Paddy Dillon / 07976 435095

Carer and Toddler
10am-12noon
Church of Ireland Hall
Rev A. Mayes / 028 87784312

Women's Circuits
6.15pm
St. John's Primary School /
£5 Karol McQuade / 07825
859705

U8 Funstart
5.30pm / St. John's Primary
School / Karol McQuade

Friday

Girls Brigade
7-9pm
Moy Presbyterian Hall
Fusion Youth Club (11-)
Church of Ireland Hall £1

**Moy Young Women's
Group**
Every 1st, 2nd and 3rd
Friday of the month @ Moy
Community Centre
(Methodist Hall) 6pm-9pm
Contact Teresa Sutton
07845 486230

**Fusion Youth Club
(11-)**
Church of Ireland Hall
£1 per night
8pm-10pm Rev A. Mayes

Saturday

Moy Wheelers
9am Moy Square
Martin McGee 07423457140

**U8 & U10
Gaelic Football**
10am Moy GAC pitch
Roman Conroy 07821082786

Morning Spin Class
9.30-10.15am
St. John's Parochial Hall £5
Paddy Dillon / 07976 435095
Starts 11th May

Sunday

Moy Wheelers
9am Moy Square
Martin McGee 07423457140

**ALIVE (Always Live
In View Of Eternity)**
Methodist Community Hall
Youth Fellowship 7.00pm to
9.30pm Last Sunday of each
month. Open to all aged 13
years and over. Mandie
Emerson
mandieemerson@aol.com

Appendix 3

BACKGROUND HISTORY OF MOY

A Short History of the Moy

In the mid-18th century the area where the Moy village now stands and all the surrounding lands was owned by James Caulfield 4th Viscount Charlemont, later first Earl, known in history as the Volunteer Earl. He was a direct descendant of Toby Caulfield, first Baron Caulfield, the original Governor of Charlemont fort and an important Captain in the service of Elizabeth 1 and King James 1. In 1755 Thomas Adderley an Irish Squire who had married Lord Charlemont's widowed mother and who acted as his advisor informed him that limestone deposits had been discovered across the river Blackwater and suggested he build a new town there. The building of new planned towns or the redesign of older towns was very fashionable with the wealthy landowning ascendancy at that time.

In 1764 the new town was built on formal lines with a central tree lined square or diamond.

The buildings had a distinctive Georgian appearance but the square was different from other new towns of the period with a distinctly continental appearance. It is said to be modelled on the Lombardy village of Bosco Marengo which the young Viscount had visited during his then fashionable grand tour.

The geographic location of the new town was an important feature in its future development. It was located on the main coach road between the important towns of Armagh and Dungannon and crossed a substantial bridge over the river Blackwater. The bridge had first been erected by Lord Mountjoy in 1602 to open a new route to Dungannon. The wooden structure had been replaced by this time, 1766, by a five arch stone structure. This was rebuilt in 1854 by William Dargan the famous railway and canal engineer as a three arch bridge which is still in use today. The new town provided coaching stops and accommodation for travellers and an important postal service. In 1744 the Newry (at that time the most important sea port in the North of Ireland, much bigger than Belfast) to Portadown canal opened and this was linked to Lough Neagh which was then linked to Charlemont and Moy by the navigable section of the Blackwater River. This accessibility greatly enhanced the commercial development of the new Town.

The Volunteer Earl who never lived or spent much time in Moy, as he was very involved in national politics, did two additional things which would have long term consequences for the Town. In 1761 he instructed a member of the gentry, James Verner who lived in an estate at Church Hill near Moy, to organise a monthly sale of horses from Lord Charlemont's large stocks. This was undoubtedly the beginning of the Moy horse fair which grew into one of the biggest in Europe and for which the Moy became internationally famous. For example, according to war office records, many of the officers' chargers and trooper mounts for the Inniskillen dragoons which took place in the famous Union

Brigade charge at Waterloo were purchased in the Moy and the same applies to some of the chargers used in the charge of the immortal 600. The Moy fair continued to grow and produce prosperity for the town right into the early twentieth century when the horse dealing business of the Lavery brothers dominated the commercial activity of the Moy. After the Great War the use of horses began to reduce due to rapid developments in the internal combustion engine but Lavery Bros took on a massive contract with the Greek government in 1922 when they became involved in the Greek / Turkish war. The Greeks defaulted on their contract and left Lavery Bros holding huge stocks of horses in Moy which they had to feed and look after. This eventually caused them to become bankrupt and it devastated the once prosperous village for years to come. The Moy fair and market continued right up to the early 1950's but it was a steadily declining event, a mere shadow of its glorious past.

The second thing which the first Earl caused to happen was the building in the 1770's of a substantial house just outside the town called, Roxborough. This was originally for his brother the Honourable Captain Francis Caulfield M.P. for Charlemont. Unfortunately tragedy struck shortly after the Building was completed. Captain Francis, his wife and children were lost at sea when the ship they had chartered to carry furniture which they had bought in London for the new house sank during a storm in the Irish Sea.

The volunteer Earl died in 1799 just before the Act of Union and was succeeded by Francis William, the second Earl. He was not as involved in politics and spent substantially more time on his Northern estates. It was he who promoted a spate of buildings and improvements in the Moy. These included St James Episcopalian church built in the Gothic style in 1819, the market house (destroyed by a bomb in the early 1970's) which served as a public reading rooms and court house and to the rear of it a shambles market which developed substantially in the latter half of the 19th century under the direction of a Moy market committee. Francis William was a liberal minded landlord and after the act of Catholic Emancipation in 1828 he encouraged the building of St John's Catholic Church in 1833. Incidentally the front and the tower is now clad with stone from Roxborough Castle after it was eventually demolished in 1920. He also supported the building of a new Presbyterian church a little later in 1855.

The potato famine in Ireland caused poverty and deprivation in the Moy as elsewhere although the Earl was one of the more supportive of the Irish landlords. It was however one of the factors which caused a young Moy man called John King to leave the village and follow his father into the army. After serving in India, he left the army shortly after the Indian mutiny to bring a team of camels to Australia and join the Burke Wills exploration expedition in Melbourne.

He was the only survivor of that fateful expedition which crossed Australia from Melbourne on the South coast to the North coast across the uncharted outback to the Gulf of

Carpentaria, a trek of some 3000 miles. John King is probably the most famous Moy man in the world today, although relatively unknown in his native town.

In the early 1840's before the famine, the second Earl became absorbed with remodelling Roxborough and creating a landscaped estate suitable for a man of his status. Stables, kitchens, servants' quarters and out offices were added. From the 1850's a lot of rebuilding and additions were made to Roxborough "Castle" in a variety of classical and continental styles. He was also responsible for promoting the new railway line from Portadown to Dungannon with a convenient station stop at Trew and Moy outside the town. This was to have beneficial results in the future for Moy fair and the general commercial life of the town. On the death of the second Earl in 1861, the third Earl continued to develop the "Castle" and estate as was fashionable among late Victorian gentry. He built a number of stone gate houses at the various entrances, a magnificent cast iron entrance which is still intact today, a iron railed deer park, beautiful gardens and green houses, 700 acres of landscaped parkland laid out with walks, fountains, statues, artificial ponds etc and of course a tall tower or folly which today is the only building remaining on the once opulent and splendid site. During that period the Earl promoted a major extension and alteration to St James church in the popular gothic style and sometime later the clock tower with its famous three faces were added. One of his prime objectives was to improve the appearance of his town of Moy and in this he was successful.

The new political dispensation in relation to land ownership and land rentals in the last part of the 19th and the first years of the twentieth century spelt the eventual end of the big ascendancy estates and the Charlemont family like many of their peers were in huge financial difficulty. The death of the third Earl in 1894 caused the closure of Roxborough Castle and the breaking up and eventual sale of the estate and other assets in the early 20th century. Roxborough was demolished in 1920 and the noble Charlemont dynasty lost its connection with the town it had founded.

Appendix 4

GREEN SPACE & PARK

PROPOSED GREEN SPACE & PARK FOR MOY VILLAGE



Appendix 5

VILLAGE WALK

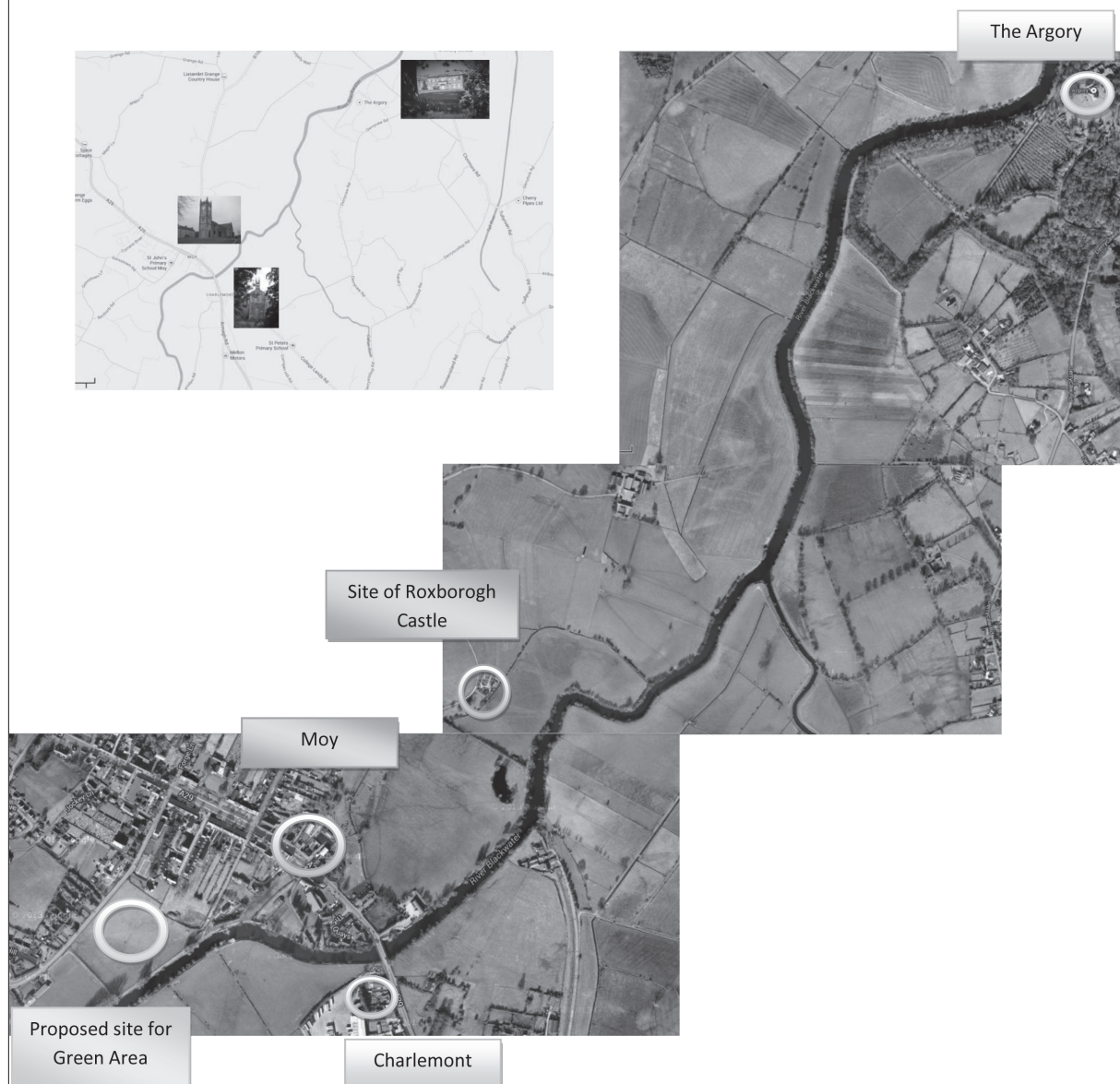
PROPOSED MOY VILLAGE WALK(S)



Appendix 6

RIVER WALKWAY

Map of Riverwalk from Moy/Charlemont to Argory



McEvoy, P

Shared Education

I am making this submission in a private capacity. I have been a teacher since 1967, in both England and in Northern Ireland, in both faith and 'state' schools.

I was cautiously optimistic in 2010 when the First Minister of Northern Ireland, Peter Robinson, stated very strongly that he saw Integrated schooling as the way forward for our society. I hoped that the day when the present 93/7% State/Integrated breakdown might finally dawn, with goodwill from all interested parties.

Then, when the 'Shared' Education model began to be mooted, my concerns grew that powerful interest groups must be influencing policy. All leaders seem to pay lip-service to the desirability of Integration but not to the extent of significantly furthering it.

Baroness Blood has called for a root and branch Enquiry into Education in Northern Ireland. Perhaps with such a thoroughgoing survey as this informing policy, the fundamental question of parental choice can be adequately aired and addressed. Faith lobbies, in particular, can be relied on to continue to emphasise the sectarian argument of parental choice, and the preservation of what they call 'ethos', ignoring the wider ramifications of the costs to society of their 'rights' being met. ('Ethos', it should be remembered, is not the preserve of any one sector. On listening to some commentators, however, it is quite clear that some 'ethoses' are more desirable than others!). While such standpoints must be heard, so too must the concerns of those – the vast majority in my view - who believe society should be aiming in the much shorter term for the establishment of a school system which integrates children, of all abilities, backgrounds, ethnicities and religions.

I have no doubt but that submissions to this Enquiry will quote the compelling international evidence in favour of educating children under one roof. (And in talking about 'rooves' I am not referring to experiments like that in the Moy which has all the hallmarks of an educational oxymoron). My reason for offering my perspective is based on my personal experiences in over 40 years of teaching in a wide variety of schools, faith and state, in both England and Northern Ireland. I was educated in Tipperary by the Christian Brothers, and am a graduate of UCD.

I was involved in the seminal educational debate in England in the '60s and onwards, which witnessed the incorporation of pupils from a wide array of origins and backgrounds. Such transformations necessitated the re-examining of curricula, overt and covert, in ensuring that schools did much more than pay lip-service to multi-ethnicity, but actually fashioned-out an ethos in which all pupils could flourish. This necessitated us as teachers confronting our own deeply held beliefs and prejudices. We who hail from the indigenous cultures of these islands have absorbed attitudes which run deep, and only a certain kind of accommodating educational environment can address the types of questions and issues which true integration throws up.

Those who demand segregated schooling speak a lot about the need to respect 'difference'. But the 'difference' that they are overly and disproportionately preoccupied with, happens to be probably, ultimately the least important, but potentially the most incendiary, of all human differences, which is that of religion. This religious segregating of children may have had a certain contested causality in the past, but in this era of multi-culturalism, it's becoming a privilege which is unsustainable. I taught in multi-ethnic schools in England, integrated schools, (though not in name), but, because of the insistence of Catholics, Anglicans and Jews on having their 'own' schools, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and other religious minorities began to demand this selfsame privilege. And thus was precipitated the further disintegration of the education service, and the growth of arguments for religion to be taken out of schools.

A faith school is too two-dimensional – it operates in an intellectually ‘safe’ context, which is the antithesis of true learning. A mixture of backgrounds and cultures provides the missing dimensions. With Northern Ireland’s fractious history, it is essential for schools to work towards that synthesis which is only possible with proper integration. ‘Half-way houses’ like those proposed by the Shared model, are exactly what Northern Ireland does not need. ‘Shared Education’ represents a failure to confront society’s most glaring needs.

While faith/segregated/sectarian schools can and indeed do, emphasise certain desirable values, they cannot, by their very nature, draw from that nurturing well which is generated by a cross-community, ethnically-mixed, religiously-diverse catchment of children. There is little possibility of true, lasting friendships developing until children, working at the same tables, eating at the same tables, playing in the same teams, acting in the same plays, playing in the same orchestras, visiting each others’ houses, (visiting each others’ places of worship?), see each other as nothing other, than merely other young label-less people.

In all my years in schools, I never once came across a teacher who expressed a preference for teaching ‘Catholic’, or ‘Protestant’, or ‘Muslim’, or ‘Jewish’, black or white, etc. ... children. Teachers prefer to teach the child who is before them and not one of a particular racial, religious, sexual, or any other label. In fact, if a teacher were to have strong preferences for such a sectarian catchment of children, I believe they would in so doing, be disqualifying themselves from the noble profession of teaching. And yet, teachers in Northern Ireland are trained in segregated training institutions, a medieval practice which should have no place in a modern society. Those with the power to effect and perpetuate such ghettoisation should be challenged. If there were a proposal to train doctors, lawyers, etc., along sectarian lines, questions would rightly be asked.

In the days when schools were well-subscribed, there was no urgency to change structures, except among the high-minded pioneers of the

Integrated Education movement. Now that numbers are dwindling, it would take a very uncynical person not to wonder if perhaps current preparedness to share resources had to do with such paucity of children. A figure that could run into the forties of millions of pounds, maybe more, while thousands of teachers and other staff lose their jobs, while children continue to be failed, has been suggested for this lurch into the worst of all possible carve-ups.

I would appeal to all power-brokers in the education world of Northern Ireland, particularly the CCMS, one of whose spokespersons has stated that the CCMS ‘neither supports nor opposes integrated education’, to re-consider the false path we are placing our children on with this ‘Shared’ trade-off. Why? Because it is not really ‘shared’ at all – not in the true meaning of that word. But it most assuredly looks like a trade-off to those of us looking-on powerlessly from the sidelines. If someone in Birmingham - England or Alabama - suggested a ‘shared’ campus, a la Northern Ireland, between Muslim and Jewish, or black and white children, in either place, the idea would be derided, and rightly so. We must ask ourselves what the essential difference is between such a disingenuous proposal as this, in those places, and that planned for the Moy, and other places in Northern Ireland. Shared education is segregation with a smiley mask on.

Because of the ‘parental choice’ millstone, politicians are afraid of rocking the educational/electoral boat and will opt for the line of least resistance. I believe that an Enquiry among the people of Northern Ireland, proposing universal Integrated education would command the support of the vast majority of people of good-will. The tail has wagged the dog for long enough and it is time people were given the choice of declaring what kind of society Northern Ireland should be. Intransigent rumps have held sway for far too long and it is time that the voice of the people, free from the browbeating of prelate, politician or propagandist, was heard and acted upon.

Paddy McEvoy

Methodist College - Briefing paper

Methodist College Belfast Briefing for Education Committee on the Diversity of the College

Areas to cover:

The Principal and representative of the Board of Governors thank the Education Committee for the opportunity to host their meeting and to present on the ethos of the College and the level of “mixing” in the school

1. Ethos

- a. opportunity diversity and excellence
- b. a values based educational experience (tolerance, respect, integrity, equality)
- c. pupils encouraged to develop compassion, self-awareness and independence of thought and spirit
- d. provide an education that is exciting, exacting, enriching and ennobling.

2. Extent of mixing

- a. Members of 23 different religious groupings
- b. Diverse ethnic mix, 87.6% white
- c. Diverse geographic mix – 43 postcodes – town and country

3. Reasons

- a. Aims and values lived out
- b. Opportunities to share experiences
- c. Commitment to making a difference: community involvement (local and global)
 - i. Salter Sterling Outreach Project
 - ii. Belfast Inter-Schools Creative Writing Forum
 - iii. University of Cambridge Higher Education Plus Programme
 - iv. Input into the Community Relations Council, the Sharing in Education Programme and the work of OFMDFM on developing a United Youth Policy
 - v. contributor to the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life: community, diversity and the common good
 - vi. Community voluntary work
 - vii. Romania Society
 - viii. India Society
 - ix. Languages – French, German, Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Chinese
 - x. Multi-cultural evening
- d. Experiences of current and past pupils and families.

4. Conclusion

Methodist College provides a naturally integrated, cosmopolitan environment where pupils from all backgrounds and faiths learn together, play together and grow together; a school where pupils have memorable and life changing opportunities.

Mill Strand Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit



MILL STRAND INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY UNIT
Promoting Excellence, Celebrating Difference

33 Dhu Varren Portrush Co. Antrim BT56 8EW
 Tel: 028 70823090 Fax: 028 70824226

e-mail: info@millstrandintegratedps.portrush.ni.sch.uk
 web site: www.millstrand.co.uk

Principal: Mr P. Reid B.Ed D.A.S.E. M.Sc PQH(NI)



13 October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion

I am writing in response to your request for written evidence with regard to Shared and Integrated Education.

- Shared and Integrated Education are completely different. In recent years politicians have sought to sell shared education as a viable alternative to integrated education. It is not. Shared Education at its worst is apartheid education with Catholics going in one door, Protestants another. At best it allows pupils to share some time together but in essence, while better than nothing, it is similar to most CRED work. While there are some examples of good work, it is largely ineffective. Having worked in the controlled sector for twenty years and having been involved in supporting and running CRED activities for almost thirty years I know from personal experience and from the views of professional colleagues that while providing some 'nice' opportunities it has limited long term effect. The good work evident in CRED happens every second of every minute of every day in Integrated schools. More importantly, as the interaction is ongoing and a natural part of daily life, rather than artificial and forced, it IS effective in that the friendships and bonds created are long lasting and meaningful. An analogy would be to describe Rangers playing Celtic as 'Shared Education'. Different shirts, different managers, different clubs, different tactics, different changing rooms, different teams... allowed to play together and interact for periods on a shared pitch before dividing again. Integrated Education would be to describe playing for Scotland. Different views, different clubs, same team, same shirt, shared goals.
- We have been made aware that a definition of shared education as opposed to integrated education was provided to Mr Justice Treacy as part of the court proceedings surrounding Drumragh. Why seek a legal obligation to facilitate Shared Education when our assembly, MLAs and educational bodies have ignored and avoided a legal obligation to develop Integrated Education. In fact, since, the Good Friday Agreement Integrated Education has been capped and suppressed. Seeking a legal obligation to promote 'Shared Education' is just another excuse to continue to avoid an existing legal obligation to promote **Integrated Education**. Any legislation underpinning Shared Education must not be to the detriment of integrated education which is more effective and financially efficient at achieving the shared aims. Rather it should demand 'shared practice' within the segregated sectors where they exist.

respect harmony trust teamwork integration balance sharing friendship



- The key barrier for Integrated Education is the ‘what we have we hold/no change’ mentality of those in power and those working within the segregated sectors of education. Integrated schools have been actively prevented from growing so as not to negatively impact on neighbouring segregated schools. I have been at meetings with local and national politicians who have described integrated education as ‘artificial, false and forced’. They have no knowledge of integrated education, no understanding of it and no desire to either. They fear it because Integrated Education is the only effective means of bringing about real positive change. With thirty years of experience the established integrated sector inc NICIE & IEF and existing Integrated schools is the only body capable of facilitating it. The biggest barrier to Integrated Education is the existing divided political and educational system that needs a divided society to survive. Integrated Education would heal that division.
- **Other jurisdictions have come to the Integrated Sector to learn from the model of existing good practice in Northern Ireland.** It speaks volumes that our politicians ignore the obvious answer on their doorstep to seek something else. Why on earth would you look at practice elsewhere and ignore the established practice within our own integrated sector that is seen as a benchmark of good practice? Does the education committee at Stormont have a reason for failing to recognise the integrated sector’s thirty years of knowledge and expertise? It is beyond belief that the ELBs, are tasked with CRED when they have sought to maintain their status as a single ELB rather than potentially dilute their identity within ESA while the bodies with real knowledge and expertise are sidelined (eg NICIE)
- CRED is an elastoplast for a compound fracture. Having attended a dissemination of ‘outstanding’ practice for CRED last year it is no wonder why Northern Ireland is and will remain a divided society. The best facilitators had extensive work experience with NICIE yet NICIE was not part of the process. The outcomes of best practice were minimal and those identified happen every second of every minute of every day in integrated schools. We are more likely to have argument and fall out over football in Mill Strand Integrated School than religion or politics (maybe it would be more logical to have different schools for pupils supporting different football teams). Even those disagreements are dealt with easily as we celebrate difference/tolerate nothing.
- As a school, Mill Strand Integrated Primary School is more than the sum of its parts. The rich ethos of the school, practice in meaningful integration is embedded in the culture of the school. It is something that is unique to this area but then it is something that IS unique to integrated schools. There is an old saying “If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got.” The only way to heal a divided society is to heal the division. Education from the earliest age in an integrated setting is the best way to heal the division. This is not an opinion. It is a fact, supported by countless years of research and in Northern Ireland there already exists a model of best practice. It is ironic that we have the means to create a truly inclusive society building a shared future at a time when schools in the mainland may be moving in a direction that will see the creation of a divided society. There are examples of integration in action on the doorstep of every MLA in the province. I would urge every one of them to spend a week in an integrated school.
- You cannot make a school integrated by simply changing its title/name and artificially forcing pupils together. Integrated schools have a unique ethos and practice.

I spoke at Stormont about Creative Change. The work of Derek Wilson from the University of Ulster, a fantastic and real cross community initiative that really did engage stakeholders and make a difference. Despite our presentations funding ended when the work should have been extended. It was disheartening to realise afterwards that few MLAs actually attended and those that did, did so fleetingly. With £23m recently donated it should be wisely spent on Integrated Education and the Creative Change project. It will more likely be wasted on shared

initiatives that are less efficient, effective and that will leave no long term legacy for the better.

It is completely appropriate that you seek the views of all sectors. It is vital that you engage with the segregated sectors to ascertain the barriers to shared education, the effectiveness of any shared practice and the limits within the current structures.

If you ask a question you must be prepared to listen to the answer. If you want to be informed about Integrated Education you must talk to the integrated sector. If you want to bring about change you need to listen to the integrated sector. If you want to continue to promote division, continue to ignore it, sideline it and suppress it.

If this inquiry genuinely wishes to move Northern Ireland forward I will gladly travel to Stormont, I will gladly give up my time, I will willingly engage with MLAs for as many days as it takes. I am sure my colleagues from other integrated schools and NICIE would do the same. Equally, I would welcome any MLA to spend time at Mill Strand Integrated School & Nursery. Should they wish to spend a week here they will walk away informed, enriched and enabled to think about integration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Reid', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Philip Reid
Principal

Millennium Integrated Primary School

Millennium Integrated Primary School

139 Belfast Road
Saintfield
BT24 7HF

22nd October 2014

Dear Mr Mc Callion,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry. If there is any intention to meet with interested parties, I would be very happy to do so and also for some of our children to take part in the consultation process.

I am writing to you as the founding principal of Millennium Integrated Primary School and as a teacher who has worked in the controlled sector, is Chair of Governors of a CCMS Community Nursery and in the earlier part of my career worked in an international school and also at the Rudolf Steiner School in Holywood. In addition I have a long track record in innovative cross- community work. All of these enriching experiences have contributed massively to my understanding of the importance and richness of experience which is a real added bonus when there is diversity within a school community. By diversity I am talking about integration and inclusion in the widest possible sense, so that all are valued. A community which truly, actively and proactively welcomes all and ensures that this is alive within the school.

Millennium has had an incredible journey and owes everything to the parents in the Carryduff community who wanted integrated education for their children. I could write pages about the many hurdles and obstacles the founding parents and I had to overcome at every stage of the school's development, but I am fortunate to also be able to celebrate the achievements of our community and our integrated school.

If we analyse why Millennium exists, it is my firm belief that it exists in spite of the very organisations one might have expected to show support or even equity of treatment, and the politicians who did their very best to block the opening, building and development of the school particularly, in the first 12 years.

Why does Millennium exist?

- Parent Power- sheer hard work, perseverance and determination no matter what the setbacks were
- The demographics of this area which has possibly the highest percentage of mixed marriages in Northern Ireland
- The changing face of Northern Ireland – many of our younger parents really want integrated education and are voting with their feet. Unfortunately the big decisions are being made by an older generation who still carry the scars, hurt and baggage of the troubles (Only today I received notification of a Development Proposal from another integrated primary school – the statistics enclosed from DE are interesting and speak for themselves –enrolment patterns of 8 integrated primary schools for 2013/2014 intake are that there were 422 first preference applications for 347 places. In the controlled sector across the 7 schools listed there were 996 unfilled places and in the maintained sector 2 schools were listed with 196 unfilled places)
- Parents are voting with their feet and they do not send their children to integrated schools just because they are integrated – like all parents they want the very best, rounded and balanced educational outcomes for their children
- Support given to the school by voluntary organisations and philanthropic donors from around the world – without their assistance the school may never have started

- The outcome of the recent judicial review has already begun to make a difference – a greater sense of being treated more equally with the other sectors although there are still some procedural and legislative issues which have the potential to continue to stifle rather than facilitate integrated education

What hurdles/barriers has Millennium had to overcome?

- No government funding in the first year
- Not being allowed on site because of traffic concerns despite the fact that there had been a furniture showroom and a car showroom, as well as a private dwelling – far more traffic than 1 teacher, 1 assistant and 10 children in that first year!
- Delaying tactics in relation to the planning application in the early years
- Even when our temporary school had been built and we had 7 new classrooms our growth was being controlled to protect other sectors
- Having to fundraise and apply for grants and look for donors to establish pre-school education
- Having to source funding for basic accommodation which would have been provided to other sectors – accommodation for the Nursery, for classrooms, for special needs provision
- Operating in a relatively new building which had 30% less accommodation than stipulated in the DENI handbook
- Turning away children and their families, particularly poignant when the family is from a mixed marriage

In the opening paragraph of this letter I gave an outline of my varied educational posts. I have seen and experienced at first hand the reality of the wonderful things which happen in a good integrated school when the children have the opportunity to be together all day, every day, sharing experiences, exploring diversity, understanding fully what is important to all of the religions and cultures which are part of our school community. Celebrating together special events which in the context of Northern Ireland are perceived to belong to one tradition or another. Developing mutually respectful values on a day by day, moment by moment, practical and meaningful basis. Total immersion is the key for the best possible outcomes, just as it is, if you really want to learn a second language proficiently. Not only is there an impact on the children and the staff but also on many of our parents who have made friendships with the 'other side'

It is so much more difficult to achieve a tolerant and open society when children are kept apart throughout their educational lives and also through the lack of mixed housing and as a result their contact with each other is minimal.

Good quality shared education is, I believe, an important first step on the journey but not if it's just about the occasional time together, making the effort because there is funding available or a lovely state of the art campus, and not if it is developed at the expense or exclusion of integrated education.

If shared education is not, in the long term, to repeat the limited outcomes of the old EMU, then much work needs to be done to upskill the staff, change mindsets and develop meaningful, regular opportunities through the curriculum for children to engage in learning about each other and the country and world which they live in and are part of.

Shared education is not the same as integrated education. A mixed school is not the same as an integrated school. The ethos, the hidden curriculum, the vision, the day to day values, are the things which define any school. So many of the decision makers have no experience or understanding of integrated education as the majority will have come through the controlled or maintained sector and understandably this is what is familiar to them.

I believe that parental choice should be facilitated as much as possible so the choice to send a child to a maintained, controlled or Irish Medium should also be available.

However we will know when there is a real commitment to integrated education by the powers that be, when the first integrated school is proposed and planned for by DE without the parents, the founding principal and staff having to jump over so many hurdles. Much is made of the recent lack of growth within the integrated sector. I know that this has been due to the lack of will to facilitate the growth of integrated education and the continuing situation that CCMS and the ELBs hold all the power. Just because the integrated sector and the Irish medium sector are smaller should not mean that they should be virtually excluded from the decision making processes. These two sectors should have as much right to be present from start to finish throughout all decision making processes. Respect needs to be developed for all sectors from within the sectors themselves as well as from the decision makers.

Does Northern Ireland want a unified, diverse and peaceful society or not?

Why are the decision makers so reluctant to make the decisions which have the potential to allow Northern Ireland to move away from many of the entrenched views and to embrace a better future for the generations to come?

In ten years' time will this period be viewed as a time of missed opportunities?

Will there be disappointment that shared education hasn't managed to deliver all that is hoped for?

I would like to see equity for all four sectors, a willingness to listen to the voices of our families, a true facilitation of integrated education, the development of skilled and meaningful shared education so that the children of the future do not carry the baggage and burden of Northern Ireland's sectarian past.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely

Mary Roulston

Moy Area Playgroup Moy Regional PS and St Johns PS

On 1st July 2014 the Minister for Education announced the Shared Education Campus proposals selected to be advanced to the production of a full business case. We were delighted that the proposal submitted for the Moy Shared Campus was selected as one of the three projects approved by the Minister.

We therefore decided it was important that our joint management committee of (Moy Area Playgroup, Moy Regional Primary School and St. John's Primary School) should make a response to the request for written evidence for the Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry. This response has been formulated and agreed by all members of our joint management committee.

Shared/Integrated Education Enquiry

Joint Response from Moy Area Playgroup, Moy Regional PS and St. John's PS.

1. Nature and definition of Shared Education.

- 1.1 We fully agree with the definition for Shared Education provided by the Ministerial Advisory Group. "Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion."

In the Protocol Document for the second call for expression of interest in the Shared Campuses programme, section 2.3 states 'Shared Education' means the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together." We agree with this statement but would more inclusive by adding "and adults" after children and young people. Our aim is to have a shared campus open to all ages.

2. Identification of the key enablers and barriers for Shared education in no significant order.

Enablers:

2.1 Parental and pupil Support

We believed that throughout all our discussions on "a shared campus" it was important that all stakeholders (Parents, pupils, staff, governors, trustees and the wider community) were kept informed.

2.2 Protection of Ethos and identity

The management bodies of all three institutions decided from the early stages that the retention of our own distinct ethos was essential. Also it was of paramount importance that we respected difference and promoted a culture of inclusion, tolerance and diversity.

2.3 Leadership and Management

We ensured that key personnel in the management of all institutions involved, had a clear vision and the absolute determination to ensure our proposal for a shared education facility became a reality.

2.4 Economic rationale

Detailed research carried out in Scotland has clearly shown that a shared facility would reduce the overall per-pupil cost of new schools, while providing extensive facilities for pupils and the wider community. This research quoted a "savings of around 25 percent in capital

costs are made compared to two free standing schools” (quoted from Education and a shared future).

2.5 Church/Education authority support

It is essential that the trustees and governing authorities of all institutions involved give their full support to any shared education projects. In our case the CCMS/relevant trustees and transferors/ SELB/PEAGS have now given our project full support despite reservations in the initial stages. This was very important as the project would not be able to proceed without their agreement and acceptance of our vision of a Shared Campus in Moy.

2.6 Cross community/Cross party political support

Since 2007 our project has continually consulted/informed and enlisted the widespread support and agreement of the local community. We have met and presented our vision for a shared campus on numerous occasions to politicians, education ministers, education committees, bishops, church representatives, teaching unions and other community groups. On each occasion we received unanimous support for our vision of a shared campus.

2.7 Availability/provision of effective cross community education programmes

For this past twenty years St. John's PS and Moy Regional have jointly taken part in a range of educational activities and programmes.

As both schools are geographically very closely located there has historically been links between the Moy Regional and St. John's. These links became more structured/formal with the introduction of the EMU (Education for Mutual Understanding) programme funded by DENI. This programme enabled all classes in both schools meeting together on at least three occasions at a neutral venue to undertake a variety of curriculum based lessons.

These lessons included the areas of Drama, Art, Environmental Studies, Sport, History/ Geography and Community Relations.

EMU was then replaced by the SCRP (Schools Community Relations Programme) and this involved classes being taught lessons in each other's schools by external service providers. Again these lessons were similar to the areas listed above but there was a greater emphasis on teaching Community Relations topics.

With these closer links now having been developed we then undertook joint parent information, Parent and staff training activities, joint celebrations for Christmas and joint after school/summer activities in the areas of music, sport, drama and dance. SCRP has now been replaced by CRED (Community Relations Equality Diversity) and both schools continue to be involved in cross community projects.

The schools then undertook, with the support of the Governors of both schools, PCPP (Primary Curriculum Partnership Programme) which was funded by the SELB and International Fund for Ireland. This programme involved children visiting each other's schools and being team taught Mutual Understanding from PDMU by the teachers. Staff and governors from both schools also attended training together in community relations (looking at respecting differences and flags and emblems). This very creative programme began in 2011 and ended in 2013 and greatly enhanced the quality of community relations activities which have been ongoing in both schools.

2.8 Government Policy/Right time for change

With the publication of the Bain Report and the impending closure of small schools a subcommittee of the Governors of Moy Regional and St. John's began to meet regularly to try and prevent closure of the Moy Regional and the possible negative impact this would have on our community. As St. John's had been assessed by CCMS as being a viable school but requiring a complete new building, the idea of a single site campus for all educational providers in the area became a vision for this subcommittee of governors. At this time the

Moy Area Playgroup became part of this vision as they had recently taken up temporary accommodation in St. John's due to flooding of their premises (at the GAA grounds) and were in need of permanent accommodation.

As a result of discussions by the subcommittee of governors in 2008/09 we agreed the following series of aims/objectives to achieve our shared vision.

- Increase shared resources to provide better educational experiences for all the children.
- Enhance Playgroup facilities and provision for the whole community.
- Enhance community relations
- To secure excellent educational and sports/recreational facilities and the creation of a community resource space for all age groups.
- Explore the possibility of developing a single site educational centre which enhances and maintains the respective cultural identities/Ethos within our community.

On 9th May 2013 'Together: Building a United Community' was announced by the First and deputy First Ministers. This contained a range of proposals including details on Shared Education Campuses. This was a watershed in that this was exactly what the community in Moy was aiming for and gave our vision the credibility it needed to keep striving towards our goal of a shared campus.

Barriers:

2.9 Fear of change

This undoubtedly will be a factor. In Moy all of the education providers hope to move to a new purpose built building on a neutral site. This will be a completely new experience for us all. Most people are afraid/wary of change as it can disturb their routines and involves adapting to new systems and ways of working.

2.10 Governance

Issues of ownership, management and community use of the building will need to be carefully organised and agreed by the three management bodies involved.

2.11 Availability of funding for capital build and site procurement.

Where is the funding coming from? It needs to be made available as soon as projects are identified and are given approval to proceed to the building stage. A suitable site needs to be identified quickly and agreed upon by the education authorities and management of the three institutions involved.

3. Our analysis of models of good practice in other jurisdictions.

3.1 Benview Shared Campus visit (3rd June 2013)

Eight members of our joint management committees and a member of the Fermanagh Trust travelled to Benview Shared Campus in Glasgow. During our time there we toured the schools, interviewed the principals, teachers and members of the joint parent support. We were all very impressed and realised this could be replicated in N. Ireland. We are also very aware of research (Education and a shared future) regarding other shared campuses in Scotland and that these are also working very successfully together.

4. Priorities and actions needed to improve sharing/Shared Education

4.1 Shared Education Projects identified should be prioritised and completed much more quickly.

4.2 A wide variety of projects developed to enable greater opportunities for children, young people and adults to meet within communities (including cross community programmes).

NASUWT

NASUWT
The Teachers' Union
NORTHERN IRELAND

EVIDENCE

**Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education
Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education**

The NASUWT's submission sets out the Union's views on the key issues identified by the Committee in respect of shared and integrated education in Northern Ireland.

The NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in Northern Ireland representing teachers and school leaders.

For further information, Assembly Members may contact:

Ms Chris Keates
General Secretary

chris.keates@mail.nasuwt.org.uk
www.nasuwt.org.uk

Executive Summary

- The NASUWT believes that the education system has a critical role to play in the promotion of social cohesion and the development of safe, just, inclusive and tolerant communities.
- The NASUWT acknowledges and respects the right of the Minister of Education to identify shared education as a policy priority and recognises, in this context, that advancing shared education was highlighted as a key objective in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government.
- The definition of shared education in the remit given by the Department of Education to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education represents a viable and potentially helpful starting point from which to evaluate the nature of shared education and its implications for the education system.
- The NASUWT endorses the view of the Ministerial Advisory Group that integrated education represents a distinct and important sector within the education system, rather than a model upon which the development of shared education should be based.
- In evaluating the proposals set out for inter-school collaboration within the context of the shared education agenda, the Committee should recognise the benefits of an education system organised on the principles of partnership and co-operation and work to ensure that the stated commitment of the Minister of Education to develop policy on this basis is realised in practice.
- The NASUWT welcomes the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group that the Department of Education should undertake a review of how shared education and enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and educational support centres might most effectively meet the needs of children and young people

with disabilities, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with special educational needs.

- Without clarity of definition, potential policy options for shared education cannot be developed or evaluated on a meaningful basis.
- The Department of Education should work with the NASUWT and other relevant stakeholders to identify potential barriers to the involvement of academically selective schools in inter-school partnership arrangements and to develop any necessary policy actions required to facilitate purposeful collaboration between these schools and other schools within their localities.
- The current school accountability system should be reformed to ensure that it encourages and celebrates collaborative working between schools and other educational providers more effectively.
- More attention would need to be given, within the context of a shared education agenda, to developing the capacity of institutions to establish collaborative arrangements in areas where there is no history of partnership working.
- Inter-school partnership arrangements must be properly assessed in terms of their impact on teacher and school leader workload and evaluated against criteria agreed with the workforce, including the NASUWT and other recognised trade unions, with the results of these evaluations being taken into effective account in the development and implementation of policy.
- The NASUWT is concerned that the implications of the introduction of a shared education premium for other areas of education-related funding and what, if any, conditions would be attached to its use, have not been identified by the Department of Education.
- It is essential that any proposals for the development of local shared education arrangements are not used as a pretext either to seek to reduce overall levels of investment in schools or to undermine the job security of the school workforce through the adoption of inappropriate approaches to school rationalisation.
- Before schools are designated as public authorities for the purposes of the provisions of Section 75 of the 1998 Northern Ireland Act, a thorough review should be undertaken of the potential implications of implementation of this proposal for learners and members of the school workforce.

Introduction

1. The NASUWT welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.
2. The Union's evidence addresses the specific issues identified by the Committee in its call for evidence by:
 - considering the nature and definition of shared education and integrated education, including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and the introduction of a legal obligation in statute on the Department of Education to facilitate and encourage shared education;
 - assessing the key barriers to shared education, with specific reference to the Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy, parental and carer engagement and the role of Special Schools; and
 - where appropriate, identifying experiences from other jurisdictions that might guide the development of future policy in Northern Ireland.
3. The NASUWT's response therefore:
 - places issues related to shared and integrated education into their appropriate current policy context (p.4);
 - considers the definition, nature and promotion of shared education (p.8);
 - examines policy lessons from other jurisdictions (p.10);
 - sets out key issues related to the operation of academic selection in systems that seek to promote inter-school collaboration (p.16);
 - describes approaches to school accountability that promote inter-school collaboration (p. 17);
 - evaluates resource, governance and workforce considerations that should guide the development of policies focused on the promotion of inter-school collaboration (p.X); and
 - assesses the Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) dimensions of any shared education agenda and the role of special schools in this context (p.X).

Background and context

4. The NASUWT believes that the education system has a critical role to play in the promotion of social cohesion and the development of safe, just, inclusive and tolerant communities.
5. Alongside the important contribution made to building social cohesion by other key public and social services and institutions, the work of schools in creating high quality educational opportunities for children and young people, celebrating diversity and difference and tackling inequality, discrimination, prejudice and bigotry must be recognised in the development and implementation of public policy in these key areas.
6. The Committee will recognise that public discourse on approaches to the achievement of these objectives has continued to focus on the potential contribution of shared and integrated education. The NASUWT notes in this regard that the Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education, published in March 2013, identified shared education as the core mechanism by which educational quality and equality could continue to be sustained and further progressed in Northern Ireland and advocated its continued emphasis in the development of policy.¹ Critically, the Ministerial Advisory Group assessed the potential value of shared education not only in terms of the religious beliefs of pupils, parents and wider communities but also in respect of their socioeconomic status, the extent

1 Connolly, P; Purvis, D. and O'Grady, P.J. (2013). Advancing Shared education: The Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group. Available at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/Filestore/Filetoupload,382123,en.pdf>; accessed on 17/10/14.

to which they encounter social exclusion or marginalisation and the special and additional learning needs of children and young people .

7. The NASUWT further notes that in October 2013 the Minister for Education, after a period of reflection, accepted the recommendations set out in the Report and sought to encourage a public debate on how best to advance shared education.² The Union welcomes the Committee's Inquiry as an important means by which this debate can be progressed on a purposeful and appropriately informed basis.
8. The NASUWT acknowledges and respects the right of the Minister to identify shared education as a policy priority in light of the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group and recognises that advancing shared education was highlighted as key objective in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government.³
9. As a trade union committed to organising teachers and school leaders on a non-sectarian basis and to maintaining a genuinely inclusive and world class education system that meets the needs and interests of all children and young people, the NASUWT takes a particular interest in those areas of the Executive's work related to the promotion of equity, diversity and high standards of provision in all schools.
10. Having set out its position on the value of promoting shared education, it is incumbent on the Department for Education to ensure that it develops a coherent and credible strategy that recognises the particular economic and social context within which Northern Ireland is located. This submission therefore seeks to engage with the key themes identified as significant by the Committee with reference to the policy challenges that the Department for Education and the wider Executive will need to address if the Minister's aspirations for shared education are to be realised.

The definition, nature and promotion of shared and integrated Education

11. The NASUWT is concerned that, too frequently, consideration of the merits or otherwise of shared education has been attempted without a commonly recognised working definition. Without clarity of definition, potential policy options cannot be developed or evaluated on a meaningful basis.
12. The Union notes the support given by the Ministerial Advisory Group to the definition of shared education in the remit given to it by the Department for Education:

*'Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.'*⁴
13. While debates about the nature of shared education are likely to remain contested, the NASUWT believes that this definition represents a viable and potentially helpful starting point from which to evaluate the nature of shared education and its implications for the education system in Northern Ireland. It should, therefore, be adopted as the basis for the development of future policy in this area.
14. This invites further reflection on the important distinctions that should be drawn between shared and integrated education. The NASUWT notes the view of the Ministerial Advisory

2 Department of Education (2013). Advancing Shared Education: Ministerial Statement. Available at: http://www.deni.gov.uk/advancing_shared_education_-_22_october_2013_docx.pdf; accessed on 18/10/14.

3 Northern Ireland Executive (2011). Programme for Government 2011-15. Available at: <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/pfg-2011-2015-final-report.pdf>; accessed on 17/10/14.

4 Connolly et.al. (2013). op.cit.

Group that integrated education represents a distinct sector rather than a model upon which the development of shared education should be based.

15. The NASUWT endorses this analysis. It is clear that integrated schools have had an important and legitimate role to play in the education system in Northern Ireland and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The Union notes ongoing perceived concern that the Department of Education has failed to discharge its statutory responsibility to encourage and facilitate integrated education. Given the nature of this requirement, it is important that the Committee and other relevant stakeholders should seek to examine and, if necessary, address these concerns.
16. However, integrated schools are settings with an intentionally multi-denominational but unambiguously Christian character. Consequently, the Ministerial Advisory Committee has recognised correctly that the privileging of integrated education in its current form cannot be regarded as a cohesive or credible approach to the development of shared education. Given the increasingly diverse nature of society in Northern Ireland, it must be recognised that many parents would hold legitimate and understandable objections to their children's education being undertaken wholly within institutions founded on a multi-denominational Christian ethos. Such an approach would be inconsistent with the definition of shared education advocated by the Ministerial Advisory Group.
17. Therefore, while integrated schools would have a distinctive and potentially powerful contribution to make to the development of shared education, the likelihood that parents will continue to prefer an education system that reflects the diversity of religious, cultural and philosophical beliefs across Northern Ireland suggests that the establishment of alternative approaches to shared education would be necessary in order to secure and maintain a reasonable degree of policy sustainability.
18. The NASUWT notes the interest in debates on shared education in the desirability of establishing a statutory definition of shared education. The Union recognises that the acceptance by the Minister of the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group that a legal requirement should be placed on the Department of Education to advance shared education would require the introduction of a statutory definition.
19. However, the NASUWT is concerned that the introduction of a statutory duty in respect of the promotion of shared education prior to the development of a clear, coherent and practical implementation framework would lead to the imposition of a duty on the Department of Education that it would not be able to discharge effectively. The Union is clear that significant barriers to the development of shared education exist within the education system and that until these barriers are addressed, it would be inappropriate to introduce a statutory duty on the basis proposed by the Ministerial Advisory Group. These impediments to the advancement of shared education are set out elsewhere in this submission.

Policy lessons from other jurisdictions

20. The NASUWT notes the interest of the Committee in evidence from other jurisdictions that could support the development of shared education. The Union's views in this regard are shaped by its extensive experience of organising across jurisdictions and its active role in the global education trade union federation, Education International.
21. The NASUWT is clear that education systems benefit from approaches to school organisation that promote collaboration and partnership not only between schools but also between the school sector and other services that support children and young people. The Union therefore welcomes the commitment of the Minister in his statement to the Assembly on shared education to ensure that policy is guided by a determination to promote inter-school

- collaboration and the provision of education for all learners through the securing of effective partnership arrangements.⁵
22. The NASUWT recognises that the development of education policy in Northern Ireland must acknowledge the unique post-conflict context within which its education system operates. Policymakers must therefore resist simplistic attempts to transplant approaches to the development of enhanced inter-school collaboration from other jurisdictions that do not take the particular circumstances pertaining in Northern Ireland into effective account. However, the NASUWT is clear that it is possible to identify some broad policy lessons from other jurisdictions that are relevant to the development of shared education strategies in Northern Ireland.
 23. The direct experience gained by the NASUWT from its work across jurisdictions confirms its understanding of the importance of collaboration and partnership within education systems. This derives from the Union's recognition of the fundamental status of education as a public good and a universal human right.
 24. The status of education as a public good means that policy and practice should not only seek to secure benefits for individual pupils and learners but should also recognise the importance of education to the economic, cultural, civic and democratic wellbeing of wider society.
 25. These inherent characteristics of education have profound implications for the principles upon which education systems are organised. In particular, they confirm that notions of education as a commodity to be consumed by individuals and provided for in a competitive and marketised context are wholly inconsistent with an understanding of education as a public good and a human right.
 26. In its Report to its 2013 Annual Conference, *Maintaining World Class Schools*, the NASUWT described the profoundly negative consequences of attempts to use market mechanisms, including competition between providers, as a guiding principle for the organisation of provision in the education system.⁶
 27. In particular, the NASUWT's report draws attention to the fact that there is no credible international evidence that the development of education systems on the basis of conceptualising pupils and parents as consumers of education in a marketised context, with the promotion of competition between providers as a means of raising standards of provision, generates improved educational outcomes.⁷ Instead, the use of such mechanisms has been associated with high rates of variation in levels of pupil performance⁸ and increased social and economic segregation.⁹
 28. In such a context, it is also apparent that collaboration between schools and providers of wider services for children and young people to promote and improve children's wider wellbeing is also likely to be emphasised insufficiently where inter-school competition is a prevalent characteristic of the education system.
 29. The impediments to institutional collaboration generated by marketised approaches to the operation of the education system also have important implications for its productive and allocative efficiency by undermining the ability of schools to generate economies of scale

5 Department of Education (2013). op.cit.

6 NASUWT (2013). *Maintaining World Class Schools*. NASUWT; Birmingham.

7 ibid.

8 Hickman, R. (2011). 'Education and Fairness' in Lawson, N. and Spours, K. (eds.). *Education for the Good Society: The Values and Principles of a New Comprehensive Vision*. Available from: http://clients.squareeye.net/uploads/compass/documents/COM0972_Education_for_Good_Society_WEB.pdf; accessed on 18/10/14.

9 NASUWT (2013). op. cit.

- through effective partnership working and impeding the distribution of finite resources across the school system on a strategic basis.¹⁰
30. It is therefore clear that models of educational provision based on collaboration work to create circumstances within which significant educational, organisational and economic benefits can be secured. This has been recognised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and was an unequivocal message of the recent independent investigation of the academies programme in England undertaken by the independent Academies Commission.¹¹
 31. Evidence gained by the NASUWT from England is particularly instructive in this respect.
 32. It is important to recognise that, notwithstanding the compelling evidence of the importance of institutional collaboration in securing positive outcomes for individuals and for wider society, policy development in England has long sought to embed quasi-markets and competition between schools as key features of the state education system.
 33. This approach was initiated by the 1979-1997 Conservative Government and was based to a significant extent on the introduction of performance league tables and punitive individual school inspection, a fundamental purpose of both policies was to provide 'market' information to parents in order to allow them to exercise consumer choice in relation to the schools attended by their children.¹²
 34. These reforms were supported by the granting of significant degrees of financial autonomy and control over key personnel-related functions to individual schools, reflecting the view of proponents of marketisation in the education system that such autonomy is a necessary condition of the efficient operation of quasi-markets as, in theory, it permits schools to respond more effectively to prevailing market conditions.¹³ The necessary corollary of the re-location of financial authority and control of resources at school level was a weakening of the strategic role of local authorities in supporting and maintaining effective collaborative arrangements between schools.¹⁴
 35. While the Labour Government of 1997-2010 retained many of the features of a quasi-marketised education system, it is important to note that the value of collaboration was recognised to an increasing extent in the development of policy during this period.¹⁵ This revised approach was reflected in, for example, the introduction of school behaviour and attendance partnerships, 14-19 curriculum and qualification consortia and the co-ordination of admissions arrangements through Admissions Forums. In relation to school accountability, considered in more detail elsewhere in this submission, the previous administration's School Report Card proposal, subsequently discarded by the Coalition Government, sought to examine ways in which systems of accountability might be recast to emphasise more effectively the importance of collaboration between schools.¹⁶
 36. More broadly, the critical importance of cooperation and partnership working between schools and other agencies and organisations within the wider children's services sector was

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- 10 Atkinson, M.; Springate, J.; Johnson, F. and Hulse, K. (2007). *Inter-school collaboration: a literature review*. NFER; Slough. Huxham, C. and Vangen, S. (2005). *Managing to Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage*. Routledge; Oxford.
 - 11 Exley, S. (2013). 'Mind the gap between the best and the worst: it's widening'. *Times Educational Supplement* (8 February). (<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6318807>), retrieved on 18/10/14; The Academies Commission (2013), *op. cit.*
 - 12 Reed, J. and Hallgarten, J. (2003). *Time to say goodbye? The future of school performance tables*. IPPR; London.
 - 13 Glennester, H. (1991). 'Quasi-markets for Education?'. *The Economic Journal*. Vol. 101 No. 408 pp.1268-1276.
 - 14 Institute for Government (2012). *The development of quasi-markets in secondary education*. Institute for Government; London.
 - 15 *ibid.*
 - 16 Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF)/Ofsted (2008). *A School Report Card: consultation document*. DCSF; Nottingham.
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recognised in the development of statutory local authority-led Children and Young People's Trusts. These bodies were established not only to enhance the educational opportunities available to children and young people but also to promote their wider wellbeing through the adoption of strategic local approaches to inter-agency collaboration.

37. However, since taking office, the Coalition Government in Westminster has removed many of the remaining key drivers of cooperation within the education system, through its abolition of previous requirements on schools to collaborate with others and by undermining local-level structures through which effective inter-school partnership arrangements, as well as those between schools and other children and young people-focused public services, could be secured in practice.
38. The undermining of support for effective collaboration within the education and wider children and young people's services sectors has been driven by a clear commitment on the part of Coalition Government Ministers to the use of competition and quasi-market structures as the principal drivers of system improvement, despite an asserted recognition by the Department for Education of the value of inter-school and inter-sectoral collaboration.¹⁷ This approach to policy has been characterised particularly clearly by the emphasis placed by the current Westminster Government on its academies and free schools agendas.
39. In evaluating the proposals advanced for inter-school collaboration advanced through an agenda for shared education, the NASUWT therefore invites the Committee to take note of the considerations set out above. In particular, the Committee should emphasise that the commitment of the Minister to promote collaboration will only be secured in practice through a continuing rejection of policies based on the establishment of quasi-markets and fragmentation of the school system.

Academic selection and inter-school collaboration

40. The Minister's commitment to the promotion of inter-school collaboration draws attention to the ways in which academically selective schools within a shared education context might contribute effectively to the learning of all children and young people present in the communities within which they are located. The Union welcomes the particular attention given to this issue by the Ministerial Advisory Group.¹⁸
41. Development of policy in this area would need to consider how the approach to shared education advocated by the Minister will require active consideration of the ways in which settings currently operating systems of academic selection might need to amend their current practices to enable them to play a meaningful role in collaborative arrangements at a local level.
42. In this context, the Union notes the Minister's acceptance of the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group that effective use should be made of area-based planning to promote the development of schools with all-ability intakes. However, given the fact that the Assembly has to date declined to take steps to end academic selection, it is likely that selective schools will remain a significant feature of the education system in Northern Ireland for the foreseeable future, regardless of the powers available to the Minister through the area-based planning process referenced above.
43. As a result, prior to the introduction of any formal requirement on the Department of Education to promote shared education, the Assembly will need to give consideration to the ways in which academically selective schools can be integrated into genuinely collaborative arrangements with non-selective schools. This collaboration, if it is to be meaningful, would need to include provision, where appropriate, for selective schools to take an active and direct role in the education of pupils enrolled formally in other schools as part of their contribution to the local learning partnerships advocated by the Ministerial Advisory Group.

17 Institute for Government (2012). *op. cit.*; The Academies Commission (2013). *op. cit.*

18 Connolly et.al. (2013). *op.cit.*

44. The Committee should, therefore, recommend that the Department of Education should work with the NASUWT and other relevant stakeholders to identify the potential barriers to the involvement of academically selective schools in local education partnerships and to identify any necessary policy actions required to facilitate purposeful collaboration between these schools and others within their localities.

Approaches to school accountability that promote inter-school collaboration

45. The NASUWT is clear that a fit for purpose framework of accountability is critical to ensuring that public trust and confidence in the state education system can continue to be secured.
46. However, it is not only critical that the school accountability system reflects accurately the quality of education made available to pupils, it is essential that it does not operate in ways that contradict or undermine other important system-wide education policy priorities.
47. In the context of the commitment of the Minister to shared education and increasing levels of inter-school collaboration, it is important that consideration is given to the extent to which the current school accountability system in Northern Ireland operates in ways that are consistent with these policy objectives.
48. It is evident that, at present, the current framework for holding schools to account in Northern Ireland works against the establishment of effective collaborative arrangements between schools and other learning providers. In particular, the increasingly high-stakes nature of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) establishes powerful incentives for schools and other learning providers to focus on their own pupil performance indicators rather than on addressing, through collaboration, the needs of all learners within the communities they serve.
49. In a context where greater emphasis is placed on shared education, pupils would be likely to be educated in more than one institution. In such circumstances, it would be highly anomalous to continue to attempt to hold schools and colleges to account solely on the basis of the progress and attainment of their formally enrolled pupils.
50. It is therefore evident that effective collaboration between institutions would necessitate a fundamental review of the way in which schools and colleges are held to account for the work they undertake with learners. The introduction of effective approaches to shared education would depend upon the establishment of an approach to accountability that incentivises schools and colleges to focus to a greater extent on the work they undertake in collaboration with other institutions.
51. In *Maintaining World Class Schools*, the NASUWT set out clearly the extent to which models of school accountability based on the use of a narrow range of pupil performance indicators and punitive, data-driven school inspection, such as that in place currently in Northern Ireland, result in their failure to capture the totality of the work that institutions, individually and collectively, undertake with pupils and the benefits that derive from this work for individual learners as well for wider social and economic wellbeing.¹⁹
52. The commitment of the Minister and the Executive to promote shared education therefore creates an important opportunity to consider future policy options for school accountability in Northern Ireland.
53. In particular, effective note should be taken of the fact that many of the education systems in other administrations regarded as high performing or fast improving, are able to establish and sustain accountability-related processes that maintain high levels of public confidence and also support system development and improvement without use of the high-stakes approaches to school accountability that characterise arrangements in Northern Ireland to an increasing extent.²⁰

19 NASUWT (2013). op.cit

20 Eurydice (2007). *School Autonomy in Europe: Policies and Measures*. Eurydice European Unit; Brussels.

54. The NASUWT therefore advocates an objective and detailed review of the models of school accountability used in other education systems as a starting point for debate about the future of the school accountability framework.
55. This review should include consideration of the ways in which accountability frameworks in operation elsewhere work to engender enhanced levels of parental involvement in the education system, given evidence that the system in place in Northern Ireland, which is justified to a significant extent on the basis that it provides information about school performance to allow parents to make informed decisions about their children's education, does not serve to secure this important policy objective in practice.²¹ This consideration should be regarded as particularly critical given the identification by the Ministerial Advisory Group of effective parental engagement as a necessary condition for the development of sustainable approaches to shared education.²²
56. The concern of the NASUWT with current levels of parental engagement and commitment to the state education system reflects its understanding of education as a public good, underpinned by a culture of collaboration rather than contestability, and not as a commodity to be consumed by individual children and their families. As a result, the Committee should seek to promote a debate about the future of the school accountability system that explores ways in which a more effective balance can be struck between accountability at school, local and system levels. Critically, the recasting of public discourses on school accountability on this basis would serve to promote the public valuing and celebration of the education system evident within high performing jurisdictions such as South Korea and Finland.²³

Inter-school collaboration: resource considerations

57. The NASUWT welcomes the recognition by the Ministerial Advisory Group that collaborative arrangements between schools need to take account of and reflect their local contexts and that partnerships also need time to develop levels of trust and thereby establish appropriate and effective arrangements.
58. It is important that the Department of Education acknowledges that collaborative arrangements should encourage co-operation, facilitate and support networking and enable teachers and school leaders to concentrate on their core responsibilities for teaching and leading teaching and learning. In the establishment of such arrangements, the NASUWT and other recognised trade unions and members of the school and college workforce should be involved actively in decision-making processes.
59. As the report of the Ministerial Advisory Group acknowledges, positive examples of effective collaboration between providers across all sectors of the education system are emerging. However, it is evident that more attention would need to be paid within the context of a shared education agenda to developing the capacity of institutions to develop collaborative arrangements in areas where there is no history of partnership working.
60. Schools and colleges need time and additional resources and support, to be able to develop and implement effective partnerships.
61. Issues related to the training and development of teachers and school leaders working within a shared education context, highlighted as particularly important by the Ministerial Advisory Group, would also need to be considered carefully.
62. With specific regard to the funding of shared education, the NASUWT notes the acceptance by the Minister of the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group that provision would need to be made to address the additional cost to schools engaging in shared education and

21 NASUWT (2013). op.cit.

22 Connelly et.al. (2013). op.cit.

23 NASUWT (2013). op.cit.

that the intention of the Department for Education is to mainstream this funding in the longer term.

63. The Union further notes that the Minister has reserved his position on taking forward the Ministerial Advisory Group's recommendation that a shared education premium within the common funding formula would represent the most effective means by which shared education could be funded.
64. It is critical that clarity is provided on these issues as a matter of urgency and before any attempt is made to implement the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group. In particular, the NASUWT is concerned that the implications of the introduction of a shared education premium for other areas of education-related funding and what, if any, conditions would be attached to its use have not been identified by the Department of Education. The ongoing uncertainty over the Northern Ireland Executive's budget serves only to amplify these concerns.
65. As referenced elsewhere in this submission, area planning arrangements would have a central role to play in the development of a coherent shared education agenda and already are subject to terms of reference and guidance that seek to promote the development of shared education options.
66. The NASUWT believes that the current requirements that proposals for shared education models must have the support of the local community, be sustainable and be capable of delivering high-quality education are appropriate.
67. The Union is also clear that collaborative arrangements between schools can secure the more effective use of finite resources through the generation of economies of scale and minimising unnecessary duplication. However, it is essential that any proposals for the development of local shared education arrangements are not used as a pretext to seek to reduce overall levels of investment in schools or to undermine the job security of members of the school workforce through the imposition of inappropriate approaches to school rationalisation.
68. The Department of Education should seek to take forward greater inter-school collaboration on the basis that it provides an opportunity to make more effective use of the talents and expertise of the existing school workforce and to thereby enhance the quality of educational provision for learners. This important principle should therefore be incorporated into terms of reference and guidance on the development of local proposals for shared education.

Inter-school collaboration: workforce considerations

69. It is important that the risks to the workforce of poorly managed collaborative arrangements are recognised by those with responsibility for the development of policy in this area. Policy should be progressed on the basis of a clear understanding of the centrality of the school workforce to maintaining and further enhancing standards of educational achievement.
70. Specifically, inter-school partnership arrangements must be properly assessed in terms of their impact on teacher and school leader workload. They must be evaluated against criteria agreed with the workforce, including the NASUWT and other recognised trade unions, and the results of these evaluations must be taken into effective account prior to the implementation of policy. This evaluation must examine the capacity for institutions to cope with the changes and the capacity of the workforce in terms of time, knowledge and skills. This is particularly important in relation to the increased demands that may be made of teachers and school leaders in the future development of shared education campuses.
71. The Committee should also note the significant levels of workload pressure to which teachers and school leaders are currently subject. The NASUWT's Big Question survey found that 84% of teachers and school leaders in Northern Ireland cite excessive workload as their main work-related concern. Attempts therefore to progress a shared education agenda in ways that do not take effective account of these pressures and that would intensify further the workload demands on teachers and school leaders would be entirely unacceptable.

Inter-school collaboration: governance considerations

72. The considerations set out above draw attention to issues related to the funding, management and governance of inter-school partnerships and collaboration. It is important to note that a significant proportion of the Ministerial Advisory Group's recommendations, and the Minister's acceptance of them, rested on the assumption that the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) would be established prior to their implementation. The decision not to proceed with the ESA therefore casts doubt on the extent to which a consistent approach to shared education can be secured in the absence of ESA or a comparable system-wide body.
73. The Union notes the intention of the Department of Education to review all the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group in light of the Minister's proposal to replace the current five Education and Library Boards (ELBs) with a single board from April 2015.
74. However, in the absence of any meaningful detail about how a single board would operate in practice, it is not possible to determine with any reasonable degree of certainty the extent to which this body would be able to undertake functions in respect of shared education for which ESA was intended originally to have responsibility. It would therefore not be appropriate for the Department of Education to seek to take forward its shared education agenda until the functions and remit of the single board have been determined. Any attempt to take forward shared education through existing ELB structures would not be appropriate given the risks of unacceptable variation in the approaches adopted across different areas that may result.

Community Relations Equality and Diversity policy and the role of special schools

75. The NASUWT welcomes the recognition given by the Ministerial Advisory Group to the important role played by special and alternative education settings in the provision of a genuinely inclusive education system. It is clear that any meaningful commitment to the development of an effective shared education strategy must include consideration of the ways in which such settings can contribute to purposeful inter-school partnerships that seek to meet the educational needs and interests of all children and young people.
76. As the Ministerial Advisory Group acknowledges, highly skilled and experienced staff in special schools and alternative settings are particularly well-placed to support provision for pupils with special and additional educational needs in mainstream settings, while staff across both sectors can benefit from the sharing of expertise and experience in all areas of pedagogy and professional practice.
77. The NASUWT therefore endorses the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group that the Department of Education should undertake a review of how shared education and enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and educational support centres can most effectively meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with special educational needs. The Union looks forward to working closely with the Department of Education on the development of the terms of reference of this review, its methodology and the evaluation of its outcomes.
78. Specifically, the Union will seek early clarification from the Department of Education that the view of the Ministerial Advisory Group that, wherever possible, pupils with special and additional needs are taught in mainstream settings will not be interpreted in a way that undermines the importance of ensuring that decisions about where such pupils are educated should continue to be guided by objective and professional assessments of the kinds of settings where these needs can best be met.
79. In relation to the Committee's specific interest in the relationship between the shared education agenda and the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy, the NASUWT remains clear that a meaningful approach to shared education in the context of broader equality and diversity policy must seek to address the needs of pupils across all
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categories specified in the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and those living in materially deprived households.

80. In this regard, the Union takes particular note of the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group that legislation should be brought forward for schools and other educational institutions to be designated as 'public authorities' under Section 75 and thereby required to comply with the statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
81. In principle, the Union has no objections to schools being designated as public authorities for this specific purpose. However, before any such proposal could be progressed, it would be necessary to undertake a thorough evaluation of the possible wider implications for schools of their designation as public authorities in order to prevent such a decision creating unforeseen and unwanted consequences. This evaluation would secure the confidence of the school workforce and the wider public that the sole implication of designation would be to introduce a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
82. In addition, as the report of the Ministerial Advisory Group implies, designation of individual schools as public authorities could impose responsibilities on schools that they may require additional support and resources to discharge effectively and manageably. Before any steps were taken to implement this proposal, it would also be important to ensure that provisions are put in place to prevent responsibilities under Section 75 that should continue to remain within the remit of other public authorities being transferred inappropriately to schools.
83. The NASUWT recognises that responsibility for the introduction of legislation to designate schools and other educational institutions as public authorities falls within the remit of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). The Union notes from evidence given to the Committee by the Department of Education that the Minister intends to write to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to communicate the detail of the Ministerial Advisory Group's recommendations and to seek their views on the practicalities of designating schools as public authorities for Section 75 purposes.
84. The NASUWT further notes that to assist the Minister in this process, the Department of Education is undertaking a review of approaches to equality legislation for education settings in other jurisdictions. Given the potential significance of any decision to designate schools as public authorities for the school workforce, the NASUWT is clear that it should be consulted fully over the terms of this review in particular and on the development of this strand of policy more broadly.

NEELB

Appendix 8

Shared / Integrated Education Inquiry

Submission from the North Eastern Education and Library Board

October 2014

Introduction

The North Eastern Education and Library Board has, since its inception, been at the forefront of educational innovation and development. Among the responsibilities which it discharges have been those in respect of promoting Community Relations and indeed contributing to the reconciliation process both during and after decades of inter-communal conflict in Northern Ireland.

As a learning organisation, it has remained aware of and involved in many of the significant initiatives which have sought to further these societal purposes and indeed have had significant implications and benefits for our schools. Some of these are as follows;

- i. The Cross Community Contact Scheme (CCCS), initiated by DE in 1987 and the re-launching of the above scheme as the Schools Community Relations Programme (SCRCP) in 1996 and continuing in this form until 2010
- ii. The DE working group paper on the strategic promotion of EMU, entitled 'Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Education for Diversity', 1999
- iii. The NEELB Policy and Action Plan on 'Promoting a Culture of Tolerance', 2001
- iv. The NEELB Action Plan to Promote Cultural Diversity, 2006
- v. The Dunclug Initiative 2006 – 2010. This initiative provided funding for the two main post primary schools in the locality to extend and deepen their collaborative work and thus provide an initial template for 'Shared Education' between post primary schools.
- vi. The implementation of a new Northern Ireland Curriculum in 2007, including as it did for the first time, discrete areas of study which pertained to this field, notably Personal Development and Mutual Understanding at Primary age (4-11) and Local and Global Citizenship at Post Primary age (11-16)
- vii. The development of Integrated Education, and more specifically Controlled Integrated provision in the NEELB area, in conjunction with our educational partners
- viii. The PIEE (Primary Integrating and Enriching Education) Project, 2009 – 2013 which was operational in the NEELB area. This project represents an established model for Shared Education at primary level which has been validated by external evaluation. As such it has provided much evidence which is relevant to this inquiry
- ix. The PIRCH (Partnership, Inclusion, Reconciliation, Citizenship and History) Project, 2011 – 2013 which was operational in the NEELB area. This project represents an established model for Shared Education at post-primary level which has been validated by the Education and Training Inspectorate. As such it has provided much evidence which is relevant to this inquiry
- x. From 2008 to 2010, DE initiated and facilitated a working group which led to the formulation and publication of the DE Policy on 'Community Relations, Equality and

Diversity' (CRED) in 2011. The NEELB has been at the forefront of the implementation of the policy in schools and youth facilities since that time.

Based on the experience and learning which have accrued from involvement in and the management and delivery of the above, we would therefore propose to submit evidence to the Committee premised upon the bullet points which have been set out in the terms of reference of the request.

Summary

The North Eastern Education and Library Board has a long history of participation in programmes that have involved young people and schools engaging in shared education.

As a consequence of this extensive experience the Board has learned a great deal about the key factors that contribute to the success of shared education programmes. In recent times the Board has been engaged in innovative work involving sharing at a local community level which, based on rigorous evaluation, has proven to have a significant impact on communities.

Experience of this work has emphasised the need for engagement to be carefully planned and set very firmly in the context of the history and culture of the local area. The importance of providing support to assist school partners to address the issues that present in such work has been pivotal in ensuring success.

The Board believes there is a need to bring clarity, through definition, of Shared Education and for such definition to support the local contextualisation of shared working. Evaluation of Board projects has identified the benefits for learners and communities of shared education. The key enablers outlined in the submission have been identified through experience and practice.

Contents

This paper will collate and outline evidence sequentially based on issues 1-4 of the Terms of Reference as set out in the request from the inquiry as follows;

- *Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;*
- *Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;*
 - (a) Barriers and enablers for Shared Education in the Primary context in terms of learning from the PEE Project
 - (b) Barriers and enablers for Shared Education in the Post Primary context in terms of learning from the PIRCH Project
- *Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;*
- *Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools*

Terms of Reference issue 1.

- *Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;*

1. The PIEE Project at primary phase, and the PIRCH Project at post-primary phase, were direct examples of models of 'Shared Education' and as such offer the clearest opportunity for providing evidence in relation to the purpose of this paper.

Both of these 'Shared Education' projects were heavily influenced by potential benefits which they would bring to stakeholders. Three benefits of Shared Education in particular were identified in the devising of the two projects which may be summarised thus;

- (i) **Educational Benefits;** To provide an enhanced quality of educational provision and experience to the schools and young people involved
- (ii) **Societal benefits;** To improve community relations, reconciliation and community cohesion in light of a divided and troubled past
- (ii) **Economic benefits;** To maximise educational provision and resourcing in light of a diverse and often rural schools estate which has experienced pressures, particularly in times of economic downturn

These benefits as concepts may well serve to focus the direction of Shared Education and to influence the decision making of those who are seeking to establish the efficacy of Shared Education.

2. In working toward a definition of Shared Education the PIEE Project upon inception in 2009 termed it to be **"regular and sustained engagement between pupils and teachers from two or more schools of different management types"**. ('How to Create and Maintain a Primary Partnership', NEELB, 2013)

3. The Project Vision, Project Aim and Project Objectives for PIEE were as follows;

- **Project Vision:**

To establish sustainable, partnering relationships at primary level to enhance the quality of the educational experience and contribute to community cohesion.

- **Project Aim:**

To provide support to small schools of different management types within a geographical area by developing cross community clusters of primary schools.

- **Project Objectives:**

- (i) To enhance the quality of the cross community educational experience;
- (ii) To encourage schools from different sectors to participate in a partnership model of Shared Education
- (iii) To ensure the sharing of resources and facilities for mutual benefit.

4. The PIRCH Project which was developed somewhat later and implemented from 2011 onward, consistently referred to Shared Education as being **"a collaborative working relationship between two or more schools, whereby each retains its own identity and ethos, but that provision, practice, expertise and resources are managed in a shared and mutually beneficial way"**. (Various related documents, NEELB, 2013)

5. The strategic aims for the PIRCH Project were as follows;

- To enhance and improve reconciliation and community relations in areas where large numbers of the two main traditions are living in close proximity using education as the primary agent of change
- To enhance and improve community cohesion in areas where large numbers of the two main traditions are living in close proximity using education as the primary agent of change

- To improve educational opportunities for children who are socio-economically disadvantaged and who are at risk of marginalisation or exclusion using a cross community and partnering approach to inclusion and education
- To build practical, sustainable partnerships between pairs of Post Primary schools of differing religious traditions whose relationships bring about improved educational experiences and life chances for the young people concerned
- To promote and facilitate shared education on the themes of peace building and reconciliation in the post primary setting

Statutory Definition

6. Based on experience the Board considers that a formal statutory definition of Shared Education is required. This is fundamental to accountability in respect of resources allocated to achieve the Programme for Government commitments in respect of Shared Education. It is also essential that there is clarification in respect of the distinction between Shared Education and Integrated Education and a definition will contribute to this understanding.

The Board acknowledges the work of the Ministerial Advisory Group and would endorse the definition provided in the Minister's terms of reference:

Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

The Board's experience has demonstrated that Shared Education can contribute to the aim of improving educational outcomes for learners. A statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage Shared Education would acknowledge this contribution, place value on it and ensure its potential is fully utilized.

In addition our experience has demonstrated how Shared Education contributes to the improvement of community relations. The Board has worked closely with the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education in the development of controlled integrated schools within its area and also recognizes the contribution that Integrated Education has made. However, our evidence has shown that a fully integrated system of schooling is not achievable province wide and there is much to be gained from supporting and developing collaboration within existing structures.

Terms of Reference Issue 2

Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;

- (a) Barriers and enablers for Shared Education in the Primary context in terms of learning from the PíEE Project
7. Unlike many previous initiatives, which focused on pupils alone, PíEE's intention was to impact at all levels within the school communities, i.e. pupils, staff, parents and governors as part of what may be termed a 'whole school' sharing model.
8. Ultimately the PíEE project aimed to influence a move away from competition between small primary schools towards collaboration. In the context of partnerships between schools of different management type this process supported enhanced community cohesion without compromising the existing ethos of any school.
9. As a result of the project partnerships collaborated on planning and professional development for staff and provided opportunities for pupils to experience a broader

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- curriculum through shared classes, both within school hours and during after school and summer school activities.
10. Building capacity amongst principals to manage sharing within schools and partnerships was recognised as being critical to the successful delivery of PíEE
 11. Similarly, shared staff development for the wider group of teachers from the partner schools was viewed as crucial to the underpinning of relationships and thus the project as a whole.
 12. The appointment of a 'Shared Teacher' to each partnership in the PíEE Project was both ground breaking and successful. This demonstrated that a joint appointment could be managed effectively across a number of schools and that there were clear educational and social benefits to having a shared teacher.
 13. As sharing between partnerships evolve, this growing formality could be represented by a Partnership Agreement. The Partnership Agreement represented schools' individual and collective commitment to long term collaboration. These were prefaced by an agreed vision and outlined the aims and objectives of the partnership. An exemplar Partnership Agreement is included in 'How to Create and Maintain a Primary Partnership – A Handbook for Schools'.
 14. Many unexpected or external factors can also affect shared arrangements between schools, for example, the appointment of a new principal, staff illness, new education initiatives and the impact of wider education policy. During the course of the project two PíEE schools closed and the introduction of area based planning had an impact on schools as issues of viability and sustainability came to the fore.
 15. The PíEE Project Steering Group embraced representatives from the other education sectors, namely CCMS, NICIE and CnaG. This lent credibility to the project and ensured that there was full cross-sectoral support for project activities.
 16. From the outset the PíEE schools were acutely aware of the need to secure parental and governor support for PíEE processes and activities.
 17. PíEE's experience shows that those partnerships comprising a controlled and maintained school of similar enrolment size and in close proximity to each other were able to maximise sharing opportunities across all levels of the school.
 18. Data relating to pupil contact time demonstrated a significant number of hours spent in shared classes across the four years of the project. Without PíEE, this sharing, with pupils, side by side in a classroom, would not have taken place. The data for shared hours in Year 4 illustrate that for some partnerships the shared teacher was utilised in a way that lead to very significant increases in shared classes. This was particularly true of partnerships which were closest in terms of geographical distance between schools.
 19. Planning for pupil 'team building' activities is important before embarking on regular shared classes. Like staff, pupils need time to get to know each other and schools need to consider what is manageable in terms of shared classes. Residential visits often helped to accelerate the relationship-building process. Having built relationships between pupils it is important to maintain these as any prolonged gaps between visits can have a detrimental effect on fledgling friendships.
 20. The sharing of resources and facilities was one of the most immediate benefits identified from the PíEE project. Data collected from schools showed clearly that schools quickly took advantage of being able to share physical resources with their partners.
 21. The PíEE project offered a unique approach to promoting cross community links between schools by encouraging schools to develop whole school connections. Through this process many schools reached the conclusion that interdependency provided an essential platform for enhanced educational practice.
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22. It should be noted that entry to the PíEE Project for schools was premised upon various criteria, one of which was that each school should have no more than 105 pupils. This was particularly advantageous in promoting ‘sharing’ between small rural schools for whom that was often the case. Indeed, this model lent itself well to bringing about ‘sharing’ on a whole school level. This does however raise the issue of how similar arrangements might be brought about for medium or large sized Primary schools for whom whole school ‘sharing’ may well be more complex and indeed difficult to achieve.
23. The collaborative work of the partnerships and the individual schools was both successful and commendable. However it should not be underestimated the role that was played both by the host body of the project, namely the NEELB and indeed the project Steering Group which included members from different employing authorities e.g. NEELB, CCMS, CnaG and NICIE. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that in initiating and sustaining such work, the role of local educational authorities in providing strategic direction, governance and support is of key importance.

(b) Barriers and enablers for Shared Education in the Post Primary context in terms of learning from the PIRCH Project
24. Entry into the PIRCH Project for schools was through application which required them to meet a number of criteria. This process required them to apply in pairs. Hence at the outset, the impetus to be part of this undertaking had to come from the schools themselves. Moreover, the onus was on them to assess the situation in their local community and to identify a ‘sharing partner’ with whom they were keen to collaborate and work with. This aspect of the process thereby allowed them to work with the issues of local ‘politics’ and to come forward with their own solutions. This was crucial to ownership, self-determined commitment and future success of the partnership.
25. Proximity between partner schools, based on knowledge of previous projects and initiatives, is very likely to have a significant impact on the quality and practicalities of the work. A criterion for entry was therefore that partner schools were no more than six miles apart. As well as relating to issues of practicality in implementing the project e.g. the transportation of children, it was also intended to insure that the children attending the schools were almost certainly living in the same or nearby neighbourhoods. Relationships formed were therefore likely to continue outside of school in the other significant aspects of the lives of both the young people and their parents and families.
26. For a project such as this which involved large post-primary schools, with understandable limitations on finance, manpower at school level and support, it was not possible to bring about ‘sharing’ on a completely whole school level. However, structures and practices were established between partner schools which provided both a working model and a template for future development and expansion toward ‘whole school’ involvement, should conditions allow for this in the future.
27. A key feature of the initiative between each pair of schools were the relationships which were built between staff members at various levels. These were developed firstly between the Principals of the two schools and next, as far as possible, between the two teams of Senior Managements. It was also desirable, as will become evident below, for the two Heads of Pastoral Care to form a close working relationship. Ever broadening the staffing base, Heads of Department from various subjects also worked together intensively and indeed in time brought subject teachers from their Departments into the equation. The result of this process over a near three year period, was that a staffing spine of mutuality was formed between the two schools. By the end of the project, a considerable number of staff from each partner school had worked closely with their counterparts and lasting sustainable relationships had been formed. In short, capacity had been built for future sustainable ‘sharing’. Such a process by whatever means may be viewed as fundamental to promoting ‘sharing’ between Post Primary Schools.

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28. It perhaps goes without saying that staff development in various aspects of the project was implemented on a joint basis. The majority of the large numbers of teachers involved were new to this kind of work. However, it is therefore even more notable, that there were few problems or issues in facilitating teachers to become operational in both the practical and educational aspects of the project. This facilitation and staff development was provided by the NEELB. A key lesson from this process was therefore that it need not be onerous or overly time consuming to initiate and develop teachers in this area if the support and facilitation is of sufficient quality and focus.
29. A main feature of the project activities between partner schools were curriculum / subject based programmes. This typically involved a class of children from each of two partner schools using an area of the curriculum from their subject studies which they then studied together using a variety of learning contexts. Some of these were classroom based while others were workshops or visits to educational locations. Fifty four such projects were implemented during the three years of the overall initiative. The PIRCH Project compelled schools to use History and Citizenship as the two main subject areas, promoting as they did, the best opportunities for young people to deepen their understanding of issues in relation to the past, culture, identity, conflict and reconciliation. However it also allowed schools to choose their own subject areas for these purposes. Among these were Drama, Music, Art and Physical Education. This 'shared' use of the curriculum to promote reconciliation proved to be a major success. Moreover it is in keeping with a key recommendation of DE's CRED Policy which cites the curriculum as being a major driver in educating children about these issues. The nature, quality and variety of the curriculum based projects were favourably commented upon by ETI as part of their overall inspection of the project.
30. While the implementation of the projects outlined above was highly successful, it should be noted that this was possible in certain subject areas due to the external funding which the project was receiving through the International Fund for Ireland. Such programmes have a cost implication which would not be inconsiderable. Similarly this meant that only certain subject areas were able to be utilised for these purposes. While not all subject areas between two post primary schools would lend themselves to such a shared approach, linking those all of those which would benefit would be a major undertaking.
31. For each of the 12 Post Primary schools involved in the PIRCH Project, funding allowed the appointment of an 'Inclusion Teacher' for two school years. This teacher fulfilled a variety of roles, both pastoral and academic. In the first instance, in collaboration with senior staff, they served to promote Inclusion in the sense of insuring that potentially marginalised children or those facing specific challenges, were supported significantly to be in school and fully engaged in meaningful academic study. However they also worked intensively with their counterpart in their partner school to make sure that much of the work was undertaken on a shared basis. Often working with support agencies and community groups, they sought to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable children in the community. Bringing those children together, often to look at issues of personal and social significance, e.g. drugs education or community safety also formed a key part of the shared relationship and reconciliation process. The Inclusion Teachers also played a pivotal role in co-ordinating shared activities between the partner schools, further augmenting community cohesion. Such appointments were radical in the sense that they moved away from the traditional post-primary appointment process of appointing on the basis of subject specialism. Again this 'Inclusion' work was favourably commented upon by the Education and Training Inspectorate.
32. In concluding evidence in relation to Shared Education which has accrued from the PIRCH Project, it is timely to again reinforce the significance of the role played by the local education authority, in this case the NEELB, in driving, co-ordinating and supporting the advances made by the schools. Curriculum and management support was crucial in providing direction into what is almost always new territory for schools who are willing to make such a commitment.
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33. **Summary of Key Enablers**

- Involvement of all key stakeholders – pupils, parents, staff and Governors
- A culture of openness and collaboration
- Capacity building
- Building relationships
- Understanding and taking account of the community context
- Trust, equality, mutual understanding and shared responsibility
- Effective planning
- Effective facilitation and support
- The provision of time and funding for substitute cover to enable teachers to plan together
- Funding to support shared education development
- Effective use of technology
- A focus on enhancing the education experience

Terms of Reference Issue 3

- *Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;*

34. The NEELB would not wish to offer specific evidence in terms of this issue, having not had direct experience of ethos and practicalities in this regard from other jurisdictions. However it would wish to suggest that comparable evidence is sought from experts on jurisdictions which could provide valuable relevant evidence to the local context, namely;

- (i) Scotland, where issues of religious division and sectarianism have impacted upon the education system and which has a similar socio-economic demographic to our own exists
- (ii) Macedonia, with whom a number of comparison studies have been made and indeed is a place where a healthy accommodation in education seems to have been approached while working within the context of a divided society

Terms of Reference Issue 4

- *Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools*

35. Terminology such as Community Relations Education, Integrated Education and Shared Education do not enjoy a great level of understanding by the public in general. Consideration may well therefore be given as to how a better level of understanding might be brought about, particularly in relation to parents, carers and others with a direct interest or involvement in school aged education.

36. However, even within the structures of the formal educational community itself, the third of these concepts, 'Shared Education' has a low level of appreciation. It is both a relatively new concept and one in which formal definitions and structures have yet to be established. Above has been evidence accrued from projects whereby a small number of schools were involved in Shared Education initiatives. However, apart from schools such as these, it would seem that a considerable job of education and familiarisation needs to be undertaken in order for the greater number of schools to gain a basic awareness of the nature of Shared Education and the potentialities it may hold for them. In-service training and development for Governors, Principals, Senior Managers and Teachers at the various levels would therefore be required.

37. Assuming that understanding of Shared Education did increase to a level whereby schools were coming forward (preferably by self-selecting) and an established need had therefore arisen, the following would then need to be in place to allow for meaningful implementation;
- (i) A clear definition of Shared Education and indeed accompanying categories and parameters of clarification as to what does and does not meet the definition
 - (ii) Structures and staffing within the statutory educational bodies which would advise, co-ordinate, support and part manage at least the initial phases of schools wishing to enter in to Shared Education arrangements.
 - (iii) Significant resourcing of at least the initial phases of transforming the culture of local education to one of Shared Education. (This refers to educational processes and staffing and does not refer to the cost of capital builds or other 'bricks and mortar' elements of progression). As a result, funding would need to be available to schools through the statutory bodies to allow for uptake and engagement.
38. The current DE Policy on CRED (2011) alludes to much of the philosophy and many of the principles and concepts of Shared Education. It is worth considering as to whether any substantive developments in relation to Shared Education can be accommodated within this existing policy or indeed a new and separate policy for Shared Education is necessitated in itself.
39. The CRED Policy advocates use of the curriculum as a key vehicle in achieving reconciliation and education in relation to other concepts such as Equality and Diversity. This has shown to be appropriate and successful in both the PIEE and PIRCH projects outlined above. In this respect, use of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding at Primary age was particularly relevant and more so in the context of 'shared classes'. At Post Primary age, the subject areas of History and Citizenship offer an excellent opportunity to allow students to study issues relating to a contentious past and indeed ways of dealing with an ever evolving present, with 'shared classes' again having the greatest potential for impact. Other subject areas at both Primary and Post Primary can also contribute significantly in this respect.
- However, a much more widespread understanding of the ethos and practicalities of how this might be done needs to be achieved if it is to become common practice both in individual schools and in the context of Shared Education. Aware as ever of resource limitations, it is nonetheless probable that a major training process would be required to initiate teachers into the philosophy and practicalities of shared curriculum delivery and shared classes
- The out workings of this suggestion are alluded to in (34) (ii) above.
40. Shared classes, while high on the scale of positive outcomes of Shared Education, obviously require a degree of organisation. This entails a workload for those concerned, most specifically at Post Primary where elements of shared timetabling have been in evidence. Practicalities are also a significant issue. Where schools are in extremely close proximity, pupils can move easily from campus to campus. Such a situation is often where we find Shared Education working at its best. However where schools are not in close proximity, even when only one or two miles apart, a transportation cost will be involved from a source which is yet to be established. Some of the proposals for resourcing / funding in this paper could be structured to allow for this ongoing expense.
41. The CRED Policy advocates meaningful interaction between different groups of children in achieving reconciliation and education in relation to other concepts such as Equality and Diversity. This has been recognised over time in recent projects such as PIEE and PIRCH as well as through statutory funding streams such as the Schools Community Relations Programme and the CRED Enhancement Scheme. While we are not at the stage of fine detail on Shared Education practice, programmes such as this would almost certainly play a role in future arrangements.

The resourcing of such 'meaningful interactions' though would not be insignificant. It may be suggested that such resourcing should be available to all of those who wish to use it as one of the elements of establishing and continuing Shared Education arrangements. As such it may require a considerable level of funding which encourages those who may wish to undertake such a process and thus could assume large scale proportions.

Again the out workings of this suggestion may be entailed in (34), (ii) and (iii) above.

42. Special Schools provide a unique form of educational provision for our children. Involvement by many of them in initiatives such as the Schools Community Relations Programme (1996-2010) show that they have much to offer in terms of peer education and that their participation in such schemes need not be hindered by philosophical or practical barriers. There is therefore every reason to hold to the conviction that Special Schools are just as well placed to be part of any future Shared Education arrangements as any other type of school. This may serve as a guiding principle when undertaking strategic consideration of possible developments.
43. Some elements of 'sharing', while not overtly aimed at reconciliation, have emerged over the years, arising out of a variety of educational and practical necessities. One example of this has been the work undertaken in relation to the Entitlement Framework and the Area Learning Communities. One proposal therefore which may be useful is that an audit of current 'sharing' could be undertaken at local level so that existing good practice can be recognised and built upon.
44. Whatever decisions are made as to how this issue is approached, experience and learning from initiatives outlined above would suggest that any path of development will require a long term commitment. In the sense that any strategic objectives would undertake to change the whole culture of an educational system toward collaboration and interdependency rather than separateness, this may indeed necessitate support, resourcing and external part-management for the best part of a generation.

NI Commission for Catholic Education



Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education.

Shared Education Inquiry.

Submission of Written Evidence to the Northern Ireland Assembly – Committee for Education.

October 2014

1. This evidence is being submitted on behalf of the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education (NICCE).

NICCE represents the Catholic Bishops and leaders of Religious Congregations in their role as Trustees of the family of 500+ Catholic Voluntary Maintained and Grammar Schools in Northern Ireland. These schools have been chosen by parents of almost half of the school-going population, of varied religious and ethnic backgrounds, as the preferred option for their children.
2. NICCE welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the Committee for Education with a view to assisting its inquiry into Shared Education and requests the opportunity to supplement this written submission with an oral presentation to the Committee.
3. The founding purpose and aim of all Catholic Schools in Northern Ireland is the same as for Catholic Schools throughout the world. They offer to parents the choice of a school inspired and directed in all of its activities by the message and spirit of Jesus Christ, a message that has at its very heart the commandment to love God, to love our neighbor and to live and celebrate a constructive and healthy love of self. Catholic schools throughout the world are therefore defined by a commitment to forming young people as active citizens who contribute constructively to the good of the society in which they live, as well as to the global community of the human family. This includes, as a founding and guiding principle, seeking to form young people into those values that are the very bedrock of a peaceful, reconciled, diverse and flourishing human society such as respect for the inherent dignity of every person and working with all for the common good.
4. The Catholic Church provides schools that are welcomed and recognized for their educational excellence and positive contribution to peace and the common good in every imaginable social and political environment in the world. Even where Catholic schools do not have a majority of Catholic pupils attending, their distinctive ethos and capacity for forming pupils who make a positive contribution to the well-being of the society in which they live is acknowledged across the world.
5. In Ireland, Britain, Scotland and other European democracies, the long-standing right of parents to a faith based education for their children is formally recognised in legislation, including in the European Convention on Human Rights, and in various national policies. Indeed, diversity of school provision has long been one of the hallmarks of a truly diverse and pluralist society which respects the rights of individuals, of communities and, in the case of education in particular, of parents. This in turn is closely related to another hallmark of a truly free, diverse and pluralist society, respect for the fundamental human right to freedom of conscience and religion.

6. In this submission to the Education Committee, therefore, NICCE wishes to emphasise the following point: the diverse provision of schools in Northern Ireland, as elsewhere on these islands, is a matter of respect for the human rights of citizens. It not a matter of one policy choice among others, much less a regrettable remnant of historic ethno-political divisions in our society. Diversity of provision in education is the hallmark of, not an obstacle to a normal, diverse, pluralist society. NICCE calls on the Education Committee to publicly recognize this vital point and to affirm the right of parents to have access to a faith-based education for their children, where possible, as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and elsewhere. NICCE calls on the Education Committee to acknowledge that diversity of provision in schools, in response to this right, is the mark of, and not the obstacle to, a diverse, tolerant and pluralist society. The Education Committee needs to decide if the Northern Ireland education system is appropriately diverse and pluralist, rooted in the human rights of citizens, as in other parts of these islands, or somehow uniquely and inappropriately ‘segregated’, a term which NICCE rejects as both offensive to those schools which uphold the right to a particular religious, cultural or linguistic ethos and inaccurate. In fact, as the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) pointed out in their submission, the term segregation to describe the education system in Northern Ireland is incorrect given that segregation, according to the Oxford English Dictionary means;

“enforced separation of racial groups in a community.”

The principle of parental preference in the Northern Ireland Education system in no way implies and should not be understood as “enforced separation”.

7. Great care needs to be taken to avoid giving the impression that a peaceful, normalized future in Northern Ireland has to be built on the erosion of fundamental rights enjoyed by citizens and respected by government in other parts of these islands. The necessity to highlight this point is demonstrated by the not uncommon presumption that only one type of school and only one approach to sharing within educational structures can contribute effectively to a peaceful and reconciled society. It is unjust and inaccurate to perpetuate the impression that schools in the formally ‘integrated’ sector represent the best or even the most achievable, effective and appropriate way for schools to contribute to peace, tolerance and understanding in Northern Ireland. Research has consistently and repeatedly demonstrated that various other forms of sharing, from inter-school activities to appropriately negotiated shared campuses, provide meaningful and measurable outcomes in terms of extending the already positive contribution all school types make to the promotion of tolerant and welcoming attitudes to diversity. Catholic schools, and Catholic Trustees, have not only actively encouraged engagement in this full range of sharing opportunities in Northern Ireland, in many cases Catholic schools have actively led such initiatives. NICCE will continue to encourage such leadership in sharing by Catholic schools including, where appropriate, and where the rights of Trustees to ensure ethos is adequately respected, participation in shared campus arrangements.
8. This is to confirm a key finding of the Bain Report in 2006, when Sir George Bain observed that “all schools and, indeed, all educational interests need to, and wish to, play their part in the journey towards the goal of a shared future.” He then concluded: “We advocate, therefore, not a single approach to integration, but a more pervasive and inclusive strategy, focused on the dynamic process of integrating education across the school system”. NICCE supports the general principle underpinning this approach.
9. The value and realism of such an approach was also reflected in the findings and recommendations of the more recent report of the Ministerial Advisory Group on “Advancing Shared Education” (March 2013). Having considered the wide range of research available on the effectiveness of formally ‘integrated’ schools in promoting good relations, the Advisory Group concluded: “the vast majority of the evidence reported has not been able to demonstrate clearly that it is specifically because of the child or young person attending an integrated or mixed school that their attitudes are more positive. It could be that the reason

why there is a relationship between school attended and attitudes is that integrated or mixed schools tend to attract parents, and thus children and young people, with more positive attitudes in the first place” (cf. ps.55-56).

10. The Advisory Group went on to say: “the Group does not agree that integrated schools should be viewed and actively promoted as the ‘preferred option’ in relation to plans to advance shared education. Parents and children have the right to their religious, cultural and philosophical beliefs being respected.... promoting one particular school sector runs counter to the vision of a diverse and plural system outlined above and is not a model for advancing shared education. By definition, shared education involves schools and other educational institutions of different types and from different sectors collaborating together. Actively promoting one sector over other sectors will not only be divisive but it will not, in itself, lead to the educational benefits that accrue from schools sharing good practice and collaborating together; nor will it necessarily ensure that children and young people from a wider range of backgrounds learn together” (cf. ps. xx-xxi). NICCE fully supports this analysis and conclusion.
11. It also follows that the Education Committee should recommend an end to the long-standing statutory duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the development of formally Integrated education. This duty is not only unjust it also undermines the fundamental principles of equality, respect for difference and for the rights of others upon which a truly diverse, peaceful and tolerant society is based. It is also appropriate to question the effectiveness of this policy after such a prolonged period of time. Across Northern Ireland last year, for example, the formally integrated post-primary schools filled to only 85% of their potential intakes. Only seven integrated post-primary schools oversubscribed at first preference. At the same time increasing numbers of pupils from across the community spectrum are opting in to the Catholic sector. In towns like Bangor, Lisburn and Coleraine/Portstewart, pupils are passing the local “integrated” schools and choosing Catholic schools as the preferred schools for both academic standards and for integrating local populations. In this regard NICCE fully supports the position of CCMS when it states in its submission that: “If after 30 years the sector has grown to the point where it commands only 6.89% of the school age population in Northern Ireland, the Department should evaluate the public appetite for ‘Integrated Education’ as a sectoral entity, reconsider the ‘statutory duty’ and look to the promotion of other “initiatives” which have a greater chance of making more effective use of limited resources, promoting social cohesion and delivering on the general principles of TACOT:IT as outlined below;
 - a. *It is a seminal purpose of the Northern Ireland Education Service to promote a culture of tolerance and reconciliation and, for schools, to do so in keeping with the particular ethos and circumstances within which they operate. These different approaches should be valued and all schools encouraged to provide further opportunities to promote a culture of tolerance.*
 - b. *There should continue to be a pluralist approach to education, expressed in a plurality of structures (i.e. different types of school) and ethos.*
 - c. *All schools should provide a pluralist curriculum promoting tolerance and mutual understanding.*
 - d. *The present structure for schooling has been determined by parental wishes and, subject to the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils should continue to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.*
 - e. *education policy, administration, school funding and school support should be fair and equitable to all grant-aided schools, i.e. controlled, voluntary, integrated, Irish-medium maintained, denominational, non-denominational, etc. (TACOT:IT June 1998)”.*

12. To this end, NICCE supports the view of the Ministerial Advisory Group when it suggests that: “while the vision of a plurality of different schools is respected and encouraged, this must be within the context where strong efforts are made to ensure that these different types of school collaborate together in a sustained and meaningful manner to ensure that educational standards are enhanced for all children and young people and good relations are promoted.” The Trustees of Catholic Schools have consistently demonstrated their willingness to be part of such a shared and collaborative education system. From as far back as 2001, the Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland (*in Building Peace Shaping the Future*) were actively promoting the message that Catholic schools, in living out their particular philosophy and ethos, are obliged to;
 - Provide friendly contacts between pupils of different characters and backgrounds in order to encourage mutual understanding;
 - Assist society to move beyond its deeply-ingrained divisions into a new coherence and openness to the world at large;
 - Promote reconciliation and the common good;
 - Recognize that the attendance at our schools of children from other denominations and none is an enrichment of the education experience offered by the school and is seen as a practical expression of the commitment to inclusivity.
13. NICCE remains fully committed to these principles and to their practical promotion in all Catholic schools in Northern Ireland. As in Britain, Catholic schools in Northern Ireland are among the most racially, ethnically and linguistically integrated. We are a much more diverse society than we were 20 years ago. This makes use of the hackneyed denominational language of the ‘Protestant vs. Catholic’ caricature to describe the fundamental fault lines of social division in Northern Ireland increasingly hackneyed and inappropriate. Some 15 years ago, the Good Friday Agreement showed that the core problem in Northern Ireland was political, not religious. It is also interesting to ask a more fundamental sociological question of those who point to the practical effectiveness of formally integrated schools in increasing community tolerance: “Have any pupils or parents of pupils from integrated schools been involved in interface rioting or other forms of sectarian civil disturbance over recent years?” In the interests of respect for the efforts and contribution to peace, reconciliation and stability made by all schools in Northern Ireland, NICCE encourages the Education Committee to recommend that when major international figures hosted by Government in Northern Ireland are invited to witness the important work of schools in the area of peace and reconciliation, this should always include visiting the excellent initiatives being carried out by many controlled and Catholic maintained schools, as well as by those in the integrated sector.
14. An important point also needs to be made here about the popular misconception that pluralism in the provision of schooling in Northern Ireland involves huge extra costs and inefficiencies in public spending. This is simply not borne out by the evidence. The school system in Northern Ireland is very similar in its overall pro-rata cost to the school system in Wales. Both are slightly more expensive than in Britain and Scotland, largely because of the lower density and wider geographical spread of the population, not because of plurality of provision. The 2007 Deloitte ‘*Research into the financial cost of the Northern Ireland divide*’ famously determined that £1.5 billion per annum ‘could be considered to be the upper limit of the cost of the divide in NI’ (para. 16.1). However, in terms of the proportion of this maximal figure that related to education, the research concluded that: ‘quantification of conflict related costs within the education sector was particularly problematic. Those identified related to RPA related structural reorganisation which, together with community relations spend, totalled approximately £10 million’ (para. 16.2). This represents approximately 0.6% of the maximum additional costs associated with community divisions in Northern Ireland, with security, health and lost business opportunities constituting by the far the largest proportion of the £1.5 billion figure. NICCE would encourage the Education Committee to publicly challenge the perception that pluralism in school provision in Northern

Ireland involves substantially higher costs to the public purse than is the case in comparative parts of these islands.

15. NICCE also encourages the Education Committee, if it is to take the issue of schools and social division seriously, to prioritise addressing what actually causes most damage and division in the NI education system, namely, academic selection in post-primary transfer. Ensuring equality of access for all on the basis of agreed and enforceable criteria would go a long way to ensuring greater social balance and integration within and between all schools, for the greater good of all pupils and the whole educational enterprise.
16. Across modern diverse societies, the State has the duty to facilitate the citizen's right to choice in education. Those taxpayers and others who prefer Catholic education – whatever their religious belief, or non-belief – are entitled to have that choice respected, facilitated and held to account for the standards achieved. NICCE recognizes that there is also a corresponding duty on every citizen, and community of citizens, to actively contribute to the common good of our society, including to the search for greater understanding, tolerance and respect for difference and diversity. NICCE remains committed to supporting all Catholic schools in living up to this responsibility in a meaningful and appropriate way, and to working with representatives of other school sectors to continue to explore opportunities for greater collaboration.

ENDS.

NI Committee of the Association for Science Education

Response from the NI Committee of the Association for Science Education (ASE) on Shared and Integrated Education in Northern Ireland

The ASE has three main aims to promote education by:

- improving the teaching of science.
- providing an authoritative medium through which opinions of teachers of science may be expressed on educational matters.
- affording a means of communication among all persons and bodies of persons concerned with the teaching of science in particular and with education in general.

The NI Committee for the ASE are committed to promoting excellence in science education whatever the context. The ASE welcomes members from all cultural and religious backgrounds and strives to meet the professional development needs of the whole science teaching community (primary, post-primary and technicians). The committee would strongly recommend that, in the planning phase for any restructuring of education or amalgamation of schools in Northern Ireland, appropriate structures and funding should be in place to facilitate the delivery of the highest quality science education.

Kind regards,

Elaine

Elaine Lennox

Association for Science Education
Northern Ireland Field Officer

Tel: 07718626554

Email: ElaineLennox@ase.org.uk

Shared Education and Integrated Education Inquiry

NI Assembly Education Committee

Evidence from the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)

Introduction

Shared Education constituted a significant commitment in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government (2011-15). This was detailed through a series of key objectives, including the establishment of a ministerial advisory group to bring forward recommendations to the Minister to advance shared education. Two objectives also stated, that by 2015, all children would have the opportunity to participate in shared education and the number of schools sharing facilities would have substantially increased. A further priority was that there would be significant progress on plans for the Lisanelly shared education campus. There was no reference to integrated education within the Programme for Government.

The Department of Education (DE) asserts that the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different types of schools to learn together through shared education has the potential to deliver a range of educational benefits to learners, to promote good relations, respect for diversity and social cohesion and to promote the efficient use of facilities and resources.¹ However, while shared education has been recognised as a step in the right direction, concerns have been expressed that it will not achieve a fully inclusive and integrated system which brings together children of all abilities and religions and none². Reviews of current DE policies have suggested that integrated education has been 'superceded' by shared education and that the wider political focus is now on education policies which plan for separate schools development rather than 'structural change and a unified system of common schools'.³

This paper by the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) will highlight key findings emerging from a consultation conducted by her Office with children and young people concerning their views and experiences of shared education. The focus of the consultation was very much on shared education however pupils and teachers from integrated schools participated therefore some reference is made to integrated education too.

The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

The Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) was created in accordance with 'The Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order' (2003) to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people in Northern Ireland. Under Articles 7(2)(3) of this legislation, NICCY has a mandate to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law, practice and services relating to the rights and best interests of children and young people by relevant authorities. The remit of the Office is children and young people from birth up to 18 years, or 21 years, if the young person is disabled or in the care of social services.

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- 1 <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/July-2014/Inquiry-into-Integrated-and-Shared-Education-Department-of-Education-Briefing/>
 - 2 <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/debateni/blogs/steven-agnew/i-have-a-dream-today-but-the-reality-of-shared-education-in-northern-ireland-is-a-nightmare-30014590.html>.
 - 3 http://www.unescocentre.ulster.ac.uk/pdfs/pdfs_unesco_centre_publications/2013_04_whatever_happened_to_integrated_education.pdf;
<http://news.tes.co.uk/b/opinion/2014/07/23/the-growing-pains-of-integrated-schooling-in-northern-ireland-is-a-lesson-for-england-after-trojan-horse.aspx>

In determining how to carry out her functions, the Commissioner's paramount consideration is the rights of the child and NICCY is required to base all its work on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)⁴. The UNCRC is a comprehensive, international human rights treaty which enshrines specific children's rights and defines universal principles and standards for the treatment and status of children around the world.

The UNCRC and the Committee on the Rights of the Child

Articles 28 and 29 of the UNCRC contain key provisions which detail a rights-based approach to education. Article 28 is primarily concerned with the right of access to education, on the basis of equality of opportunity. Article 29 of the UNCRC addresses the aims of education and the benefits that every child should be able to enjoy as a consequence of their right of access to education. This is of particular relevance to the provision of shared education, as it states that the education of children and young people should be directed towards preparing them for responsible life in a free society, in a spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of gender, and friendship. Article 29 also requires that Government directs education towards the development of children's personalities, talents and mental and physical abilities. In parallel to this, it also states that children and young people's education should be directed towards respect for their parents, their cultural identity, and the cultural identity of others. The aims of shared education which are associated with the promotion of equality of identity, respect of diversity and community cohesion may be perceived as supporting the realisation of the rights enshrined in Article 29.

In its Concluding Observations in 2002, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which oversees the implementation of the UNCRC, welcomed the development of integrated schools in Northern Ireland, but recorded its concerns that, at that time, only approximately 4% of schools were integrated and education remained largely segregated. It recommended that the Government increase the budget for, and take appropriate measures to facilitate the establishment of additional integrated schools in Northern Ireland. In its next report in 2008, the Committee reiterated its concerns that 'segregated education was still in place' and recommended that the Government take measures to address this situation.

Since that Report, the proportion of integrated schools in Northern Ireland has risen slightly to 7% with an estimated pupil population of 22,000.⁵ Recent commentaries suggest that demand currently outstrips provision and a number of integrated schools have applied to increase their intakes⁶. A variety of stakeholders have also called upon DE to meet its statutory responsibility to promote integrated education, as laid out in the 1989 Education Reform Order, and to respond positively to calls to expand places in integrated schools.

Shared Education: NICCY's Report of the Views of Children and Young People

NICCY conducted its consultation with pupils between October 2012 and January 2013). The Consultation provided interesting and reflective insights into pupils' experiences, and their ideas about how shared education might be most effectively taken forward.

Decisions regarding the further planning and development of shared education provision should be informed by the views and experiences of those who will be most directly impacted. NICCY would therefore strongly advocate that pupils of all ages, from every type of school in Northern Ireland are consulted in a meaningful way and that their feedback contributes to the further development and implementation of shared education. NICCY is aware that the Department of Education plans to seek feedback from pupils on a biennial basis. It will be

4 <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

5 http://www.deni.gov.uk/enrolments_in_schools_1314_-_february_release_-_final_rev.pdf

6 http://www.ark.ac.uk/publications/books/fio/10_fio-education.pdf
<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/education/parents-demand-800-increase-in-integrated-primary-school-places-29367225.html>
<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/education/school-heads-rail-at-catholic-sectors-dig-at-integrated-education-30685222.html>

important that pupils of all ages are enabled through effective mechanisms to share their experiences and provide advice regarding how provision should be reviewed or changed.

Background

As highlighted above, the Department of Education established a Ministerial Advisory Group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister of Education to advance shared education in Northern Ireland. In line with her statutory duty to 'keep under review, the adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for children and young persons by relevant authorities,' the Commissioner offered to assist the Minister by consulting with children and young people to explore their views and experiences of shared education, with the intention of ensuring that these were effectively incorporated into the Ministerial Advisory Group's report. An interim report was duly forwarded to the Advisory Group in February 2013 and a final Report of the Consultation findings was published in April 2013.

Approach to the Consultation

NICCY wished to ensure that as many children and young people as possible were able to participate, therefore the consultation involved two strands:

- Workshops with primary age pupils (8-10 years) and post-primary age pupils (14-17 years) and;
- Surveys completed by children aged 10-11 years and young people aged 16 years.

For the surveys, two modules of questions relating to pupils' attitudes and experiences of shared education, were commissioned from ARK, a joint initiative between The Queen's University, Belfast and the University of Ulster.⁷ ARK conducts annual surveys of P7-age pupils through the Kids' Life and Times (KLT) survey⁸ and 16 year olds, through the Young Life and Times (YLT) survey⁹. The questions included in the KLT and YLT surveys on shared education and area-based planning were devised by NICCY in partnership with members of the ARK team. The module of questions was very similar in both surveys in order to facilitate comparisons between the different age groups of respondents.

Alongside the surveys, 38 workshops were conducted in 21 schools across Northern Ireland involving more than 750 primary, post-primary and special school pupils. During the school visits, interviews were also conducted with principals and/or members of staff in order to contextualise pupils' responses and where necessary to clarify factual information reported. The interviews also enhanced the research team's understanding of any relevant issues facing a school and the community context in which it was located. A key objective was to ensure that pupils from as many school types as possible were able to participate, and care was taken to ensure that the sample of schools recruited, was as representative of the various school types in Northern Ireland as possible. Eight of the ten post-primary schools selected, were involved in shared education initiatives through their membership of area learning communities or involvement in the Sharing Education Programme (The Queen's University, Belfast) or Shared Education Programme (The Fermanagh Trust)¹⁰.

The workshops explored pupils' awareness, understanding and experiences of shared education and their views regarding how it should be progressed. They were encouraged to identify opportunities and activities which they believed would be enjoyable and beneficial and to highlight any barriers which they felt might dissuade pupils from taking part. Pupils' perceptions of the importance of children and young people from different schools and backgrounds learning together were explored and to conclude, pupils were invited to identify

7 <http://www.ark.ac.uk/>

8 <http://www.ark.ac.uk/klt/>

9 <http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/>

10 It is important to note however that pupils from these schools who participated in the workshops were not necessarily involved in shared education.

any issues which they believed Government should consider in taking shared education forward. Recognising the relevance of area-based planning to shared education and potential impact of the proposals on schools and pupils, the sample cohort was also asked to share their views on this issue¹¹. Quotes from pupils who participated in the workshops are presented in the findings below.

Findings

Recognition of the term ‘shared education’

When asked if they recognised the term ‘shared education’; less than 50% of post-primary pupils indicated that it was familiar to them. For those who did recognise it, this was usually due to their knowledge of, or participation in shared classes. Very few primary pupils were aware of the concept, although after further explanation, they identified a range of activities, including projects and trips, which they believed constituted shared education. This was not unexpected, given the age range of pupils, the fact that the term may not have been widely used in schools and that a significant proportion of primary pupils consulted, indicated that they had not participated in shared education. Post-primary pupils’ experiences were in many cases linked to their participation in shared classes, although other forms of ‘shared’ activities were also identified, such as joint residential or day trips and shared sports facilities or transport. The potential for pupils to participate in shared activities appeared to be influenced by a number of factors, including the subjects they studied, their class or year group and their involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Experiences of shared education

Children and young people who had taken part in shared classes or activities expressed a diverse range of opinions regarding their experiences. Both primary and post-primary pupils welcomed the opportunity to interact and make friends with pupils from other schools, experience different learning approaches and to gain insights into other schools, although as noted earlier, primary pupils had significantly fewer experiences of shared education;

“I think it’s a good way to mix with pupils from other schools, make new friends with people who have a different background or religion to us” [post-primary pupil]

“It was more fun and you got to talk to different people” [primary pupil]

“It’s interesting to see other schools” [special school pupil]

“It gives you a less biased view of what they [other schools] are like” [post-primary pupil].

A clear benefit of shared classes identified by post-primary pupils was the expanded choice of subjects available to them at Key Stage 4 and ‘A’ Level.

“Gives people more subject options – unique opportunity” [post-primary pupil]

“Without [School X] I wouldn’t be able to do my...course...but I would rather do it in a school of the same religion” [post-primary pupil].

Less positive experiences of shared education were also reported by some pupils. These had arisen through pupils having only limited or negative interactions with young people from other schools, from a sense of being in the minority or of feeling ‘out of place’ when attending classes in other schools;

“Joint classes are a bit awkward. We all sit at one table – don’t really mix with pupils from [the other school]” [post-primary pupil]

11 For the sake of brevity, this issue is not explored in the current paper, however details of pupils’ responses may be found at http://www.niccy.org/downloads/2013/publications/Adult_Report.pdf (p.59).

“Children from the other school mustn’t like us. They swear and put their fingers up” [primary pupil]

“I felt really crap and just sat there...I didn’t talk to anyone in the class for two years” [post-primary pupil]

“You feel like outcasts if you’re going to class and walking through [the school] and they look at you in a different uniform” [post-primary pupil].

A number of logistical issues, including transport and timetabling also impacted on pupils’ experiences;

“It’s awkward because of the timetables. You have to get taxis to [School X] so we have to cut short classes here as they are a different length to classes there...” [post-primary pupil]

Therefore, while a majority of pupils spoke positively about shared education, a significant minority gave quite negative accounts of their engagement with other schools.

Taking Shared Education Forward...Identifying Effective Practice

During the consultation, children and young people were asked to think about the kind of approaches and activities which they believed would be effective in undertaking shared education. Pupils shared a wide range of ideas whilst also identifying a number of challenges which they felt should be addressed. A significant majority of respondents in the KLT and YLT surveys agreed that shared projects, classes and facilities were a good idea. Eighty-six percent of sixteen year olds completing the YLT survey agreed that joint projects were a good idea while 72% noted that joint classes were a positive initiative. Fifty-nine percent of P7 pupils thought joint classes were a good idea and 73% felt similarly about joint projects.

Pupils participating in the consultation workshops called for more collaborative learning approaches to be employed, and for additional subjects and activities to be included;

“Group work and more mixing activities...would make it more enjoyable” [post-primary pupil]

“Find out about them...find out about their thoughts...get to know them” [primary pupil]

“Technology, Art, PE, Science and Music – you could do them with other people better” [post-primary pupil]

“We could link up with pupils studying ‘A’ level Irish in English medium schools” [Irish Medium School pupil].

They also highlighted the importance of introducing shared education at an early stage in a child’s schooling, undertaking preparation in advance of shared learning activities and consulting with pupils about their experiences.

“Mixing at primary school would be better than at secondary as by that stage people have framed opinions and been influenced by parents” [post-primary pupil]

“Team bonding should be essential beforehand” [post-primary pupil]

“You need to talk it through before you start” [special school pupil].

A number of pupils in schools who had limited or no experience of shared education argued that classes or activities involving similar types of school to the one they attended, would be more appropriate. Most pupils however advocated for pupils from all kinds of schools and backgrounds to join together in shared education activities. One primary pupil suggested; “We should join with people not as fortunate as us and people who have special needs”.

Taking Shared Education forward...potential barriers and challenges

As well as highlighting opportunities for shared education, pupils were asked if they thought there were any barriers which might dissuade young people from participating in shared education activities. In response, some students, mostly at post-primary level, acknowledged that they held particular views about other schools and pupils, relating to academic ability, cross-community issues, standards of behaviour, and the increased potential for bullying. In the KLT and YLT surveys, by far the most common concern expressed by respondents was the possibility of having to share their education with children or young people who were considered to be 'nasty', 'disruptive' or 'annoying'. Sixty-eight percent of respondents to the KLT survey highlighted this as did 75% of YLT respondents. Similarly, workshop participants referenced this concern alongside a number of other issues;

"I don't like the fact that if another school joins with us...we will have bullies...the bullies will spread when we do shared education" [primary pupil]

"I don't want to sound stuck-up but they don't push you there. We get better grades" [post-primary grammar pupil]

"Think about the complexities between Protestants and Catholics – it's ok at certain schools but not all" [post-primary integrated pupil]

"Some people mightn't like other schools and just want to be friends with ones in their own school" [primary pupil].

Logistical issues, including travel arrangements, timetabling and different school rules were cited by many post-primary pupils (as well as principals and teachers), as a significant barrier;

"It would just take forever to get there" [post-primary pupil]

"You would have to set consequences for anyone from a different school if they did anything bad" [primary pupil].

The consultation with participants clearly identified opportunities for and barriers to shared education. Pupils provided candid feedback but also sought, where possible, to suggest measures which might address some perceived or actual difficulties.

Sharing with Pupils from different types of School

During the consultation, pupils were asked if they thought it was important for pupils from different schools and backgrounds to have an opportunity to learn together. A majority of pupils from all school types generally concurred with this proposal. Indeed in a number of workshops, pupils contended that the aim of shared education should not be restricted to bringing pupils from the two dominant religious traditions together but rather, involve pupils from all different types of schools. However pupils also acknowledged the challenges of promoting shared education between particular school types. In every workshop conducted in a grammar school, pupils expressed reservations about collaborative learning with pupils from non-selective schools. These reservations concerned the academic ability and behaviour of pupils in non-selective schools and the standard of teaching; "I want to be sure I pick subjects where the standard of teaching is good...too risky to move [to another school]" [grammar school pupil]. Similarly some pupils attending non-selective schools felt that grammar pupils would regard them as being "less able" and therefore be reluctant to become learning partners; "It's how they view us. Because we're not grammar, we're not as smart" [non-selective school pupil].

Pupils attending special schools were generally very keen to engage with pupils from other schools. While sometimes acknowledging they were "a little nervous going somewhere new", pupils were "happy to meet pupils from other schools...anywhere, any age..." When asked about shared education opportunities with pupils from special schools, mainstream primary and post-primary school pupils generally welcomed the opportunity. Respondents did however

highlight a number of issues which they felt needed to be considered in advance of any shared activities, including the potential for bullying and accidents, logistical difficulties, and the challenge to teachers to effectively teach all pupils together.

Irish medium school pupils reflected on the challenges they would encounter through collaborative learning with English medium schools where there would be limited opportunities for them to speak Irish. Some said they would be happy to learn in English while others were not; “It’d be pointless to learn a subject in English if you are doing all the rest of your education in Irish” [Irish-medium school pupil]. Integrated school pupils expressed a willingness to engage with pupils from all types of schools although some felt that pupils from other schools did not “fully understand” integrated schools. They believed however, that their experiences and the *modus operandi* in integrated schools could helpfully support other pupils to participate effectively in shared education. As one integrated school pupil proposed; “...if we met with other schools we could set an example”.

Principals’ and teachers’ responses echoed some of the views expressed by pupils, particularly in terms of the opportunities to build relationships and the logistical challenges associated with arranging shared education activities including timetabling constraints and requirements regarding curriculum delivery. Additional challenges included the availability of funding, promoting shared education through cross-community links and for a minority of teachers, the management of staff and parents’ concerns.

Further comments from pupils about these issues and area-based planning are documented in the Report. Copies were forwarded to members of the NI Assembly Education Committee last year. It may also be accessed at http://www.niccy.org/downloads/2013/publications/Adult_Report.pdf

Reviewing the Findings

From the consultation, it was evident that shared education in post-primary schools was often associated with enhanced curriculum provision at GCSE and ‘A’ level and the opportunity then for pupils in Years 11-14 to participate in joint classes with other schools. A few post-primary pupils also referred to shared school facilities or taking part in shared activities, such as sports or drama. In primary schools, pupils’ experiences of shared education were generally through joint projects or trips with other schools. In some of the primary school workshops, pupils indicated that participation in shared activities had only been available to pupils in other year groups. The objective of shared activities in many primary schools, was to encourage cross-community contact, and where it occurred, the impetus arose from a principal’s or teacher’s desire to actively engage with other primary schools through new or existing collaborative working relationships.

Given the commitment in the Programme for Government for all children to have the opportunity to participate in shared education by 2015, significant efforts will be required to expand provision across all year groups in primary, post-primary and special schools if this is to be realised.

The consultation with pupils through the workshops and surveys, demonstrated that many pupils recognised the value of shared education and potential benefits it afforded in relation to learning and social integration. Many of those who had experienced shared education gave positive accounts of their participation in joint classes and activities, however a significant minority professed to having more mixed experiences. Some pupils described collaborative activities and joint classes as being ‘shared’ but ‘separate’ due to the fact that pupils had remained within their own school or friendship groups and interaction with pupils from other schools had been limited. Others referred to the uncomfortable experience of being in a minority when attending classes in another school and to the logistical challenges associated with the delivery of shared educational provision.

It will be important that the objectives of ‘shared education’ are sufficiently clarified and that pupils are encouraged and supported to be genuine and equal collaborators. As shared education is taken forward, there should be a focus on ensuring that quality learning experiences are available to all pupils. Where they have concerns and where difficulties arise, appropriate mechanisms should be put in place (e.g. school councils, buddy systems), so that pupils can be facilitated to raise issues and be confident that they will be dealt with sensitively and effectively.

From the findings, it was evident that some post-primary pupils’ attitudes to shared education, particularly those who had less experience, were strongly influenced by their perceptions of other schools and pupils. Perceived differences in pupils’ ability and religion influenced their views and desire to engage in shared learning initiatives. In some cases, these views had been strongly influenced by the views of parents and teachers. If shared education is to be regarded as a positive learning opportunity, there is a clear need to confront and challenge such preconceptions. Evidently, one of the most effective ways to do this is to involve pupils in positive shared learning initiatives, however it will also be important to consider other measures which may alleviate pupils’ concerns and challenge negative perceptions, prior to their participation.

The consultation clarified issues pertaining to specific school types which should be considered more closely. Irish-medium school pupils were keen to engage in shared initiatives however the challenge of providing dual medium activities or classes have, thus far, served as a barrier to their inclusion. Principals of Irish medium schools were keen that the Department of Education consider how their schools could be included in shared education initiatives as it moves forward. The inclusion of special schools in shared learning initiatives was evidently regarded as more challenging by some pupils and teachers. Therefore, it will also be important to consider how mainstream schools can collaborate most effectively with special schools and manage any logistical and practical issues which may arise. As also noted, pupils and teachers in grammar schools expressed reservations about the benefits of joint learning initiatives with pupils attending non-selective schools, due to perceived differences in academic ability and behaviour standards. The perspectives of pupils and staff in integrated schools were quite distinctive. While many welcomed opportunities to engage in collaborative learning with other schools, they emphasised that pupils and staff were already part of an effective shared learning environment. Pupils felt that their experiences of being part of an integrated school could helpfully support other schools engaged in shared education initiatives.

If schools are to provide shared education in line with the broad and diverse remit outlined in the Department of Education’s definition, this will create significant and specific challenges for some. Careful consideration should be given to ensuring that all schools are supported appropriately and effectively in their efforts to provide positive and meaningful shared experiences which are also educationally and socially valuable.

NICCY would like to thank the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee for the invitation to submit a written response to its inquiry into Shared Education and Integrated Education.

Should you require any further information concerning this submission, please contact Dr. Alison Montgomery at Alison@niccy.org or 02890 316185.

NICCY 2



Shared Education and Integrated Education Inquiry

NI Assembly Education Committee

Oral Evidence Paper

Introduction

I would like to thank the Committee for inviting us here today to give evidence to its inquiry into shared education and integrated education. I welcome the Committee's decision to initiate an inquiry into these two important aspects of education in Northern Ireland and to garner the views of stakeholders.

As you may be aware, the principal aim of my office, as set out in legislation, is to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people. As part of my remit, I have a mandate to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law, practice and services relating to the rights and best interests of children. Furthermore, my office bases all of its work on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – the UNCRC.

My presentation this morning will highlight the key findings emerging from a consultation which my Office undertook with children and young people, to explore their views and experiences of shared education. The Inquiry's Terms of Reference address the nature and definition of shared education, key barriers and enablers for shared education and what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing. Children and young people discussed these issues during the consultation and I will make reference to their responses throughout the presentation.

Consultation with Children and Young People on Shared Education

As you will know, the Department of Education established a Ministerial Advisory Group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister to advance shared education in Northern Ireland. In line with my remit, which I have just described, I offered to assist the Minister by consulting children and young people about shared education with the intention of ensuring that their views were incorporated into the Ministerial Advisory Group's report. The focus of the consultation was on shared education however pupils and teachers from integrated schools participated therefore reference is also made to integrated education.

Although the Consultation was completed within a very short timeframe, NICCY was eager to ensure that as many children and young people as possible were able to participate. So, there were two strands. Firstly, workshops were conducted with primary school pupils (aged 8 to 10 years) and post-primary age pupils (aged 14 to 17 years) and secondly, surveys were completed by children aged 10-11 years and young people aged 16 years.

The surveys were commissioned from ARK, a joint initiative between The Queen's University, Belfast and the University of Ulster which devises the Kids' and Young Life and Times surveys. Two modules of questions relating to pupils' attitudes and experiences of shared education were included in each survey.¹

Thirty-eight workshops were conducted in 21 schools across Northern Ireland involving more than 750 primary, post-primary and special school pupils. A key objective was to ensure that pupils from as many school types as possible were able to participate, and care was taken to ensure that the sample of schools recruited, was as representative as possible.

1 <http://www.ark.ac.uk/klt/>

The workshops explored pupils' awareness, understanding and experiences of shared education and their views about how it should be taken forward. They were also encouraged to identify opportunities and activities which they believed would be enjoyable and beneficial and to highlight any barriers which they felt might dissuade pupils from participating. Interviews were also conducted with principals or members of staff in order to contextualise pupils' responses or to clarify factual information provided.

Findings from the Consultation

Less than 50% of post-primary pupils indicated that the term, 'shared education' was familiar to them. Where they did recognise it, this was usually due to their knowledge of, or participation in shared classes at GCSE or 'A' level. Very few primary pupils were aware of the concept, although after it was explained, some suggested it referred to activities, such as joint projects or trips with other schools in which they or other pupils had been involved. This lack of awareness was not entirely unexpected, as the term may not have been widely used in schools and a significant proportion of primary pupils indicated that they had not had any experience of shared activities.

Post-primary pupils' experiences of shared education, were in many cases linked to their participation in shared classes, although other 'shared' activities were also identified, such as joint residentials, drama productions or sports events with other schools. Pupils also talked about sharing sports facilities or transport. The potential for pupils to participate in shared activities appeared to be influenced by a number of factors, including the subjects they studied, the class or year group they were in and their involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Children and young people who had taken part in shared classes or activities expressed a range of opinions with regard to their experiences. Both primary and post-primary pupils welcomed the opportunity to interact and make new friends with pupils from other schools. They also enjoyed the experience of different learning approaches and gaining insights into other schools. One post-primary pupil summarised many pupils' responses by saying;

"I think it's a good way to mix with pupils from other schools, [and to] make new friends with people who have a different background or religion to us."

A clear benefit of shared classes for post-primary pupils was the expanded choice of subjects available at Key Stage 4 and 'A' Level. One pupil commented, that it

"gives people more subject options...[it's a] unique opportunity."

Some pupils reported having less positive experiences. These often occurred where they had limited or negative contact with pupils from other schools. They talked about feeling uncomfortable if they were in a minority or feeling 'out of place' when they attended classes in another school. As one post-primary pupil said;

"Joint classes are a bit awkward. We all sit at one table – don't really mix with pupils from [the other school]."

Another pupil said;

"You feel like outcasts if you're going to class and walking through [the school] and they look at you in a different uniform."

A number of logistical issues, including transport arrangements and timetabling variations between schools, also impacted on pupils' experiences.

During the consultation, children and young people were asked to think about the kind of approaches and activities which they believed would be effective in the development of shared education. A significant majority of respondents to the KLT and YLT surveys agreed that shared projects, classes and facilities would be a good idea. Pupils in the workshops

explored this question in more detail, calling for more collaborative learning approaches to be employed, and for additional subjects and activities to be included. Pupils said; “Group work and more mixing activities...would make it more enjoyable” and “[Subjects like] Technology, Art, PE, Science and Music – you could do them with other people better.”

Pupils also highlighted the importance of introducing shared education at an early stage in a child's schooling, of undertaking preparation in advance of shared learning activities and providing opportunities for pupils to feedback on their experiences.

As well as highlighting opportunities for shared education, pupils were asked if they thought there were any barriers which might dissuade young people from taking part. In response, some students, mostly at post-primary schools, acknowledged that they would be concerned about sharing their education with pupils from particular schools. Their concerns related to academic ability, cross-community issues, standards of behaviour, and the increased potential for bullying. To illustrate these concerns, a grammar school pupil commenting on a non-selective school said;

“I don't want to sound stuck-up but they don't push you there. We get better grades.”

And a primary pupil admitted;

“I don't like the fact that if another school joins with us...we will have bullies...the bullies will spread when we do shared education.”

Logistical issues, including travel arrangements, timetabling and different school rules were again cited by many post-primary pupils (as well as principals and teachers), as significant barriers.

A majority of pupils thought it was important for pupils from different schools and backgrounds to have an opportunity to learn together. Indeed in a number of workshops, pupils contended that the aim of shared education should not be restricted to bringing pupils from the two dominant religious traditions together but instead, involve pupils from **all** types of schools. However, pupils acknowledged concerns about shared education occurring between particular school types. Reservations expressed by pupils at grammar schools have been mentioned. In response, some pupils attending non-selective schools felt that grammar pupils would regard them as “less able” and therefore be reluctant to become learning partners.

Pupils attending special schools were very keen to engage with their peers in other schools although a few did admit to being “a little nervous going somewhere new”. In response, pupils from mainstream schools highlighted a number of issues which they felt needed to be considered in advance of any shared activities with pupils at special schools, including the potential for bullying, accidents, logistical difficulties, and the challenge for teachers to effectively teach all pupils together. A special school teacher also welcomed the educational opportunities for pupils through her school's membership of an area learning community, although she noted there was also resistance on the part of some mainstream schools to engage with special schools.

Irish medium school pupils reflected on the challenges they would encounter through collaborative learning with English medium schools where there would be limited opportunities for them to speak Irish. Integrated school pupils expressed a willingness to engage with pupils from all schools, suggesting that their experiences and the *modus operandi* in integrated schools could support other schools to effectively participate in shared education.

Principals' and teachers' responses echoed some of the views expressed by pupils, particularly in terms of the opportunities to build relationships and the logistical issues associated with arranging shared education activities. Additional challenges included funding, promoting shared education through cross-community links and for a minority of teachers, managing staff or parents' concerns.

To conclude, I would like to briefly reflect on the findings.

Reflection on Consultation Findings

It was evident that shared education in most post-primary schools was associated with enhanced curriculum provision and the opportunity for pupils in Years 11 to 14 to participate in joint classes with other schools. In primary schools, pupils' experiences were generally through joint projects or trips with other schools. In some workshops, pupils indicated that participation in shared activities had only been available to other year groups. Given the commitment in the Programme for Government for all children to have the opportunity to participate in shared education by 2015, significant efforts will be required to expand provision across all year groups in primary, post-primary and special schools, if this is to be realised.

Many pupils recognised the value of shared education through the potential benefits for their learning and opportunities to develop relationships with pupils at other schools. While many recounted positive experiences, a significant minority offered less positive feedback. Some described collaborative activities and joint classes as '**shared**' but '**separate**', because pupils remained within their own school or friendship groups and interaction with pupils from other schools had been limited. Other young people talked about feeling uncomfortable when attending classes in another school, particularly where they were in a minority.

In taking shared education forward, it will be important that the objectives are very clearly communicated to all involved, and that pupils are encouraged and supported by all stakeholders to be **equal** and '**effective**' collaborators. The provision of quality learning experiences must be a priority for **all** pupils. Appropriate mechanisms such as school councils or 'buddy' systems should be put in place, so that where pupils have concerns, these can be dealt with sensitively and appropriately.

The attitudes of some post-primary pupils, particularly those who had less experience shared education, were strongly influenced by their perceptions of other schools and pupils. Perceived differences in ability, social background and religion influenced their desire to engage in shared learning initiatives. In some cases, pupils' views had been influenced by their parents or teachers. If shared education is to be regarded as a positive learning opportunity, there is a need to confront and challenge such preconceptions. Evidently, one of the most effective ways to do this is to involve pupils in positive shared learning initiatives, however it will also be important to consider other ways to address pupils' concerns prior to their participation. As one principal commented, "It's important to make people comfortable and get them in a position to embrace challenges".

The consultation highlighted a range of issues relating to specific school types which should be considered by the Department of Education. Pupils and principals in Irish medium schools were keen that the Department consider how their schools could be included in shared education as it is taken forward. It will also be important to consider how mainstream schools can collaborate most effectively with special schools and be supported to address any attitudinal or practical issues arising. And, as already highlighted, pupils and teachers in grammar schools expressed reservations about the benefits of collaborative learning with pupils attending non-selective schools.

The perspectives of pupils and staff in integrated schools were quite distinctive. While many welcomed opportunities to engage in collaborative learning with other schools, they pointed out that they were already part of an effective shared learning environment. One principal reflected, "Shared education is fine as a starting point, but it needs more work".

The consultation with pupils referenced the definition of shared education outlined in the Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Advisory Group and which is now displayed on the Department of Education's website. This definition references the need for shared education to provide for 'learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status' and to '...

promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion'. Findings from the consultation indicated that some shared education activities fulfilled these requirements more successfully than others. In some cases, the main objective appeared to be supporting the provision of the entitlement framework in the post-14 curriculum and pupils' access to a wide range of courses. In others, collaboration was occurring between schools of a similar management type or ethos. If pupils are to experience shared education, as defined by the Department, clear aims and objectives need to be outlined at the beginning of any shared initiative, to which all stakeholders can subscribe. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of activities, which also involves pupils, should be undertaken to ensure all objectives are being met.

The 2002 and 2008 concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, recorded the Committee's concerns that education in Northern Ireland remained largely segregated. In 2002, it recommended that the Government take measures to establish more integrated schools and in 2008, it called on Government to take steps to address segregated education.

I welcome all genuine efforts to address separation in the education system in Northern Ireland and the introduction of measures which encourage greater collaboration and understanding, and which promote equality and respect for diversity. If shared education is to be implemented as envisaged by the Department, this will create both opportunities and challenges for schools. Therefore, it is vital that all those involved in the delivery of shared education are effectively supported in their efforts to provide positive and meaningful shared experiences which are educationally and socially valuable for all pupils.

NICCY, October 2014

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission



NORTHERN
IRELAND
HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION

Submission of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Summary

The NIHRC recommends that the Committee give due consideration to the purpose of education in the context of its inquiry and that it examines the relevant human rights standards directly related to shared and integrated education as set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.11. (Par. 2.12)

The NIHRC further suggests that the Committee considers the application of domestic equality and good relations duties within schools and in particular recommends that they be designated as public authorities for the purpose of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. (Par. 2.13)

The decision of the High Court in the application by Drumragh Integrated College is that the definition of integrated education requires a particular constitution and governance structure within schools and that the pupils of that school are both catholic and protestant. The NIHRC therefore advises that shared education programmes between schools that are not integrated would be unlikely to fall within the definition of integrated education for the purposes of Art 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. (Par. 3.5)

The NIHRC recommends that the Committee seeks the opinion of the DE on their understanding of the definition and scope of integrated education in accordance with the Drumragh judgment. It further suggests that the Committee examines whether

integrated schools in Northern Ireland, in the opinion of the DE, fall within the ambit of a philosophical conviction under Prot 1 Art 2 of the ECHR. In undertaking this examination, the NIHRC recommends that there should be a strong presumption of non-retrogression in the enjoyment of the right to parental choice. (Par. 3.9)

The NIHRC recommends that the Committee examines the role of the ETI and satisfies itself that the function of the inspecting body is robust in monitoring the protection and promotion of the human rights standards in education with particular attention to the duty to promote inclusion, tolerance and mutual understanding. (Par. 4.14)

The NIHRC recommends that the Committee seek further information from the DE on the measures it has introduced to implement Recommendation 10 of the Ministerial Advisory Group. It further recommends that the Committee considers the outcome of the survey to be undertaken by the Chief Inspector. (Par. 4.16)

Submission of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) pursuant to Section 69 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, reviews the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice relating to the protection of Human Rights.¹ In accordance with this function the following statutory advice is submitted to Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdfM) on its inquiry into integrated and shared education.
- 1.2 The NIHRC bases its advice on the full range of internationally accepted human rights standards, including the European Convention on Human Rights as incorporated by the Human Rights Act 1998 and the treaty obligations of the Council of Europe (CoE) and United Nations (UN) systems. The relevant international treaties in this context include:
- the CoE European Convention on Human Rights, 1950 (ECHR)²;
 - the CoE Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)³;
 - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)⁴;
 - the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)⁵;
 - The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)⁶;
 - the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)⁷;
 - the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)⁸
 - the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.⁹
- 1.3 The Northern Ireland Executive (NI Executive) is subject to the obligations contained within these international treaties by virtue of the United Kingdom (UK) Government's ratification. In addition, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, section 26 (1) provides that 'if the Secretary of State considers that any action proposed to be taken by a Minister or Northern Ireland department would be incompatible with any international obligations... [s]he may by order direct that the proposed action shall not be taken.'
- 1.4 The NIHRC further recalls that the Northern Ireland Act 1998, section 24(1) states that 'a Minister or Northern Ireland department has no power to make, confirm or approve any subordinate legislation, or to do any act, so far as the legislation or act – (a) is incompatible with any of the Convention rights'.
- 1.5 In addition to these treaty standards there exists a body of 'soft law' developed by the human rights bodies of the UN and CoE. These declarations and principles are non-binding but provide further guidance in respect of specific areas. The relevant standards in this context are:

1 Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 69(1).
 2 Ratified by the UK in 1951.
 3 Ratified by the UK in 1998.
 4 Ratified by the UK in 1976.
 5 Ratified by the UK in 1969.
 6 Ratified by the UK in 1976.
 7 Ratified by the UK in 1991.
 8 Ratified by the UK in 2009.
 9 Ratified by the UK in 2007.

- UN Human Rights Council Resolution 6/37 on the elimination of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief;
- UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace;
- Faro Declaration on the Council of Europe's Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue;
- Yogyakarta Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity;
- UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;
- UN Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;
- CoE European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation 10 on Combatting racism and racial discrimination in and through school

1.6 With reference to the terms of reference of the inquiry, the NIHRC's submission focuses on the following aims:

- Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;
- Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy, the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers, and the role of Special Schools.

2. Purpose of Education

- 2.1 Human rights law and standards place a duty on the NI Executive to promote inclusion, tolerance and respect for diversity in and through education. As one of the purposes of education, there is considerable direction in a number of human rights instruments as to how this can be achieved.
- 2.2 The ICESCR Article 13(1) states that education should enable all persons to 'participate effectively in a free society, [and] promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups'.¹⁰
- 2.3 The UNCRC Article 29 requires that the education of the child should be directed to the development of respect for the child's parents, cultural identity, language, the country in which the child is living and from where he/she originates, as well as for 'civilisations different from his or her own'.¹¹
- 2.4 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has highlighted the links between Article 29(1) and the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It notes that racism 'thrives where there is ignorance, unfounded fears of racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic or other forms of difference, the exploitation of prejudices, or the teaching or dissemination of distorted values'.¹²
- 2.5 Further it recognises that approaches to promoting tolerance and friendship among all peoples, might appear to sit in tension with policies designed to develop respect for the child's own cultural identity, language and values.¹³ However the Committee 'recognises the need for a 'balanced approach to education...which succeeds in reconciling diverse values

10 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, Article 13

11 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, Article 28

12 United Nations, Committee on the Rights of the Child (2001) General Comment No.1: Aims of Education (par 11)

13 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 Article 29 (1c)

- through dialogue and respect for difference'. Moreover it advises that children are 'capable of playing a unique role in bridging many of the differences that have historically separated groups of people from one another'.¹⁴
- 2.6 The ICERD, Article 7, requires the adoption of 'immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups.'¹⁵ The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, Article 10, has similarly recommended that governments educate the population at large by requiring that they 'encourage and promote understanding of the importance of the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, inter alia, through educational and greater public awareness programmes.'¹⁶
- 2.7 The FCNM Article 6 also requires States Parties take 'effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory.'¹⁷ The NIHRC notes that Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 gives partial domestic force to the duty contained in the FCNM, Article 6. The NIHRC also notes that sectarianism falls within the ambit of the definition of racism in international human rights law.¹⁸
- 2.8 In accordance with the CEDAW Article 5 the Northern Ireland Executive has a positive obligation to take appropriate measures to 'modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women.'
- 2.9 The CRPD Article 8 contains a similar duty to 'raise awareness...and to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities' which includes an obligation to 'combat stereotypes'. One of the measures required is to foster 'at all levels of the education system, including in all children from an early age, an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities'.
- 2.10 The Yogyakarta Principles set out the application of the right to education in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity in Principle 16. It requires that education 'responds to the needs of students of all sexual orientations and gender identities' and '[e]nsure that education methods, curricula and resources serve to enhance understanding of and respect for, inter alia, diverse sexual orientations and gender identities'. It also sets out the duty to '[e]nsure that laws and policies provide adequate protection for students, staff and teachers of different sexual orientations and gender identities against all forms of social exclusion and violence within the school environment, including bullying and harassment'.
- 2.11 The NIHRC notes that whilst schools are not designated as public authorities for the purpose of the good relations duty found in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, a similar duty does apply to schools in England and Wales. Under the Equality Act 2010 the public authority duty created in Section 149(1) is applicable to 'the governing bodies of schools' as set out in Schedule 19.

14 United Nations, Committee on the Rights of the Child (2001) General Comment No.1: Aims of Education (par 4)

15 International Covenant on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination 1965 Art. 7

16 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005 Art. 10

17 Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities 1995 Art. 6

18 ECRI General Policy Recommendation 7: on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination, (2002), para 1(a). See also, 'Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia', a publication prepared by: International Labour Office (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), OHCHR, in consultation with Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), (2001), p 2.

2.12 **The NIHRC recommends that the Committee give due consideration to the purpose of education in the context of its inquiry and that it examines the relevant human rights standards directly related to shared and integrated education as set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.11.**

2.13 **The NIHRC further suggests that the Committee considers the application of domestic equality and good relations duties within schools and in particular recommends that they be designated as public authorities for the purpose of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.**

3. The Right to Parental Choice in Education

3.1 The ECHR, Article 2 of the first protocol outlines the State duty to ‘respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions’¹⁹. The Commission notes the UK’s reservation to this article of the ECHR stating that it will adhere to the principle of educating pupils in accordance with parents’ wishes ‘only so far as it is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training, and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure’²⁰.

3.2 The Department of Education (DE) facilitates a variety of choices in education in Northern Ireland by providing funding for different types of school. The NIHRC notes that there is a statutory duty to ‘encourage and facilitate the development of’ both integrated and Irish medium education.²¹ In the context of the current discussion, the NIHRC notes that integrated education is defined as ‘education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils’²² and has traditionally meant education in a particular type of school that adheres to the criteria set out in the Core Principles of Integrated Education.²³

3.3 The NIHRC notes that the recent judgment in the judicial review application by Drumragh Integrated College examined the definition of integrated education. In addressing whether or not the ‘Article 64 duty is capable of being owed to any school in which Protestant and Roman Catholic children are educated together’ the judgment considered the potential that the definition might extend to schools providing shared education programmes. The conclusion of Treacy J was that ‘Integrated Education is a standalone concept’ and ‘[t]he provision plainly envisages education together at the same school.’²⁴

3.4 The judgment goes on to emphasise that a constitution and governance structure that reflects integration must be present in order for a school to be defined as integrated:

As against this, an integrated school strives to achieve an equal balance in relation to worship, celebration and exposure to both faiths. This is reflected in its constitution and the board must strive in its ethos to achieve this. For these reasons it must be the case that the integrated education referred to in the article is education that is integrated throughout and not education that is delivered by a partisan board.²⁵

3.5 **The decision of the High Court in the application by Drumragh Integrated College is that the definition of integrated education requires a particular constitution and governance structure within schools and that the pupils of that school are both catholic and protestant. The NIHRC therefore advises that shared education programmes between schools that are**

19 European Convention on Human Rights, 1950 Protocol 1, Article 2

20 Human Rights Act, 1998 Schedule 3, Part II

21 Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order, 1989 Section 64 (1)

22 Ibid.

23 Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Statement of Principles See <http://www.nicie.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Statement-of-Principles1.pdf>

24 Re: Drumragh Integrated College (citation no. [2014] NIQB) (2014) par. 50

25 Ibid. par. 53

not integrated would be unlikely to fall within the definition of integrated education for the purposes of Art 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

- 3.6 The NIHRC view is that the question of whether or not integrated education constitutes a philosophical conviction for the purposes of Prot 1 Art 2 of the ECHR remains to be tested in the domestic courts. Whilst it was argued in Drumragh Integrated College's 2013 application for judicial review, it was not dealt with in the judgment as the application did not present a victim and therefore the argument could not be evaluated.
- 3.7 Early judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) did not uphold the argument that integrated education is a philosophical conviction that should be protected under the parental right to choice.²⁶ However the ECHR is a living instrument and subsequent cases at the ECtHR have demonstrated a broadening of the interpretation to protect beliefs that are 'worthy of respect in a democratic society'²⁷ and 'attain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance'²⁸.
- 3.8 The NIHRC notes that the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education in Article 64(1) of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 demonstrates the respect and importance attached to this choice of education in domestic law and policy. It further recognises the current level of State commitment to integrated schools through the support of an arms-length body, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education, and the provision of funding to 62 schools providing places for 21,745 pupils.²⁹
- 3.9 **The NIHRC recommends that the Committee seeks the opinion of the DE on their understanding of the definition and scope of integrated education in accordance with the Drumragh judgment. It further suggests that the Committee examines whether integrated schools in Northern Ireland, in the opinion of the DE, fall within the ambit of a philosophical conviction under Prot 1 Art 2 of the ECHR. In undertaking this examination, the NIHRC recommends that there should be a strong presumption of non-retrogression in the enjoyment of the right to parental choice.**
- 3.10 The NIHRC notes that while human rights standards are clear about the duty to promote inclusion, tolerance and respect for diversity through education, there is no requirement to support any particular school structure in order to achieve this. Both integrated schools and shared education programmes may be considered methods supported by the state to fulfil its obligations in this regard.
- 3.11 The NIHRC notes the commitment of the DE to advance shared education through the Shared Education Campuses Programme. This programme, alongside the financial support provided through the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, is intended to implement the commitment in the Together Building a United Community Strategy to '[e]nhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience'³⁰ and to '[c]reate ten Shared Educational Campuses'³¹ within the next 5 years. The strategy includes this commitment as an action that will 'lead to sustainable improvements in good relations'.³²
- 3.12 The NIHRC is also aware that the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has expressed concern that 'education continues to be heavily segregated' and has recommended that the Northern Ireland Executive 'increase [the] budget and take appropriate measures and

26 X v UK (app no. 7782/77) (1978) ECHR 14 DR 179.

27 Young, James and Webster v UK (app no. 7601/76) (1981) par. 63

28 Campbell and Cosans v UK (app no. 7511/76) (1982) par. 36

29 NI Statistics and Research Agency, Enrolments at schools and in funded pre-school education in Northern Ireland 2013/14 Available: http://www.deni.gov.uk/enrolments_in_schools_1314_-_february_release_-_final_2.pdf

30 <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf> p. 29

31 Ibid. p. 5

32 Ibid.

incentives to facilitate the establishment of additional integrated schools in Northern Ireland to meet the demand of a significant number of parents.’³³

4. Curriculum content

- 4.1 The obligation contained in the ICESCR Art 13 and in the UNCRC Art 29 protects the right of children to an education that is directed towards,
 - (a) the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
 - (b) the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
 - (c) the development of respect for the child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
 - (d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
 - (e) the development of respect for the natural environment.³⁴
- 4.2 The NIHRRC notes that in order to fulfil this obligation of the UNCRC and the ICESCR the DE are required to consider the content and delivery of the curriculum paying due regard to mutual respect and understanding.
- 4.3 The UN Human Rights Council Resolution 6/37 emphasises that:
 - promoting tolerance and acceptance by the public of and its respect for diversity and combating all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion and belief are substantial elements in creating an environment conducive to the full enjoyment by all of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as enshrined in article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.³⁵
- 4.4 The CoE Faro Declaration encourages:
 - intercultural dialogue on the basis of universal human rights, as a means of promoting awareness, understanding, reconciliation, tolerance and respect for the other, of preventing conflicts and of ensuring an integrated and cohesive society.³⁶
- 4.5 The UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace recognises peace as being:
 - a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation.³⁷
- 4.6 Creating a culture of peace, therefore, requires:

33 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations: The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (2002) para 45

34 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 Article 29 (1), See also International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 Article 13 (1)

35 UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 6/37: Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief (2007), para 8

36 Faro Declaration on the council of Europe’s Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue (2005) DGIV/DC-FARO

37 UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace (1999), preamble

- Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations.³⁸
- 4.7 ECRI General Policy Recommendation 10 on Combatting racism and racial discrimination in and through school outlines measures that should be applied to ensure equal access to education, to combat racism and racial discrimination at school and to support teachers to work in a multi-cultural environment. This includes ‘by ensuring that human rights education is an integral part of the school curriculum at all levels and across all disciplines, from nursery school onwards’.³⁹
- 4.8 The statutory curriculum in Northern Ireland makes a general provision for teaching and learning in relation to tolerance and respect for diversity through the inclusion of ‘mutual understanding’ and ‘cultural understanding’ as key elements of the curriculum to be addressed by all learning areas/subject strands. In addition, specific provision is made within PDMU (primary) and Local and Global Citizenship (post primary).
- 4.9 Extensive support materials and non-statutory guidelines have been produced to support the delivery of these aspects of the curriculum; however, schools have discretion in terms of the way in which this is delivered. The need for continued professional development of teachers in relation to community/good relations has been identified by the Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy which makes a commitment to provide funding to facilitate a move away from dependency on external organisations in delivering this type of work in schools to ‘firmly embedding’ CRED activities in educational settings by ‘providing a strong skills base for educators’.⁴⁰
- 4.10 The Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education made a recommendation on this in its 2013 report suggesting that,
- An independent review should be undertaken of current practice in relation to the delivery of:
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Pre-School Education);
 - Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2);
 - Local and Global Citizenship (Key Stages 3 and 4); and
 - The Curriculum Framework for Youth Work (Youth Service).
- The review should consider the effectiveness of the current Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy and also include consideration of the opportunities that are provided for children and young people to discuss and explore issues associated with divisions, conflict and inequalities in Northern Ireland. The review should make recommendations regarding the content of these areas of learning and also how teachers can best be supported to deliver these.⁴¹
- 4.11 General Comment 29 of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child outlines the requirement to monitor progress in the fulfilment of the aims of education:
- The Committee calls upon States parties to devote more attention to education as a dynamic process and to devising means by which to measure changes over time in relation to article 29 (1). Every child has the right to receive an education of good quality which in turn requires a focus on the quality of the learning environment, of teaching and learning processes and

38 Ibid.

39 CoE European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation 10 on Combatting racism and racial discrimination in and through school (2006), p. 6

40 DE (2011) Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education. Bangor: HMSO. (par. 6.9)

41 DE (2013) Advancing Shared Education: Final Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group Recommendation 10, p. 118

materials, and of learning outputs. The Committee notes the importance of surveys that may provide an opportunity to assess the progress made, based upon consideration of the views of all actors involved in the process, including children currently in or out of school, teachers and youth leaders, parents, and educational administrators and supervisors. In this respect, the Committee emphasizes the role of national-level monitoring which seeks to ensure that children, parents and teachers can have an input in decisions relevant to education.⁴²

- 4.12 The NIHRC recognises the role of the Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) in providing ‘inspection services and information about the quality of education’ with a view to promoting ‘the highest possible standards of learning, teaching and achievement’.⁴³
- 4.13 The NIHRC recommends that the Committee examines the role of the ETI and satisfies itself that the function of the inspecting body is robust in monitoring the protection and promotion of the human rights standards in education with particular attention to the duty to promote inclusion, tolerance and mutual understanding.
- 4.14 The Minister of Education in his response to the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group stated that he welcomed this recommendation ‘in principle’ and as a ‘first step’ had ‘asked the Chief Inspector to carry out a survey of current practice, with a particular focus on what additional support and development teachers need.’⁴⁴
- 4.15 The NIHRC recommends that the Committee seek further information from the DE on the measures it has introduced to implement Recommendation 10 of the Ministerial Advisory Group. It further recommends that the Committee considers the outcome of the survey to be undertaken by the Chief Inspector.

42 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment 29 on the aims of Education (2001) par. 22

43 Promoting Improvement in the Interests of all Learners: A Charter for Inspection See:
<http://www.etini.gov.uk/a-charter-for-inspection-december-2013.pdf>

44 Advancing Shared Education: Ministerial Statement 22 October 2013 See:
http://www.deni.gov.uk/advancing_shared_education_-_22_october_2013_docx.pdf

NIPSA

Response to Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

October 2014

1. NIPSA is the largest locally based public sector trade union and also the biggest union representing non-teaching and academic support staff with well in excess of 8000 members in the Education Sector. NIPSA represents the full range of workers in education across administrative and managerial grades and professional support staff as well as every category of school based staff.
2. NIPSA welcomes the opportunity to provide some thoughts in respect of this Inquiry and would welcome participation in the broader debate about the future provision of education for children and young people. The Union apologises for the slight delay in submitting this response and hope that this submission can be considered by the Committee along with the others.
3. It is not totally clear whether this Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education is a follow on from the Ministerial Advisory Group which considered the issue last Autumn, or whether it is meant to compliment that piece of work, or indeed whether it is totally separate. It would of course be somewhat ironic if it was the later.
4. Consideration of this topic has to be seen in the context of the reality of how we live our lives beyond the school gates. In a society where many of us live separately, have different medical practitioners, worship at different churches (if at all) socialise separately, watch, play and support different sports and teams, remember the same historical events differently and have different moral compasses when considering those events it is not difficult to understand that the subject of education is a complex one. There is clearly a wider community integration issue which goes far beyond education. We should therefore tackle the issue in the context of it being only one, albeit critical, piece of a much bigger jigsaw.
5. If we are serious as a society in wanting to break down barriers, tackle divisions and prejudices and develop a new shared future for all citizens it would seem sensible to suggest that the way to advance that vision is to take the matter out of the stuffy rooms of Stormont and engage directly with the community. Ten or twenty responses on a topic as important as this is insufficient to form a definitive view.
6. During the Patton Review of Policing a number of years ago the debate was brought into the heart of the community. There were also written submissions to compliment the community consultation. It would send a powerful message to the general public if the Education Committee, in partnership (or in collaboration/with the Minister and the Department) was to initiate a consultation programme across the whole community.
7. This generation has failed children and young people. Perhaps it is time that the next generation should be given a more significant say in what shape the future provision of education should take.
8. A project could be initiated, whereby all 1200 schools in the education sector are asked to participate, though internal debates or joint projects/submissions with nearby schools from a different sector. It would be an exciting and invigorating exercise to view young people themselves actively engaged on this issue.
9. It is important to consider the impact of the current Area Planning process which continues unabated at present, where each sectorial interest, in the main, addresses its own issues. Should that process proceed to conclusion the benefits, or otherwise of shared education or

integrated education will be but an academic debate as the education infrastructure will have been determined for another generation.

10. In the FE Sector young people from the age of 16 have come together successfully to continue study or learn new skills. The earth has not stopped spinning for those students, or indeed their families. A model therefore already exists which clearly demonstrates that it is possible to retain a certain identity, which is not necessarily diluted or damaged when exposed to those who are different.
11. There are many examples of schools who have embraced newcomers to these shores into their school community with significant success. Again that success has been achieved without any negative diminution of rights or identities.
12. Phrases, often glibly used such as 'parental choice' have to be considered in the wider context of a long term vision for the whole of society of a shared future. That future can no longer be put on hold until the child and young person reaches the age of 18.
13. There are many legacy issues of our most recent conflict. Fixing this particular legacy issue will require significant injection and long term commitment of additional financial resources. This cannot be achieved by salami slicing existing budget allocations. Addressing divisions in communities and division in our education system can only be achieved through a united Assembly speaking with one voice seeking ring fenced additional resources from the British Government to tackle the issue. The UK government has to take responsibility for the failure over several generations to encourage the development of a society at peace with itself and being comfortable in embracing its differences, without fear of undermining the growth of a community where differences are respected and celebrated. Their actions and inactions over the years have contributed to the difficulties which the community is now trying to deal with . They have a responsibility as a result to make a separate financial contribution to build that shared future.
14. For completeness the NIPSA response dated November 2012 to the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Advancement of Shared Education is attached along with this submission.

MINISTERIAL ADVISORY GROUP ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF SHARED EDUCATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Response Form for Written Submissions

**Closing date for the receipt of responses is
5:00pm on Friday 9 November 2012**

Submissions made after this date will not be considered

If you require the form in another format (such as large print, Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disk) and/or other languages please contact:

Catherine Bell at mag@gub.ac.uk
Tel: (028) 9097 5913
Fax: (028) 9097 5066

Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education
School of Education
Queen's University Belfast
69/71 University Street
BELFAST
BT7 1HL

Please note that all written submissions will be made publicly available on the Ministerial Advisory Group website. By submitting a completed form you are giving your permission for the form to be made available in this way.

The Ministerial Advisory Group will conduct face to face interviews with a sample of individuals and organisations selected to represent as wide a range of stakeholder perspectives as possible in November and December. If you would be interested in being considered for interview, please tick the box below.

I would be interested in meeting the Ministerial Advisory Group yes ☐

1. RESPONDENT DETAILS

Name:	Paddy Mackel
Organisation (if applicable):	Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance
Address:	54 Wellington Park
	Belfast BT9 6DP
Telephone Number:	028 9066 1831
Fax Number:	
E-mail:	Paddy.mackel@nipsa.org.uk

I am responding: As an individual ☐
 On behalf of an organisation yes
 (Please tick one box)

2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been provided as part of the terms of reference for this review:

Education: includes pre-school education, early years services, primary schools (including nursery schools), post-primary schools, special education provision and youth services.

Shared education: means the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;
- involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Section 75 categories: Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a statutory obligation on public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

3. QUESTIONS

Question 1

Given the definition of shared education outlined above, what are your views on the best way to advance shared education in Northern Ireland?

The Assembly should co-ordinate an open, inclusive and non-judgemental dialogue, initiated at political level but also involving wider civic society in promoting the advantages of shared education, not just from an educational perspective but more importantly from a shared future perspective. To do so will require agreement to promote sharing as a positive experience rather than being imposed on communities by those who “know better.”

Engagement at local community level to listen to concerns or potential obstacles should be commenced to ensure that whatever apprehensions or concerns which may exist (real or perceived) are addressed in a comprehensive and transparent manner.

The move to a shared education environment should not be predicated or justified on grounds of budgetary constraints. Whilst this may seem attractive to politicians it is less likely to obtain community buy-in. Generations of young people, now adults, have been educated in a separate, isolated and often wrongly justified system. The difficult and sensitive process of obtaining society approval for something which hasn't been sought before at political level should not be underestimated. Most people recognise that a normal society does not or should not segregate its children at 3 years of age. However the reality due to political opinion, religious views, security concerns, demographics and a tendency to live as adults within the community of childhood has made it easy to justify perpetuating the status quo of segregation

Society needs to accept that housing, schools and workplaces benefit from diversity, tolerance and embracing difference.

An open Forum, involving the political parties, the trade union movement and the wider community, to bring together those with a similar view would be a good place to start

Question 2

What do you feel are the barriers to advancing shared education in Northern Ireland?

History, laziness, comfort zones, continuing sectarian viewpoints which are not tackled openly, religious preferences and a fear of change all contribute to the view that it's best not to take this issue on. In some ways it is the one major last hurdle to get over before the eventual realisation that it is ok to be different without having to be separated.

Separately if the Assembly is serious about advancing shared education it actually needs to seek additional funding from Westminster to pay for the changes required to make this a reality. Otherwise we will only scratch around at the surface, similar to the proposals contained in the ELBs' Area Plans. With a distinct lack of resources or a lack of commitment to obtain the necessary resources this agenda will not be advanced. Furthermore it may make society suspicious about whether there actually really is a genuine attempt to promote shared education

Question 3

How should the advancement of shared education meet the needs of, and provide for the education together, of learners from all Section 75 categories (outlined above) and all socio-economic backgrounds? Have you any particular experiences or advice to share in relation to any of these groups?

If children and young people were educated together and had equal access to education and educational outcomes then the elitist system which currently exists would not be able to flourish. Whilst the current system continues, which favours those from more affluent backgrounds and consequently discriminates against those young people from either less privileged backgrounds or disadvantaged communities those Section 75 categories will continue to be irrelevant as far as education is concerned. It is no accident that the proponents of maintaining some form of academic selection at such a young age are quite often from a very similar economic background. They also have the means or access to the means to move their children or their home to accommodate those preferences. The current system, non-shared as well as the voluntary grammar system perpetuates division not just along community background lines, but also along class lines.

Question 4

How do you think the advancement of shared education might address issues such as ethos and identity? Please comment specifically on how such issues can best address the right of learners to participation, safety and welfare, and dignity and respect in educational settings.

Sometimes this community appears to think that nowhere else in the world do people exist beside or near each other who do not share the same religious beliefs (or none) or the same politics. There are many examples in other European countries where a shared (or inclusive) education system caters perfectly well for diverse ethos and identities. If the wider community can accept that issues such as safety, identity and culture are not under threat by moving to shared education then they are more likely to embrace the concept. What is needed are “champions” for the cause who can act as advocates for the vision, without being seen as part of a wider conspiracy to force people down a road which they haven’t yet bought into

The Irish medium secondary school Coláiste Feirste provides a non-selective educational experience but consistently demonstrates very good academic results by children and young people, many of whom (but not all) live in areas of multiple deprivation and lower socio economic income ratio than many other similar performing schools. The children often also come from a bi-lingual family background or have parents who have little or limited Irish language, which adds an additional strain or layer of complexity when trying to develop a holistic family contribution to the education of those young people. However these facts do not negatively impact on their educational experiences or outcomes. Whilst the issue of shared education is clearly a different challenge to that facing Irish medium education, the point is that hurdles can be faced and overcome and children can still manage to thrive, both personally and educationally.

Question 5

What are the implications of advancing shared education for the curriculum and the types of knowledge and skills that are taught in educational settings? Please comment specifically on how the right of learners to develop a broad range of essential life skills should be met.

There is no doubt that the curriculum would need to be developed to take account of a shared educational system, which would by necessity also take into account mixed abilities in terms of academic or more vocational interests/talents of the young people. The balance also needs to be achieved between what employability skills are required, but also, equally importantly, what life skills and interest topics are also covered to ensure that young people obtain a more rounded and "adult ready" experience

Question 6

How do you think shared education can be advanced in ways that ensure equality of opportunity and access to education for all learners?

This is a much wider question than just about shared education. This directly relates to political decisions which are taken which perpetuate class division in education, access to support mechanisms and encouragement to move to 3rd level education. So, issues such as reducing EMAs or entitlement to EMAs, oppressive university fees and student loans all play a part in discouraging certain groups of young people from advancing in education, regardless of their ability. The income of a family also contributes to decisions of young people. The changing economic fortunes of certain communities and a historically different perspective by some sections of the community of the requirements of achieving academically also have to be tackled.

In many areas, certain groups of young people perform less well. A recent report into the educational underachievement of working class protestant males in Belfast clearly demonstrated that there is a wider structural problem to be tackled to ensure that young people aren't ignored or left behind, just because of their background. Whilst this may not be a problem exclusive to that particular category of young people it does nonetheless demonstrate that a problem clearly exists and is one that needs to be resolved. Shared education in itself may not address or resolve this issue; it does however have the potential to assist in breaking a cycle of underachievement.

Question 7

Is there any particular research evidence on shared education that you believe should be considered? If so, please provide full references below and, where possible, attach a copy with your submission (preferably in electronic format).

I have no further evidence to share at this time in relation to Question 7

Thank you for your time. Your views are important and will be considered carefully by the Ministerial Advisory Group.

Updates on the work of the Ministerial Advisory Group can be found on the website:
<http://www.qub.ac.uk/mag>

END.

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education



Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Submission

To the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

October 2014

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into shared and integrated education.

At the outset we remind the committee of the unequivocal declaration given to integrated education in the Education Reform Order (NI) 1989 and the Good Friday Agreement 1998, both of which require that it is for the government to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'. It is important also to note that the Good Friday Agreement was supported by over 75% of the population in its entirety and although many difficult and controversial elements involving change were contained within, and despite later attempts by dissident voices to 'cherry-pick' at the agreement, it remains intact today, a basis on which to build a more equal, more peaceful and more forward looking Northern Ireland.

The statutory duty of government was also recently affirmed by Lord Justice Treacy in May 2014 in a judicial review initiated by Drumragh Integrated College. Referring to Article 64 of the ERO(NI) 1989 he made it clear that integrated education 'is a stand alone concept, that is to say the education together at school of protestant and roman catholic pupils... as opposed to integration within school of any other distinct sets of pupils... integrated education must be the service of imparting knowledge to young people from all backgrounds as equals'. And he continued: 'a school which has a predominantly catholic or predominantly protestant ethos... cannot be said to be delivering integrated education... because as part of its constitution as an institution it is fundamentally oriented to one religious cannon over another... The integrated education referred to in the article is education that is integrated throughout and not education that is delivered by a partisan board... The Department needs to be alive to the A64 duty at all levels.'

It is generally acknowledged that our present segregated system of education is not sustainable. It does not promote social cohesion, it reinforces the notion of the 'other' and separation, it increases social segregation and it fails a significant number of children. It is not preparing our young people for a rapidly changing and uncertain future. The duplication

and triplicating of resources is expensive; in this era of austerity we cannot justify the use of constrained resources to prioritise the maintenance of vested interests over the educational needs of our young people. The status quo is not tenable. This inquiry provides an opportunity to advance solutions which will support the reform of this system.

NICIE identifies below solutions and innovative approaches which would contribute to such a reform and which would enable Northern Ireland to move beyond a segregated education system to a cohesive system of education which will reflect and shape our changing society.

Recommendations for change

- We call on DE to actively implement Article 64 to encourage and facilitate integrated education and to show public commitment to doing so by including representation for integrated education on the proposed single board.
- We call on DE to guarantee equality of planning for integrated education. There is no central mechanism for either testing parental demand for integrated education or for planning for it. This failure in planning discriminates against parents seeking an integrated school since it is they who must prove sufficient demand before a school may be established.
- The duties of the new single board should clarify both its obligation to encourage and facilitate integrated education and its responsibility to plan for such education.
- Through area based planning and meaningful consultation with parents, DE must ensure there is equality of choice in every area, including the choice of integrated schooling.
- We call for the decoupling of pre-school provision from sectoral management and an end to the segregation of children in their formative years.
- The role of special schools in providing an inclusive and fully integrated education should be recognised.
- NICIE calls on the committee to endorse its initiative Positive Partnerships for Integration, an initiative which will allow all schools to recognise the diversity which exists in each classroom.
- NICIE calls on courageous decisive action to follow the recommendations in the International Review Panel on Teacher Education in Northern Ireland among which is the recommendation to establish one inclusive centre of excellence to train our young teachers to help build a united and prosperous community.
- NICIE calls for a clear and unambiguous definition of shared education. The model of integrated education should be explicitly referred to in any reference to and definition of shared education, consistent with DE policy which views shared education as a journey to an integrated system of education. All funding and resourcing of shared education should be equally open to integrated education and its schools.
- NICIE calls for the establishment of a Patten style inquiry into education in Northern Ireland.

Support for integrated education

The duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education was written into the Education Order 1989 and was copper-fastened in the Good Friday Agreement in recognition of the positive role this model of education could play in inoculating against sectarianism, supporting peace and building a cohesive society.

Over thirty years, forty integrated schools were founded by groups of pioneering parents who wished that their children be educated together irrespective of faith, background, ethnicity, or ability level. Another twenty two schools transformed to integrated status. The founders of integrated education believed that the divisions which had ignited the 'troubles' could only be removed by giving young people from different backgrounds and cultures opportunities

to learn together on a daily basis, in a safe environment, where difference is recognised, understood and valued.

In integrated schools each child is nurtured in the values of their own ethnic, religious and cultural background in such a way that their own faith is not diminished and their understanding of other beliefs is enhanced. In a planned way children are encouraged to take pride in and celebrate their own cultural and religious identities and to learn about and respect the diverse identities of their classmates. Staff facilitate programmes and learning experiences that give young people opportunities to confront contentious issues; events and dates that are important for all members of the school community are explored and respected. Each school provides cultural experiences according to the diversity of the school community. The planned integrated experience ensures that every child is equipped to live and work in an increasingly diverse world.

In 2014, almost 22,000 young people attend sixty two integrated nursery, primary and post-primary schools and colleges, while a further 700 children who apply are turned away annually because of insufficient places.

The continuing highly segregated nature of housing and education is well documented and its symbolic continuance, a sign of lack of progress towards a more confident and outward-looking society, commented on. Over ninety per cent of our children continue to be educated at single identity schools, often returning to equally divided residential areas. The gap in achievement levels involving our students has increased while evidence mounts of the correlation between social deprivation and underachievement. (Four in ten of our children are leaving school without the minimum five GCSE passes at grade A–C, a key employability qualification.) Factors of gender and religion also contribute to disparate outcomes among pupils. The selection issue remains unresolved and in that vacuum has emerged a ‘catholic’ and a ‘protestant’ selection test. Racist incidents against our newcomer community are an almost daily occurrence. All this is set against a backdrop of political stalemate and economic austerity.

The case and need for integrated education remains.

NICIE argues that active implementation of Article 64 would disseminate more widely awareness of and demand for integrated education. This implementation should find expression at the operational level as identified in the recent judicial review where the weakness of area based planning was highlighted as a potential blocker to the expansion of integrated education. Inclusion of representation for integrated education on this new board is central to demonstrating strategic commitment to Article 64.

Planning for integrated provision

The greatest barrier to the expansion of integrated education lies in the discriminatory and unequal approach to planning. CCMS has a statutory duty to plan for the provision of catholic schools. The ELBs, under the 1986 Education Order, have a duty to plan for sufficient schools of different character in their areas. They choose to interpret this as planning for controlled schools and do not accept that they have a role in planning for integrated education. Parents seeking a catholic or controlled school will have a choice from a number of such schools in any area. Parents seeking an integrated school are expected to plan this provision themselves and to provide evidence of need. NICIE has an important function in supporting such parents but has no statutory planning remit. Furthermore, the funding mechanism which existed in the past to support the development of integrated schools has been discontinued.

The process of area based planning has exacerbated the situation, with ELBs and CCMS planning for their own sectors. No consideration is given to whether or not an integrated choice should be considered and parents are not consulted on such a possibility. This is despite the evidence of all polls which show strong parental preference for integrated education. According to polls, support for integrated education remains consistently high.

Seventy seven per cent of parents in the most recent Millard and Brown survey indicated they would support a request for their child's school to become integrated.

A new single ELB is now being legislated for. It is critical that the new education bill clarifies the responsibility of this board in relation to how at an operational level Article 64 is implemented and that a clear responsibility is imposed on the single board to plan for integrated education.

Pre-school provision

Prof Paul Connolly, in his seminal research evidence, confirms how children from the age of three can demonstrate awareness of 'communal symbols' and prejudicial attitudes. DE policy insists that pre-school provision is non-sectoral but this is not reflected in reality. Nursery units are linked to single identity primary school and so children are channeled into our divided system from this early age. The time has come to change this. DE can do so simply by ensuring that funding for pre-school provision goes only to those settings which are welcoming to all and clearly non denominational (and can show evidence of being such). Such an easily attained and non controversial step would play a significant role in the desegregation of our educational system.

Special schools

The role of special schools in providing an inclusive and fully integrated education is rarely recognised. Special schools are open to children from all backgrounds irrespective of religious affiliation, socio-economic status, ethnicity, etc. and are undoubtedly examples of integrated education in practice. It can be argued that the failure to recognise the integrated nature of special schools further marginalises these schools. NICIE argues that special schools should be allowed to be officially recognised as integrated and we call for the legal barrier preventing this to be rescinded. In doing so we endorse the stance taken by Tor Bank Special school in its submission to this inquiry.

Moving beyond segregation to a cohesive system of education:

Positive Partnerships for Integration

NICIE is fully appreciative of the quality education offered in all types of schools. We are also sensitive to the historic reasons for our divided educational system and to the emotional connection between schools and the communities they serve. NICIE is committed to meaningful parental choice.

We note that real choice for many parents is often constrained by such factors as finance or geographical location, and that parents choose a school for a variety of reasons including reputation, family ties or tradition. We acknowledge the principle of parental choice and, in so doing, acknowledge the right of parents to seek faith-based provision. This range of choice should be accommodated in a cohesive system of education, rather than being used as a prop to maintain a segregated system. Such a cohesive system would include single identity and faith schools, and schools integrated both by legal status and by being recognised as having an integrated ethos. All schools would be committed to inclusive and shared education, with children in single identity schools guaranteed sustained and meaningful shared learning.

Moreover, we argue that our traditional sectors do not reflect our changing society. We argue that despite the badges of school type, every school includes a diversity of children and young people: children from mixed marriages; children from different faiths and ethnicities; children from secular backgrounds as well as those from the main traditions; children of different abilities and with different talents. We contend that we do a disservice to all children if we assume they are the same because of the type of school attended. We argue that children learn best when they feel fully accepted.

For that reason NICIE calls on the committee to endorse our initiative, *Positive Partnerships for Integration*, an initiative which will allow all schools to accept difference, to challenge division and to celebrate the diversity which exists in each classroom. This school-driven process will allow schools, through partnerships, to move from a dominant or partisan ethos to one of equality of respect for all, and will facilitate change in the lived experience of the children without necessitating a change in managing authority. This process has been developed after many months of careful consultation with stakeholders. PPInt hopes to deliver benefits to all schools involved by enabling an audit of current provision for diversity and inclusion and identify opportunities for future development. NICIE calls on this inquiry to recommend that DE supports this initiative.

NICIE emphasises the importance of preparation of teachers to support such diverse and inclusive learning environments and calls for the implementation of the recommendations of the panel on initial teacher education.

Shared education

NICIE recognises the positive involvement of many schools in the various shared education initiatives and the benefits that accrue from this. All integrated colleges play a positive role in their local area learning communities. Three integrated colleges submitted proposals for shared campuses and were disappointed when these bids were not successful. Other colleges have taken a lead in shared education partnerships. NICIE, funded by IFI, trained more than 600 teachers to maximise outcomes in shared classrooms through our *Shared Classrooms: Deepening Learning* project.

NICIE supports the concept of shared education where it is based on the imperative of building community relations through connecting children and young people and, through them, families and communities.

Integrated schools from their formation have involved the coming together of parents, carers and local communities and they continue to offer strong effective channels for their participation in the running of the schools. The sixty two integrated schools across Northern Ireland offer a powerful model of daily sharing in practice. The model of integrated education therefore should be explicitly referred to in any reference to shared education, consistent with DE policy which views shared education as a journey to an integrated system of education. Such a move would ensure a fairer allocation of funding and resourcing.

Integrated education by its very title implies sharing. However, we are concerned that the lack of clarity surrounding the concept 'shared education' allows for partisan use of the term and potentially undermines the good intention of its origin.

We are concerned that this developing concept involves an acceptance of a religiously divided system which 'tries to make the walls more porous' (PMR 1 2012). Such an approach to diversity and pluralism is at odds with European thinking and social science research on how to progress intercultural dialogue.

NICIE's concern is that shared education is used as an alternative to rather than a tool for change. A clarity of definition is urgently required, not least because of the £70 million funding which is going to be made available to shared education projects over the next five years.

A recent survey published in the Belfast Telegraph found a clear understanding and support for integrated education with shared education understood as a completely different concept. DE in a recent submission to the education committee was very clear that integrated education was at the upper end of the continuum of sharing. This should be made explicit in the definitive definition of shared education.

This definition of shared education should focus on its role as a tool for reconciliation. A poorly defined and poorly understood concept may simply provide a fig leaf of respectability

to our segregated system. Properly defined and with bench marks for assuring high quality outcomes, shared education will permit single identity/faith schools to play their part in building reconciliation and will support the creation of a cohesive system of education.

Conclusion

The Peace Monitoring report of 2014 (P137) referred to the current 'backsliding', 'where peace often fails to bring the prosperity that might give it lasting value to all sides... where integration is postponed indefinitely... and when constant work and constant compromise is required'. To wait until more wider societal change occurs before tackling the issue of desegregating our system of education is to deny yet another generation of the proven outcomes of a more cohesive community. It required courage and commitment to deliver change in reform of policing and the prison service as laid down in the Good Friday agreement. That same courage and commitment is now demanded to deliver on other aspects of that same agreement, not least on integrated education. For this reason NICIE argues that our educational system should not be ring fenced from change but should be the subject of an independent review to guide reform.

Integrated education is premised on the belief that education is capable of transforming society, capable of shaping and leading rather than simply reflecting and maintaining the legacy of division; this is a view widely shared throughout the globe. In its opening paragraphs the most recent Peace Monitoring Report (2014) states: 'The peace process in Northern Ireland has lost the power to inspire... without a vision of shared society to sustain it.'

To many international observers a major key towards effecting change is the desegregation of our schools. In September this year Nancy Soderberg, former senior aide to President Clinton, commented: 'good leaders in Northern Ireland would... build the best schools which are no longer segregated', while President Obama on his last visit to Belfast commented: 'issues like segregated schools and housing... symbols of history that are a source of pride for some and pain for others... these are not tangential to peace, they are essential to it... if catholics and protestants have their schools... if we can't see ourselves in one another, if fear and resentment are allowed to harden, that encourages division, it discourages cooperation.'

The NICIE vision sees education leading society into a new era rather than simply reflecting an unchanging legacy. Our model of integrated schools is much admired abroad and has been instrumental in the creation of new systems of schooling in other post-conflict and ethnically divided societies such as Bosnia, Macedonia, and Turkey. There is a significant body of research highlighting the positive impacts of integrated education on those who come through these schools.

We look towards other systems of high standard, all embracing education such as that of Finland and we welcome the progress of organisations such as Education Together as it establishes an alternative system of schooling in the Republic of Ireland responding to the demands of a more diverse and plural society.

NICIE welcomes this inquiry into our approaches to integration and sharing and applauds the committee for undertaking this important piece of work.

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education 2

SHARED AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION INQUIRY



NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION

Prior to the presentation by NICIE to the education committee on November 19, we wish to submit the following additional evidence:

- response to issues raised in submissions of CCMS and NICCE;
- moving beyond segregation to an integrated or unified system of education.

Definitions of integrated education

Integrated education is a model of education developed by parents in response to the divisive system of education that existed in the 1970s. At a time of serious conflict, these parents wished to see their children educated together. They believed that, by this simple process, hostility and fear would be reduced, mutual respect and understanding would be increased and the seeds of a more peaceful society would be sown. They sought to model within the school walls the type of society they wished to see: one characterised by respect for difference, by celebration of diversity, by democratic engagement with division. To this end, it was important to ensure a balance of both traditions at all levels of school life, from governors, through to staff and students. It was important to ensure that the culture of both major traditions and others were celebrated openly. It was important that the individual child felt accepted and cherished for who she was, and was not labelled with a single unchanging identity. Integrated education is method of education which is inclusive, it is sharing as the norm on a daily basis.

Shared education is a concept which has developed as a means of connecting children across the divide. It has a number of different definitions, ranging from educational through economic to cross community building. It is critical that an agreed definition, based on the promotion of good relations is settled upon.

Parental choice

NICIE fully accepts the principle of parental choice.

We argue that choice of parents for a particular type of school in Northern Ireland is limited by our historical and traditional differences and divisions; our parallel system of education is indeed a 'regrettable remnant of historic ethno-political divisions in our society'. Choice is often determined by the geography and the demographic mix in an area. Managing authorities work on the presumption that parents choose schools on the basis of their religious background and plan accordingly. The evidence from integrated education suggests otherwise. A recent public opinion survey by NICIE in the BELB area found that faith-based ethos was important for only 27% of primary school parents.

We also note that, where schools are oversubscribed, parental choice is denied.

Segregation or an integrated system?

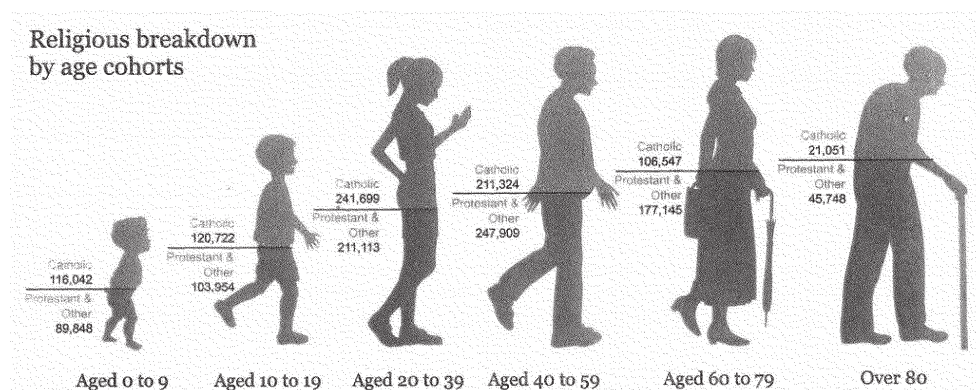
We accept that 'diversity of provision in education is the hallmark of, not an obstacle to a normal, diverse, pluralist society'. However, Northern Ireland is not yet a normal, diverse and pluralist society. The submission from CCMS provides compelling evidence of continuing division. NICIE argues that our educational system has a key role to play in shaping such a diverse and pluralist society, moving us beyond a 'shared out' society to one which is shared. We argue that no one

sector can be a barrier to change. We argue that an independent analysis should be held into the impact our segregated system has on perpetuating divisions and the concept of the 'other'. For this reason we have called for a Patten-style inquiry into education.

We chose the word 'segregated' to describe our system, based on the main definition of the Oxford English dictionary: *the action or state of setting someone or something apart from others*. Where 92% of children are educated separately on the basis of perceived religious background, such a use of the word is measured. We further note that the wider world, including politicians and academics, characterise our education system as segregated, as indeed do the general public. That is why leading international visitors choose to visit integrated schools rather than those they see as segregated.

In no way does NICIE call for the erosion of fundamental rights, but we do draw attention to the dangers of maintaining a system based on sectors.

We include below a diagram from the most recent peace monitoring report which clearly illustrates the demographic drift: a protestant majority is evident in the population aged forty and over. Under this age the majority of the population is catholic with the trend more pronounced at younger ages.



If we maintain the status quo of our system of education then we can predict a shift from the present share out of schools where there is already a majority of catholic schools to a situation where that majority becomes more pronounced.

Such a situation is not a recipe for a peaceful and cohesive future and must be addressed.

NICIE respects the steps taken by the catholic church in its commitment to social justice through its opposition to social selection; we call on it to show the same moral leadership in moving education towards a system which is genuinely diverse.

A blueprint for change

NICIE believes we can move beyond segregation without changing the management type of the school or its ownership, through moving from the ‘dominant’ ethos, as described by Judge Treacy in the recent judicial review, to the development of an ethos of equality for all, which is the key characteristic of an integrated school.

NICIE is offering support for schools who wish to move from a dominant ethos to one of equality through our initiative *Positive Partnerships for Integration*. Such an ethos recognises the diversity which exists in every classroom today and does not cloak individual and multiple identities under historical labels. Each individual child is entitled to be recognised as an individual first and foremost, not as an inherited identity, be that of religion or nationality.

It is for this reason that NICIE supports the recommendation of the Bain report: ‘We advocate, therefore, not a single approach to integration, but a more pervasive and inclusive strategy, focused on the dynamic process of integrating education across the school system.’ In such an integrated system of education, there would continue to be single identity schools, including catholic faith-based schools. These schools would be obliged to engage with shared education to

ensure their children and young people had opportunities to learn together. There would be shared campuses where the emphasis would be on sustained, daily sharing of learning. There would be schools integrated in law, and schools which might be of different management types but which would be integrated in ethos, as defined by Judge Treacy. Such an integrated system of education would remove our schools from their historical positions as serving only one community and allow for a system of education where one side does not dominate and where pluralism becomes a reality.

Levers for change

NICIE suggests that there are a number of structural changes which, if addressed, would facilitate the reform of our educational system.

Governance

We have a complicated and varied system of school governance. A common structure of governance for all schools would support movement towards an integrated and unified system of education.

Ownership

For historical reasons we have an equally complex system of ownership of schools. While recognising the historic financial contribution to the catholic school sector, all publicly funded schools should be owned by the state. NICIE recognises that significant negotiation would be needed to advance this; an independent commission would be best placed to advance it.

Planning

There is no provision for the planning of integrated schools. This is discriminatory and unequal and must be addressed.

Teacher education

We do not prepare our teachers to teach in either integrated schools or in shared classrooms. The recent independent enquiry into initial teacher education argued that the status quo in teacher education is not implemented and offered a range of options for reform, all of which protected specific catholic teacher training within a pluralist model. We urge the necessary changes in teacher training to provide teachers with the skills and attributes to educate the diversity of our classrooms.

Human rights

Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states: ‘the education of the child shall be directed to ... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origins.’

NICIE argues that our schools must create the conditions that allow this to happen; under CRED policy they are obliged to do so. We insist that this happens most effectively in the classroom where there is an acknowledged diversity and the openness which allows difference to be acknowledged and division challenged. Research over thirty years shows that children in integrated schools have many cross community friendships, that these friendships sustain into adulthood, and that, as young people, those who have been to integrated schools are more positive about the future and about good community relations.

Shared education

NICIE welcomes shared education where it has the focus of deepening learning between, about and with others, and we have led a successful training programme for teachers to support this. Our fear is that shared education becomes a means of preserving the status quo rather than a way to move beyond it. The minister for education clearly put the needs of areas and individuals before sectors and institutions when he introduced area based planning. The need of the shared campus or shared partnership should be based on the needs of the young people, not on the protection of particular forms of management.

The statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education

In their submissions, both CCMS and NICCE call on the education committee to recommend an end to the long-standing statutory duty on the department of education to encourage and facilitate the development of formally integrated education. They argue: ‘this duty is not only unjust, it also undermines the fundamental principles of equality, respect for difference and for the rights of others upon which a truly diverse, peaceful and tolerant society is based.’

NICIE expresses its dismay at this attack on integrated education. We draw attention to the underwriting of article 64 in the Good Friday Agreement. Are CCMS and NICCE also calling for a rewriting of this agreement? We note that an obligation to encourage and facilitate integrated education had to be written into law because of implacable opposition to this type of schooling from the catholic church as well as from politicians. The position of most politicians has changed in the last thirty years. We note that the reason for a statutory obligation to support integrated education is still valid — that is, that the segregated system still exists. We repeat our concern, heightened by this latest demand from CCMS and NICCE, that the concept of shared education is in danger of becoming a partisan means of protecting the status quo.

The need for article 64

NICIE reflects on the irony of the demand to remove article 64 when it is clear that there has not been a proactive implementation of this duty. The failure to carry out this duty has severely constrained the growth and expansion of integration. This is most evident in the area of planning. There is no mechanism for planning for integrated schools. CCMS plans provision for catholic schools and ELBs plan provision for controlled schools, but parents seeking an integrated school must achieve this by their own efforts, either by establishing a new school or through a process of transformation, a process which has not been supported by NICCE, resulting in only controlled schools using this process. This is discriminatory and unequal.

NICIE had hoped that area based planning would rectify this inequity. Instead the managing authorities have planned for their own sectors and have not sought the innovative shared solutions the minister asked for. Parents are consulted in relation to change within sectors, not about the type of school they might prefer. Parental choice becomes a hollow concept indeed when the vast majority of integrated schools are already oversubscribed and when there are many areas which have no integrated schools. Add in the scandal of attaching what should be non-sectoral nursery units to single identity schools and the denial of parental choice is complete.

The recent judicial review was sought because of the failure to approve growth in an oversubscribed integrated school. The ruling noted that the ‘needs model’, which fixes children in the designations of catholic, protestant or integrated, could be seen to hinder integration. NICIE’s opposition to this model of planing is well documented. Parents should not be deprived of their choice of an integrated education because it will impact on numbers in other schools, schools which are protected and planned for by their managing authority. We highlight further the danger of pigeon holing children by presumed religion and argue this is no way to plan for an education fit for a 21st century society. This use of the shorthand ‘catholic’ or ‘protestant’ underlines the acceptance of division which is embedded in official thinking and which contributes to a culture of division.

The achievements of integrated education

Despite the failure to plan for integrated education, its success is unquestioned. Since 2000, against a background of a significant drop in the number of school goers, student numbers in integrated education increased by 53%. At the same time the numbers attending catholic schools plummeted by 7.7%.

NICCE notes that ‘increasing numbers of pupils from across the community spectrum are opting in to the Catholic sector. In towns like Bangor, Lisburn and Coleraine/Portstewart, pupils are passing the local “integrated” schools and choosing Catholic schools...’ It is significant that NICCE references the four catholic schools which have a mixed intake. Overall, only 0.9% of children in catholic maintained schools are protestant. This is not surprising when in its CCMS submission we are reminded that, despite being welcoming to all, ‘the schools are nevertheless quite clearly and unapologetically Catholic in ethos and daily practice’.

This focus on catholic ethos illustrates Judge Treacy's reference to dominant ethos and partisan boards and encapsulates the critical difference between catholic and integrated schools where an equality of respect is evident for all.

Conclusion

We welcome NICCE's reiteration of CCMS's call for the minister to evaluate the public appetite for ‘Integrated Education’. All public opinion surveys show significant and consistent support for integrated education. NICIE wishes to see this support tested at local level when educational change is proposed. We ask for parents to be given a voice in shaping the type of school they wish to see. We ask for parents to be consulted on the full range of choice instead of the presumption in favour of preserving sectors.

We further recognise that our call to move beyond a segregated system of education has implications for integration also. NICIE has no desire to create an integrated sector — our aim is to ensure children and young people can learn together on a daily basis; our aim is to move education beyond its alignment with the divisions of the past. All schools can and should play their part in this process. Both main sectors should encourage their schools to engage with *Positive Partnerships* to enable this to happen.

If such change from within is not possible then an independent commission should be tasked with desegregating our system.

NICIE contends that our education system is part of the problem of our divided society; it allows for the perpetuation of the catholic/protestant divide and maintains the notion of ‘other’. NICCE argues that there is no connection between our education system and our divided society. An independent commission could test the veracity of both views and make recommendations, binding on all publicly-funded education for the future.

We note the NICCE sociological query: ‘Have any pupils or parents of pupils from integrated schools been involved in interface rioting or other forms of sectarian civil disturbance over recent years?’ This would be interesting to pursue, set in the context of the violence of the ‘troubles’ and the educational backgrounds of those involved. What we do know is that controversial issues, including the issue of rioting, are addressed openly in integrated schools, with an exchange of views that allows for challenge, reflection and learning.

Finally, on the issue of economics, it has been estimated that £80 million a year would be saved if we did not have duplication and triplication of schools, but even that figure is an underestimation, since the longer term reduction in policing costs as the impact of an integrated system of education supported a more cohesive society has not been factored into the calculation.

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (3)

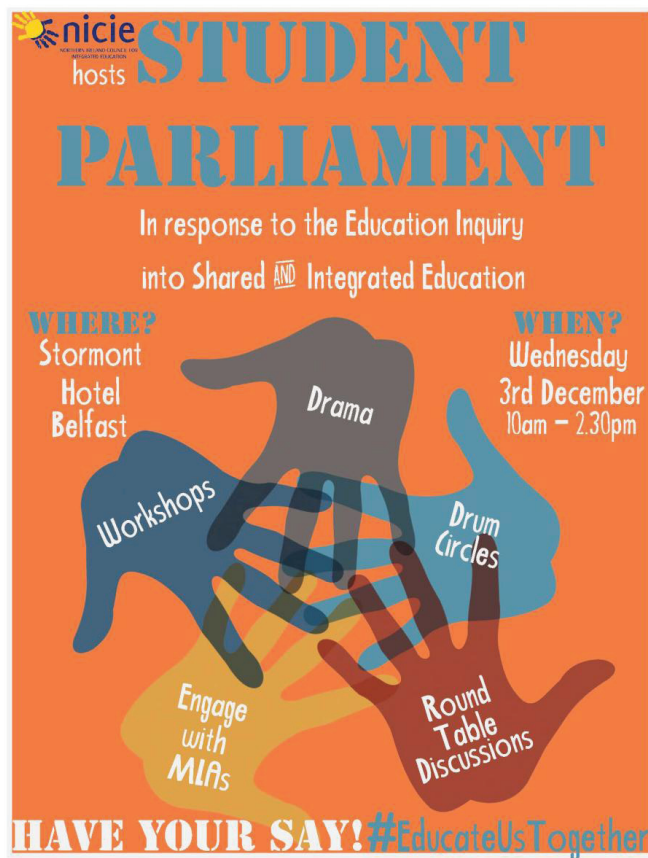


Report from Integrated Schools Youth Parliament

Stormont Hotel

3rd December 2014





**Report from Integrated Schools Youth Parliament
Stormont Hotel
3rd December 2014**

On Wednesday 3rd December 2014, over 90 students from 30 integrated schools came together in the Stormont Hotel, to discuss integrated and shared education in the light of the Education Committee inquiry. Young people, ranging from years 6,7,10 and post 16 mixed in groups to explore the various elements in the consultation. This was a dynamic event that enabled the young people to think critically about integrated education and discuss and debate the key issues. Through discussion and drama they explored the various themes of the inquiry and presented them as drama tableaux. They also captured their thoughts and discussions on flip charts. Below is a report, drawing on these workshops, of what young people in integrated schools think about integrated and shared education,

The following comments were gathered in response to several questions posed to the young people.

- 1) What do you think are the main differences between integrated and shared education?
- 2) What things make it difficult to have more integrated education?
- 3) What things would make it easier to have more integrated education?
- 4) What things would make it difficult to have shared education?
- 5) What things would make it easier to have more shared education?
- 6) What three things do you think the government should know so that more young people can have integrated education?





The thoughts that were drawn out from these discussions about integrated education (IE) are:

Characteristics:

- IE is about co-operation and joining young people together. It promotes understanding, equality, respect and strength and helps to break down walls and therefore helps to promote young people's rights. The voice of young people is not only heard in IE but others also listen and it matters what is said.
- IE is non-judgmental, fair, comforting, diverse, innovative, accepting, inclusive, welcoming, educational, valued, offers religious understanding and promotes freedom.
- IE is good because although everyone is different everyone is included and learning happens about the different religions automatically and in a friendly and safe environment. Also there are more opportunities to learn other languages, play other sports and experience different types of music.
- IE celebrates both differences and similarities.
- IE promotes acceptance of other minority cultures both in and out of school. Children and young people have the opportunity and feel comfortable to develop lasting friendships outside of school and embrace cultural traditions eg foods, customs, festivals etc. Also the young people can feel comfortable expressing their culture and learn to accept others for who they are and not by their religion.
- Some young people also felt that IE was confidence building as they felt cared for and welcomed in a non-judgmental environment.



Employment:

- IE is the only way to prepare young people for the reality of employment and working with all kinds of different people. If you do not teach young people and children together how do you expect them to work together as adults.
- Young people will be able to accept and respect other employees of different backgrounds and work alongside them with no issues.

Political:

- Children and young people from the IE sector are more likely to have a positive impact as potential politicians of the future.
- IE is important as the young people involved can help to abolish the negative view of IE schools.

Barriers to IE:

- It should not just rest on the shoulders' of young people to promote integrated education - parents and others should also be involved.
- It was mentioned that adults need to take the lead from children and young people in relation to IE.
- Although some adults may not be aware of the need of IE children and young people are very comfortable with IE and feel that we need to use education as a tool to move Northern Ireland on from the past rather than live in the past.
- Other difficulties mentioned were language barriers, opinions of parents, not enough funding, and location of schools.

Shared Education:

The main points about shared education were:

- One group felt that it was a mistake to think that shared education was a permanent solution
- The sharing of facilities on a single campus only entrenches sectarianism in a form of benign apartheid
- Shared education is still segregated as pupils are still separated and only come together sometimes
- Some pupils described negative experiences of shared education and felt that education should not be competitive.
- It was felt that Shared Education does not embrace other cultures and that sharing lessons a predominately single identity school makes students feel like a visitor. IE welcome a wide range of opinions and viewpoints.
- Proper planning needs to take place to enable shared programmes to be beneficial and effective.
- Some felt that Shared Education was limited, ordinary, unfair, subdivided, secluded, boring, usual, and dreary.



Advice to Government:

The young people wanted to tell the MLAs:

- To listen to their opinions and give them more opportunities to speak to them.
- To recognise the work of Integrated Education and the work that is done in their schools.



NICIE would like to thank Peter McCallion for all his support and advice in the preparation of the event. We would also like to thank Michelle McIlveen, Sandra Overend and Robin Newton for taking time out of their busy schedules to spend some time with the young people and to listen to what they had to say.

Northern Ireland Youth Forum - Champions for Change



Response to Consultation:

The Committee for Education: Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Northern Ireland Youth Forum
October 2014

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Committee for Education's inquiry into shared and integrated education.

The NIYF aspires to supporting young people to affect change in their communities and we are strong advocates of young people as emerging leaders. The NIYF prides itself in involving young people in the policy making process and supporting young people to engage directly with decision makers at the very highest levels. Young people make up one third of the population of the North of Ireland and have a vital role to play in effecting social change.

We aim to support young people and to help build their self-confidence and belief in themselves, so that they can raise and discuss issues of importance to them. The NIYF's work is cross community in nature and focuses on social issues. We place equality, diversity, independence and interdependence central to our ethos. We believe that all young people should be listened to and respected and we place understanding and acceptance of cultural and political diversity at the forefront of our work. We work to achieve a situation of empowerment – where young people are proactive in the decision making process.

The NIYF, in partnership with BYTES manages a Big Lottery funded project entitled 'Champions 4 Change' (C4C). The C4C project encapsulates the youth model of the NIYF:

- 1/ Personal Change – The belief in young people to affect personal change.
- 2/ Peer Change – The belief in young people to assist and support their peers

- 3/ Community Change – The belief in young people collectively to affect change at a community level.
- 4/ Societal Change – The belief in young people to bring about change in wider society; at local, national and international levels.

Methodology

The C4C programme seeks to engage young people aged 16-20, who are in Need of Employment, Education or Training. It aims to develop their ability to make personal change and influence peer, community and societal change. As part of this process, C4C staff engaged with sixty-two young people from a diverse range of religious, political, academic and economic backgrounds - to discuss their views on shared/integrated education.

To facilitate discussion the young people were provided with the following information:

Inquiry into Shared / Integrated Education

The Committee for Education is part of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Its job is to think about schools and youth services in Northern Ireland. It is currently reviewing the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education.

What is the Inquiry about?

The Committee wants to know what you think about the different types of education.

Options

- What is good about Shared Education?
- What is good about Integrated Education?
- What is good about Separated Education?
- Should more Shared Education be encouraged?
- Should more Integrated Education be encouraged?
- Should more Separate Education be encouraged?
- What should be done to promote your option in schools?
- What part should pupils or parents play in supporting this option

Essentially, you are being asked to give your view on what type of education system we should have in the future, these are the main options;

Integrated – Young people are taught in the same school irrespective of their religious and indeed, non-religious beliefs.

Shared - Young People come together for some subjects and then return to their own school.

Separated - Young people attend a school that reflects their own faith.

Free Choice – The Department of Education should support the choice of the board of governor's or governing body of each school to decide for themselves what way their school operates.

Some background information

At the heart of this inquiry is whether or not we can and should live together i.e. shared housing, recreational facilities, education etc... However, this does not mean that to achieve one you must agree with the other. Most venues within the city centre would be seen as shared spaces; pubs, shops, restaurants, cinema etc...however these can be maintained and

indeed developed further without people having to be educated together or living next to each other.

Summary of Group discussions

In general the vast majority of young people (59) expressed the view that integrated education should be supported. They were mindful of the dangers that this may pose to some young people in certain areas. In these circumstances they were of the view that shared education could be safely supported.

Whilst being overwhelmingly supportive of Shared/Integrated Education, there was a marginal separation as to how this should be progressed:

32 x believed that the government should encourage shared/integrated education, but they shouldn't legislate for it.

27 x of those who responded indicated that they felt shared/integrated education improves community relations and the government should legislate for it.

NOTE: Although the numbers of young people who had actually attended an integrated school was very small (6) they all agreed it was extremely beneficial to them in establishing links with the other community and understanding their religious counterparts. These six participants came from areas that they described as integrated.

The prevailing view of the other participants was; shared education improves young people's understanding of the other community, however it does not equate to an increase in the maintenance of relationships beyond the school environment.

Many of the respondents felt that sectarianism was more of an issue for older people than them.

They felt that many politicians reinforce sectarian attitudes.

Group Discussions

Participants were invited to give an overview of the type of education they received and to discuss the merits of this. This was an ice breaking activity, to get the young people to think about the issues surrounding education. They focused on the specific issues of shared and integrated education, via a number of preset questions. This is a selection of their views to each question;

Should there be Integrated Education?

"Yes!, It provides you with the opportunity to meet new friends"

"I think so, it helps break down barriers between people who live in different area's"

"Yeah! You're able to get other people's opinions about things"

"Schools should not only be mixed in relation to Catholic's and Protestants, but boys and girls" (This view was widely supported).

"I would support integrated education but others wouldn't"

"I would like it, but there are things about it I would need to think about"

How should Integrated Education be introduced?

"In our school the teachers made sure the class was even" (equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant pupils).

"It needs to start from primary school up"

"Parents should be given the chance to visit integrated schools to see if that's what they want"

Should there be Shared Education?

"Shared education should be supported especially in rural areas"

"In areas where integrated education wouldn't work, because of people's safety, they should be encouraged to share classes, they (pupils) could go into the other school in buses"

"In those schools that have too many people in their area wanting to go to the school, they could do shared education. They might be able to get people from the other side to come and live in their area to go to their school"

What are the benefits of Shared or integrated education?

"It enabled us to meet up at shared spaces" (city centre shopping centres)

"You get the chance to hear what they think of living in their area"

"I went to house parties in their area, it didn't bother me. Before I went to school with them, I wouldn't have walked through their area".

"Integrated education may eventually lead to integrated housing"

Blockages to Integrated/Shared Education

"Our parents have the issues not us, sectarianism starts at home. Go in to school with people from the other side isn't going to make much difference in what you think if you go home to sectarian attitudes."

"Politicians reinforce segregation"

"Communities reinforce segregation"

"Some area's given their local history with the other side may not want to mix"

"In some areas it would be dangerous for you to walk through their area to get to your own house after school"

"Students should be asked to vote on it, in each school and if they want to remain on their own then they should"

"The government should be left out of any decision about it (shared/integrated education) they should take the views of parents, pupils, teachers and those running the school and then do what they want"

"The government should have a say as they fund the school, but they shouldn't have the final say"

"Some schools are already over subscribed to by people from the local area, how could they be integrated?"

"I was bullied in my School (shared education) my name clearly identified me as a ..."

"Schools should remain segregated"

Other Comments

"It shouldn't matter where you go to school"

"There should be a mixture of schools, that suit the needs of local communities"

"There should be another Irish language secondary school" (This view was widely supported)

“There should be youth drop-in centres in neutral areas that would support integration in education”

“Teachers need trained to assist integration”

“The quality of education is more important than the type”

Religious Education should be left to the home”

The C4C project welcomes the opportunity to respond to the aforementioned inquiry and to ensure that the views of young people are heard at the highest levels of political governance. During this process, it was inspiring to hear that young people were moving away from sectarian views of each other irrespective of the school that they had attended. It is also noteworthy that despite their own personal views on integrated/shared education they recognised it wasn't for everyone and shouldn't be forced upon them.

NUS-USI

Submission from NUS-USI to the Committee for Education's Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Opening comments

NUS-USI wishes to express gratitude for the opportunity to be able to provide this submission to this Inquiry. We believe that the subject of addressing division in the education system in Northern Ireland is a vitally important issue. NUS-USI does not wish to be considered to provide oral evidence to the Committee on this Inquiry and our submission covers our key thoughts on this matter.

Integrated Education

NUS-USI believes that children in Northern Ireland should ideally be educated together within an Integrated Education system. Why should division in our education system be allowed to exist?

NUS-USI believes that if government is aiming to create Shared Education campuses, why can it not simply instead make these Integrated Education campuses?

While Shared Education might be a step along the road to Integrated Education, as much progress as possible should be made, and Integrated Education should be the key priority.

NUS-USI believes that government must demonstrate the utmost ambition possible around tackling societal division in Northern Ireland.

If societal division is addressed and an integrated approach to the provision of public services is applied, this could address many very significant problems and could help build a shared future.

Delivering a shared future

The cost of segregation in Northern Ireland can potentially have a very significant impact upon public finances. NUS-USI believes that government should work to address the cost of division as a key priority, to help build a shared future.

Government should make delivering more Integrated Education places one of their top priorities and we believe that the government should publicly support Integrated Education ahead of Shared Education.

NUS-USI thinks that Integrated Education could potentially be the most important aspect of building a shared future. Building a shared future could cement peace and stability in Northern Ireland and could have an extremely positive impact on society. We also believe that tackling societal division could also help grow our economy and could help attract investment to Northern Ireland by potentially demonstrating that society here is moving forward together.

Integrated Education could also help in addressing societal division by potentially building the good relations landscape which could help facilitate the removal of peace walls in interface areas. If children are educated together it could change their whole perspective on life, and could help them understand and celebrate diversity at an early stage.

NUS-USI would strongly encourage the Committee to support Integrated Education over Shared Education.

Oakgrove Integrated College

Submission on Shared/ Integrated Education

**Prepared by Oakgrove Integrated College Derry-Londonderry for the
NI Assembly Committee on Education**

October 24th, 2014

This submission is prepared by the school's Vice Principal who is also responsible for Integration within the school and into the wider community, locally, nationally and globally. It is based on interviews and surveys with staff, students, past students and reflective discussions with some of parent representatives of the Board of Governors.

Established in 1992, Oakgrove Integrated College sees its role as being one of facilitating reconciliation by creating a safe but challenging place where people from different backgrounds can work, play and learn together. Central to what we do is a consideration of how we can advance efforts to create a more peaceful society, whilst also meeting the statutory demands of the Department of Education. In balancing many demands, we emphasise our founding duty to promote integration by developing in young minds an ability to think beyond/below/above/ around the barriers created in society.

The Committee must recognise that each sector responding will speak from its own experience. In our case, our reflections are focused on how our contribution can help to advance a change in provision so that there can be greater reconciliation through education across our society. It should be recognised that the integrated schools alone were set up as a model of how to achieve reconciliation, modelling a way of living together in community with those who are different, and celebrating the diversity. While there are flaws in every model, we humbly suggest that when an integrated school returns to its core value of trying to heal and to reconcile, there is a great deal of opportunity to engage young people creatively for diversity which it is hard to replicate in any other setting.

It has been suggested that the voice from the integrated sector is too small to be given equal weight to that of others; we contend that the small voices of other groups have provided crucial guidance at previously important times in our conflict-resolution journey. We hope that the experience we have learned about sharing throughout our twenty-two years in this school will provide insights to share more widely. Small political parties made great contributions, and small religious groups such as the Religious Society of Friends created important opportunities to foster seeds of peace. Small gestures by the many who suffered in our history pointed others towards a better way; wisdom in the smaller voice should not be ignored.

If each sector is seen simply to speak for itself, then the over-arching aim of the inquiry will be forgotten. In presenting our thoughts, we have focused on those aspects of our journey which we feel point most helpfully a way to bringing young people together for meaningful exchange which will result in a more normal society. The Committee should see through the mists of our clouded multi-layered system and distil what is essential for a better future. Many projects are worthwhile, but those which bring lasting change are the essential ones, and those which should receive support. The US began the end of its segregated society by making changes which people did not want. It may be that our society needs to be told by leaders of courage that a different way must be found, which will foster truer reconciliation.

Our school was designed as a child-centred institution, and we routinely solicit the views of young people, especially around issues of segregation, integration and sharing in society. A small selection of student views are given at the end of this document; should the committee wish to see further evidence of attitudes towards integration, bi-annual Holocaust Day surveys and other school-based data dating back to 2004 will provide this.

Students suggest that The Committee should focus closely on what shared or integrated education is about. It aims to promote reconciliation, and so we must look with honesty to those things which have brought this about. In our experience, the opportunity of students working together through issues which divide or unite provides a model of use in wider society and for later life. Students learn most of these lessons not through formal interactions in the classroom, but in the informal contacts where friendships are developed, issues explored and trust built.

We strongly believe that attitudinal change comes **not** through intellectual but through emotional responses. Opportunity for this type of emotional growth are limited in any experience which does not have young people continually working with those whose experiences are different. In segregated settings, learning such as that envisaged by CRED or LLW provisions is bound to be limited to learning about, rather than from “the other”. We believe that only in fairly constantly mixed settings, where there is a constant encounter with “otherness” will the opportunities exist to grow, learn and develop understanding of what a reconciled, shared community can look like.

It is our hope that The Committee will allow us to present orally, and to hear from student voices. If doing so, we would speak not only of the experience of an integrated school, but also of those projects which have enabled us to reach out to others, most significantly:

- The work of the Spirit of Enniskillen Trust (and how a way must be found to preserve that work);
- The work of a schools UNITY Project to challenge prejudice, based on the model given by Steve Wessler, founder of the Maine Centre for the Prevention of Hate Violence;
- The shared learning about the first world war and its lessons for a modern, divided society made possible by the work of the International School for Peace Studies.
- Theatre of Witness and its ability to reach beyond segments of a divided society and show how friendships can exist which defy the stereotypes often encountered in a more limited, less emotional understanding of history.
- Hands For A Bridge, an after school project linking our students with those in South Africa and Seattle, to explore issues of identity in a community of division, and which has brought our young people to a deeper awareness of themselves and our community.

We have felt that these models have proved to be effective, at low cost, and involving genuine sharing, rather than the sometimes superficial contacts which have sometimes arisen from funding opportunities rather than a genuine desire to build community.

It is in our nature to respond positively to every invitation to engage with others. Alongside many positive experiences, there have been others which did nothing to further trust, and indeed have seemed more about achieving balance for political/ financial or other purposes than about furthering the stated ideals of reconciliation, peace-building or connecting young people.

The Committee could give thought to the reasons why people involved themselves in shared education, and examine closely the possibility that work is driven by less noble motives than those stated; in a divided, underfunded educational system where schools compete, it must be recognised that less than the best practice can take place yet be presented in ways which look attractive. In our society emerging from conflict, few are willing to be critical of any initiative purporting to further peace, yet in making decisions about the future, we must be critical since only genuine reconciliation will prevent those darker and more sinister forces in society taking hold in ripe young minds.

Our experience is that for genuine trust to be built, there should be space to make mistakes, to speak honestly. This is hard to do when funding is involved, and where the value is judged in numbers touched, rather than changes recorded in attitudes towards others. The showcasing of projects which have been heavily funded does not inspire confidence that

change has come about. It simply shows that targets have been met for funding purposes, without critically examining at a grassroots level whether those were the targets which ever ought to have been set.

As individuals on the Committee, members could give thought to what they themselves have found to work. All MLAs must have experienced progress on an individual level with others which they may once have thought impossible. What is it that allows individuals to form working friendships with those with whom they may remain opponents on many areas relating to politics, for example? The answer which we have found is the sustained opportunity to look for common ground, which is found when people are beside each other on a sustained basis and which is not possible in other settings.

Students in our school have trained staff; some staff now report that they think differently because of what they have learned from students. There is a place for young people from different backgrounds to work with politicians, not to learn from them about politics, but for politicians to learn from them about reconciliation, building bridges and not being afraid to learn from their mistakes.

In conclusion, we would ask The Committee to reflect on the question: what is shared about? We suggest it is about building a society which will foster reconciliation between individuals and across communities. If societies are reconciled when individuals have this experience, then there are individual examples to help us as we struggle to understand. Recently, the family of murdered journalist James Foley spoke of how he believed in changing the world, person by person, act of love by act of love. Amid the rubble of Enniskillen, as his daughter's life ebbed from her, Gordon Wilson said that the "bottom line was love", "I bear no ill-will, I bear no grudge". As he left us in our hope of a better future, Senator George Mitchell reminded us two friends from different traditions, buried side by side as a reminder of our brokenness, and where our failure to engage would lead us back, if we chose that route. And in what he said at the funeral of Elizabeth O'Neill, the Minister's words should remind us still: "Sectarianism lives in all of us."

None of those voices who urged us to move our way to peace pointed to their own success, but rather encouraged others to give their best for peace. The church leaders and individuals who so much ground work for peace did not celebrate their success – they facilitated the dialogue. In looking to see how our future can be better, we would urge The Committee to be careful to support and encourage what is genuine, not what makes the soundbite. The voice of children is clear when it is heard - they want to be together, to have opportunities to learn together, to develop understanding of the other, to learn about the past, and to share stories wherein the healing will be found.

We commend our thoughts to The Committee and will be happy to share further information which may help.

We wish you well in this difficult, life-changing and critical task.

John Harkin

October 24th, 2014

A sample of thoughts on integrated education selected from reflections by current/ recent past pupils of Oakgrove Integrated College, Derry-Londonderry

- I can't imagine my schooling years in a non-integrated school. Why? Because it just makes life in this world feel a bit more "right" when you're in an environment that promotes interest in everyone around you. No matter what gender, background, or nationality. I really appreciated this, being a Jehovah's Witness - I felt respected, and that I had a voice within the school. The good attitude that the school promotes really rubs off on its students, as I always felt respected by my peers, especially in a-level years, and many were interested to find out more about me and my faith, which was really encouraging to me. A synonym

of “integration” is “blending”. We generally blend food because different foods together taste nice, or sometimes even nicer than when eaten on their own. I think the blending that integration does for young people makes their attitudes and personalities much more tasteful to the figurative palette of society. I like to think this contributes to communities of happier and more peaceful people. - Jay

- You must become the change you wish to see in the world - Mahatma Ghandi - Jason
- I feel that moving from an all Catholic school to an integrated school completely changed my personality and my own thoughts on the world. . If I hadn’t moved to Oakgrove and experienced the integrated education I wouldn’t have been able to look at each individual for their own self and their own qualities. I learnt that we shouldn’t look at people as Catholics or Protestants or Muslims etc and that we shouldn’t judge people based on what religion they are, what they look like how they talk etc. I feel that being in integrated education has helped me a lot with my journey to university and has helped me meet and respect the new people here in Manchester from various different backgrounds etc. - Caitlin
- Being able to share my education with people from all races and religions is something I’ve always been grateful for. When I watch the news and see the conflict and tragedy happening around the world because of race, religion and culture its an eye opener. Although we have problems with in our school, it is a sanctuary for me and many other students... somewhere where each and every one of us are judged not by our race, religion or culture but the content of our character. - Rachel
- Shared/Integrated education, holds the key to peace through breakdown of bias and grudges that have been passed down from family members. This is achieved through allowing children to make decisons for themselves with an open mind removing a wall between the concept of “us and them”. Learning playing and developing in an integrated environment that prepares children for work life. As segregation in the work place is not allowed, why should it be allowed in schools? - Orla
- I count myself very lucky to have gone to Oakgrove. Not only did I receive a brilliant education but my entire time there has undoubtedly shaped who I am today. I met people and experienced things I know I would never have gotten the opportunity to do, had I not gone to an integrated school. I have also had some experience of shared education as in 6th year I travelled to another school for one of my subjects. Although this was a good experience it was different from my normal classes. I think this was because even though we were brought together for class, there was not much of an opportunity to really mix with the pupils from the other school and it seemed that our differences ran deeper than our notably different uniforms. Integrated education goes far beyond simply bringing people together. It is about giving young people the knowledge and power to better understand themselves and others, and use this to make changes to how they live their lives, by moving beyond their differences and focusing on shared experiences. - Geraldine
- Hands For A Bridge (A project based within Oakgrove Integrated College) helped me so much through my high school years. Being in Hands For A Bridge as well as an Integrated School meant I could put the discussions we had in group meetings into action. Making sure to look after the younger ones, trying not to exclude people, not judging someone on their appearance and never joking to someone about their race or culture. I learned not to do these things because I had the opportunity to talk to fellow students in Hands For A Bridge and find a common thread was at one point or time we felt excluded, isolated and alone because of who we are and what we believe. Hands For A Bridge gave me empowerment. I became much more confident and it helped me believe I could truly make a change in the world. ‘If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way’, sums up who I’ve been. I have the confidence and self belief to know you can change the world one person at a time. Being there for the other students, taught me compassion. Knowing when to be quiet, to let someone else speak and let out what’s on their mind is a vital lesson in life. I really don’t think I’d be the same person I am today if it wasn’t for my

integrated school and for Hands For A Bridge, even now, 2 years after leaving school I still feel a sense of belonging to a community, one that I am proud to support. - Bethany

Odling-Smee, A

Education Committee Enquiry on Shared and Integrated Education. October 2014

Personal Submission. Anne Odling-Smee

My professional life has been in education at primary and third level as well as for the glass industry. Social policy underpins this work and because of this the educational system in Northern Ireland has been of particular interest.

Since 1974 I have been involved particularly in the development of schools in which pupils from the main Christian traditions and others could be educated together. Northern Ireland is a relatively small place and the potential for the people to join in a common purpose for the health of the economy and cultural life is severely weakened by the often fatal fissures of political and religious division.

Succeeding generations have inherited and suffered from separation in education, in where they live and in their different views of the world. They have grown up without knowledge of 'the other'. Ignorance breeds suspicion, fear and often antagonism.

Despite this distance growing numbers have come together, shared their working and social lives and formed relationships. So why do the structures stay rigid? Why cannot those who wish to do so be able educate their children together? Why always the religious labels dominating choice?

It was a desperate group of parents who in 1981 decided to tempt fate and open Lagan College. A school for all children of all abilities and social class. The parents were embarking on a personal journey of discovery about their own feelings and those of their fellow travellers, What were the essentials of their faith, their philosophy and their culture.? How would all these factors be melded into a secure environment in which their children could share but not flaunt all that mattered to them.

There was nothing easy about the task either physically or mentally. There was a common purpose and determination with which to counter the problems and some hostility. The community that grew around the school, parents and staff, pupils and wider family circles were and are an example of how a shared Northern Ireland could be if that phrase was a sincere aspiration.

Forty Integrated schools have been started by parents since then. Lagan College has grown from 28 to 1200+ pupils and heavily oversubscribed, as are many of the forty. This year, 2014, the Integrated Primary school that grew nearby to Lagan had to turn away 19 pupils who applied as their first preference. Forge IPS not far away had no room for 24 similar applicants. A few years ago a local controlled PS applied to transform to Integrated status but it was discouraged by the two Education and Library Boards and turned down by DENI. That PS could have absorbed the demand.

We have been grateful for the courage of the controlled schools who have transformed and the Transferors who have seen the possibilities therein. A Transforming school has a challenging task as it is not starting from scratch. They do have a building but they have to go the journeys and carry the existing staff and parents while reaching out as they incorporate 'the other'. Often they are judged by their original capacity notwithstanding demographic changes and the need for a transformed integrated school to grow organically as it changes character is little appreciated.

Throughout the years since 1981 Government policy has changed regularly and the development of more Integrated places has been chequered. There was considerable growth during the 1900-2000 period but from then increasing blocks have been inserted, in particular that saying no new school should affect an existing one.

During the period 1970 to the present time my impressions and experiences of the education system has been shaped by various roles. I was a Lecturer in the Social Work at QUB and learnt at first hand the experiences of the students I was privileged to tutor. At one time seven of my tutorial group of twelve had honours degrees but had failed the 11+. Integrated colleges are All Ability .I also served as a Lay Magistrate on the Juvenile Panel. Young people from most of the Belfast schools came before us over the 25 years. The effect of disadvantage was reinforced by the lack of parity of esteem between selective and non-selective schools. Underlying was the sectarianism of ignorance. The disturbances surrounding many of the community rituals and the time of year dictated the affiliations of those before us. And gave too many a criminal record.

For 12 years I was a member of the Belfast Education and Library Board, with the last 4 years as Chair. During that time I got to know many of the schools from all sectors and appreciated the difficulties of running a system segregated 4 ways, by religion and ability and with the concentration of 14 Voluntary grammar schools in the city.

Bringing children together can only be done with great care and sensitivity. Ancestral voices are quickly summoned. Throughout all these years teachers have been very honest that to engage in discussion of sensitive issues whether religious or historically political, requires that they are trained and supported. The submission from the North East Education and Library Board describes well the groundwork needed for Shared Education.

After so many years of turbulence it is surely incumbent upon us to seize the initiatives that have been shown in education, the arts, sports and community action to enhance the potential for development of a functional and progressive society with a common purpose.

The community action that has prospered against all the odds are the schools founded by parents so that their children can learn together and know each other. Across the divides of ability, class, religion and politics they offer a choice for those who wish to share their futures.

To this end it seems imperative that the concept of Community Audit be instated in a robust and non-partisan fashion so that planning for the future of education in any area is decided by the people of that area. In this way, if supported by politicians and stakeholders, there might be a possibility that the aspirations of parents and the different educational interests could converge.

O'Reilly, N

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School of Law
Queens University Belfast
28 University Square
Belfast BT7 1NN
Northern Ireland

Peter McCallion
Room375a,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw,
Stormont,
Belfast,BT4 3XX

Dear Peter

**RE: MINDFULNESS, WELLBEING AND EDUCATION IN POST-CONFLICT NORTHERN IRELAND:
SUPPORTING MINDFUL SCHOOL COMMUNITIES AS A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE BUILDING**

**A submission to the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education Inquiry into
Shared/Integrated Education**

On behalf of my colleague, Niamh O'Reilly, and myself I am attaching a submission to your Inquiry into Integrated Education and Shared Education. We'd be grateful if you could bring this to the attention of your Chair, Deputy Chair and membership.

Our submission responds, in particular, to the following terms of reference:

- Identification of key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;
- Identification and analysis of alternative approaches and models of good practice; and
- Consideration of priorities and actions needed to be taken to improve sharing and integration.

Thank you for your attention,

Dr Peter Doran

PP Niamh O'Reilly

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Mindfulness, Wellbeing and Education in
Postconflict Northern Ireland:

**Supporting Mindful School Communities
As A Contribution To Peace Building**

A Submission

Mindfulness is the energy of being aware and awake to the present moment. It is the continuous practice of touching life deeply in every moment of daily life. To be mindful is to be truly alive, present and at one with those around you and with what you are doing.

(Wake Up Schools European Network)

<http://wakeupschools.org/>

Mindfulness training for doctors and teachers: Mental health problems cost the UK economy an estimated £70bn annually. Training new medical and teaching staff in mindfulness techniques would embed a culture of wellbeing in health and education, and reduce a later burden on the NHS by improving the availability of mindfulness-based therapies.

(All Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing, September, 2014)

<http://parliamentarywellbeinggroup.org.uk/>

Acknowledgements

We offer our thanks to the Community Foundation Northern Ireland and Kat Healy for the financial support for this research and enabling this submission. We also thank all those who gave of their time for a series of interviews that form an important part of this submission. Clearly, mindfulness in the context of our education system and our journey towards united communities is an idea ripe for further exploration and support.

Interviewees:

- Michael Mc Knight, Principal, Lough View Integrated Primary School
- Anna Johnston, SENCO, Lough View Integrated Primary School
- Monique Harte, Occupational Therapy Lecturer, University of Ulster
- Mary McNulty, Amal Project, Mediation Northern Ireland
- Clíodhna Scott-Wills, Senior Development Officer, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
- Lorraine Murray, Calm Kids, Connected Kids, Founder and Director of Feel Good Therapies
- Phap Lai, Wake Up Schools European Network
- Clare Kelly, Mindful Schools (UK)
- Diarmuid Moran, Holy Child Primary School, Belfast
- Caren McDonald, Mindfulness Educator and Secondary School Teacher, San Francisco
- Dr Siobhan Hugh Jones, Faculty of Medicine and Health, Leeds University
- Valerie York-Zimmerman, President of Mindful Kids Miami
- Patricia McIlhone, Steiner School Holywood

Witnesses who may be available to address the Inquiry:

- Dr Peter Doran, School of Law, Queens University Belfast
- Niamh O'Reilly BCL, LLM, PGCE, Lead Author of this Submission
- Niamh Bruce, The Sanctuary, Dublin
- Professor Katherine Weare, University of Exeter/Contributor, All Party
- Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing & Economics (2014)
- Phap Lai, Wake Up Schools European Network

Key Findings of research undertaken and collated for the Inquiry

1. Mindfulness as a secular practice – as endorsed by the NHS, the Mental Health Foundation, and the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) - has been defined as “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p.4). In addition it is seeing things in new ways and staying in the present. Mindfulness is associated with enhanced capacities for awareness and emotional regulation.
2. Mindfulness practices have already been the subject of a number of pilot projects in Northern Ireland schools. One school-based intervention has been the subject of a research project, which demonstrated a positive impact on teachers and pupils.¹
3. Emerging research demonstrates that mindfulness can be part of schools’ response to a pressing need around the stress and emotional difficulties reported by increasing numbers of children. The practice can therefore contribute to educational performance. This is best realised if mindfulness can be incorporated into a whole school culture.
4. One of the primary benefits of mindfulness in schools is the cultivation of enhanced capacity for attention as a support for qualities of mind and behaviour that can make a significant contribution to ‘Building a United Community’. These qualities of mind include:
 5. Compassion for self and other
 6. Non-judgement
 7. Open-minded curiosity
 8. A capacity for contemplative inquiry
 9. Tolerance and respect for otherness
 10. Self-awareness and a deeper understanding of one’s own limits
 11. Practices of gratitude and establishing a culture of gratefulness
 12. Acceptance alongside resilience and creativity
13. These qualities of mind can enhance individual and collective capacity for early identification of crises and challenges and encourage early intervention and a preventive approach. Mindfulness based work is associated with interrupting emerging patterns that might prove harmful to mental and physical wellbeing.
14. Mindfulness practices for students are best cultivated in school environments where teaching staff have already embraced the practice and begun to apply it to their roles in the school

1 See MSc in Applied Psychology (w/ Clinical Specialism) Dissertation Paper – “An evaluation of a mindfulness-based stress reduction programme for children in a whole-class primary school setting.” 2014

and integrated the practice into their own self-care and wellbeing.² Ideally the committed staff would include a Principal or other senior figure. It is advised that the best and most sustainable results for children and young people in our schools will be founded on initial support and training for school staff where staff have expressed an interest. In this way mindfulness can be embedded as a voluntary and bottom-up whole-school practice and contribution to good relations.

15. Mindfulness can re-awaken teaching staff's original animus for entering the profession and help them recover a passion for accompanying their pupils and students and make a difference in their lives.
16. Distinctive approaches to mindfulness should be encouraged for primary and secondary schools. Mindfulness practices differ and needs vary when it comes to supporting younger children and older students e.g. teenagers.
17. Mindfulness practices can complement school-based strategies to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
18. Mindfulness based practices can complement school approaches to counter bullying and the cultivation of respectful relationships.

Recommendations:

1. As a contribution to peace building and cultivating united communities, the Department of Education to work with education providers (all sectors) on identifying the support infrastructure and training required to introduce mindfulness to schools and identify resources. Specifically, this would involve:
 - a. A further study of international best practice in terms of the support and training resources required to embed mindfulness as an option for teachers and school administrators;
 - b. Steps to engage teacher training colleges on training and practice requirements, including measures to 'train the trainers';
 - c. Resources to establish a 'community of practice' for those engaged in mindfulness training, practice and research in our schools;
2. The Department to take steps to promote and become an advocate for a better understanding of mindfulness as a low cost intervention and its potential in a range of public services (e.g. mental and physical health, wellbeing, education outcomes).
3. Initiate a programme of support and training in mindfulness within the teacher training institutions at Stranmillis and St Mary's College, with an initial focus on extending support to trainee teachers in taking care of their own wellbeing and managing stress. This to be based on further pilot studies in our local education system.
4. Invite Katherine Weare, University of Exeter, to facilitate the extension of her 'Mindfulness in Education' work to Northern Ireland teacher training colleges and schools interested in taking mindfulness into local schools.³
5. Other sources of training and support available to Northern Ireland schools include:

2 Wellbeing of teachers is a concern with 50 per cent of teachers exiting the profession in the UK within the first five years of their employment.

3 Other ongoing research work that would support capacity building in NI is currently being conducted by Mark Williams at Oxford and by Siobhan Hugh Jones at University of Leeds.

- a. The European Wake Up Schools network.⁴ This network offers year round support, including in-school workshops and immersive experience for school staff and is already active in the UK and the Republic of Ireland.
 - b. The Sanctuary Meditation and Mindfulness Centre, Dublin.
6. Adopt the recommendations of the All Party Group on Economics and Wellbeing set out in their report, *Wellbeing in Four Policy Areas* (September, 2014), including mindfulness in schools:
 - i. “Well-being must be seen as integral to core policy objectives in health and education, and not separate from them: mental health is inseparable from physical health, and children’s mental health and well-being is inseparable from their capacity to learn and achieve. A more holistic approach is needed.”
 - ii. In both health and education, a key challenge for scaling up mindfulness programmes is building the stock of trained mindfulness teachers whilst maintaining standards. It was suggested that mindfulness should be included in teacher training and in medical students’ training as a matter of course – bearing in mind that mindfulness can benefit doctors and teachers as much as it can patients and pupils.
7. To introduce mindfulness into a school community it will be important to work alongside school principals, administrators, teaching colleges and curriculum advisory bodies. This initiative should, at all times, be voluntary and based on outreach and engagement with a growing number of interested teachers and practitioners within and beyond the education profession.
8. Mindfulness and the accompanying practices can help staff and pupils deepen a sense of community and provide a model of good relations and wellbeing based on harmonious relationships for the wider community.
9. Identify “Beacons of Mindfulness” in local schools for the purposes of collecting evidence and providing local demonstrations of best practice and evident impacts.
10. Information to be made available to teachers on mindfulness and benefits of bringing it into the school. Highlighting benefits for: a. pupils; b. staff; c. parents and wider school community. This could take the form of information evenings and workshops.

Mindfulness, Wellbeing and Education in Post-Conflict Northern Ireland: Supporting Mindful School Communities as a Contribution to Peace Building

1.0 Introduction

There is significant evidence that children and adolescents today are experiencing unprecedented levels of stress (Mendelson et al., 2010⁵ in mindfulness for children and youth articles). Reports and diagnosis of anxiety, depression, ADD, ADHD, to name but a few, among children and young people are increasing (Farrell & Barrett, 2007⁶) and it is believed that the number of cases reported represent a small fraction of those that go unreported. Today’s world is fast, digitally focused, stress filled and disconnected.

4 The Plum Village training may be accredited in the near future and would tap into a significant source of expertise and a significant level of commitment to Northern Ireland.

5 Mendelson, T., Greenberg, M., Dariotis, J., Gould, L., Rhoades, B., & Leaf, P. (2010). Feasibility and preliminary outcomes of a school-based mindfulness intervention for urban youth. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 38(7), 985-994.

6 Farrell, L., & Barrett, P. (2007). Prevention of childhood emotional disorders: Reducing the burden of suffering associated with anxiety and depression. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 12(2), 58-65.

The context of a post-conflict society brings additional challenges for our children and young people many of whom suffer the ills of trans-generational trauma and experience the impact of living within a deeply segregated and sectarian communities.

Violence, poverty, discrimination, underachievement and poor mental health are daily experiences for many within communities struggling to emerge from the legacy of the conflict. At the other end of the spectrum, we see “high achievers” emerging from 14 years of a highly segregated (religion, gender and often class based⁷), largely exam/assessment focused educational system. They have had very little exposure to, and thus lack, understanding of the views or experiences of children and young people from other communities. Academic achievement is given priority, with support for their short- or long-term mental health often limited. An education system which genuinely recognizes and nourishes the wellbeing of the whole child is something to strive for. Integral to this, should be the recognition and support for the wellbeing of teachers, educators and parents. Schools must be recognized as places where children, teachers and parents can flourish and grow together.

Positively, the role and importance of Social and Emotional learning has gained increasing acceptance within many schools, especially at primary level. Fostering and promoting mental wellbeing ought to feature prominently at every education level especially when we consider such that during the period 1999 to 2009, 2,258 deaths were registered as suicide in Northern Ireland⁸ In addition bullying and peer pressure continue to feature as major concerns within our schools⁹. It has been highlighted that the elements of health education that relate to mental health and wellbeing within many schools are underdeveloped¹⁰ (p.21).

Against this backdrop, this paper posits that the introduction of mindfulness based practices into schools across Northern Ireland in general – and within the context of integrated and shared campuses in particular - could potentially support teachers, pupils, staff and parents with regard to nourishing their mental health and wellbeing. Through so doing, we suggest that the introduction of mindfulness practices would foster a greater sense of connection to self and others. It would help to nurture a certain ‘quality of mind’ which would be more open to peace, compassion and acceptance of self and others in a sustainable and lasting way.¹¹ We suggest that the successful introduction of mindfulness practices into schools could create a model of a mindful community based on respect, understanding, non-judgment and compassion which could act as a powerful example to the wider community in Northern Ireland of the transformational impact which mindfulness could bring to our relationship to ourselves, others and the wider community.

Our society is one which continues to struggle with our roots in the past. Our aim, while not belittling the pain of the past, should be one of focusing on the beauty and wonder of the present moment with an open and curious mind and heart with regard to the future from a place of healing, self-care and resilience.

It is the role of this paper to highlight the evidence to date supporting the introduction of mindfulness practices into schools and make suggestions regarding how the practices could most effectively be introduced in Northern Ireland. This is an area that is rapidly growing with regards to accessibility, receptivity and research.

7 Smith A., Education and the Peace Process in Northern Ireland, Paper presented to the Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association, Montreal, April, 1999

8 Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

9 Burns, S., (Dec 2006) School Bullying in Northern Ireland - It hasn't gone away you know. ARK Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive, 48 <http://www.ark.ac.uk/publications/updates/update48.pdf>.

10 Education and Training Inspectorate, (Nov 2006), Report of a Survey of Health Education in Post-Primary Schools in Northern Ireland, <http://www.etini.gov.uk/survey-of-healtheducation-in-post-primary-schools-in-northern-ireland.pdf>

11 Mindfulness practices have been used in other conflict zones, for example with bereaved mothers in Palestine. Pigni, A., A First-Person Account of Using Mindfulness as a Therapeutic Tool in the Palestinian Territories. *Journal of Child and Family Studies* (2010) 19: 152-156

2.0 Views and experiences within Northern Ireland and further afield

The focus of this research was to identify and understand the benefits that the introduction of mindfulness into schools could bring to children and young people in Northern Ireland. We considered the benefits as falling within two specific areas; that of enhancing the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people and that of contributing to the peace process in Northern Ireland. We thus considered how mindfulness could affect the present and future experience and context of our children and young people and indeed how it could offer them the opportunity to view the past from a different perspective. In order to facilitate the research and to receive guidance regarding the effective introduction a number of interviews were carried out with people in Northern Ireland who had direct experience of working with children, adolescents and adults in the context of mindfulness in various fields. A further set of interviews were carried out via telephone, email or Skype with experts in the field of mindfulness in England, Scotland, France and the United States. Nearly all interviews were recorded. For those which were not recorded, detailed notes were taken. To ensure clarity, the key points and guidance which were gained from the interviews has been recorded below divided under the headings of 'Mindfulness to support peace building', 'Mindfulness to promote wellbeing/mental health' and 'Practical advice for the effective introduction of mindfulness into schools'.

2.1 Mindfulness (in schools) to support peace building

As referred to above, the education system in Northern Ireland is highly segregated. Schools have attempted to take account of the conflict/post conflict situation in a wider community sense through intervention in the process of education (curriculum reforms and increased contact between 2 communities) and the structure of education (equity issues and formation of integrated schools). The Northern Ireland Curriculum underwent intense revision in 2008 adding new segments on Local and Global Citizenship and Mutual Understanding (NIC 2008d). For younger children the curriculum focuses on approaches to conflict, understanding different people and cultures and being members of a community (2008a). For older children, the curriculum focuses more upon citizenship encapsulating four main areas; diversity and inclusion; human rights and social responsibility; equality and social justice; and democracy and active participation (2008c).

This report recommends that mindfulness would complement and allow greater access to this area of the curriculum. In so doing, it could contribute greatly to children and young people's sense of peace within themselves and with other people. It would also nurture qualities such as positive acceptance, selfawareness and awareness of others, respect and tolerance which are necessary on our path of peace building.

Key points from interviews

- Schools could work to be exemplar models of a community within a community demonstrating how mindfulness can nurture and nourish respect, empathy, compassion, non-judgment, self-confidence and acceptance of oneself and others (for the past and the present). (Phap Lai, Wake Up Schools Network, Plum Village, France).
- Mindful listening and mindful speech must be cultivated within the school environment - between staff, staff and students, parents and the wider school community. This enables people to understand the needs of others and to celebrate and express appreciation for others (Phap Lai, Wake Up Schools Network). In this way, teachers will also enjoy a greater sense of support which can contribute to building resilience. If teachers are in harmony with each other, they will provide a powerful model for their students. Linked into the concept of mindful listening and speech is the role of the 'mediative presence'. This allows for deep listening and can be aided by the practice mindfulness meditation and can be invaluable in the context of conflict resolution. (Mary McNulty, Coordinator for Amal, Mediation, N.I.).

- Elements of mindfulness including kindness practice (thinking about oneself and others with compassion) and gratitude practice (being grateful for what we have) can have a powerful effect on the classroom environment which can be brought into the wider community. (Valerie York-Zimmerman, President of Mindful Kids Miami)
- Mindfulness helps with identifying emotions and regulating emotions. It helps us to respond more skilfully to situations or stimuli that we may find displeasing or distressing (Clare Kelly, Mindful Schools). A possible point of research would be to investigate how people respond to a difficult situation (possibly conflict related) with mindfulness practice and without (Siobhan Hugh Jones).
- Mindfulness aids conflict resolution by helping us to regularly tune in to our emotions and pause before responding. Mindfulness can help to temper emotions and in this way acts as a preventative tool (Michael Mc Knight, Principal, Lough View Integrated Primary School).
- Mindfulness helps children to accept themselves, others and situations. (Anna Johnston, SENCO, Lough View Integrated Primary School).
- Coming into the present helps to nurture a sense of peace and relief for children in Northern Ireland many of whom will be carrying the burdens of the past and struggling with concerns about the future. (Michael Mc Knight, Principal, Lough View Integrated Primary School)
- Mindfulness plays an important role in aiding positive, peaceful relations within a school and helping to engender compassion and prevent bullying. (Monique Harte, Occupational Therapy Lecturer, University of Ulster)
- Mindfulness helps us to bring our attention to and notice our thoughts, opinions, mindsets. By so doing, we can bring awareness to our prejudices and concerns, realizing that that is what they are. They do not have to define us. This is more relevant for older children. (Lorraine Murray, Calm Kids, Connected Kids, Founder and Director of Feel Good Therapies)
- Mindfulness ties in with many social and emotional learning programmes. It helps children to understand, accept and appreciate who they are. (Clíodhna Scott-Wills, Senior Development Officer, Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education)

2.2 Mindfulness to promote Mental Health

*'The evidence that the mind and the nervous system are deeply connected is irrefutable...'*¹²

As evidenced above, research suggests that mindfulness practice promotes positive mental health by, for example, reducing anxiety and recurrence of depression. With schools reporting increasing incidences of poor mental health, in addition to increasing number of diagnoses of conditions such as ADD and ADHD, there seems to be an increasingly significant need for support. Such support tends to take the form of interventions and preventative measures.

Mindfulness is a skill which children and young people can learn, with practice. It can be a relief to many teachers and parents to know that children and young people can learn skills that will promote their wellbeing and protect their mental health.

Below are the key points that emerged from the interviews with regard to mindfulness and mental health.

Key points

- Children are very responsive, in a ready place to practice mindfulness. (Diarmuid Moran, Holy Child Primary School, Belfast)

- Developing good habits of mind early on in childhood in terms of building self-awareness and being able to recognize and identify emotions and how to deal with them is very important for future mental health. Mindfulness can help with these skills. The benefits of attention building, emotional regulation and executive function which it is reported are gained from mindfulness practice are linked to enjoying positive mental health. There is a gap in provision, at second level in particular, of education programmes that deal with mental health. Mindfulness could help to bridge that gap though more research is required. 75% of all mental health disorders are diagnosed before the age of 15. (Dr Siobhan Hugh-Jones, Associate Professor, School of Psychology, University of Leeds)
- While mindfulness can have a calming effect on the body and mind, the practice may have quite a different effect, initially, especially with regard to adolescents. While it raises awareness, it may bring to the fore some difficult emotions and experiences. (Lorraine Murray, Calm Kids, Connected Kids, Founder and Director of Feel Good Therapies, Caren McDonald, Mindfulness Educator and Secondary School Teacher, San Francisco)
- Mindfulness helps children to realize that thoughts create a feeling or response in the body. (Lorraine Murray, Calm Kids, Connected Kids, Founder and Director of Feel Good Therapies)
- Mindfulness can be beneficial for extreme anxiety. Mindfulness could be used to de-escalate strong emotions/responses (Dr Siobhan Hugh-Jones, Associate Professor, School of Psychology, University of Leeds)
- Mindfulness can help children in their interactions with others to be more mindful of others' feelings. In this way, it can help with relationship building. Strong peer support is important with regard to positive wellbeing and mental health. (Diarmuid Moran, Holy Child Primary School, Belfast)
- We are learning that the adolescent brain develops quite differently from the childhood brain (Dan Siegel's, Brainstorm), therefore teenagers who are learning mindfulness techniques need to be monitored closely and taught by an experienced teacher. If some are dealing with trauma or some hidden mental illness then there can be some negative side effects to mindfulness meditation. Additionally, teenagers are dealing with a different level of stressors, socially, sexually, familial, (possibly) experimentation of drugs, which impacts their brain. Thus caution is required in this area. (Caren McDonald, Mindfulness Educator and secondary School teacher, San Francisco).
- Once a 'mindful community' has been established within a school, children can experience the place as somewhere where they are secure and safe. (Phap Lai, Wake Up Schools Network) Mindfulness helps children and young people to develop compassion for themselves. (Lorraine Murray, Calm Kids, Connected Kids, Founder and Director of Feel Good Therapies)
- The focus of non-judgment in mindfulness helps to relieve adolescents of the judging which they can feel and which they place on themselves (Lorraine Murray, Calm Kids, Connected Kids, Founder and Director of Feel Good Therapies)
- If children have experience of mindfulness at an early age, they are being offered a lifelong tool to help them to manage emotions and stress (Phap Lai, Wake Up Schools Network, Michael Mc Knight, Principal, Lough View Integrated Primary School)
- Mindfulness, by helping a child or young person to understand themselves, is helping them to understand their limits. (Michael McKnight, Principal, Lough View Integrated Primary School) Mindfulness helps children to accept themselves and accept difference.
- Mindfulness must be practiced regularly to effectively act as a preventative and protective measure regarding mental health (Anna Johnston, SENCO, Lough View Integrated Primary School)
- Children and young people are constantly exposed to many stimuli, partly due to advances in technology, social networking etc. with little time for quiet. Mindfulness provides a

break from the endless ‘doing’ mode and allows time for simply ‘being’. (Valerie York Zimmerman, Mindful Kids Miami, Anna Johnston, SENCO, Lough View Integrated Primary School) It can offer children and young people a mental break. This could help to engender a sense of connection with ourselves that is often felt to be lacking in the modern world. A lack of connection with ourselves and others will inevitably impact upon our wellbeing.

- Mindfulness can be a powerful, stress reducing, tool for children and young people who have special needs and their families. (Monique Harte, University of Ulster)

2.3 Practical advice for the effective introduction of mindfulness into schools

Before mindfulness can be introduced effectively into schools, there is a number of important, practical steps which should be considered and encouraged. Below are the key points of advice that emerged from the interviews.

3.0 Evidence base supporting the introduction of mindfulness practice with children and adolescents

Mindfulness is increasingly recognized as an essential education tool. It develops attention, emotional and cognitive understanding, and bodily awareness and coordination, as well as interpersonal awareness and skills. Most importantly, by diminishing stress, anxiety and hostility, mindfulness enhances our total wellbeing, peace, confidence and joy... Mindfulness is a powerful tool to help children develop the skills to promote peace in themselves and in the world around them.”¹³

Documented research into the effects of mindfulness upon children and young people is still at a relatively infantile stage though the area is growing rapidly. There has been extensive research, however, into the effects of mindfulness practices upon adults and results have been overwhelmingly positive showing that mindfulness can prevent the recurrence of depression, reduce anxiety, help people to manage chronic pain, facilitate improved sleep and self-esteem and promote emotional regulation¹⁴ (Biegel, Brown, Shapiro and Schubert, 2009). Such results suggest that there is ‘significant potential benefits for teachers and pupils’¹⁵ (Meikljohn J et al. 2012)

This section will highlight the evidence and research to date into the effects of mindfulness practice with young people.

Children, it is evidenced, are in a ready position to respond to mindfulness. They are more focused on the present moment¹⁶ (Hooker & Fodor, 2008). Their hearts and minds are more naturally open and have a natural capacity to approach matters with a ‘beginners mind’¹⁷ (Jon Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Partly due to the challenges associated with their developmental stage, the structure of the learning environment and differing external and internal pressures which they experience, the approach to introducing mindfulness to children and adolescents and young people must differ.

Given the proportion of time which children and young people spend in school, it seems the logical place to introduce the practice. (This paper is also open to the potential to disseminate the practice to parents and carers of children. Positive evidence of the benefits

13 Dharmacharya Shantum Seth, Foreward, Planting Seeds. Berkley: Parallax Press, 2011. 11-12.

14 Biegel, G.M., Brown, K. W., Shapiro, S. L., & Schubert, C. (2009). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for the treatment of adolescent psychiatric outpatients: A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Clinical and consulting Psychology*, 77, 855-866.

15 Meikljohn J., Phillips, C., Freedman, L., Griffin, M.L., Biegel, G.M., Roach, A., (2012) Integrating mindfulness training into k-12 Education: Fostering the Resilience of Teachers and Students. *Mindfulness*, 3, 291-307

16 Hooker, K. E. & Fodor, I. E. (2008). Teaching mindfulness to children. *Gestalt Review*, 12(1), 75-91

17 Kabat-Zinn, J., (1990) Full Catastrophe Living, Using the Wisdom of your Body and mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness. Delta

can be found in Singh et al., 2009¹⁸.) The hope is that the practice will act as a lifelong tool to help children and young people manage stress, build resilience, regulate their emotions and enjoy positive relationships with others from their own and other communities.

Central to this paper, akin to the approach of Kabat-Zinn with regard to his clients (Kabat-Zinn et al., 1992¹⁹) is the belief that mindfulness practice will provide an empowering tool for children and adolescents to play an active role (as far as possible) in their present and future life.

The following research reports on the effects of mindfulness programmes that have been researched with primary and secondary children in both school and clinical settings. Generally, programmes draw largely on the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) or Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) approaches and refer to programmes delivered in an educational or clinical setting. The studies range from evaluations of universal programmes, for example .b to small scale interventions. Studies have been separated based on age and have been chosen based on relevance to introducing mindfulness to the education system.

3.1 Mindfulness defined

Mindfulness has been most commonly defined in literature as ‘paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally’²⁰ (Kabat-Zinn, 1994) Adding to this Langer and Moldoveanu (2000)²¹ proffer that by seeing things in new ways we stay in the present moment. Katherine Weare of Exeter University explains that learning to be mindful enables us to ‘be aware and pay close attention to inner states such as thoughts, emotions and physical sensations, as well as to what is happening to the outside’²². A common thread among all of these definitions is the focus upon attention. What is actually happening right now? By staying with the present moment, we reduce the amount of time that we spend ruminating about the past or worrying about the future. Mindfulness encourages us to accept experiences as they unfold, viewing them with kindness and curiosity in a non-judgmental way. The practice of mindfulness, it is reported, lessens reactivity and impulsiveness and generally helps to foster a greater sense of ‘mental stability, calm, acceptance and appreciation for what is.’²³ At root, mindfulness cultivates a healthy capacity to separate out thoughts and emotions from the construction of our identity, and enables a spirit of on-going life inquiry.

It must be emphasized that a focus on the present moment does not denigrate the importance of the past or the future but rather puts us in a different relationship to them. Zajonc elucidates this clearly through his definition of contemplative practice which draws greatly upon mindfulness. Contemplative practice, he suggests, means ‘a special form of recollection of the past, mindfulness for the present, and envisioning of the future in a manner that is enlivening, clear and insightful’²⁴ (Zajonc, 2009). Within the context of post conflict Northern Ireland 2014, this definition seems particularly relevant. Mindfulness, as examined and presented in this paper refers solely to the secular practice which has evolved in the West over the past four decades since Jon Kabat-Zinn first developed the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction programme at the Medical Centre at the University of

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- 18 Singh, N. N., Singh, A. N., Lancioni, G. E., Singh, J., Winton, A.S.w. & Adkins, A.d. (2009). Mindfulness training for parents and their children with ADHD increases children’s compliance, *Journal of Child and Family Studies* (published online 26/03/09)
- 19 Kabat-Zinn, J., Massion, A. O., Kristeller, J., Peterson, L. G., Fletcher, K., Pbert, L., et al. (1992). Effectiveness of a meditation-based stress reduction programme in the treatment of anxiety disorders. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 149, 936-943
- 20 Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York: Hyperion. 4
- 21 Langer, E. J., & Moldoveanu, M. (2000). The construct of mindfulness. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56, 1-9
- 22 Weare, K., (2013) Developing mindfulness with children and young people: a review of the evidence and policy context. *Journal of Children’s Services*, 8(2), 141-153
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Zajonc, A., (2009). *Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love*. Lindisfarne Books. 20
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Massachusetts. While key features of mindfulness can be identified, for example, a focus on the breath, mindful movement, paying attention to our mind and body, becoming aware of one's experience, it must be recognized that mindfulness can ultimately be brought to all activities. Our goal indeed with introducing the practice would be to introduce people to the possibility of leading more mindful lives, to reach a mindful way of being (Kabat-Zinn). Through so doing, a person is better equipped to make decisions and respond more skilfully to the events of everyday living as they unfold.

3.2 Local Research and Experience

Local research into the effects of school based mindfulness practices is also growing and showing positive results. A Masters level study, (carried out by Emmet Kinsella and supervised by Queens University Belfast and the Children's Interdisciplinary Schools Team, BELB) was carried out in a year 3 class in Lough View Integrated Primary School, Belfast in 2014. The study evaluated an 8 week, MBSR based, child friendly programme. Reports from the children, class teacher, school SENCO and parents were considered. Results showed 'statistically significant improvements on ratings of psychological wellbeing and emotional regulatory ability' among the children who partook in the programme.

3.3 Post primary age interventions

Beauchemin et al. (2008)²⁵ reported on 32 adolescents with learning difficulties attending a private residential school. Students experienced led mindfulness meditation sessions for 5-10 minutes at the start of each class, 5 days a week for 5 weeks. The students reported reduced anxiety and teachers reported improvements in students' social skills, problem behaviors and academics.

Zylowska et al. (2008)²⁶ researched the effects of mindfulness meditation on symptoms of ADHD with 30 participants (adults and adolescents). After the study, participants reported improvements in ADHD symptoms, anxiety, depressive symptoms and working memory. Bogels et al. (2008)²⁷ carried out a study involving 14 adolescents (aged 11-18) with ADHD, ADD or ASD partaking in an 8 week MBCT programme. The participants and their parents reported improvements in attention, behaviours, subjective happiness and mindful awareness.

Biegel et al. (2009)²⁸ studied the effects of a modified MBSR programme delivered to 102 4-18 year olds with various diagnoses. Those who participated in the programme reported significantly reduced symptoms of anxiety, depression and somatic distress, increased self-esteem and sleep functioning. A three month follow up assessment was carried out which showed that those who continued to practice showed improved clinicians' ratings of anxiety and depression.

Broderick and Metz (2009)²⁹ evaluated the universal 'Learning to Breathe' curriculum using a group of 137 girls aged 17-19 at an independent girls school who participated in the six session programme. Participants reported a reduction in negative affect, tiredness, aches

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- 25 Beauchemin, J., Hutchins, t.l., & Patterson, F. (2008). Mindfulness meditation may lessen anxiety, promote social skills, and improve academic performance among adolescents with learning disabilities. *Complementary Health Practice Review*, 13, 34-45.
- 26 Zylowska, L., Ackerman, D. L., Yang, M. H., Futrell, J. L., Horton, N. L., Hale, S. T., et al. (2008). Mindfulness meditation training with adults and adolescents with ADHD. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 11, 737-746.
- 27 Bogels, S., Hoogstad, B., van Dun, L., De Shutter, S., & Restifo, K. (2008). Mindfulness training for adolescents with externalizing disorders and their parents. *Behavioral and Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 36, 193-209.
- 28 Biegel, G., Brown, K., Shapiro, S., & Schubert, C. (2009). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for the treatment of adolescent psychiatric outpatients: A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Consulting and clinical Psychology*, 77(5), 855-866.
- 29 Broderick, P. C., & Metz, S. (2009). Learning to BREATHE: A pilot trial of a mindfulness curriculum for adolescents, *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 2, 35-46.
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and pains and an increase in emotional regulation, feelings of calmness, relaxation and self-acceptance.

Kuyken et al. (2014)³⁰ have carried out an evaluation of the nine-week UK based Mindfulness in Schools Project 'b'. The non-randomized control trial included over 500 students in 9 schools and was carried out by University of Exeter. After the programme, the participants reported fewer depressive symptoms, less stress and higher rates of wellbeing. A greater commitment to practice outside of the dedicated sessions was associated with higher rates of wellbeing.

Sibinga et al. (2011)³¹ evaluated an 8 week MBSR programme for 33 urban youth aged 13-21 with a range of medical and psychological issues. Those participating in the MBSR programme reported reduced levels of emotional discomfort and hostility, and perceived improvements in school achievement, health, relationship and levels of stress.

Twemlow, Sacco and Fonagy (2008)³² researched potential to use mind body techniques to reduce aggression - research suggests that physical movement is a vital element to reaching youth who are reluctant to engage with talk therapy.

Joyce et al (2010)³³ studied behavior problems and depression with a group of 10-13 year old children participating in a 10 week mindfulness programme which was delivered by teachers. The participants reported a significant reduction in behavior problems and depression after the programme particularly with pupils who had significantly high levels of behavioral problems and depression before the intervention.

The evidence above all supports the proposition that bringing mindfulness into schools is likely to bring significant benefits for the pupils especially with regard to key areas such as attention, depression, anxiety, stress, wellbeing, emotional regulation, behavioral regulation, self-esteem and executive function. A natural inference to draw from the evidence is that if stress, anxiety and depression decrease through mindfulness practice while wellbeing, attention and emotional regulation increase, it is likely that academic performance will also improve. Underdeveloped attention skills, Kaiser Greenland argues, can pose a considerable impediment to success in the school system³⁴. The research also underlines the importance of practice showing that the more consistent and regular the practice, the greater the benefits accrued.

3.4 Mindfulness and teacher training

As mentioned in the introduction, this paper posits that before children experience mindfulness, it is important that teachers develop their own practice. This proposition is based on two main tenets.

Firstly, teaching is a 'high stress', 'high burnout rate' profession. In the UK, 50% of teachers leave the profession before they have completed their first five years. Stress is cited as one of the main contributory factors. There is clearly a need, therefore, to provide a means to support teachers in the profession, to build resilience. Linda Laniteri who has been responsible for writing and delivering programmes for teachers and children who suffered severe trauma following 9/11 bombings in New York argues that Mindfulness can nurture the

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- 30 Kuyken, W., Weare, K., Ukoumunne, O.C., Lewis, R., Motton, N., Burnett, R., Cullen, C., Hennelly, S., and Huppert, F. (2013). Effectiveness of the .b Mindfulness in Schools Programme: A Non-randomized Controlled feasibility Study. *British Journal of Psychiatry*
- 31 Sibinga, E., Kerrigan, D., Stewart, M., Johnson, K., Magyari, T., & Ellen, J. (2011). Mindfulness instruction for urban youth. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 17, 1-6.
- 32 Twemlow, S.W., Sacco, F.C., & Fonagy, P. (2008). Embodying the mind: Movement as a vehicle for destructive aggression. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 62(1), 1-33.
- 33 Joyce, A., Eddy-Leal, J., Zazryn, T., Hamilton, A., and Hassed, C.. (2010). Exploring a mindfulness meditation program on the mental health of upper primary children: A pilot study. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 3, 17-17
- 34 Kaiser-Greenland, S., (1990) *The Mindful Child*, New York: Free Press. 88.
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self and other and foster appreciation among staff³⁵. Improved peer support is therefore a factor that would help to support teachers' resilience.

A number of specific programmes have been established, for example, The Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education Programme (CARE) which aims to support teachers with regard to their own wellbeing, their ability to support the emotional wellbeing, behavior and learning of their students, improve their classroom environment and promote positive pro-social behavior with their students. The programme encourages teachers to participate in mindfulness practices to help them to recognize their own emotions and those of others, recognize and manage their own stress and nurture the skills of mindful listening to enable them to increase their understanding and empathy of their students and colleagues (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009³⁶). Following this programme, teachers have reported feeling less stressed, more able to manage their classrooms and more able to build positive relationships with their students.

Secondly, it has been shown that courses that have been delivered by teachers who are experienced mindfulness practitioners have been more effective. This stems from the fact that teachers will be more able to embody and model the qualities of compassion, open mindedness, empathy, patience, skills of focus and attention which regular mindfulness encourages³⁷. They will also be more experienced with regard to the benefits and challenges which one can experience with mindfulness practice. In line with the most recent All-Party Parliamentary Group on Wellbeing Economics 2014³⁸, this report recommends that mindfulness practice and training opportunities should be made available to teachers both trained and those completing their initial teacher training programme.

3.5 Primary School age interventions

Napoli, Krech and Holley (2005)³⁹ reported on a 24 week programme (12 sessions of 45mins each) with 194 children aged 5-8 from nine classes in two schools. The programme included sitting, movement and body scan exercises and relaxation practices. The results showed reductions in self-rated test anxiety and improvements in teacher-rated attention, social skills and selective attention.

Wall (2005)⁴⁰ used a five-week modified MBSR programme in addition with Tai Chi with 11 school children aged 11-15. The children did not have any reported behavioral difficulties but reported feeling an increased sense of calm and wellbeing. They also reported feeling less reactive and experiencing improved sleep.

Semple et al. (2009)⁴¹ carried out a 12-week programme using MBCT-C with 25 children aged 9-11 who had been assigned to a remedial unit for reading. When compared to the control group, participants experienced a significant reduction in attention difficulties. A reduction in anxiety was also observed in children who had clinically raised anxiety at the time of the programme.

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- 35 Lantieri, L., (2012), *Cultivating the Social, Emotional and Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*, FAROS Sant Joan de Deu Foundation, Spain
 - 36 Jennings, P. A. & Greenberg, M. T. (2009) The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79, 491-525
 - 37 Weare, K., (2013) Developing mindfulness with children and young people: a review of the evidence and policy context. *Journal of Children's Services*, 8(2), 141-153
 - 38 <http://parliamentarywellbeinggroup.org.uk>
 - 39 Napoli, M., Krech, P.R., & Holley, L. C. (2005). Mindfulness training for elementary school students: The attention academy. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 21, 99-125.
 - 40 Wall, R. B. (2005). Tai chi and mindfulness-based stress reduction in a Boston middle school. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 19, 230-237
 - 41 Semple, R. J., Rosa, D., & Miller, L. F. (2009). A randomized trial of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for children: Promoting mindful attention to enhance social-emotional resiliency in children. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*
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Salzman and Goldin (2008)⁴² reported upon an 8 week 'child-friendly' MBSR programme for 31 children aged 9 to 11. The programme was written for children and parents and the teachers were trained mindfulness instructors. The participants reported improved attention, emotional reactivity and some areas of meta-cognition. Schonert-Reichl and Lawlor (2010)⁴³ undertook a study of 12 elementary classrooms in which six were randomized to receive the Mindfulness Education (ME)(now MindUP) programme and six to wait list control. Teachers delivered the programme of ten lessons with mindfulness sessions three times a day. Students participating in the programme reported increased optimism and teachers reported improvements in behavior and social and emotional competence and a decrease in aggression.

Singh et al. (2007)⁴⁴ used 'Meditation on the Soles of the Feet' programme with seventh grade boys who displayed aggressive behavior. The study suggested a reduction in aggressive behavior and participants reported feeling more relaxed, having increased impulse control, better focus and improved sleep. The effects were felt for over one year.

Flook et al. (2010)⁴⁵ carried out an 8 week programme of mindful awareness practices (Susan Kaiser-greenland's 'Inner Kids' programme) with 7-9 year old children with 64 children divided between those experiencing the mindful practices and the control group. Those who participated in the programme who had lower pre course self-regulation exhibited significantly improved overall behavioral regulation, meta-cognition and executive function.

The MBSR programme for adults has been shown to reduce anxiety, manage and prevent recurrence of depression and facilitate improved sleep and selfesteem (Biegel, Brown, Shapiro and Schubert, 2009⁴⁶). The MBSR programme has been adapted for use with children (Saltzman & Goldin, 2008⁴⁷). Activities have been shortened and are presented in a more child friendly. Research on the programme suggests that children participating in the programme show improvements in attention, self-regulation, social competence and general wellbeing (Saltzman and Goldin, 2008).

3.6 Local Research and Experience

Local research into the effects of school based mindfulness practices is also growing and showing positive results. A Masters level study, (carried out by Emmet Kinsella and supervised by Queens University Belfast and the Children's Interdisciplinary Schools Team, BELB) was carried out in a year 3 class in Lough View Integrated Primary School, Belfast in 2014. The study evaluated an 8 week, MBSR based, child friendly programme. Reports from the children, class teacher, school SENCO and parents were considered. Results showed 'statistically significant improvements on ratings of psychological wellbeing and emotional regulatory ability' among the children who partook in the programme.

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- 42 Saltzman, A., & Goldin, P (2008). Mindfulness based stress reduction for school-age children. In S.C. Hayes & L. A. Greco (Eds.), *Acceptance and mindfulness interventions for children, adolescents and families* (pp. 139-161). Oakland: Context Press/New Harbinger
- 43 Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Lawlor, M. S. (2010). The effects of a mindfulness-based education programme on pre- and early adolescents' wellbeing and social and emotional competence. *Mindfulness*, 1, 137-151
- 44 Singh, N., Lancioni, G., Joy, S., Winton, A., Sabaawi, M. Wahler, R., & Singh, J. (2007). Adolescents with conduct disorders can be mindful of their aggressive behavior. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 15(1), 56-63.
- 45 Flook, L., Smalley, S. L., Kitil, J., Galla, B.M., Kaiser-Greenland, S., Locke, J., et al. (2010) Effects of mindful awareness practices on executive functions in elementary school children. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 26(1), 70-95
- 46 Biegel, G. M., Brown, K. W., Shapiro, S. L., & Schubert, C. (2009). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for the treatment of adolescent psychiatric outpatients: A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Clinical and Consulting Psychiatry*, 77, 855-866
- 47 Saltzman, A., & Goldin, P (2008). Mindfulness based stress reduction for school-age children. In S.C. Hayes & L.A. Greco (Eds.), *Acceptance and mindfulness interventions for children adolescents and families* (pp. 139-161) Oakland: Context Press/New Harbinger.
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3.7 Post primary age interventions

Beauchemin et al. (2008)⁴⁸ reported on 32 adolescents with learning difficulties attending a private residential school. Students experienced led mindfulness meditation sessions for 5-10 minutes at the start of each class, 5 days a week for 5 weeks. The students reported reduced anxiety and teachers reported improvements in students' social skills, problem behaviors' and academics.

Zylowska et al. (2008)⁴⁹ researched the effects of mindfulness meditation on symptoms of ADHD with 30 participants (adults and adolescents). After the study, participants reported improvements in ADHD symptoms, anxiety, depressive symptoms and working memory. Bogels et al. (2008)⁵⁰ carried out a study involving 14 adolescents (aged 11-18) with ADHD, ADD or ASD partaking in an 8 week MBCT programme. The participants and their parents reported improvements in attention, behaviors', subjective happiness and mindful awareness.

Biegel et al. (2009)⁵¹ studied the effects of a modified MBSR programme delivered to 102 4-18 year olds with various diagnoses. Those who participated in the programme reported significantly reduced symptoms of anxiety, depression and somatic distress, increased self-esteem and sleep functioning. A three month follow up assessment was carried out which showed that those who continued to practice showed improved clinicians' ratings of anxiety and depression.

Broderick and Metz (2009)⁵² evaluated the universal 'Learning to Breathe' curriculum using a group of 137 girls aged 17-19 at an independent girls school who participated in the six session programme. Participants reported a reduction in negative affect, tiredness, aches and pains and an increase in emotional regulation, feelings of calmness, relaxation and self-acceptance.

Kuyken et al. (2014)⁵³ have carried out an evaluation of the nine-week UK based Mindfulness in Schools Project 'b'. The non-randomized control trial included over 500 students in 9 schools and was carried out by University of Exeter. After the programme, the participants reported fewer depressive symptoms, less stress and higher rates of wellbeing. A greater commitment to practice outside of the dedicated sessions was associated with higher rates of wellbeing.

Sibinga et al. (2011)⁵⁴ evaluated an 8 week MBSR programme for 33 urban youth aged 13-21 with a range of medical and psychological issues. Those participating in the MBSR programme reported reduced levels of emotional discomfort and hostility, and perceived improvements in school achievement, health, relationship and levels of stress.

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- 48 Beauchemin, J., Hutchins, t.I., & Patterson, F. (2008). Mindfulness meditation may lessen anxiety, promote social skills, and improve academic performance among adolescents with learning disabilities. *Complementary Health Practice Review*, 13, 34-45.
- 49 Zylowska, L., Ackerman, D. L., Yang, M. H., Futrell, J. L., Horton, N. L., Hale, S. T., et al. (2008). Mindfulness meditation training with adults and adolescents with ADHD. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 11, 737-746.
- 50 Bogels, S., Hoogstad, B., van Dun, L., De Shutter, S., & Restifo, K. (2008). Mindfulness training for adolescents with externalizing disorders and their parents. *Behavioral and Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 36, 193-209.
- 51 Biegel, G., Brown, K., Shapiro, S., & Schubert, C. (2009). Mindfulness-based stress reduction for the treatment of adolescent psychiatric outpatients: A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Consulting and clinical Psychology*, 77(5), 855-866.
- 52 Broderick, P. C., & Metz, S. (2009). Learning to BREATHE: A pilot trial of a mindfulness curriculum for adolescents, *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 2, 35-46.
- 53 Kuyken, W., Weare, K., Ukoumunne, O.C., Lewis, R., Motton, N., Burnett, R., Cullen, C., Hennelly, S., and Huppert, F. (2013). Effectiveness of the .b Mindfulness in Schools Programme: A Non-randomized Controlled feasibility Study. *British Journal of Psychiatry*
- 54 Sibinga, E., Kerrigan, D., Stewart, M., Johnson, K., Magyari, T., & Ellen, J. (2011). Mindfulness instruction for urban youth. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, 17, 1-6.
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As mentioned in the introduction, this paper posits that before children experience mindfulness, it is important that teachers develop their own practice. This proposition is based on two main tenets.

Firstly, teaching is a 'high stress', 'high burnout rate' profession. In the UK, 50% of teachers leave the profession before they have completed their first five years. Stress is cited as one of the main contributory factors. There is clearly a need, therefore, to provide a means to support teachers in the profession, to build resilience. Linda Laniteri who has been responsible for writing and delivering programmes for teachers and children who suffered severe trauma following 9/11 bombings in New York argues that Mindfulness can nurture the self and other and foster appreciation among staff⁵⁸. Improved peer support is therefore a factor that would help to support teachers' resilience.

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55 Twemlow, S.W., Sacco, F.C., & Fonagy, P. (2008). Embodying the mind: Movement as a vehicle for destructive aggression. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 62(1), 1-33.

56 Joyce, A., Etty-Leal, J., Zazryn, T., Hamilton, A., and Hassed, C.. (2010). Exploring a mindfulness meditation program on the mental health of upper primary children: A pilot study. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 3, 17-17

57 Kaiser-Greenland, S., (1990) *The Mindful Child*, New York: Free Press. 88.

58 Lantieri, L., (2012), *Cultivating the Social, Emotional and Inner Lives of Children and Teachers*, FAROS Sant Joan de Deu Foundation, Spain

59 Jennings, P. A. & Greenberg, M. T. (2009) The prosocial class room: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79, 491-525

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60 Weare, K., (2013) Developing mindfulness with children and young people: a review of the evidence and policy context. *Journal of Children's Services*, 8(2), 141-153

61 <http://parliamentarywellbeinggroup.org.uk>

Parenting NI 1



ParentingNI

Report for Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

October 2014

keeping
parents at
the heart of
what we do...



parentingni.org

42 Dublin Road . Belfast . BT2 7HN
028 9031 0891

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Executive Summary

Parenting NI undertook a consultation in September 2014 to gather a snapshot of views and opinions from parents across Northern Ireland in relation to Shared and Integrated Education. The consultation was formatted (based on the Terms of Reference of the Shared Education Inquiry) into an online survey and ran from the 20th September through to the 10th October. It was distributed via our Parenting Forum network (of which there are over 1800 individual parents and organizations involved) as well as through social media. In total, 209 parents from across Northern Ireland completed the survey with many more parents completing some of the questions.

Key Findings:

Definition of Shared and Integrated Education

Parents understood Shared Education to primarily mean 'bringing Protestant and Catholic pupils together'. Shared Education was seen as being beneficial in helping to share resources such as teachers, facilities, and providing a wider choice of subjects studied at Post primary level. Building relationships and promoting tolerance and respect while still retaining pupils own identity and culture were the main views held by parents. Providing a clear definition on Shared Education is essential to parents as there was confusion across the board in relation to the difference between Shared and Integrated Education.

Parents understood Integrated Education to mean educating children together regardless of ability, religious identity, and social background. Parents commented that Integrated Education promotes tolerance, accepts differences, builds relationships between pupils and is welcoming of everyone. Integrated Education was generally defined as children integrating daily in a school environment on a full-time basis.

Even though the survey was distributed to a broad range of parents, 65% of parents responding to the survey had a child/children currently attending an Integrated School. 61% of parents stated that they would consider sending their child/children to an Integrated School but factors affecting parents' decisions included locality of school, reputation of local school and how religion is viewed/taught at the school.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Shared Education

The advantages of Shared Education for parents included; more opportunities to study wider range of subjects that are not always available in every school especially at GCSE and A level (i.e. that pupils would be able to attend classes in their partner school in that subject). Some parents identified that this is currently happening in many schools including Ballycastle High and Cross and Passion in Ballycastle.

Overall most parents view 'Shared Education' as a step in the right direction in a 'shared future' for NI and that it encourages communities to work together where there may previously have been no opportunities for contact.

The disadvantages of Shared Education included, religious differences not being dealt with, practical timetabling for pupils, transport costs and the continued doubling of resources. Some parents commented that it was a small step towards the Integrating Education completely.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrated Education

Overall, parents agreed that Integrated Education breaks down barriers giving pupils opportunities to share their experiences of religion, teaches tolerance, mutual respect, encourages acceptance of difference, and broadens perspectives. Parents responded that, for many of them, Integrated Education is the future for NI preparing pupils to mix freely with all communities which they will eventually encounter in the workplace. Disadvantages included the locality and limited spaces available in

Integrated Schools; some parents responded that it would mean extra journey time. Parents were concerned about the percentages of pupils from different communities in Integrated Schools such as in some areas perhaps 20% from Protestant background and 80% Catholic. This, parents felt, might lead to one community being a minority and parents are concerned that this may lead onto pupils feeling excluded or being bullied.

Participation in Cross Community Programmes

68% of parents said that their child/children had participated in cross community programmes either in school or in the local community. Activities included; sport, The Arts, visits to other schools both in Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland, attending cultural events, sharing subject classes and participating in programmes provided by organisations who work in Community Relations such as the Corrymeela Community and the Speedwell Trust.

Alternative approaches to integrate children

Parents suggested other ways for children to be integrated in NI which included living in shared housing developments. Parents thought this would mean that children are building relationships across communities daily. Other approaches included; running joint after school clubs for schools in the same locality, joint summer schemes, cultural community events and communities working closely together, one parent provided an example in their community of a single identity project which is ongoing ahead of a joint programme with a neighbouring estate.

Ways forward to improve Shared/Integrated Education

Ensuring that all education in schools is of the highest quality and appropriate to the needs of each child was highlighted by parents as an issue within Shared/Integrated Education. Parents suggested that all teacher training degrees currently provided by St.Mary's, Stranmillis, Queens and University of Ulster, should be joint in the one campuses. Some parents highlighted that if we are segregating our teacher training then it does little to support the integration of our pupils. Other parents also

commented that initial teacher training and professional development training should have more of a focus on the benefits of Shared and Integrated Education. Parents also felt that more information or training to parents around the benefits and issues in Shared/Integrated Education needs to be provided.

Parents felt that providing more funding to schools that are currently Integrated, or willing to become Integrated, should be made available as well as more places for pupils at those schools. One parent commented that locality planning of schools by the Education Boards should be 'more strategic' in increasing parental choice about the best school to send their children to in the area. Parents also expressed the need for more places within existing Integrated schools and the need for more Integrated Schools as these were not always available to parents in their area.

Parenting NI

Parenting NI is the lead voluntary organisation, which focuses on supporting parents. We work with parents to improve outcomes for children and young people and to influence policy and practice on parenting. Our work is based on the principle that by empowering and working with parents, outcomes for children are improved. There are four key areas of Parenting NI's work:

- ▶ **Parents Helpline** - support & guidance to parents on parenting issues through a free-phone helpline
- ▶ **Parents Counselling** – face-to-face counselling for parents on parenting issues
- ▶ **Parenting Forum** - listens to needs of parents & works towards ensuring that parents views inform policy, practice & public opinion
- ▶ **Parenting Programmes** - to groups of parents & workshops for practitioners on a range of topics

Parenting NI have been advocating on behalf of parents since 1979, and are keen to ensure that the views of parents are taken seriously in the planning and delivery of all services for children in Northern Ireland.

Seeking parental feedback is now an integral part of the work of the Parenting Forum within Parenting NI, and as such the organisation has developed an effective methodology to carry out such consultations. It is important that parents are confident that the consultation process is worthwhile and that they feel comfortable sharing their views.

Parents were grateful for the opportunity to be involved in this consultation survey and they look forward to hearing the Outcomes of the Committee's Inquiry.

Background to the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

The Committee for Education in NI are holding an Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education here. The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry were set out for organisations to respond to. Parenting NI has previously been involved in a consultation for the Shared Education Advisory Group for Queens University, Belfast in 2012 on Proposals for Shared Education in Northern Ireland and we felt we would like to gain more up-to-date information from parents in relation to their views on Shared and Integrated Education to help inform the Inquiry's work.

Methodology

Development of the Consultation Tool

Aiming to gain as many responses from parents as possible, we developed an online survey for parents using Question Pro consultation tool. Online surveys offer a number of advantages including convenience for parents who can respond in their own time, with easy access through computer or mobile phone, assurance of anonymity and potential to complete the survey in much less time than would be required to participate via a focus group. The survey questions were based on the Committee for Education's Terms of Reference, which were published as part of the Inquiry. The survey was initiated on 30th September 2014 and closed on 10th October 2014. Publicity to promote the survey was generated via Parenting NI using Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter as well as through professional networks, the Parents Forum database and e-brief.

Profile of Focus Group Participants

In total 1297 parents viewed the survey. 502 parents started the survey and 209 completed it.

Participants consisted of 160 females and 34 males; 143 were married or in a civil partnership; 14 were cohabiting or living with their partners; 16 were single; 21 parents are divorced or separated and 1 parent was widowed. 22 parents were in the 18-34 age range; 103 between 35-44; 63 between 45-54 and 10 parents were 55 plus. 15 parents had a disability or additional needs and 24 participants had children with a disability. 15 participants were from ethnic minority/migrant communities including black African; Polish, Anglo Asian, and Metis. 92 participants brought up as Catholic responded, 71 Protestants, 6 other Christian, 6 preferred not to say what religion they were brought up in or currently practice and 1 participant stated 'other religion'. Between them, participants had a total of 189 children. In total 59 lived in urban areas; 59 suburban areas and 72 lived in rural areas. Participants came from the following counties in Northern Ireland, 50 in Co. Antrim, 29 in Co. Armagh, 49 from Co. Derry-Londonderry, 35 in Co. Down, 6 in Co. Fermanagh and 26 in Co. Tyrone. 2 participants were not currently living in Northern Ireland but had lived here previously.

Some parents did not answer all of these questions therefore some figures are not truly reflective of the parents who responded.

The following table gives a breakdown of these statistics:

Figure 1: Parent Profile Data:

Demographic details	Total
Male	34
Female	160
18-34 years old	22
35-44 years old	103
45-54 years old	63
55 years old and over	10
Married/Partner	143
Co-habiting	14
Single	16
Separated/divorced	21
Other – including widowed	1
Ethnic minority or migrant?	
Yes	15
No	177
Disabled or additional needs?	
Yes	
No	11
	181

Total number children?	189
Rural	72
Urban	59
Suburban	59
County currently lived in:	
Antrim	50
Armagh	20
Derry-Londonderry	49
Down	35
Fermanagh	6
Tyrone	26
Not live in NI	2
Religion	
Catholic	92
Protestant	71
Other Christian	6
None	15
Prefer not to say	6
Other	1



Key Findings

The Education Committee in their undertaking of an Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education state in their Terms of Reference that they will:

‘Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases-including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education’

Shared Education

Parents were asked to respond to the above by answering the following questions.

In your own words, what do you think is meant by the term “Shared Education”?

The responses to this question were varied and very positive. In order to present the information concisely, the responses have been grouped.

Protestants and Catholics being educated together

The majority of participants understood the term to mean Protestants and Catholics being educated together since the majority of schools in Northern Ireland are separated.

Sharing Resources

Many parents commented that Shared Education was about Schools sharing facilities, subjects, activities, and teachers but still maintaining their own culture, identity and ethos while being respectful to others. Maintaining pupils’ or schools’ own culture and identity was seen as being of great importance to parents while at the same time respecting others cultures. One parent said they thought shared education should mean, *‘developing specific subject excellence in particular schools and having*



*pupils/teachers move between the two schools. This will ensure children get the highest standard of teaching and **save schools money** by reducing the need for teaching and resources for some subjects.'*

Equality and Inclusion

Other parents understand the term to be broader than inclusion of Protestants and Catholics. For those parents, Shared Education is about equal access for all pupils, providing equal opportunities regardless of social status, religion, ability, nationalities in order to provide good quality education. There was a strong feeling from parents that equal access for all abilities should be available with more training provided for teachers/staff for pupils of severe special needs or other learning difficulties so that teachers would be better equipped to teach a range of abilities and needs.

Attitudes and Teaching on Respect and Tolerance

Parents thought that Shared Education should be provided under one roof, in the same school, where there is an ethos of respecting difference and being tolerant of differences. One parent commented, 'it should be about rethinking the curriculum in terms of history, culture and language and how these are portrayed. Pupils should have the opportunity to develop skills to accept difference without being threatened by them'.

Religious Education

A few parents felt that for Shared Education to be successful it should be free from religion with no Religious Education (RE) being taught in class or assembly. Other parents felt that they would like R.E. in shared schools to include more of an element or focus on other faiths/ as opposed to the current curriculum which is based predominantly Christianity. Some Parents want their children to learn about people from other faiths especially they said 'since Northern Ireland has people living here of all



religions. Some parents stated that they would like to see less control of schools by the Churches

Whole Community Approach

Some parents responded that their understanding of Shared Education has shifted towards it being the responsibility of the whole community rather than only teaching staff and parents. One parent said, “*Sharing education is where all stakeholders have a role to play in education. Parents, pupils, communities, and schools are working together for the best possible education for all pupils.*”

No definition

For 10 parents they were unsure of what the term “Shared Education” meant, commenting that they did not know that there was any difference between Shared and Integrated. They felt the term was ‘too vague’ and parents would have found it useful for a definition to be provided.

General Comments

One parent said, “Shared Education is a good thing but nothing like enough. It’s a step up from the old EMU programmes schools were involved in but it does not go as far as full integration which is a pity.” Another parent commented, ‘it’s just a money saving initiative to reduce numbers of schools where there are falling numbers of pupils and in an environment where budgets are being reduced.’ One parent said they hadn’t heard the term ‘shared’ formally but felt that it was a way of avoiding or dealing properly with integrated education.



Integrated Education

Parents were then asked to state in their own words, **‘what do you think is meant by the term “Integrated Education”?’**

Overall parents seemed to have a clearer understanding of what the term Integrated Education meant to them and were positive in their responses.

Inclusion of all

Participants responded that they felt Integrated Education was more than just Protestant and Catholic pupils being educated together in the same facility but included pupils from different religions with a common ethos.

Many parents stated that integrated Education to them means being inclusive of all pupils regardless of age, disability, race, belief or any other measurable demographic. One parent commented “all pupils should have the opportunity to fully embrace their own education with any and all barriers seen as obstacles to be overcome rather than blocks”.

Physical Environment

Another stated that “Integration means one school, one entrance, one site, one uniform, one ethos. Choosing to teach children that we are all different but that we are all the same underneath. Choosing not to perpetrate the ‘them and us’ mentality that exists in Northern Ireland. It is a “grassroots response to challenging the divided and segregated nature of our education system.”

Some parents stated that integration is welcoming of all peoples in a shared facility, accepting of differences with tolerance being promoted rather than as one parent commented ‘simply tipping hats to sharing resources’. Parents talked about the ‘diversity’ of pupils from different religions, ethnic groups being an important part of



Integration, which can break down barriers. A shared vision and purpose in Integrated Education was highlighted as essential to living a shared future in Northern Ireland.

A few parents expressed their concerns that the perception of Integrated Education to them “seems like a deliberate attempt of a 45% representation of pupils from the Protestant and 45% from the Catholic Community with 10% other religions” represented rather than a desire for integrating pupils because of wanting them to build relationships. The mix of pupils from different traditions and religious backgrounds they felt, “is not always reflected depending on where the Integrated School is situated for example in a predominantly Protestant area where one community can become the minority or majority group.”

Curriculum and Teaching

The teaching of RE featured strongly in parents’ views on Integrated Education with some parents stating that to be an inclusive school, the teaching of Religion either needs to focus on all religions or not be taught at all. Most parents preferring that “it should be a personal and individual choice catered for outside of school.”

Uptake on Integrated Education

We asked parents whether they had children already attending Integrated Schools in order to understand where they were coming from and get an idea on general uptake. Although this online survey was sent to a wide variety of parents, schools and community/voluntary organizations who work with parents, 65% of parents who responded currently had a child attending an Integrated School.



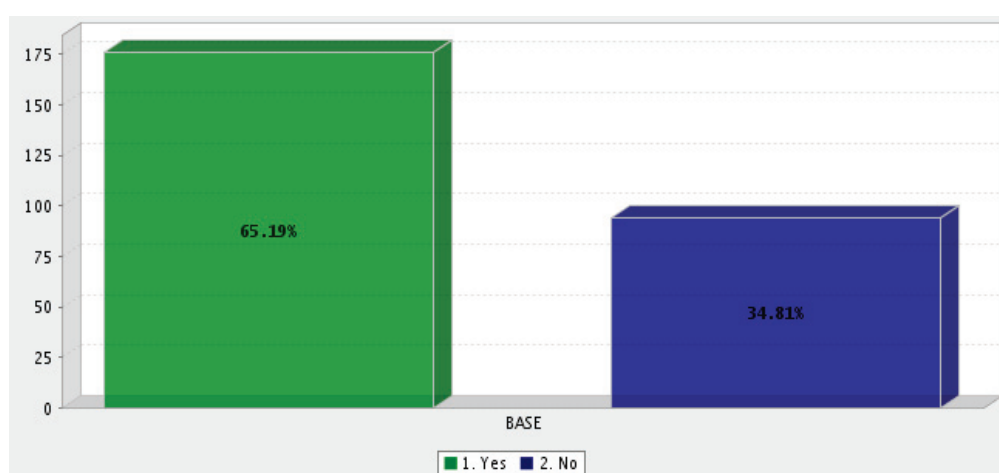
Figure 2

Do you have a child/children who currently goes to an integrated school (including nursery/preschool)?

270 parents in total responded to this question.

Yes 176

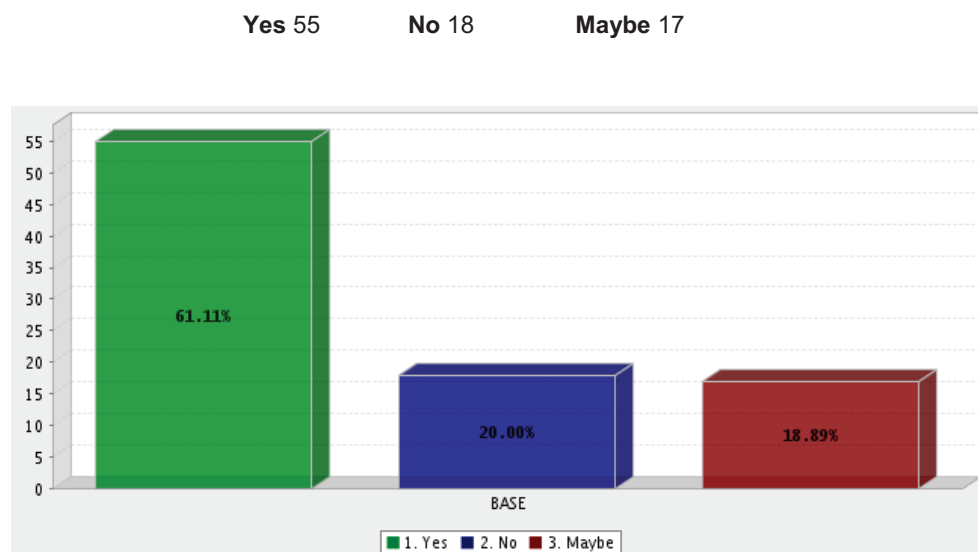
No 94



Parents were then asked to respond to the question '**would you consider sending your child to an Integrated School?**' In total 90 parents responded to this question. Of those 90 parents, 61% said they would consider sending their child to an Integrated School.

Figure 3

Would you consider sending your child to an Integrated School?



Parents were then asked to explain their decision and the main reasons given were as follows;

- The location and quality of school needs to be considered. Integrated Schools are not always located conveniently and have a limited number of pupil spaces
- The standard of education in Catholic Grammar Schools can be superior especially in helping children to reach their full potential



- Comes down to the choice of one parent in the family who may be of a different religious persuasion
- It is important for children to have their own religious ethos taught in school and as well as at home. Some parents wanted their children to be prepared for sacraments
- Northern Ireland is a divided and segregated society and to be able to move forward schools needs to be Integrated. Children should be able to mix freely together breaking down sectarian barriers
- Integrated Schools should have no taught Religious Education
- It depends on each child's needs where they are best placed e.g. special needs/developmental needs
- Strong belief in the ethos and vision of Integrated Education
- Although some parents preferred their child to go to an Integrated Post-Primary School, they respected their child's choice in attending a school with their peers

Barriers and Enablers

The Committee for Education state in the Terms of Reference that they will "Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education"

We asked parents about the advantages and disadvantages of Shared and Integrated Education. Their responses were grouped together based on key themes/issues and outlined overleaf.



Figure 4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Shared Education

Advantages of Shared Education	Disadvantages of Shared Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive of all • Encourages communities to work closely together • Helps to build relationships • Economically sensible rather than doubling of resources • Explore more opportunities eg sports, subjects • Exposes children to other cultures, • Promotes tolerance, respect, accepting of difference • Breaks down barriers in NI • Shared resources • Has all the benefits of integrated education but schools can still retain their identity and religious ethos • No advantages, respect can be taught at home • Sharing expertise of teachers • Steps in the right direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of education depends on each school • Children are sharing classes but not really mixing with each other • Children still defined by cultural tradition • Lack of resources available • None • Diverts from being fully integrated • Issues of bullying if one community is in the minority • Religious difference being highlighted • Practical timetabling of classes, • Transport costs and availability • Too expensive • Subjects such as History being taught from one point of view • Loss of school identity • Divisive and not solve the problem of segregation • Lack of appropriate building • Separate Religious Education



	<p>classes still being taught</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of parental choice • Difference in uniforms can lead to exclusion and highlight difference • Minimal inclusion of children with special needs
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Figure 5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrated Education

Advantages of Integrated Education	Disadvantages of Integrated Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No distinctions are made on divisive grounds of religion • Education of all pupils bringing them together from an early age to understand other cultures • Social and economic advantages • Breaks down and removes barriers, opportunity to share experiences of religion, teaches tolerance, mutual respect, encourages acceptance of difference, broadens views, mutual understanding, removes stereotypes, racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One community being the minority • It depends on the locality of schools so not may not fully reflect 'true' integration • None-“ <i>we should disband divisive education and cease funding schools who have religion as a requirement for entry either perceived or actual</i>” • The Identities of children can be lost • Misperceptions by parents, staff who think that integrated education is a



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the concept of NI as a nation and promotes national identity rather than British or Irish • Prepares pupils for society which is mixed e.g. the workplace • Builds relationships between cultures • None. One parent said it is '<i>a middle class attempt at social mobility through education, shouldn't be placed above any other type of education offered</i>' • Pupils are more aware of the common ground between their peers • Promotes equality regardless of background • Fully inclusive society, ethos of inclusion in integrated education • Reduces fear of 'the perceived other' • Education under same roof, financial benefits • Helps children understand religion is a choice, not born into religion • Embraces the child holistically rather than only academic achievement 	<p>neutral environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No real value placed on spiritual moral issues too eager to please to proclaim all things to all men, a melting pot, • Can be harder for pupils to retain their identity especially when they go back to segregated communities after school • The teaching of religion should not only be from a Christian viewpoint as it currently stands but incorporate all religions which reflects a more diverse society • Under-funded and lack of resources from government • Availability limited of integrated schools in certain areas to meet demands, limited amount of places in schools • Many parents see integrated as just another sector rather than a good model that is beneficial for children and society • Issues of bullying for being different • Local history not taught (ie. why people from different communities feel the way
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True integration is more than mixing religion, about mixed academic abilities, genders, special needs • Increased parental involvement • Normalizes education system removing religious/social class barriers • Promotes community cohesion • Way forward for change in NI to show we can live side by side, get along • Same advantages as shared education 	<p>they do)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents see them as being of a lower achieving standard than other schools as they are largely all ability schools while grammar schools are more academic
---	---

Overall, parents were positive about both Shared and Integrated Education viewing both as *“a necessary step in the right direction for living a shared future in Northern Ireland.”* Parents were in support of breaking down barriers between communities and teaching children to respect and tolerate others. Some parents stated that they preferred Shared Education as children are being taught about differences between communities but that there was still an element of retaining their own school and community identity.

Parents highlighted the limited availability of places in the Integrated Schools and the locality of Integrated Schools as a barrier to them sending their children to an Integrated School. *“The quality of the education provided”*, some parents said *“depends on individual Integrated Schools and can be perceived as inferior to a Grammar education”* which some parents prefer for their children.

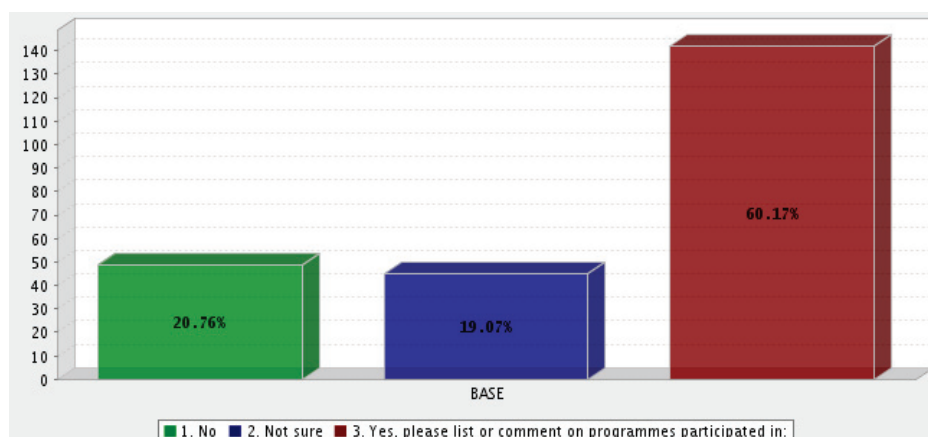


Good Practice

The Committee for Education suggested that the Inquiry into Shared Education will also *“Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes”*.

Parents responded to the question, **has your child participated in any cross community programmes either in school or in the local community?**

There were 236 responses to the question. 49 parents stated that their child (children) had not participated in any cross community programmes, 45 said they were unsure and 142 parents said their children had.



Parents were then asked to list the types and names of programmes that their children had participated in. These were then grouped into the following areas;



- Sport (eg football, boxing)
- Fermanagh learning community
- Cross border projects through Scout groups
- Community youth club/organisations
- Other types of programmes- cultural and identity awareness, drama, arts, music, nature, media activities
- Shared education classes
- Social gathering of friends from different backgrounds
- Summer camps/schemes
- EMU/CRED type programmes in school
- Visits to the Corrymeela Community
- Joint visits to local churches
- Links with schools in Europe
- Attending community run/based events

Parents were then asked to suggest what other ways they thought their children could be integrated in NI apart from through formal education. They suggested the following ideas;



- After school clubs where children from different schools in a local area meet
- Sport clubs
- Community groups
- Shared housing
- Compulsory places in nursery schools
- Summer schemes including cultural events
- Exhibitions/more family community cultural events
- Youth clubs
- Shared spaces in local communities
- Churches coming together
- Projects aimed at cross community
- Not forcing children to come together, problems are due to society, lack of parental education, unemployment, ghetto mentality
- Integrating all schools
- Music
- Removal of allegiance from societal clubs (eg beavers, scouts must pledge allegiance to Queen)
- Residential trips (eg to Corrymeela where differences can be explored in a 'safe space')



Key priorities and actions

The Inquiry also seeks to “*consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration-including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools*”. So we asked parents about the issues they felt were most important and how Shared and Integrated Education could be moved forward in Northern Ireland.

Improvements:

- Ensuring all education provided is of the highest quality and meets the needs of children despite academic ability
- Better support in place from local communities, churches, government
- Shared teacher training, shared professional development courses, parental training
- Financial resources, funding to integrated schools for more pupil places and better equipped buildings
- An agreed vision by the Northern Ireland Assembly to commit to integrating or sharing schools by a certain date, “*more support from ministers rather being a political ball passed about*”
- Better knowledge and awareness of Shared and Integrated Education for the public so they can make informed choices
- Organizing more intercultural events



- Remove religious doctrine. Some parents would prefer the removal of Religious Education from the Curriculum while some parents would like World Religions to be included in the Curriculum
- Several parents commented that Shared Education should only be viewed as a medium step towards full integration and that *"it should be a central focus of the TBUC strategy and all schools should be integrated"*
- Educate children together from the Early Years providing either more cross community programmes or integrated Nurseries/Playgroups
- Highlight the successes of shared/integrated education to the public
- Educate adults/public on changing attitudes
- Provide funding to schools who are willing to share education and less to those who don't
- Better strategic planning based on area needs and suited to local situations, area planning
- Cultural awareness training for teachers/staff
- Shared education must be defined as to its purpose, the benefits, some parents have misconceptions as to what is meant by this term
- Integrated education must become more inclusive and welcoming
- Agreement on Flags and Emblems – Some parents felt that all aspects of religion, flags and emblems should be removed from the educational environment. These parents felt strongly about the removal of emblems so as not to antagonize others and felt there was already too much separation on symbols in the wider community. However, other parents felt that to move



forward and open up discussions with children/young people to help them understand the significance that communities place on these objects would be more helpful in promoting respect and understanding of each other.

- Mixed transport on way to school
- Reduce power churches have on schools
- Twinning schools
- Develop better integrated ethos
- Shared timetabling at 16plus to allow more choice

Important Issues:

- Quality of education provided, should be excellent in every school
- Academic achievement should be the most important thing
- Maintaining of community identity whilst co-learning
- Building better Community support and understanding
- Collaboration between schools to work more co-operatively
- Religion should not be the central issue
- Lack of adequate resources
- Emphasize building relationships between pupils
- Funding to offer more places



- Bullying due to religious or community affiliation
- To learn to be more 'accepting of others', promoting tolerance, treating others with respect, breaking down barriers,
- Locality of schools to share education and locality of integrated schools
- Reassuring parents who fear shared or integrated education
- Parental choice
- More political support from NI Assembly
- Children learning what happened in the past
- To learn that we all have a Shared humanity
- Provide definitions of the terms, 'Shared' and 'Integrated' as although they are linked they are different



Appendices

Appendix 1

List of Questions developed by Parenting NI for the Online Survey

1. In your own words, what do you think is meant by the term “Shared Education”?
2. In your own words, what do you think is meant by the term “Integrated Education”?
3. Do you have child/children who currently go to an Integrated School (including nursery/preschool)?
4. Would you consider sending your child to an Integrated School? Please explain your answer.
5. Has your child/children participated in any cross community programme either in school or in the local community? If yes, please list or comment on programmes participated in.
6. What do you think are the disadvantages of Shared Education?
7. What do you think are the advantages of Shared Education?
8. What do you think are the disadvantages of Integrated Education?
9. What do you think are the advantages of Integrated Education?
10. Other than through formal education what other ways do you think children could be integrated in Northern Ireland?
11. What could be done to improve Shared/Integrated Education here in Northern Ireland?
12. What do you think are the most important issues within Shared/Integrated Education?





**Committee for Education
Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw,
Stormont,
Belfast,
BT4 3XX**

10th November 2014

Dear Peter,

Parent Survey – single teacher training facility

I am writing in response to the questions posed by the Committee for Education on the 5th November regarding Parenting NI's Parent Survey. Although only 10 parents mentioned that providing a single teacher training facility as one of the ways forward for Northern Ireland the responses were strongly felt. The survey question was not aimed specifically at asking parents their views on the current status of Teacher Training Facilities but at suggesting improvements to Shared and Integrated Education in Northern Ireland.

Thank you once again for meeting with us and giving us the opportunity to present our survey results.

Yours sincerely

Nicola McKeown
Parenting Forum Participation Worker



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Pip Jaffa
Chief Executive
Parenting NI
42 Dublin Road
Belfast
BT2 7HN
clare-ann@parentingni.org

7 November 2014

Our Ref: PMcC/JW/1751

Dear Ms Jaffa

Parent Survey – single teacher training facility

The Committee would like to convey its thanks to Clare-Anne Magee and Nicola McKeown for their briefing on Wednesday 5 November 2014 as part of the ongoing inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The Committee agreed to write to Parenting NI asking for information on the level and nature of responses from parents, in the relevant survey, to the proposed establishment of a single teacher training facility.

A reply by Friday 21 November would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk
Committee for Education

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Parenting NI 2

Queens University Belfast
Shared Education Advisory Group

Report on Parental Consultations Proposals for Shared Education in Northern Ireland

Parenting NI
November 2012

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Appendix 1 – Facilitators' Pack

Introduction

In October 2012 the Parenting Forum commenced the task of carrying out a consultation exercise with parents on behalf of the Queens University Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education. An important aspect of this review was to engage in a transparent consultative process that would provide a platform for parents to air their views, concerns and objections to the new proposals.

The Parenting Forum was approached to carry out the consultation with groups of parents across Northern Ireland. The Parenting Forum has considerable experience in carrying out such exercises as it has regular contact with a network of parents and parent support groups throughout Northern Ireland and is well placed to carry out real and meaningful consultations with parents within an agreed frame-work. Over a seven week period 6 focus groups were accessed. In total this included 55 parents caring for 155 children and young people. An unusually high number of parents had children with special needs, although only one group was targeted. However only one parent represented ethnic and minority groups. Participants were mainly female with a twelve male representation, some parents worked and some did not work outside of the home.

The Consultation Process

As agreed with the Advisory Group, the initial plan was to enlist co-operation from groups of parents from the existing Forum membership as many of these parents had previous experience of consultation. Opportunities were also given to groups that the Forum had not worked with in the past. Focus groups were chosen from across Northern Ireland in schools and community settings which were both urban and rural.

The Parenting Forum used three of their own internal facilitators for all of the focus groups. Consultation with parents requires highly skilled and experienced facilitators who are capable of working sensitively with diverse groups and facilitators were chosen accordingly. Parents clearly valued the opportunity to be consulted on the document and readily contributed their views and their experiences.

Consultation Methodology

A consultation pack was designed to ensure a uniform approach across all the focus groups in collecting and collating the information. The pack also aimed to give parents an insight into the rationale and user friendly materials were designed in order to present the proposals to the parents in a way that would encourage debate [see Appendix 1- Facilitators' Pack]. Focus groups were used as the data gathering method because they brought parents together in a way that allowed them to share their experiences and their opinions, to identify issues of individual and common concern. The Parenting Forum was aware of the need to consult with parents from across Northern Ireland to provide a wide geographic spread from urban and rural communities.

The Groups

It is worth noting that many of the groups consulted contained parents who had children attending a mix of schools in a geographic area. In one instance, a number of parents scheduled to attend a mixed group session withdrew as they felt that it was an attack on grammar schools. A seventh school had agreed to take part in the consultation but had to withdraw. As agreed the groups targeted included:

2 primary

2 post primary

1 early years

1 alternative to education provided

Parent Profile Information

Total number of parents consulted: 55

Gender:	Male	Female		
	12	43		
Marital Status:	Single	Married	Sep/Div	Other
	8	33	11	3
Belong to ethnic/minority group?	Yes	No		
	1	54		
Parent with disability/special need?	Yes	No		

	8	47		
Ages of Children:	0 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 - 17 years	18+
Male	12	14	23	18
Female	6	8	40	16
Sex unspecified	2	1	7	8
Children with disability/special need?	Yes	No		
	29	26		
Community:	Urban	Rural		
	32	23		

Sep/Div = Separated/divorced

Exercise 1

This exercise was designed to introduce shared education to the group and to have an overview of their understanding and experiences. In almost all of the groups some parents initially answered 'no' to their children having experience of shared education but when other parents gave examples they changed their minds and provided examples. Some parents focused on integration of children from different backgrounds and abilities within their current school setting.

1. Have your children ever experienced opportunities for shared education?

- Yes. Most parents said that their children had.
- Most of the parents with children attending an alternative school had not experienced it.

2. What did they do?

The responses to this question varied and in order to present the information the responses have been grouped in categories.

Arrangements between schools

- Partnership arrangements between schools where kids went to another school and made smoothies or did a project (P6 and P7)
- Extended schools / EMU Programme
- One primary school came to another to use computers
- In transition year the young people go to local college and have an opportunity to try new things
- School twinning a good start, even to get teachers mixing
- Going to another school to study subjects
- Going to the local college to undertake vocational courses
- Visiting other schools particularly in transition years
- Contested Spaces project in Lisnagelvin School in Derry with 9 schools involved. Children out one day a week, curriculum related
- Grammar and High School share facilities as different specialisations

Programmes and training

- Love for Life - one parent recently went to sex education talk for parents from the three local schools (cross community)
- Primary school was integrated in every way, inclusive of young people from all backgrounds.
- A variety of parenting programmes where parents from a number of schools in the area came together for these

Additional or extra curricular activities

- Roe Olympics
- A language unit is coming to the school which will make it more inclusive
- When the army camp was open the school had many kids from an international context
- Child (protestant boy) sings in choir so has to attend First Communions
- Sports and football teams are mixed
- Music provision by Western Board where kids plan an orchestra
- Christmas concert
- Ulster project, mixed group and go to America
- High School meet with Special School and help out with literacy, Christmas sale etc.
- Rugby tour to South Africa forms global connections
- Cross community work

Concerns

- One parent questioned the need for a consultation as he felt that we are there in terms of shared education. It is happening already so what was the need?
- One parent was concerned that this was all about an attack on grammar schools.

3. What are your feelings about this?

Almost all of the parents were very positive about the experience and the benefits for their children. However some parents raised questions and concerns. The responses have been groups into themes.

Breaking down barriers and deal with prejudices

- Chance to get to know that other kids are not so different
- Communicating with others from different environments face to face is good
- “The kids are leading the way, teaching us how to relate to others from different cultures”
- Preferred boys and girls to be taught together
- Good to meet children with special needs – other children don't know how to react when they see a child with a special need so it breaks down barriers Parents are very aware of how other people look at children with special needs

Benefits

- Good for children with special needs to get out into other schools or colleges as it helps when they are moving on and they have to use transport etc.
- New experiences build confidence
- Opportunities to study different subjects that are not available in their school

Concerns

- Different school may have a different ethos / approach / rules which is challenging when children and young people attend different schools
- Some of the parents of children attending an alternative school thought it could lead to bullying / victimisation

Exercise 2

This exercise was designed to take parents through key questions directly relating to the public consultation questionnaire.

In most of the groups there was a discussion about the current systems and geographic location of schools which mean that it could be difficult to advance shared education. Parents felt that attitudes would need to change from some parents, communities and schools themselves before real changes could be put into place. The responses to the questions often overlap and are interlinked.

Q1. What are the best ways to ensure shared education moves forward in NI?

Funding and Accountability

- Needs legislation to make it happen and there is a need to check it's happening as school may say they are part of Shared Education but do not always understand what this means in practice
- Needs funding / money to help it work
- Agreement from ESA

Parental and Schools Input

- Listen to schools and parents as they know best
- Parent power to ensure that Shared Education is a reality – this is linked to good parenting
- Need to bring everyone on board; parents, teachers and politicians to work together.

Provision of Education

- One shoe does not fit all – children with special needs may not be able to participate in Shared Education because their physical needs supersede everything else
- Better basic education and vocational education linked to better understanding of cultural and other differences
- Create ways to engage kids from underprivileged backgrounds
- All schools to be integrated so kids can go to their closest school. Some kids can't as schools are attached to a local parish. CCMS and controlled sector need to work together to sort this out.
- Religion was a recurring issue in one group and the group was divided about how they felt. 8 participants felt that religion should have nothing to do with schools and kept completely separate. A few others felt that Christian values should underpin our education system and new communities (BME) should respect that. A few others felt that world religion should be taught but not focussed on any particular religion.
- Cosmopolitan fluid society where no one is seen as minority. Lots of diversity and people from all over the world to make us integrate. More outside influence.
- Start mixing kids from a young age from nursery and playgroup right up. Secondary is almost too late.
- School twinning a good start, even to get teachers mixing.

- Super schools where all backgrounds are included but it needs investment to do it right.
- Need to be taught as individuals, something there for everyone no matter what their needs are. Kids need to have aspirations to achieve and do well. Give them hope.
- Adults need educated on shared education
- Pupils need better support – emotional as well as physical
- Integrating gender is important

Q2. What are the barriers to advancing a shared education system?

Current system

- Location of some schools would mean that children would have to go into another community. Not everyone would accept this and it may lead to bullying or more serious violence
- CCMS and the restrictions on the staff that they employ mean that some teachers cannot teach in their schools
- ESA input on shared education
- Numbers: in Derry there is a majority Catholic population and in any school Protestants will remain a minority. Where there is a 'majority' there will be discrimination against those in the minority.
- Children who have complex needs which cannot be met other than in their current setting. Health and education together
- Snobbery and attitudes of some schools particularly some grammar schools who feel they are better than secondary schools
- Class was seen as a major barrier as working class kids do not get the same opportunities.
- More state interference to support kids who are neglected. There is a spiral of deprivation that passes down through generations. Need to break the cycle.
- EMA keeps kids in school
- The need for mutual understanding of everyone in society and how moving forward after the troubles can be a barrier
- In secondary schools prejudice is already entrenched, it is too late.

Funding

- Money / funding is needed for school buildings and training
- Need for new buildings in neutral locations
- Better transport
- Schools get paid per pupil and schools might manipulate 'shared education' to get more kids through their doors permanently rather than just popping in to share resources.
- Geography and logistics. The cost of kids travelling to other schools. Logistics for teachers, needs resourced. Bus insurance and risks.

Other

- There was scepticism about the motives for government wanting to advance shared education. What is the purpose of this consultation? Is it to promote shared education or is it really about cutting costs? Group concerned that the government is planning to privatise education and introduce 'academies' as in England.

- We have high expectations for new communities or ethnic minorities who arrive in our schools as we expect them to speak the language, adapt to our culture. Most people felt that it was important for them to keep their culture but some members felt they should adapt to a Christian society and Christian values.
- Culture was a difficult issue as the group felt our own culture was so divided that we would not know how to help other new cultures integrate. We need to address our own prejudice first. Inner city parents have more entrenched prejudice.
- Lack of respect and discipline with kids.
- People who work with kids with special needs – not having the skills needed if the children are involved in mainstream education even if it is only part time
- Time, it might take three generations to start seeing huge changes. Change is slow.
- Fear. Parents at the Derry consultation commented that many parents were too afraid to come along tonight to a discussion about shared education.

Q3. How should Shared Education ensure it meets the needs of all learners and provides opportunities for learners to be educated together, regardless of their sex, gender, race, political opinion, disability and economic background?

Many of the parents who have a child with a complex disability felt that shared education would not meet their child's needs.

Most parents talked about a system that reflects the needs of individual children and how they can reach their full potential. There were extensive discussions in many groups about the academic versus the vocational needs of children and how the Department would ensure that all children were given equal opportunities. One or two parents mentioned education systems in other European countries where children who do better with vocational studies are separate from those following an academic path.

Individual Needs

- Need to know the needs of ALL learners. Particular needs have to be addressed to ensure that the children and young people can participate and this may mean having to employ other professionals to meet these needs
- Early intervention to ensure that children accept the integration from nursery age
- Costs of rugby kit and trips and sports fees cannot be afforded by poorer families and puts pressure on kids and parents and also subjects kids to peer pressure.

Delivery in schools

- Multi disciplinary approach to support children not just with educational requirements in a school setting
- Extra support for pupils that need it
- Where does Statementing sit in Shared Education?
- More teachers
- Smaller classes, especially if mixed ability
- Kids should have a say in big decisions.
- Teach some subjects in ways that suit the kids - link them to real life
- Homework clubs in the community, libraries more accessible.
- More languages should be taught in primary schools eg: Mandarin, Eastern block languages
- Uniforms are good to unite pupils and not make individuals stand out

- Two paths for education, academic and practical and there should be two different sets of exams. In Primary school all kids are lumped together.
- Mixed opinion about out two tiered education system. Some of the participants felt this was needed to ensure all needs were addressed and others felt this was not fair.
- 2 key areas were identified for any education system:
 1. A strong focus on self esteem, personal development. More important than educational attainment. When they have good self esteem they will flourish.
 2. The basics at primary level. All kids need to have a strong grasp of reading, and number work (English and Math). Many kids reach secondary standard without these.

Q4. (Question 6 in the questionnaire) How do you think that moving shared education forward will ensure that learners will have equal opportunities to learn?

- Very abstract and aspirational. How would it be rolled out?
- It should overcome social inequality and create ways for kids from working class backgrounds to achieve their potential.
- In NI we are mostly white and have been nearly all white until recently. This increase of people from other countries will continue, so we can prepare ourselves for this. We are ignorant about a lot of these issues. We need to start shared education when the kids are really young in nursery and continue the whole way up through the education system.
- Good example (Camphill which is a mixed community setting primarily for young people with disabilities) – ethos, opportunity, respect
- Take account of the needs of vulnerable young people
- One person commented that shared education should not include different academic ability and this should be kept separate. This should not be in section 75.
- Shared education is a very wide net and there is a danger of being too wide and vague. Needs to have clear agenda/purpose.
- Shared education is not for everyone, some parents won't agree eg: special needs kids should be in the right setup
- More after schools clubs

Exercise 3

Q4. How do you think the advancement of shared education might address such issues as ethos and identity? How can Shared Education address the following issues for learners:

Opportunities for participation

- After school meetings
- School meetings such as student councils to help children and young people have their say
- Open school facilities for community to meet in - not good to lock schools up at 4pm especially in rural areas
- Leadership from school principals. Schools need to work together on this and collaborate, not compete
- Teach citizenship
- Be clear about what it is. Does it suit all children?
- Voices of parents, children and teachers need to be heard

- Funders / MLA's etc should come into the schools and listen to the school community – children, young people, parents, teachers etc.

Be safe and their welfare needs are met

- Swipe cards for all lunch pupils so those taking free school dinners can blend in with the same form of payment
- We should address these issues (agreed by all group except one) but in an environment that is safe, where people are trained for this and using a range of methods like drama etc.
- Better cross community work
- Use the buddy system
- Need better supervision of kids on transport and in class. Better security in schools
- Ensure that each school has a full time mental health councillor
- have respect and dignity no matter who they are
- Better understanding of bullying particular social exclusion and isolation – having school policies does not go far enough
- Use uniforms so that all children and young people blend in

Have respect and dignity no matter who they are

- One person thought that differences didn't need to be talked about as it just reinforces difference. Need to focus on similarities
- Start young enough when kids are comfortable to talk about anything e.g. Puppet show about diversity in local playgroup at the minute
- Parents need to move across boundaries/communities. Move away from preconceived ideas or notions. Some won't want to change

Q5.

(a) In moving shared education forward in NI, will there be a need to change the curriculum to include particular skills or knowledge for learners?

- Some parents said 'no' as the curriculum is always changing and teachers never get a chance to get used to it or have a say in how it changes.
- Many participants felt it did need to change. It needed to value different routes not just academic. Needed different exams for people who are not academic. More hands on. (some people disagreed with this)
- Need social education
- Respect and dignity
- Less packed timetable to allow for this
- Religion to be taken out. Religion is political here so that needs to change
- Less assessment, there is over assessment at the minute in Primary where you have to assess every move.
- The content of the curriculum was seen as a barrier by some. History was used as an example of how subjects can be taught from one side/perspective. People need to know their history or culture but we need to look beyond this.
- The curriculum limits kids options for careers as it limits their skills - there is a need to be more holistic in education which should be reflected in the curriculum
- A focus on all kids getting basic English and Maths at an early stage is key

- Personal Development and mental health as a core part of education.
- Invest heavily in primary education as this is the key area. By the time secondary stages come it is too late.
- Management/leadership in schools is important and they need to have high expectations of teachers and support progress.
- Schools and teachers in NI are good and better than the UK so we need to be careful not to go down the same route as the rest of the UK.
- Need to have incentive for kids to achieve in school and jobs at the end.

Q5.

(b) How can they ensure that the rights of all learners to develop a broad range of essential life skills are met?

- Leadership from above to ensure that essential skills are met
- Teaching participation, togetherness, tolerance, respect: all these things happen when you have to consider others.
- One person said that her son with dyslexia got very little support at school and she had to fight every day to get support even though he had an educational Statement.
- There needs to be extra support invested in school to deal with the range of needs and abilities. Staff time needs to be allocated to this and not cut which has happened in the past.
- Awareness raising about disability
- Mix able and disabled may have different needs to be able to attain essential skills
- Use different methods of teaching
- Get parents involved
- Have a meeting at the beginning of each school year with pupils, parents and teachers. Not a talk but interactive so they get to know each other.
- Develop a budget for the school parent's forum
- Financial education is important and needs to be part of curriculum
- Need life skills: coping with money/shopping to be able to exist in the community, to have choices, pathways open to young people, more exposure to other children for those with a disability is more important sometimes than what they achieve
- Access to education for those who need help
- Wider horizons
- Curriculum needs to reflect ongoing needs to attain essential skills
- Everyone needs to take responsibility for life skills; parents, teachers and the local community. All parents need to get involved, not just the usual suspects
- Parenting programmes are important to educate parents too
- More staff (which they are cutting). Security for staff
- Counselling for kids
- Don't put kids with special needs into a box
- Each school should have a Share Shop for books, uniforms, sport clothes and equipment. Legislation that suppliers of PE kits and uniform can't charge high prices.

Final comments made by parents during the sessions

- Some of the parents felt that it was a worthwhile consultation but were very sceptical as to why the government was taking an interest in this and they worried it was for cost cutting measures.
- They felt there were a lot of questions and sometimes the question was not very clearly worded.
- Parents felt that strong leadership is needed both from the Department and Principals to ensure that Shared Education is advanced in a way that supports all learners regardless of their abilities to reach their full potential.

Summary of Key Findings

The responses given by parents to the questions often overlap and are interlinked. Parents tended to jump about when thinking about one question and often responded to either previous questions or those yet to be asked. In summarising the key findings in the report, the overarching information has been recorded under themes.

General

The majority of parents were in favour of advancing shared education as they felt that it would benefit children and young people, both opening up opportunities to enhance learning and give them a better understanding of children from different backgrounds and capabilities. Some parents felt that shared education is good in theory but it may be aspirational for all children to be included, especially for children who have complex physical disabilities.

Parents also reflected on the wider community and how society's prejudices may be a barrier to advancing shared education. This was voiced from a number of perspectives including disability, racism and sectarianism. Parents felt that much needs to be done to educate adults including other parents.

There was a level of cynicism from some parents about the reason for the consultation taking place and they queried if one of the key outcomes would be to close schools.

Current System

A recurring issue throughout the process was that of the current system. This was discussed under a number of questions and different issues emerged. Primarily parents felt that in some areas the geographic location of schools would not lend itself to advancing shared education. They felt that in some of these areas there would be a question of the child or young person's safety, not only from other school children but also from other members of some communities.

The teaching of religion within the current system was often raised as a barrier to advancing shared education. Many parents were critical of CCMS which was said to only employ teachers who have studied religion as part of their degree. This may not be the case but it is the parents' perception.

All parents were in favour of making changes which children would experience from an early age as they felt that ongoing behaviours and prejudices can be embedded in children by the time they enter post primary education.

Parents felt that in order to advance shared education there needs to be strong leadership at different levels, not least the Department of Education and that funding would need to be available particularly in the early stages to 'make things happen'.

Practicalities

Parents raised a number of questions regarding the practicalities of advancing shared education and ensuring the safety of all children. They felt that timetabling is often too full to

allow young people sufficient time to move from one setting to another to avail of subjects and facilities in other settings. They felt that transport was a key issue if children need to travel to other settings and queried how this would be supervised.

Parental involvement was seen as crucial to ensuring that shared education becomes a reality. Some parents stated that parents may need to be educated themselves to deal with prejudices they may have which are often passed on to children.

Parenting NI 3

Committee for Education
Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw,
Stormont,
Belfast,
BT4 3XX

10th November 2014

Dear Peter,

Parent Survey – single teacher training facility

I am writing in response to the questions posed by the Committee for Education on the 5th November regarding Parenting NI's Parent Survey. Although only 10 parents mentioned that providing a single teacher training facility as one of the ways forward for Northern Ireland the responses were strongly felt. The survey question was not aimed specifically at asking parents their views on the current status of Teacher Training Facilities but at suggesting improvements to Shared and Integrated Education in Northern Ireland.

Thank you once again for meeting with us and giving us the opportunity to present our survey results.

Yours sincerely

Nicola McKeown

Parenting Forum Participation Worker

Phoenix Integrated Primary School



Phoenix IPS

80 Fountain Road
Cookstown
BT80 8QF

T: 028 867 57096

23rd October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

I am Chair of Governors at Phoenix Integrated PS in Cookstown, and was a member of the founding group in 2003/4 which set up the school. Previously I was involved in the formation and development of Mill Strand Integrated PS in Portrush and Windmill Integrated PS in Dungannon. I worked for many years in teacher education at the (integrated) school of education at the University of Ulster.

You have already received a response to the inquiry from Philip Reid of Mill Strand PS, and I hope the committee will both take his remarks seriously, and invite him to attend one of their future meetings. Philip speaks eloquently for many of us who are increasingly frustrated by the apparent attempt to develop shared education as a valid alternative to integrated education. There is nothing wrong in principle with forms of shared education, and many schools have worked hard to develop co-operative projects which are often useful and certainly better than nothing. But even at their best they always take place within a context of schools that are fundamentally representative of one tradition or another. None come close to being an adequate substitute for a school experience in which children (and, equally crucially, their parents) work together, all day, every day, for many years.

The stubbornly persistent sectarian divisions in our society have huge social and economic costs. Schools and teachers did not cause these divisions, nor can they solve them alone, but neither can education be absolved of all responsibility. We have a system in which children are separated at the age of four or five, sometimes even earlier, and separated again at the age of eleven. It is difficult to understand how, in the world of the mid to late 21st century that our children will inhabit, this could continue to be regarded as tolerable, let alone attractive. We do not need the tinkering about at the edges of our system that shared education represents but a recognition that we need an entirely new structure. It is not only the Stormont machine that is 'no longer fit for purpose'.

Even our teachers are mostly trained separately, which is particularly iniquitous. The very people who we expect to recognise and celebrate diversity in our schools have often never experienced it for themselves. I met a young classroom assistant in one integrated school only recently who said 'I never met a Protestant until I was twenty two'. Until such a time when it is impossible to say that and until the boundaries of religious background which currently inhibit our children and young people begin to be dissolved by the experience of living and working together, we will not make much progress towards a diverse yet inclusive society.

The integrated sector is more than thirty years old and within it there is vast experience of making it work. We have the astonishing achievements of hundreds of ordinary local citizens who set the schools up, often in a context of little external support (and certainly none from ELBs or DE). We have more than sixty flourishing schools; we have polls which demonstrate that more than 40% of parents actively wish their children to attend integrated schools; we have substantial research evidence of success; we have two useful representative bodies.

We even have a statutory duty placed on the Department to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'. In these circumstances one might have expected that integrated education would be developed and cherished and celebrated as an example to the world of a splintered society on a journey towards reconciliation

Yet recent headlines appearing in NI newspapers tell a different story:

- Blow for John O'Dowd's education policy after court rules expansion of integrated schools cannot be stifled
- Clintyclay Primary School: arguments for closure that don't stand up
- DUP blocks education body role for integrated sector
- Children in Phoenix IPS taught in grossly inadequate accommodation due to three year Departmental delay

The fourth of these is fictional, but it expresses our local frustration that the blindingly obvious fact that a school which expands from nothing to around 190 children and 20 staff needs buildings within which education can take place. Obvious, that is, to everyone except the Department of Education who far from encouraging and facilitating have delayed endlessly (and still are).

I don't know what is holding us back: is it just Departmental incompetence? Vested interests as expressed in the depressingly negative response of CCMS to the committee? Lack of political will? Whatever the cause we are missing the opportunity for a proper appraisal of our education system, looking at the current structure and the ways in which the integrated alternative could provide a sustainable way to bring our young people together to build a diverse yet united community. I hope that the committee's report will, at last, mark the beginnings of a change in our direction of travel.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Marriott

Stuart Marriott

PlayBoard NI



Committee for Education

Email: committee.education@niassembly.gov.uk

24 October 2014

RE: PlayBoard NI Response to the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

PlayBoard is an independent charity and the lead organisation for the development and promotion of children and young people's play in Northern Ireland. Since our establishment in 1985, PlayBoard has been committed to supporting the child's right to play through a combination of: service delivery, service development; campaigning, lobbying; awareness raising and working in partnership with others to put play on the agenda of policy makers and resource providers. The organisation takes great pride in promoting best practice in Play, Playwork and play based School Age Childcare services.

PlayBoard's mission is to drive the play agenda, ensuring that at every level of decision making across society, the child's right to play is not only recognised but is made a reality within the lives of children, young people, families and communities. Children and young people's views, aspirations and perceptions of themselves and the environment in which they live, are at the heart of PlayBoard's work. Our vision is of a society where the right to play is realised.

We welcome this opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education. As an organisation we are deeply concerned about the largely segregated nature of our education system. We believe that play, and playwork in particular has a critical role to play in bringing children together -through their natural and shared drive to play - something which is unfortunately all too often overlooked and underutilised by your department, our schools and educational institutions.

PlayBoard's work over the past 30 years has included a considerable body of work aimed at using play as a positive vehicle for bringing school communities together. We would urge that cognisance be given to the untapped potential of play to become one of the central lynchpins that attracts children, teachers and parents to the idea of sharing services and spaces across and between schools.

Shared Education as a mechanism to achieve Integrated Education

PlayBoard is deeply concerned about the large number of children that are segregated from the age of 3 years until they enter either the workplace or tertiary education. We believe until the structure of Northern Ireland's school system is changed or schools collaborate more effectively with each other, this problem will remain.

The integrated education movement has against the odds etched an important sector within the segregated system, an achievement that has to be applauded. However the fact remains that over 90% of children still attend either a controlled or maintained school, with only 6.7% of primary and post-primary pupils attending integrated schools¹. A further concern is the low number of children attending the 'other' school system, particularly at primary level. More worrying is that at primary level only 1% of Protestant children attend Catholic schools (with

1 Knox and Borooh (2014). Briefing Notes for Committee for Education, 15th October 2014

PlayBoard NI

7 Crescent Gardens, BELFAST, BT7 1NS Northern Ireland

Tel: 028 90803380 - Fax: 028 90803381 - Web: www.playboard.org

Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI30225 - Inland Revenue Charity Number XR86639

5.7% of Catholic children attending controlled schools)². Furthermore, no maintained school has adopted the status of an integrated school. These few points alone highlight the need to radically change the structures of the system or more probably the processes used to create and enable contact between children and young people within the school setting.

In this response we do not want to be drawn into nuances of differentiating integrated and shared education because we appreciate there are benefits and shortcomings of both. We acknowledge also that the division is not just in relation to religion but there are repercussions for social class, which is more discernible at the post-primary level. Rather we would see shared education as a necessary precursor to achieving a system whereby the label of controlled, maintained or integrated is not an inhibitor for any parent or child.

In light of our experience of delivering a shared education programme we would broadly agree with the seven principles identified by the Ministerial Advisory Group³ as being required to create a blueprint for education. We believe the implementation of points 5, 6 and 7 as set out below are particularly important. They are to:

- Help children and young people develop a greater awareness of and respect for diversity, in all its forms, and equips them with the knowledge and skills to be able to live in an open, inclusive and confident society;
- Respect the rights and dignity of all children and young people, ensures that their views and opinions are heard and responded to and promotes their safety and wellbeing; and
- Acknowledge the central importance of good leadership in schools and the quality of teachers and support staff and thus places a particular emphasis on ensuring high quality initial teacher education and continuing professional development opportunities that encourage teachers and educationalists learning and sharing together.

Furthermore, as a rights-based organisation we absolutely agree with recommendation 11 of the Ministerial Advisory Group which calls for fulfilment of duties under Article 12 of the UNCRC. Indeed the findings of the NICCY report *'Shared Education The views of children and young people'*⁴ highlights the importance of listening to the views of children and young people on all matters affecting them. The report identifies how children and young people believe that shared education should be introduced at an early stage and there is a need to ensure that effective practical arrangements are in place; they suggest trialling shared education initiatives, expanding shared education to all schools and ensuring that pupils are consulted about on-going developments and their views are taken into account. Notably some respondents indicated that;

the collaborative activities and joint classes in which they had participated, had been a 'shared' but 'separate' experience, as pupils had remained within their own school or friendship groups and interaction between pupils from different schools had been limited.

On this point NICCY note that *'it will be important to clarify what is intended through 'shared' learning and to ensure that pupils are encouraged and supported to be genuine and equal collaborators'*. We would suggest that through the vehicle of shared play many of the silo mentalities that can linger within school or friendship groups may be dissipated.

We would also point out that in relation to fulfilment of the UNCRC's article 31, the right to play, General Comment 17 is very clear that schools have a role in relation to post conflict safety.

2 ibid

3 Connolly, P, Purvis, D., & O'Grady, P J. (2013). Advancing Shared Education: A report of the Ministerial Advisory Group. Belfast: Queen's University Belfast.

4 NICCY (2013). Shared Education The views of children and young people source at http://www.niccy.org/downloads/2013/publications/Adult_Report.pdf

States are obliged to ensure ... active measures should be taken to restore and protect the rights under article 31 in post-conflict ... situations, including ... creating ... safe spaces, including schools, where children can participate in play and recreation as part of the normalization of their lives⁵ (para. 57(e).

The general comment also references the role of schools to play a major role in fulfilling the obligations under article 31, including: physical environment of settings; structure of the day; school curriculum and educational pedagogy. Moreover there is little doubt that play is important to education and we also believe it has the potential to be critical to achieving the aim of shared education particularly that relating to promoting ‘...good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion⁶’.

Our experience of Shared Education practice in schools and school age childcare settings

As stated above PlayBoard has issue with upholding a school system that enables children to be segregated on the basis of their religion. However, given that there is little as an organisation we can do about achieving a single education system; the remainder of this response outlines how we believe play is important to the shared education approach.

Over the past number of years PlayBoard has delivered a number of play programmes within the school setting, culminating in the ‘Spaces to Be’ programme. ‘Spaces to Be’ brings together children from maintained and controlled schools located in interface areas to play and come into contact with each other.

Play is special to children because despite perceived differences, the one uniting factor throughout childhood is play. It is through play that children understand each other and their world around them. They are all equal, and it is through play that children and young people’s learning in cooperation and conflict resolution skills begin. Play is an excellent vehicle to bring children from different backgrounds together because it is innate and a universal desire.

We would also highlight that although the school day is an ideal setting for shared education, it is hugely time constrained. Therefore we would suggest that considerable benefit can be accrued from extending the ‘shared’ approach outside of the ‘formal’ school day, through for example extra-curricular activities as identified by the Ministerial Advisory Group and through shared school aged childcare within the workings of OFMDFM’s Bright Start Strategy⁷.

Our work in schools: Over the past two years PlayBoard has piloted and developed the implementation of our ‘Spaces to Be’ programme within the wider Contested Spaces programme. This pilot programme is jointly funded by OFMDFM and Atlantic Philanthropies and uses play to facilitate participating schools to address community and cultural barriers enabling respect for difference and inclusion of others within the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding strand of the statutory curriculum.

The ‘Spaces to Be’ programme is premised on PlayBoard’s ‘Spaces to Be – Mapping Identity and Belonging toolkit’. The resource builds on PlayBoard’s many years of playwork experience and practice of working with children, young people across Northern Ireland. Through practical and playful exercises which are directed by the children and young people themselves, the toolkit aims to promote the creation and programming of innovative ‘shared space’, building reconciliation through play.

5 United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2013). General Comment no. 17, on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts (art. 31) (CRC/C/GC/17), United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. Available at: http://www.playboard.org/uploads/CRC-C-GC-17_en.pdf

6 Connolly, P, Purvis, D., & O’Grady, P. J. (2013). Advancing Shared Education: A report of the Ministerial Advisory Group. Belfast: Queen’s University Belfast.

7 OFMDFM (2013). BRIGHT START The NI Executive’s Strategy for Affordable and Integrated Childcare A Strategic Framework and Key First Actions. Belfast: OFMDFM. Available at: <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/bright-start-strategic-framework-key-actions.pdf>

Using a play methodology, the 'Spaces to Be' programme seeks to promote and improve the relationships between and across two interface/contested space communities. In its current incarnation, P5, P6 and P7 pupils from two schools in each area come together and through a range of play-based activities come to understand and respect difference relating to religion, culture, gender and disability. The programme is underpinned by the Playwork Principles, which puts children at the centre of their play experience. Playwork enables children to be free to: choose, personally direct and be intrinsically motivated, to play.

The aim of the 'Spaces to Be' programme is to enhance children's capacity for positive development by giving them access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities. Through contact with the 'out-group' they become more inclined to develop mutual respect for the other group's cultural events, symbols and practices. This is achieved by using practical and playful exercises that support the school curriculum, and encourage children and young people to explore their understanding of difference.

School Age Childcare: PlayBoard is also passionate about leading the development of the School Age Childcare sector, a sector which provides childcare and age appropriate play opportunities for children aged between 4 and 14 years. School Age Childcare settings provide a caring and safe environment, offering a range of active and stimulating play activities for children.

Crucially, due to the cross-community nature of most settings, School Age Childcare providers have the ability to provide for many children an opportunity to meet with, interact and engage with children from another community or cultural background on an almost daily basis. Given the largely segregated nature of the education system the importance of School Age Childcare provision in helping to build a united community should not be underestimated.

The Executive recently launched 'Bright Start', the first stage of the Northern Ireland childcare strategy and this has seen the beginning of a much needed investment in the development and growth of School Age Childcare capacity across Northern Ireland. It is critical that this investment is protected and that the impact of providers in supporting cross-community contact is acknowledged by government.

Concluding Comments

As a relatively new post-conflict society Northern Ireland has made progress, however for many children – know or unknown to them - it remains a divided society. At the heart of much of the division is the segregated schooling system, which enables the status quo of children having little or no contact with the other group, to remain. Integrated education caters for less than 10% of the school population but the stark reality is that for the other 90% they are identified as enrolled in either a Catholic or Protestant school. To make serious inroads into bringing children into contact with the 'other' group, shared education offers the best vehicle to shift the status quo and we believe play has a critical role to play in achieving this.

As an organisation we are under no illusion that implementing a play programme within a school setting is challenging; and to implement a contact based play intervention is even more challenging. However, it is our firm belief that the challenges are outweighed by both the innovative nature of play as a mechanism for contact and the potential impact it has to bring about better intergroup relations for future generations. We have learned through our experience of 'Spaces to Be' that shared education is a journey requiring buy-in from schools, principals, teachers and parents who need to be 'empowered' to engage in a process that allows them to identify and confront problems and overcome barriers. We would like to reiterate a number of the messages highlighted by the Ministerial Advisory Group including:

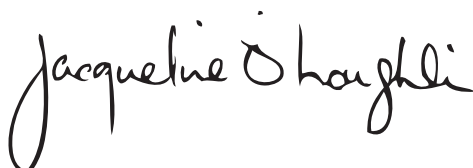
- School collaboration presents significant practical challenges in relation to matters such as timetabling, curriculum planning and transport and thus strong leadership within schools is essential;

- There are resource implications for schools wishing to engage in shared education and thus some mechanism for supporting and incentivising schools to be involved in cross-sectoral collaboration is required.
- There is no 'one size fits all' model for how schools should collaborate but, rather, how this is done will vary from one context to the next
- It is important that particular models of collaboration are not imposed on schools but that they are allowed to develop organically, reflecting the needs and situations that exist at a local level.

Given the unique ability of play to bring children and young people together through a common, natural drive we strongly advocate that shared education approaches recognise the importance of play within the school curriculum, school playground, extracurricular activities, the school estate and the wider school age childcare sector.

There is little doubt that play is of considerable importance to childhood. It is our hope, that play - the uniting bond of all children - can be effectively harnessed through this initiative and others to build a shared future for the coming generations and end the harm that occurs because of segregation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Jacqueline O'Loughlin'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'J'.

Jacqueline O'Loughlin

Chief Executive Officer

Portaferry Integrated Primary School



PRINCIPAL MRS DOROTHY MCKEATING BA PGCE PQH

Dear Mr McCallion,

I write on behalf of Portaferry Integrated Primary School with the intention of submitting evidence for the Education Committee re Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry.

Background

Our school transformed to controlled integrated status almost 20 years ago. I began my career as a teacher in the school in September 1995, the beginning of the first school year as an integrated school. I was impressed at the time with the level of involvement and commitment of the parents in establishing the first integrated school in the Ards Peninsula, and perhaps more importantly, promoting integrated education within the local community. In this respect, not much has changed in the last 20 years. Parents continue to be a major driving force in promoting the school and raising awareness of its importance in a community which suffers from economic and social deprivation. Our school remains the only alternative to maintained school provision in the Portaferry area, and although small, is vitally important to the non-Catholic minority as well as people from the Catholic tradition who do not support a segregated education system. Thanks to the efforts of parents, past and present and many supporters within the local community, the school is valued and respected as an educational provider and a place where children of any faith or none feel valued, secure and nurtured.

Shared / Integrated?

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge the work going on in many schools across the province with regard to sharing of educational opportunities, facilities, resources and professionals. This is a big step forward from the total segregation of the past. I feel, however, that sharing of this nature does not go far enough towards addressing the fundamental issue of segregation. This issue can only effectively be addressed if the school ethos goes further than merely acknowledging difference. Difference should be respected and celebrated, and the ultimate aim is to help children as they grow into young adults to realise that difference isn't so different after all. In my experience, both as a teacher and a principal in an integrated school, the children do not see each other as different in terms of religious, social or economic background. They accept each other exactly the way they are. I would have concerns about the potential for shared education to highlight religious or cultural difference, because the sharing organisations still have their individual ethos, name and code of values.

Small World

Huge advances in recent years in travel and communication technology have effectively reduced the size of our world. Through social networking and the internet, it is possible to communicate efficiently with people from a vast array of racial, cultural and religious backgrounds. When placed within the context of a dynamic and ever changing global network, the idea of a segregated education system seems archaic and backward thinking. Half measures will not solve this problem. The way forward is integrated education, especially in areas of the province where demand for places is greater than the number of places available. I consider it a basic human right for parents to prepare their children for a future in a multi-cultural society by opting out of segregation from the age of five.

Let's look closely at the evidence, surveys and opinion polls. The demand is there, the parental willingness is there, the committed teachers are there, and, most importantly, the children are there. Let's not narrow the wonder and glory and variety of the child into protestant or catholic. Rather let's celebrate the uniqueness of each individual and give them the confidence to grow up as tolerant and forward thinking individuals willing to work to build a united community.

Inquiry

This inquiry is necessary and very welcome. It is right that all sectors within the education system have opportunities to contribute, because only through open and candid investigation and discussion can the barriers to societal unity be broken down. If there is a genuine desire to move Northern Ireland forward through this inquiry, I look forward with anticipation to the results.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dorothy McKeating".

Dorothy McKeating (Principal)



PORTAFERRY INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL
HIGH STREET, PORTAFERRY, NEWTOWNARDS BT22 1QU
t: 028 4272 8523 e: dmckeating810@c2kni.net
www.portaferryips.co.uk

Professor Austin UU - Shared and Integrated Education Update on ePartners



Ulster University
Cromore Road
Coleraine
County Londonderry
BT52 1SA
Northern Ireland
T: +44 (0)28 7012 4140/4595
F: +44 (0)28 7012 4918
ulster.ac.uk

18 March 2015

Dear Ms Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)

Shared and Integrated Education update on ePartners;

You might recall that I gave evidence to the Education committee in November 2014 about the ways we had been using ICT to link schools in Northern Ireland to schools in the Republic of Ireland through the Dissolving Boundaries Programme. I mentioned on that occasion that we were starting a new project called ePartners with the aim of using a similar approach to link schools **within** Northern Ireland.

I'm pleased to include with this letter an update on the progress we have made so far and to let you know that the cost of this is working out at around £26 per pupil.

What the E-zine shows is the value of carrying out this work where there is a good mix of face to face contact connected to sustained online interaction and where University students are working to support classroom teachers.

We are currently working with 26 schools and would like to expand the numbers next year to include more schools that are geographically and culturally isolated; we will need financial support to do this and I'd welcome your guidance in determining the best way to do this.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'RSP Austin'.

Professor Roger Austin

Faculty of
Social Sciences

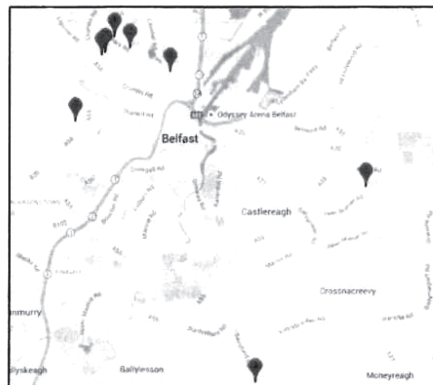
ePartners e-zine

March 2015

ePartners is a program managed by Ulster University to help schools in Northern Ireland use ICT and face-to-face contact to support shared education. ePartners is co-funded by the Department of Widening Access and Participation and the School of Education.

Schools involved 2015

Schools in Belfast



1.	Carr's Glen Primary School
2.	Our Lady's Girls Primary School
3.	Gilnahirk Primary School
4.	St Joseph's Primary School
5.	Black Mountain Primary School
6.	Holy Cross Girl's Primary School
7.	Wheatfield Primary School
8.	Holy Family Primary School

Schools in the rest of Northern Ireland

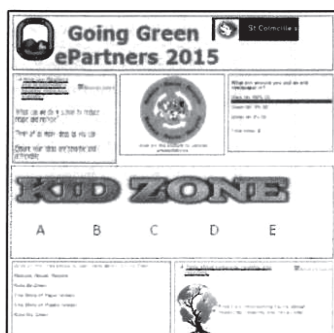


1	Castledawson Primary School	2	St Patrick's Primary School
3	Richmount Primary School	4	St Ita's Primary School
5	Maghera Primary School	6	St Colmcille's Primary School
7	Knockloughrim Primary School	8	St Mary's Primary School
9	Sacred Heart Primary School	10	Oakgrove Primary School
11	Ballysally Primary School	12	St Colum's Primary School
13	Eden Primary School	14	St John's Primary School
15	St Lawrence's Primary School	16	Denamona Primary School
17	St Brigid's Primary School	18	Harpur's Hill Primary School

The schools have been using a Virtual Learning Environment (Fronter) and a Video Conferencing tool (Collaborate) to communicate and discuss issues such as cupcake designs, Vikings, experience with video conferencing, etc...

Fronter

This Frontpage looks brilliant!



So far on Fronter there has been a total of 700 posts from the 26 partnerships. (11/03/2015) The most from one partnership was 145 posts!!!

Some of our favourite posts are displayed in the graphic below:

The Vikings
 "The Viking age in European history was about AD 700 to 1100 ..."

"The name 'Viking' comes from a language called 'Old Norse' and means 'a pirate raid!'"

Cupcake ideas
 I would like to make a sort of marshmallow cupcake, the icing could be marshmallow flavoured and coconut sprinkled on top...

"Thank you for your ideas. We thought that we could have a red strawberry sponge, white chocolate icing and cookies for topping ..."

"Our cupcake idea is an Oreo cupcake with vanilla icing sprinkled with oreos and smarties!!!!!!"

"These are the different cupcakes that I found in Tesco: Chocolate swirl 4 pack £1.00 Smarties 6 pack £1."

Video conferencing
 "...I have used skype with my uncle, auntie and my brother I am really looking forward to the x.c."

"...V.C was easy, hangman was great and we need to get better at noughts and crosses. Group A had fun. BYE BYE"

Face-to-face
 "I really enjoyed the trip to W5... My favourite activity was when we had to make our own cars working in partners with someone in the other school."

Further information about ePartners is available from Professor Roger Austin – rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk

Van Morrison it's nice to hear "there'll be days like these"..."

Face-to-Face

Schools either organise their own face-to-face meeting or come to events at Ulster University, planned for the end of March. Here are just 2 brief reports from schools that held their event early on...

"The schools ... started the morning of Friday the 27th with video conference. On this the children discussed their online contributions and what their expectations were for the tour of Derry's Walls later on in the day. The bus left ...The children from each school then had to sit beside a pupil not from their own school and find out five pieces of information regarding the person sitting beside them. For the tour the



children were then put into their five groups consisting of pupils from each school and together they walked the Walls with the guide getting the history of the city in which they live. Not only was this informative it proved very enjoyable with both sets of pupils mixing very easily so much you were nearly afraid to stop the conversations so the guide could give his

information. The collaboration that we had online helped with this as the children were not strangers to each other and were excited to meet the person in real life as opposed to a face on screen."

"Our schools had their face to face meeting at W5 this week.

It was a fabulous experience for both schools. We



had the opportunity to learn, play and eat together! The technology challenges lent themselves brilliantly to collaboration and the pupils worked together in teams to design, build and race cars. This encouraged lots of discussion. Problem solving and excitement. After working together in teams it was easier to make friends on the climbing activity and on the galleries. We all sat together for lunch, and we saw lots of discussion and sharing of ideas and experiences. It was a really positive experience for all the children, and adults, involved. We are looking forward to meeting online next week and launching our Fairtrade themed collaboration."

You can read more about what other schools are doing in the teachers' lounge online discussion in Fronter.

Impressions

Ulster University students are working in most of the schools through a volunteering initiative called Tutoring in Schools. Here are some of their comments, and the teachers they are working with.

Further information about ePartners is available from Professor Roger Austin – rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk

Partnership between teacher & university students

"Our pupils have just completed a really worthwhile session with the 2 students. Throughout the week our children have experienced some problems saving and retrieving contributions that they have made together with importing images onto discussion boards, these ladies have spent time with us and ironed out all our issues and our children are becoming more confident as a result. Many thanks, I'm learning so many ICT skills myself!" - Teacher

"If at any point the pupils, as a whole class, become loud, the teacher has created a 'time out' phrase whereby he shouts "pineapple, pineapple" and the whole class respond by shouting back "spikey on top". After this, the pupils sit quietly on their seats and behave." - Student



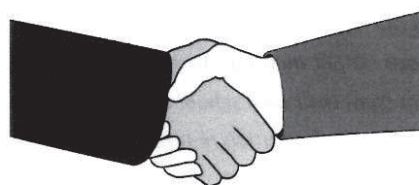
"The teacher offers plenty of support to us when we are leading the class. He will think of ways to help us get the children engaged and often start discussions. We feel very much as though we are working alongside him in this project... We feel very blessed to have such an engaged teacher who loves the project!" - Student

"The teacher is as supportive to us in this project as we are to him; ensuring the class are engaged at the beginning of the project

and supporting our input frequently" - Student

"The pupils in this class are very energetic and enthusiastic about learning and very excited about taking part in the E-Partner project. It is very rewarding to see the pupils getting so involved in something which we have helped organise. The teacher is very inspirational to both the pupils as well as myself and I feel I could learn a lot about organisation and leadership skills from her teaching methods" - Student

Using Fronter for pupils to build trust



"The children absolutely love the "pen-friend" aspect of the project and have found that they have many things in common. It's a great experience of them to enter into the world of "e-mail" to share information." - Teacher

"Fronter worked perfectly for us. Children enjoyed posting about themselves but especially loved reading about the pupils in our partner school. Some great conversations starting already." - Teacher

"After the past two weeks the children in the 2 schools are getting to know each other through Fronter and responding to each other's messages; today after a few teething problems we managed to get

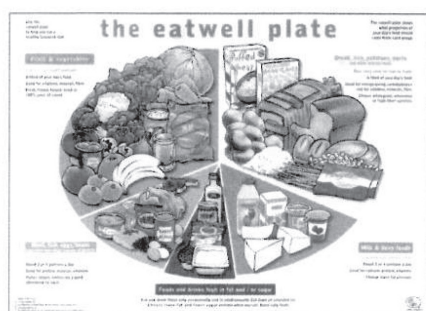
Further information about ePartners is available from Professor Roger Austin – rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk

them talking through the use of Collaborate. After the initial shyness and giggles there was some positive discussion work.” – **Teacher**

“Pupils really enjoyed posting and finding out what their partners like and are interested in. We played a game of snap! Spreadsheet took a little while to type in and to avoid children staring at the computer thinking about interests, we made a paper copy in a worksheet layout for the children to fill in. This helped to speed things up and also allowed for discussion both in class and when the children typed their comments.” – **Teacher**

Working together on joint projects

“Week 2 went very well! We discussed and explained 'Healthy Shopping' to Primary 6. To further highlight this topic, we discussed the 'Eat Well Plate', using suitable activities to make it interesting for the pupils. In keeping with healthy shopping, we used flash cards suggesting sugar swap ideas.” – **Student**



“We explained the Fronter task that we would like them to carry out. This was to visit a supermarket and note down the

various flavours and colours of cupcakes that were available on shelves. We then invited the children to report their findings into the discussion board on Fronter.” – **Student**

“They have all been using the discussion boards on the Fronter page to discuss their ideas and concepts and all seem willing to engage with one another. They will also be using Collaborate this coming Friday to speak to the school and they will be doing this within their groups. They seem highly amused and are looking forward to this experience.” – **Student**

“They all really enjoy the discussion board with the other school as they really feel as they are getting to know the pupils they are working with when discussing as a group the various different recipes to create” – **Student**

Dealing with technology...



“However, as each pupil within my school has access to an iPad, they were unable to complete certain activities on an individual basis due to not having Adobe Shock Player. However, I made sure to turn this negative into a positive, and solve the problem by completing this activity as a

group and using one computer which allowed the pupils to work as a team and communicate effectively with each other."

- Student

"Limited resources within the school means that each child does not have their own computer, however allocating them into their ePartner groups from week 1 has helped them work as a team through all activities. As a result pupils have been open to all suggestions made about their new product and have even mentioned that their ePartners may have different suggestions."

- Student

"'Collaborate' was not as successful as we would have liked it to have been due to poor internet connection, however eventually we got it to work and both schools were able to communicate effectively over the webcam and come up with their final cupcake ideas. The chance to actually see the pupils in the partner school via webcam made the whole project become even more exciting for the pupils."

- Student

Working with Pupils...

"The beauty of working with younger school children is that they are less aware of the difference in backgrounds and cultures than older children may be. To children aged 10 or 11, friendship is friendship; it is this pure and simple nature that makes the E-Partnership so easy! The children are being exposed to other backgrounds in a natural way, using learning and fun as the primary focus. The

children are engaging with their partner school well on the discussion boards, and are freely sharing their ideas and coming up with compromises to ensure that everyone is pleased. I believe this helps the children to develop key negotiation skills as well as team work abilities."

- Student

IT Surgery

Remember if you need any help regarding problems with Fronter and Collaborate get in touch with Eoin. If it is a problem with login details your question would be better put to C2K.

If you would like to arrange a video conference session with Eoin to discuss any technical problems you are having send him an email –

coyle-e12@email.ulster.ac.uk



Further information about ePartners is available from Professor Roger Austin – rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk

Professor Austin UU

Connecting every school in Northern Ireland to shared education; lessons learned from the Dissolving Boundaries Programme

1. The challenge

At present the Department of Education says that around 20% of schools in Northern Ireland have had no involvement in any form of shared education. This presentation offers one way that these schools could be connected while also offering many others who have had some inter-school contact, a model to extend and deepen their partnership.

2. Blended learning

2.1 Blended learning is used to describe contact between schools which is based on a mixture of using ICT (Information Communication Technology) and face to face contact.

2.2 Evidence from the Dissolving Boundaries Programme which ran from 1999-2014 shows that there are considerable benefits to linking schools in this way.

3. Lessons from the Dissolving Boundaries Programme

3.1 The DB programme linked 50,000 young people aged 8-17 in Northern Ireland with young people of the same age across the border. 2,600 teachers in 570 schools, a mix of special, primary and post-primary were involved. The programme was funded by the Departments of Education in Belfast and Dublin but managed by the Schools of Education at Ulster University and Maynooth University.

3.2 **Lessons for teachers; the key role of meeting and planning.** Teachers from linked schools met at the start of the school year and planned the focus of their work, how they would use both real-time video-conferencing, a Virtual Learning Environment and a face to face meeting with their partner.

3.3 **Lessons for teachers; embedding work in the curriculum;** the outline plan indicated what activities would take place over a whole school year and in every case, teachers embedded their work in the curriculum of their respective schools. This included how the ICT work would relate to the expectations from CCEA about the ways that ICT should be assessed. Many different areas of the curriculum were used, ranging from science, enterprise, history, languages, history and the environment. This meant that a very wide range of teachers were involved, not just specialists in ICT.

3.4 **Lessons for pupils;** both internal and external evaluation showed that even a year after they had completed their involvement in the DB programme there were noticeable differences between pupils who had been involved in the programme and matched pupils in the same schools who had not. These included a greater degree of respect for difference, a stronger capacity for team-work and cooperation and significantly enhanced ICT skills. Pupils enjoyed having an audience for their work and were highly motivated to produce their best work.

3.5 Lessons for programme coordination. Although the University took the lead in managing the programme, it worked in close partnership with C2K, CCEA and the Education and Library Boards. This ensured that a wide variety of different types of school were involved, that ICT provision was appropriate and that ICT work was compatible with CCEA requirements.

3.6 The University employed 2 staff to run the programme by matching schools, (to ensure that classes were of roughly the same age and ability) providing training for teachers, monitoring the learning that had been planned and administering grants to schools to support the work.

Teachers felt strongly that there was a need for 'third party experts to train, support and encourage teachers in this specific area of education'. (online discussion on the role of ICT in shared education)

- 3.7 **Costs**; schools were given a grant of £350 towards the cost of face to face meetings and in most cases this was supplemented by the schools. Teachers who completed the agreed work programme were given a grant of £500 in their first year of involvement reducing to £200 p.a for any subsequent years. The average cost per pupil of taking part was £75 per annum. On average, schools stayed with the programme for 4 years.

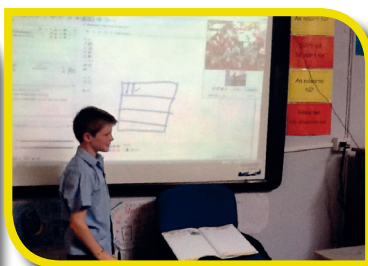
4. Possible implications for shared education

- 4.1 Much of the work done in shared education to now has been based on moving young people physically from place to place; insufficient attention has been paid to the role of ICT as a means of extending contact between teachers and pupils through ICT.
- 4.2 This type of contact not only makes use of the existing ICT infrastructure in every school in Northern Ireland but does so in a very cost-effective way. Furthermore, the skills that young people develop in using ICT for sustained contact with their peers are just as important for the work place as they are for community cohesion.
- 4.3 Using a blended approach to contact, both ICT and face to face, increases the potential for every school, irrespective of its geographical location, to be part of the shared education programme.
- 4.4 A short pamphlet, 'The Role of ICT in linking schools; emerging lessons from the Dissolving Boundaries Programme', has been sent to every school in Northern Ireland to raise awareness of the potential of ICT. (copies available for the Education Committee)
- 4.5 The University of Ulster is currently running a programme called 'ePartners' which is modelling a blended learning approach by providing student mentors to work alongside teachers in cross-community partnerships.

Professor Roger Austin

School of Education, Ulster University, Coleraine

The role of ICT in **linking schools**; emerging lessons from the Dissolving Boundaries Programme, 1999-2014



The Dissolving Boundaries programme, funded by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and by the Department of Education and Skills in the Republic of Ireland, has linked 50,000 young people, 570 schools and 2,600 teachers on cross-border work over 15 years, using ICT as the main means of communication, supported by a face to face meeting for the teachers and the pupils. The programme has been managed by the School of Education at the University of Ulster and the Education Department at Maynooth University.

We summarise in this paper key lessons that have emerged about the best ways to use this kind of blended learning; we hope this will prompt discussion of possible implications for policy and practice in shared education in Northern Ireland.

1. Optimum conditions for linking schools

Research on the Dissolving Boundaries programme and others around the world suggests that links work best when the following conditions are present;

- 1.1 The link is for a **whole school year** - this gives teachers time to become familiar with the technology and for children to develop relationships.
- 1.2 The link is based around **regular online contact** through both a VLE and video-conferencing, **supplemented by face to face contact** relatively early in the year.



- 1.3 Teachers from linked schools are given the **responsibility to plan the focus of the work together**, including the use of ICT and the location and timing of the face to face meeting.

- 1.4 The link is between **two classes in two schools** (rather than larger clusters of schools); on the DB programme, it was noted that when teachers became confident in their use of ICT for working with another school, some principals introduced the programme to more than one class.

- 1.5 On the DB programme, schools were allowed to **continue their involvement in the programme for several years** provided that they had met the terms of their agreement. Even with a reduced grant, most schools chose to continue so that successive year groups of pupils could benefit.

- 1.6 The framework described above worked well with **special schools, primary schools and post-primary schools** with children aged 8-17.





2. Key Theory: the ideas underpinning Dissolving Boundaries project work

The Dissolving Boundaries Programme was strongly influenced by a theory called the ‘contact hypothesis’ which, in simple terms, explores the conditions in which contact between two intercultural groups is likely to lead to positive outcomes for all the participants.

The contact hypothesis says that, wherever possible, contact between two groups should be based around the following:

- 2.1 It should be cooperative rather than competitive
- 2.2 It should be based on group to group rather than one to one
- 2.3 It should be long-term rather than short term
- 2.4 It should be between those of ‘equal status’
- 2.5 It should be given institutional support



3. Operational issues

- 3.1 A face to face planning conference for teachers is **essential** and should be held early in the school year; there are considerable advantages in making this a residential event to give teachers time to develop a working partnership. From experience, we found it was better to match teachers before the event started, rather than leaving this to chance at the event.



3.2 The planning conference should familiarise teachers with what **collaborative learning** means and how ICT tools can contribute to this process; part of this includes an understanding of the central role of group to group contact. Teachers should be trained together in the use of appropriate ICT tools. The use of **Moodle** in the Dissolving Boundaries programme has been particularly effective in providing both a **forum** for the exchange of personal messages and a **wiki** where pupils can contribute to a shared web-space for their curriculum project. The selected VLE should be colourful, child-friendly, intuitive and fun.

3.3 At the conclusion of the planning conference teachers should complete a **learning agreement** outlining in some detail what they plan to do and when; copies of this should be made available to the conference organisers and the Principals of the respective schools. Examples of good practice of successful projects should be provided for teachers, as for example contained in the Dissolving Boundaries Yearbook. An exemplar agreement form could also be provided.

3.4 In many cases, particularly in primary schools, a good starting point for the pupils is the sharing of personal information. In the case of DB, a template was set up into which details could be entered by individual pupils. This information could then form the basis for a database which can be shared and used for data retrieval, graphs etc; more broadly, **any work done should be anchored in the curriculum and contribute to literacy, numeracy and ICT skills** (for example the UICT provision in the use of ICT for 'exchange').

3.5 The Dissolving Boundaries programme found that a **follow-up training session in January was beneficial**. This was a "just in time" training event and was a very useful way of ensuring that teachers were confident in the use of wikis for their collaborative curricular work.

3.6 Teachers reported that the **most successful face to face events** were those where there were maximum opportunities and time for the pupils to build on the relationships from their online groups. While most put the emphasis on **team-building**



through outdoor pursuits there were some very good encounters around curricular topics, such as history, geography, music and enterprise. These contacts often led to increased online interaction.



- 3.7 The DB team found that it was important to have a **defined day towards the end of the year to celebrate success** and to share the work done in the wider school and local community. Dissolving Boundaries Day, usually held towards the end of May, acted as a focus for all 200 classes involved; many held special events for parents, did a live video-conference with their partner school and posted messages to an open forum. This event also gave teachers the opportunity to assess with their pupils what they had learned from taking part in the programme.
- 3.8 A **website**, such as the one used in the DB project, (www.dissolvingboundaries.org) gave all teachers a **single point of access** for the VLE but also provided **key information on upcoming events for schools**, a **repository of research** carried out on the programme and DVD material to inform the general public what the programme was doing.

4. Costs and benefits

Most of the hardware and software needed for linking schools is already in place in each school and this reduces the cost of maintaining the collaboration.


- 4.1 The **average cost per pupil** of taking part in the Dissolving Boundaries programme was **£75 p.a.**
- 4.2 Research and evaluation of the programme indicates that there were **considerable benefits**.
- 4.3 **Teachers gained confidence and competence in using a wide range of ICT tools for collaborative learning; they developed as 'extended' professionals by joint-planning with other teachers** and learning how to embed ICT in their everyday practice. They gained skills in handling diversity by working with teachers and children from across the border.

Teachers also had the opportunity for self-evaluation, comment on the work achieved, which was then presented in the form of a DB Yearbook. This Yearbook served as a showcase for the joint work done, as well as giving exemplar material to teachers new to DB.

- 4.4 Pupils not only gained much **wider understanding of how to use ICT for communication** but through working together with children from another school, learned important lessons about **cooperation, respect for difference and team-work**. The effects of this were **clear even a year after children had taken part** in the programme.

5. Programme Management

- 5.1 Evidence from the programme suggests that effective linking between schools **requires an external agency** to do the following: **match schools** (to ensure suitable ages, ability and curricular focus), **train teachers** in the use of ICT for effective links; **monitor participation** and offer support if there are problems; **administer any grants** for teacher attendance at training or for face to face links. The agency also needs to **evaluate the programme**. There may also be a need for **external evaluation** to supplement internal procedures.
- 5.2 There are advantages to be gained when the external agency is in the **HE sector** since this can enable the ongoing development work to be **quickly disseminated to trainee teachers** and to experienced teachers studying Masters programmes. It also increases the probability that **research and evaluation** of any development work will be consistent with other research priorities. (See below for published research carried out by DB). In the case of cross-border work, there is a strong case for the programme to be implemented by two bodies, one in each jurisdiction. In this model, regular meetings of both partners need to be held to ensure that all aspects of the programme, from school recruitment to training and monitoring are managed in an effective manner.
- 5.3 It is important that there should be **regular meetings of the funding agency** and those that **implement the programme**; **budgets need to be approved for at least a year** with clear agreement on broad lines of expenditure at the outset.
- 5.4 One of the strengths of the DB programme was the range of partnerships it established with other agencies; in Northern Ireland these included C2K, CCEA and the Education and Library Boards. These partnerships meant that there was a synergy between the ICT goals of DB and C2K, that work in DB was aligned with CCEA expectations for the use of ICT and that staff in the ELB's were able in the early stages of the programme to assist in the nomination of schools and in supporting them.



Publications based on Dissolving Boundaries research in peer reviewed journals are as follows:

Rickard, A., Austin, R., Smyth, J., Grace, A. (2014). 'Assessing the impact of ICT enriched intercultural work on pupil attitudes: Evidence from the Dissolving Boundaries Programme.' *International Journal of Information Communication and Technology Education* 10 (3).

Austin, R. & Hunter, W. (2013). *Online Learning and Community Cohesion. Linking Schools* (pp.1-175). New York: Routledge.

Austin, R. (2011). ICT, Enterprise Education and Intercultural Learning. *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education*, 7(4), 60-71.

Austin, R., Smyth, J., Rickard, A., Quirk-Bolt, B., Metcalfe, N. (2010). Collaborative digital learning in schools: teacher perceptions of purpose and effectiveness *Technology, Pedagogy and Education* 19(3), 327-343.

Austin, R. & Anderson, J. (2008). 'Building Bridges Online: Issues of Pedagogy and Learning Outcomes in Intercultural Education through Citizenship, *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education*, 41(1), 86-94.

Austin, R. & Anderson, J. (2008). *E-schooling: Global messages from a small island*. London and New York: Routledge.

Austin, R. (2006) The Role of ICT in bridge-building and social inclusion; theory, policy and practice issues, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 29(2),145-161.

Abbott, L., Austin, R., Mulkeen, A., Metcalfe, N. (2004). The Global Classroom: advancing cultural awareness through collaborative work using ICT. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. 19 (2), 225-240.

Austin, R., Abbott, L., Mulkeen, A., Metcalfe, N. (2003) Dissolving Boundaries: cross-national co-operation through technology in education. *The Curriculum Journal*, 14 (1), 55-84.

External reports on Dissolving Boundaries

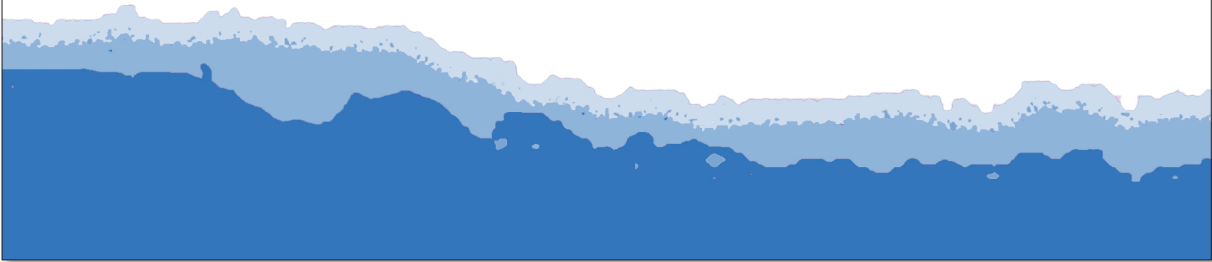
Bonnell, J., Copestake, P., Kerr, D., Passy, R., Reed, C., Salter, R., Sarwar, S., Sheikh, S. (2011). *Teaching approaches that help to build resilience to extremism among young people*. (Research Report DFE-RR119) OPM and National Foundation for Educational Research.

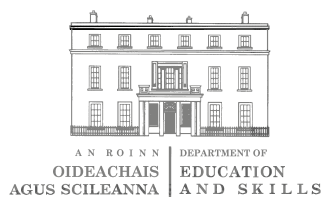
ETI (2012) *Education and Training Inspectorate - Joint Evaluation Report*, Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate - Republic of Ireland - Northern Ireland, Dissolving Boundaries Programme 2010/2011



Further Information:

Professor Roger Austin
School of Education, University of Ulster,
Coleraine BT52 1SA
rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk





JOINT EVALUATION REPORT

Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate – Republic of Ireland
Education and Training Inspectorate – Northern Ireland

Dissolving Boundaries Programme
2010/2011

January 2012

1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

The Dissolving Boundaries (DB) programme uses information and communications technology (ICT) to facilitate cross-cultural educational linkages between schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

In 1998, the Taoiseach (Republic of Ireland) and the Prime Minister (Great Britain and Northern Ireland) took part in an event of historic and educational significance. A video-conference link between a school in Northern Ireland and a school from the Republic of Ireland was established. The occasion marked the first time in which two political leaders had used an ICT resource in schools across both jurisdictions. This virtual meeting led to the start, in 2000, of the DB programme, managed by the Schools of Education at the University of Ulster (UU) and at the National University of Ireland (NUI) Maynooth.

The DB programme is overseen by a steering committee. This comprises representatives from the two programme management teams and also of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) Republic of Ireland and the Department of Education (DE) Northern Ireland, the two co-funding departments of the DB programme.

In June 2010, both DE and DES agreed that a formal evaluation of the DB programme be conducted. This decision arose from a meeting of the North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC), Education Sectoral Committee, where it was decided that a joint evaluation be undertaken to ensure that the DB programme was delivering on its original objectives effectively, efficiently and economically.

1.2 Dissolving Boundaries Programme

The DB programme invites primary, post-primary and special schools in both jurisdictions to form partnerships and to develop a relationship based around a particular curriculum-related project. The DB programme's key aims are three-fold:

- to engage pupils in collaborative, curricular-based projects;
- to promote mutual understanding through collaborative cross-border links; and
- to promote sustainability of the use of technology in schools.

The UU and the NUI, Maynooth operate the DB programme and work directly with the participating schools. This work includes initiating and monitoring school partnerships.

2. Scope of the Evaluation

2.1 Terms of Reference/Evaluation Objectives

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in Northern Ireland and the DES Inspectorate in the Republic of Ireland, on behalf of DE and DES, conducted a joint evaluation of the DB programme during the academic year 2010-2011. This evaluation sought to report on the extent to which the DB programme has achieved its key aims. The impact of the 'enterprise' strand of the DB programme, through which ten cross-border school partnerships have been formed at both primary and post-primary level, was also investigated.

In carrying out this evaluation, ETI evaluated:

- the quality of the leadership and management of the DB programme;
- the quality of the provision in a representative sample of primary, post-primary and special schools; and
- the achievements and the standards attained by the pupils.

The evaluation of the DB programme conducted by the DES focused on four main areas of enquiry. These key areas of enquiry ascertained the quality of:

- management and leadership;
- planning;
- teaching and learning; and
- support for pupils in primary, post-primary and special schools.

Both the ETI and the DES Inspectorate identified the main strengths and areas for development of the DB programme through the examination of relevant documentation, visits to schools, meetings with principals, teachers, pupils and with the DB programme management teams.

Recommendations are made in this evaluation for DE (Northern Ireland), for DES (Republic of Ireland), for the DB programme management teams, for participating schools and for Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland. (See Section 4.2)

2.2 School Selection

The evaluation of the DB programme in the Republic of Ireland was conducted in sixteen schools, including special schools and 'enterprise' schools. A wide range of schools was identified and selected for evaluation, in accordance with the following criteria: large/small schools; urban/rural locations; geographically dispersed schools; all-Irish medium schools (scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge) and single sex and co-educational schools. The school visits took place in March 2011. Ten inspectors from the DES Inspectorate, five teams of two inspectors, conducted the evaluation, working together on a cross-sectoral basis.

In October 2010, ETI selected and visited a representative sample of fourteen schools which comprised the three phases of primary, post-primary and special schools. There was a balance sought in school management type, which included controlled, maintained, Irish medium and integrated schools.

2.3 Methodology

A broad range of data-gathering methods was employed. Following meetings with each inspection team, self-evaluation exercises were completed by the two DB programme management teams, ie, in NUI, Maynooth and in UU. A review of documentation in relation to the DB programme was also undertaken.

In preparation for the DB evaluation, an ETI inspector attended the DB Planning Conference in September 2010. At this conference, teachers from existing DB school partnerships met and planned for the coming year; new school partnerships were also established.

Prior to the school visits in Northern Ireland, every school involved in the DB programme, both past and current, was invited to complete an on-line questionnaire. Approximately 44% of these schools completed and submitted the on-line questionnaire. In the Republic of Ireland, all participating schools were invited to respond to an on-line questionnaire at the end of the evaluation phase. There was a response rate of 31% from schools participating in the DB programme in the Republic of Ireland. The information obtained from the on-line questionnaires in each jurisdiction was analysed to inform this evaluation and to augment the evidence arising from the visits to the sample of schools. (See Appendix)

During the school visit stage of the evaluation in both jurisdictions, the inspectors conducted interviews with school personnel, including principals, class teachers and DB programme teacher co-ordinators, to discuss the whole-school approaches to the programme and to examine the impact the initiative has had on the pupils' learning. The quality of training and support which teachers have acquired for the implementation of the DB programme in their school was ascertained. Interviews with focus groups of pupils were also conducted

to find out about their experiences of the programme. Inspectors evaluated the quality of teaching and learning which pupils receive in the context of the DB programme sessions, including 'live-link' sessions. Pupils' work samples, whole-school and classroom planning documentation were reviewed. Inspectors also reported on pupil progress in the development of a variety of skills.

The schools visited by ETI were invited, prior to the visits, to complete a self-evaluation proforma based on their work in the DB programme, which formed the basis for discussion with the visiting inspector.

2.4 Quantitative and Qualitative Terms

For the purposes of this evaluation, a number of quantitative and qualitative terms are used which should be interpreted as indicated in the tables below:

Quantitative	% of Occurrence
almost all	more than 90%
most	75%-90%
majority	50%-74%
fewer than half	25%-49%
a small number	16%-24%
a few up to	15%

ETI Inspectors relate their judgements to the following six performance levels:

- Outstanding
- Very good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Inadequate
- Unsatisfactory

DES Inspectors relate their judgements to the following four performance levels:

Performance Level	Example of descriptive terms
Significant strengths	Excellent; of a very high quality; very effective; highly commendable; very good; very successful; few areas for improvement
More strengths than weaknesses	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; fully appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; adequate
More weaknesses than strengths	Fair; scope for development; experiencing difficulty; evident weaknesses that are impacting significantly on student/pupil learning
Significant weaknesses	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties

3. Key Areas of Enquiry

3.1 Quality of Management and Leadership

- The strategic leadership of the DB programme in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland is very good. In particular, the programme has contributed to and utilised international research to ensure that it is focused on improving the quality of the learning experiences for the participants. The DB programme management teams do not have a sufficiently rigorous and systematic approach to self-evaluation with the participating schools, focused on the outcomes for the learners; this has been identified in their own priorities for improvement.
- The DB programme seeks to enable learners to develop a clearer understanding of different social, economic, political and cultural perspectives through their experience of dissolved boundaries at many levels. The school links across the two jurisdictions involve different school management type, size and geography. The work of the programme in Northern Ireland is not linked explicitly enough by schools with the aims of the School Community Relations Programme (SCRCP)¹. Specifically where a school is both in the DB and SCRCP programmes, the online environment is not used frequently enough as a tool to promote community relations across a divided society.
- The school partnerships are not rigorous enough in their quality assurance of the final piece of work of the pupils, as a result, there is insufficient focus on the quality of the learning experience; this is an issue for the DB programme management teams.
- The DB programme management teams in both jurisdictions provide very good initial training and on-going support to all the participating schools. This support includes initial set-up and a helpline for technical support.
- Very good communication and collaboration with the partner school has been established and maintained in almost all schools visited as part of this evaluation. In the best practice, in approximately one-third of these schools, the senior management team (SMT) has a clear view of the potential to increase links with the partner school outside the parameters of the DB programme. In a small number of school partnerships, methods of communication such as video-conferencing, telephone and e-mail contact are used to monitor progress and to adjust plans as necessary. In Northern Ireland, almost one-third of the schools report a lack of consistent reliability in the use of the technology to support the programme. An over-reliance on one mode of communication, in a few instances, has led to limited contacts with the partner school. It is recommended, as identified by DB programme management teams, that consideration be given by teachers to planning for and utilising the alternative forms of communication available through the programme.
- There is very good management and leadership of the DB programme in a majority of the schools visited. This evaluation highlights the need to ensure that the DB programme does not lie solely with the ICT co-ordinator or class teacher involved, but that the principal, SMT and staff are clearly aware of its impact on the quality of learning. In schools where best practice was observed in both jurisdictions, it was found that participation in the DB programme is highly valued and that capacity building among members of the teaching staff is developed so that the future sustainability of the benefits of the programme within the school is ensured. In these schools, there is an evident strong spirit of collegiality and co-operation among the teaching team.
- In the Republic of Ireland, there is very good provision for the DB programme in schools where a significant cohort of pupils from various countries and of different religious backgrounds was enrolled. In these schools, the DB programme enables the pupils to work well in teams, thus breaking down barriers within and outside the school. In a few

1 SCRCP was replaced by the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education policy on 24 March 2011. Findings and recommendations would apply to the new policy.

schools, however, inspectors highlighted the need to set clear expectations for ensuring equality, diversity and the inclusion of all pupils.

- In a small number of schools in the Republic of Ireland, it was found that there was insufficient emphasis on ensuring that the DB programme, over time, involves more classes and increases the number of school partnerships made.
- There are very good opportunities for the effective professional development of teachers. For example, at the planning conference, the participating teachers are trained well in the use of the virtual learning environment, with a particular focus on effective learning/teaching through the use of digital technology. In addition, the teachers view examples of completed projects. This sharing of good practice, however, is not developed sufficiently and there is insufficient rigour in the evaluation of the outcomes of the school projects for the learners.
- There are effective links with a range of stakeholders. In Northern Ireland, the DB programme management team links with C2K, the Curriculum Advisory and Support Services (CASS) of the Education and Library Boards (ELBs), and the Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to ensure that the DB programme supports the Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC) to meet the current and future needs of learners. In both jurisdictions, the liaison with the Joint Business Council (JBC), comprising the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Irish Business and Employers' Confederation (IBEC), ensures a greater emphasis on the development of pupils' entrepreneurial skills through jointly-presented projects.
- The programme makes very good use of ICT facilities in a safe and secure environment. The DB programme management teams ensure that there is a high profile given to e-safety and to pupils working in a secure on-line environment. The teams have planned for the ongoing progression in the use of elements of ICT, for example, widening the communication from forums and wikis to include class blogs, podcasts and photo-sharing activities.

3.2 Quality of Provision

- The overall quality of the provision of DB in the schools visited during the evaluation ranged from satisfactory to very good; in most schools, it was good or very good.

3.2.1 Quality of Planning

- The quality of the school planning documentation in relation to the DB programme is good in most of the schools evaluated, particularly in established partnerships.
- The DB programme management teams place strong emphasis on the importance of detailed action planning at the outset of each partnership. Most of the schools (89%) who responded to the on-line questionnaire in the Republic of Ireland reported that an action plan for the DB programme with the partner school had been formulated. In Northern Ireland, 61% of the schools incorporate the DB programme into the School Development Plan for the school. (See Appendix) There is, however, a variation in the quality of planning. Where a culture of planning is well-established in the school, the clear benefits and positive impact of the planning documentation on the quality of the DB programme provided are evident. In this best practice, in fewer than half of the schools visited, learning intentions are clearly identified, the pupils contribute to the planning process, there is considered use of learning activities and there is evaluation of the impact on pupils' learning.
- In the least effective practice, the planning consists of a list of activities to be completed, with limited evaluation on the learning attained by the pupils. In these schools there is insufficient clarity in the planning to incorporate cross-curricular themes, to facilitate progression in the pupils' learning and to ensure that the learning from involvement in the DB programme is disseminated more effectively within the school.

3.2.2 Quality of Teaching and Learning

- In the majority of schools, the quality of the teaching and learning resulting from the DB programme is very good. The teachers provide high levels of enthusiastic and effective support for their pupils' learning.
- In most schools, the DB programme has facilitated a greater emphasis on the learning process and encouraged the participating teachers to focus on effective learning and teaching strategies. Almost all schools implement a broad range of teaching approaches in the delivery of the DB programme. Most of the schools who responded to the on-line questionnaire in both jurisdictions reported that teachers used a greater range of teaching and learning strategies as a result of their participation in the DB programme.
- There is a strong, inclusive ethos within most of the school partnerships. This encourages participation from all the children, including in particular, those children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools. The nature of the on-line learning environment is motivating and appropriately challenging given the openness and transparency of the learning and participation by each child. In Northern Ireland, over a ten-year period, a majority of the special schools have been involved in the DB programme. The special schools involved in the evaluation reported that there is limited cognisance of the particular needs of their pupils in the programme. For example, the schools report that there is insufficient face-to-face contact at the start of the partnership to create a more meaningful context for the pupils in special schools.
- In a majority of school partnerships, effective use is made of a range of ICT tools and other resources, which are well matched to specific learning objectives and provide high-quality support for classroom practice. Good learning outcomes are demonstrated through pupils' knowledge of ICT and through their familiarity with the use of a variety of technology.
- The 'enterprise' strand of the DB programme has made a significant positive impact on the outcomes for pupils. Inspectors noted that, as a result of schools' participation in this aspect of the programme, pupils across both jurisdictions were developing very good entrepreneurial skills.
- There is very good alignment between the aims of the DB programme and the curriculum in both jurisdictions. In Northern Ireland, the DB programme management team encourages the participating schools to gain ICT accreditation. There is very good use made of the CCEA support materials in planning projects with a particular focus on the development of literacy. It is timely that the programme management team should now consider a greater focus on the development of numeracy.
- School responses from the on-line questionnaires in both jurisdictions indicate that the purposeful promotion of cross-cultural integration is emphasised. However, inspectors in the Republic of Ireland found that pupils in more than half the schools they visited did not have a deep understanding of the traditions or community of their partner school and that little emphasis was placed by the schools on the exploration of cultural similarity and difference.

3.2.3 Quality of Support

- Very good teaching is evident in special schools in the Republic of Ireland, where tasks are differentiated and where learning targets in pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are linked with specific elements of the DB programme. In the majority of the schools visited, inspectors from both jurisdictions reported that the DB programme facilitates the implementation of differentiated learning activities.
- In most schools in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, inspectors commended the whole-school emphasis placed on having an 'acceptable use policy' for the Internet. Schools ensure that the AUP is signed by parents and pupils. Good practice is also evident through the display of visual resources in the pupils' immediate learning

environment and through pupils' familiarity and understanding of internet safety issues during the DB programme activities.

- Pupil engagement and interest in the programme is very positive in the majority of the school partnerships; the pupils have ownership of the learning. The DB programme provides opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop key skills and knowledge in almost all schools visited during the evaluation. The investigative and practical approaches to learning and the sense of an external audience create high levels of motivation. Whilst the teachers facilitate the setting up of the partnership, the pupils increasingly take responsibility for the outworking of the individual projects.
- Given the examples of the high levels of learning by the pupils, not enough teachers maximise opportunities for the summative assessment of the learning, in particular, thinking skills and personal capabilities. The formal recording of the attainment of pupils and the tracking of their progress in the DB programme is not sufficiently rigorous.

3.3 Achievements and Standards

- In most of the schools, the pupils engage in their learning enthusiastically and with good levels of independence and confidence. The pupils have good opportunities to communicate in a range of meaningful curricular contexts, enabling them to apply and develop a range of skills across the curriculum, for example, communication and ICT skills.
- The DB school partnerships provide very good opportunities for the development of a wide range of the pupils' skills such as thinking, personal and social skills. For example, the pupils engage in working collaboratively, applying their organisational and planning skills, and developing their ability to problem-solve and to think critically and creatively.
- Pupils with SEN are achieving well through the DB programme. Through the medium of ICT, the pupils are enabled to overcome barriers to learning and they can better access aspects of the curriculum. Pupil engagement and interest in the programme is very positive and most schools promote the creation of an inclusive environment which supports learning and celebrates achievement. In a small number of schools, pupil engagement could be further enhanced through greater comparability with the profile of pupils in the partner school.
- There are very good opportunities for the pupils to develop their digital and media literacy through the DB programme. In addition, the pupils benefit from interaction with other pupils beyond the boundaries of the classroom. In both jurisdictions, in schools where there was very good practice the pupils experience increased mutual understanding of different perspectives.

4. Summary of Main Findings

4.1 Overall Summary of Strengths

- In the majority of schools, the DB programme achieves its key aims.
- The strategic leadership of the programme in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland is very good.
- The DB programme management teams, in both jurisdictions, provide very good initial training and on-going support to all the participating schools.
- Very good communication and collaboration with the partner school has been established and maintained in almost all schools.
- There is very good management and leadership of the DB programme in a majority of the schools.
- There are very good opportunities for the effective professional development of teachers.

- There are effective links with a range of stakeholders.
- The DB programme makes very good use of ICT facilities in a safe and secure environment.
- The overall quality of the DB provision in most schools is very good.
- The quality of the school planning documentation, in relation to the DB programme, is good.
- In the majority of schools, the quality of the teaching and learning is very good.
- In most schools, the DB programme has facilitated a greater emphasis on the learning process and has encouraged teachers to focus on effective learning and teaching strategies.
- There is a strong, inclusive ethos within most of the school partnerships.
- In a majority of schools, effective use is made of a range of ICT tools and other resources.
- The 'enterprise' strand of the DB programme has had a significant positive impact on the outcomes for pupils.
- There is very good alignment between the aims of the DB programme and the schools' curricula.
- Pupil engagement and interest in the DB programme is very positive in the majority of the school partnerships.
- In most of the schools, the pupils engage in their learning enthusiastically and with good levels of independence and confidence.
- The DB school partnerships provide very good opportunities for the development of a wide range of the pupils' skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs are achieving good standards of work through the DB programme.

4.2 Overall Recommendations

Dissolving Boundaries Programme Management Teams

- The DB teams should facilitate the schools in developing more rigorous and systematic action planning and self-evaluation processes.
- The DB team should ensure a greater focus on special schools in Northern Ireland in the school partnerships.

Schools

- Schools should disseminate the learning from involvement in a DB partnership across all classes and ensure that progression in the pupils' attainments and learning experiences is carefully planned for, tracked and evaluated.
- The boundaries between mainstream and special education should be dissolved further.

Education and Library Boards (ELBs) in Northern Ireland

- ELB officers should be made aware of the depth and quality of the work achieved through the DB programme and should assist in the dissemination of the examples of effective practice, for example, through the Area Learning Communities.
- ELB officers should disseminate the pedagogical approaches through ICT from DB programmes in the further development of the Schools Community Relations Programme (SCR²).

2 SCR² was replaced by the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education policy on 24 March 2011. Findings and recommendations would apply to the new policy.

Department of Education (DE)

- DE should encourage the DB programme management team to identify more clearly the links for schools between the work of DB programmes and other initiatives such as SCRP, Extended Schools, Specialist Schools, and the Entitlement Framework.
- DE should ensure that the outcomes of the DB programme are linked more clearly to the principles of the Cohesion, Sharing and Inclusion policy.

Department of Education and Skills (DES)

- The DES should encourage a renewed emphasis by the schools on the exploration of cultural similarity and difference within school partnerships.

5. Conclusion

The overall provision in respect of the DB programme in both jurisdictions is of a high quality. Some very good features of highly effective practice have been reported in each of the areas of enquiry evaluated. There are areas for further development in maximising the potential the DB programme has to offer in aspects of its provision. The DB programme has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement. This is a valuable programme supporting high quality work which is being undertaken in the participating schools.

ETI Analysis of Online Questionnaires – 44% response

Management Type	Primary	Post Primary	Special	Total
Maintained	17	4		21
Controlled	11	3		14
Integrated	2	1		3
Special			3	3
Total	30	8	3	41

Key ETI responses received from online questionnaire:

- all the schools are aware of the key aims of the DB programme;
- 61% of the schools incorporate the DB programme in the school's development plan;
- in 63% of the schools, there is dissemination of the work in DB across the whole school;
- all schools agree or strongly agree that involvement in the DB programme has clearly led to 'dissolved boundaries' amongst the pupils and staff;
- 71% of the schools have carried out an evaluation of the benefits for the school of involvement in the DB programme; 54% of the schools have responded to the findings of the evaluation;
- 99% of the schools agree or strongly agree that there is a positive change in pupils' values and attitudes, e.g. open-mindedness, acceptance, self-confidence, empathy, sense of curiosity, as a result of participation in the DB programme;
- 99% of schools expressed the view that the DB programme provides value for money; and
- 98% of schools agree or strongly agree that pupils are more engaged with their learning as a result of their participation in the DB programme.

DES Analysis of On-Line Questionnaires – 31% response

Sector	Primary	Post Primary	Special	Total
	16	10	1	27

Key DES responses received from online questionnaire:

- all schools agree or strongly agree that their school is aware of the key aims of the DB programme;
- 89% of schools agree or strongly agree that an action plan for the DB programme with the partner school has been formulated;
- 85% of schools agree or strongly agree that there is capacity in their school to support and sustain the DB programme;
- 89% of schools agree or strongly agree that teachers use a greater range of teaching and learning strategies as a result of their participation in the DB programme;
- 93% of schools agree or strongly agree that the DB programme in their school links purposefully with other aspects of the curriculum;
- 96% of schools agree or strongly agree that the DB programme in their school makes effective use of a range of ICT tools and other resources;

- 96% of schools agree or strongly agree that there is very good support for pupils in the on-line environment regarding ICT safety;
- 89% of schools agree or strongly agree that they would like their school to continue its involvement in the DB programme in the future; and
- 85% of schools agree or strongly agree with the view that the DB programme provides value for money.

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Professor Brandon Hamber

Submission to the Committee of Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Professor Brandon Hamber

Incore (International Conflict Research Institute)
Ulster University

24 October 2014

Introduction

Northern Ireland remains a society emerging from conflict. While a peace agreement has been made, aspects of Northern Ireland society remain deeply divided. It is my view—based on over two and a half decades of experience working in societies emerging from conflict around the world and in Northern Ireland for nearly 15 years—that segregated education is a driver of division and needs to be addressed urgently.

There is of course sensitivity around the language used to describe Northern Ireland's education system. I will not review these debates here for two reasons. Firstly, others have already dealt with this issue comprehensively (Hansson et al., 2013), but secondly, because in many ways, the language is not what is important. What is important is that in 2014, almost 90% of children are educated in a school which is predominantly Protestant, or predominantly Catholic. DE figures show that almost half of Northern Ireland's school children are still being taught in schools where 95% or more of the pupils are of the same religion (Hansson et al., 2013).

When I share this fact with politicians, peacebuilders and academics around the world, they are astounded by it and specifically how little progress Northern Ireland has made with regard to integrated education which is considered internationally as a fundamental building block of sustained peace. Integrated education in this context is understood to be at a minimum, in divided societies, a schooling system that is dominated by schools with significant proportions of children of diverse traditions and backgrounds attending together.

That is not to say that segregated schools are inherently bad schools—many serve their children well, with an excellent academic education. However, it is questionable whether they are able to supply the core skills which a child needs in today's society: the ability to exist, work and play alongside children from other backgrounds within an explicit ethos that names, respects and celebrates diversity of background and belief. As the world globalises this is not only important locally but internationally—segregation is arguably failing our young children in terms of equipping them at an early age with the skills needed to maximise global opportunity. There is growing international research that shows that diversity increases productivity on a number of levels (Page, 2007).

Although those that run segregated schools would probably disagree, and separate or faith schools are not necessarily divisive (Hughes et al., 2013), research has found that segregating children on grounds of religion in a way that limits contact between them and other children generally promotes less positive attitudes of others. Globally, the United States Institute of Peace, one of the largest state funded peace building organisations in the world, concludes that ethnic segregation or integration of schools is an important structural aspect of education, and when ethnic groups are educated separately within the national education system important overt or hidden messages to students are inevitably conveyed about other groups in society (Cole and Barsalou, 2006). In Northern Ireland, research has convincingly confirmed that separate schooling on grounds of religion can create negative social attitudes

of those perceived as the “other” (for example, and among others, Hughes, 2011, Hayes and McAllister, 2009, Niens and Cairns, 2005).

Reasons to Promote and Encourage Integrated Education

Statutory Duty

A recent judicial review (Drumrath judgement May 2014) has reaffirmed the statutory duty of government (Article 64 of the ERO (NI) 1989) to promote and facilitate integrated education. The judge stated the Department needs to “be alive to the A64 duty at all levels”.

Peace and Reconciliation

The linking of integrated education to creating, sustaining and building peace has been ubiquitously asserted over the years. A few examples include:

The Belfast Agreement of 1998:

An essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing.

The Consultative Group on the Past:

The arguments about the ethos or quality of education provided in the faith based sectors have to be balanced against the reality that reconciliation may never be achieved if our children continue to attend separated schools (p.77).

The Peace Monitoring Report (2014) states that “the peace process has lost the power to inspire...without a vision of shared society to sustain it”. President Obama on his last visit to Belfast stated “...issues like segregated schools and housing...symbols of history that are a source of pride for some and pain for others...these are not tangential to peace, they are essential to it...”.

In addition to the broad statements, there is now a plethora of research that shows the benefits of integrated education in terms of attitudes towards those perceived as the “other”, as noted above (for example, Hughes, 2011, Hayes and McAllister, 2009, Niens and Cairns, 2005).

Outside of this sound academic research, what is interesting in that the vast majority of citizens also recognise the value of integrated education in terms of long-term peace. It has been found in a Millward Brown Ulster survey that 8 in 10 respondents (83%) perceived integrated education to be important for the promotion of mutual respect and understanding within a post conflict society (Hansson et al., 2013). It has been concluded that:

Data consistently reports that public support for formally integrated schools remains very high in terms of its contribution to peace and reconciliation, promoting a shared future, and promoting mutual respect and understanding (Hansson et al., 2013, pp.4-5).

In the extensive consultation carried out by the Consultative Group on Past they noted that “many emphasised the importance of education in building a better future and suggested that there should be more opportunities for integration” (Consultative Group on the Past, 2009, p.73).

In other words, hard facts and research aside, the general populace, having grown up in a divided society and using the intuitive wisdom that such struggles often imparts, recognise that integration is needed for ensuring a more peaceful future. Despite this, structurally and politically Northern Ireland is making little or no progress in that regard. This suggests that the key factors holding back integration are at the political level, and within the education

system itself. This is of grave concern, but also means that if the right steps are taken at these levels integration would not be something that the majority of the society would resist from the perspective of the peace process. In fact the opposite is likely, there is a general acceptance that integrated education is key to lasting peace.

Parental Choice and Equality of Provision

Many parents want integrated education. Research undertaken by both NICIE and IEF shows a high level of desire for integrated education. A recent report concludes after reviewing a range of attitudinal data, based on surveys such as Millward Brown Ulster (2008, 2003); Ipsos MORI (2011); Young Life and Times Survey (YLTS) (2003-2011); and Northern Ireland Life and Times survey (NILT) (1999-2010), that support for integrated schools remains high (Hansson et al., 2013). A recent Millward Brown survey found that almost 70% of those questioned were of the view that an integrated school was the best preparation for living in a diverse society. If data is aggregated from Ipsos MORI (2011) with the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT 1999 and 2001) the support for “mixed schooling” has increased from 74% in 1999 to 81% in 2011 (Hansson et al., 2013).

Yet the provision—and therefore the choice—is simply not available to many parents. Indeed there is an inequality of provision. Comprehensive research on the subject has concluded that the main reason for preferences for integrated education not being met is insufficient numbers of shared spaces to accommodate demand (Hansson et al., 2013).

I have heard it said that the fact that integrated schools only make up 7% of the school population, about 22,000 children, is evidence in itself that there is no desire for integration. Those who say this are simply casting aside the number of available places and geographical availability of integrated schools, as well as historical realities. As has been pointed out, any level of integration was “a considerable achievement in the midst of conflict and within a divided society” (Hansson et al., 2013, p.3). The merits of the integrated movement in Northern Ireland have been studied and lauded the world over, but strangely they go underappreciated in Northern Ireland.

Parents who want an integrated education for their children do not currently have equality of access as compared to those who want to send their children to Catholic or Protestant dominated schools. Globally there is a move to recognise the right of minorities to send their children to schools of their choice, normally as an alternative to a secular state sector. This, of course, should be supported. In Northern Ireland, however, the situation is reversed where parents who want to avail of integration, which is generally the norm in other societies, have to argue for the right to integration.

In other words, there is a serious inequality in terms of the rights of parents who want integrated education. As with most inequalities, the context can work in such a way that some parents do not even know their rights are being violated when they are forced to choose a school based on a limited number of options in a context where this has become normative. In this context, the argument that parents’ “choice” is evidence of a desire for segregation, and when seen in the light of research evidence in favour of integrated schooling, is illogical and based on a set of limited premises. It is unlikely that “choice” for integration will take place if the system and structure do not change, and the inequality in the rights afforded to those who want integrated education will endure.

I will now say something about the distinction between “Integration” and “Sharing”.

Integrated Education

An integrated school brings together children from all religious and ethnic backgrounds. Some non-integrated schools say that they are integrated, because they have a mixed school population often with a small minority of children from one background or another. This is a positive development. But limited desegregation is not the same as integration. Integrated schools are integrated not only in terms of significant numbers of pupils from

different backgrounds, but also in terms of ethos. Integrated schools have an explicit ethos to recognise and celebrate diversity. Integration means that children learn about each other's backgrounds and cultures in a spirit of equality within the school, the best environment to offer the opportunity for lasting and significant contact. In a truly integrated school, there should be no dominant ethos to either assimilate or "accommodate" children from other backgrounds. For example, while some Catholic schools claim to be "integrated", the reality is that the dominant ideology of the school, its iconography, its celebrations, its culture, are by definition, Catholic. This makes it extremely difficult for children from other backgrounds to feel that they or their beliefs and culture have equality of position within the culture of the school.

As with building peace in any society, Northern Ireland requires children to be brought together from the earliest possible age, not just for occasional contact, but in order to build meaningful and deep friendships with those from other backgrounds which can last into adulthood, forming a generation with a higher degree of mutual understanding and respect than current generations. Other divided societies continue to learn from the work of the Integrated Education movement in Northern Ireland, yet within Northern Ireland, there appears to be little political will to support this ground-breaking and internationally recognised movement.

Shared Education

Shared education—that is, separate schools with some shared resources, pupil contact and collaboration between them (Hansson et al., 2013)—has a benign ring to it. At face value, sharing and contact between groups is, of course, positive. The research in the area is promising showing, among other benefits, that the type of intergroup contact shared education offers can lead to more positive relationships and perceptions of others, and build inter-school collaboration (Blaylock and Hughes, 2013, Duffy and Gallagher, 2014). If the logical outworking of shared education is that there should be a focus on how all schools can be made more inclusive (Hughes et al., 2013) this is a step in the right direction.

In many senses, however, the move to shared education merely proves the obvious and what has been well-established in international research for decades, that is under certain conditions contact between groups can promote positive views of the other (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). Of course, any increased contact between school-age children and schools representing different traditions is to be welcomed. But as a recent research on shared education notes, an environment that seemingly reinforces a mono-cultural order can limit the potential of such programmes (Hughes, 2013). It is added "it is hardly surprising that pupils, who meet with peers from the 'other' community for short periods (albeit sustained over time) and in a highly structured setting, struggle to develop friendships that can be maintained outside of the school setting" (Hughes, 2013, p.206).

In other words, contact programmes taking place within an overall segregated context are—despite their positive indicators—essentially a sticking plaster on a system that is largely not conducive to creating positive attitudes between groups. It is possible to argue that shared education might incrementally change the system, and result in cross-community activities taking place at the heart of the community over time (Borooah and Knox, 2013). But equally, questions have been raised as to whether the initial experiments will continue to be supported once philanthropic sources of funding dry up (Hansson et al., 2013), and what the future is for shared education making a real and lasting impact within a segregated system that it tacitly endorses.

It is, from a policy perspective, counter-intuitive to set up a range of new programmes to bring children into meaningful contact with one another through various collaborative ventures—at great expense financially and in terms of resources (e.g. timetabling, travel time, busing children)—when the context itself is going to continually undermine any potential achievements, unless this is part of a wider strategy to fundamentally change the context.

Of course, there are many reasons as to why the context cannot be changed instantly, and we must foster contact where we can, but to lose sight of the fact that the most logical place to foster contact is in the classroom on a day-to-day basis is missing the most obvious long-term and sustainable solution.

The Ministerial Advisory Group's Report on Shared Education was a missed opportunity to name the fact that while sharing might be encouraged, integrated education is the logical pinnacle of shared education. The resultant proposal of 10 shared education campuses will mean children going to school in the same place, but remaining separate, in separate uniforms. The message this gives to children is a dangerous one as the extract from the United States Institute of Peace quoted above conveys—that is, it is a step too far to allow children to be educated together in all subjects every day as a unit. While shared education projects are a necessary starting point for many schools, shared education should not be considered the end point for education in Northern Ireland. The ultimate goal must be to break the stranglehold of the major sectors who have vested interests in keeping education segregated, and to move to a position whereby the default setting for education in Northern Ireland is that children go to schools that are integrated in number and in ethos.

Recommendations

The Department of Education should find ways to promote and encourage the provision of more integrated places in Northern Ireland by:

1. Supporting the expansion and development of existing integrated schools;
2. Actively pursuing ways to enable schools to transform to integrated status. This will require schools to be supported, in some cases for a number of years;
3. Ensuring that schools embarking on shared education projects are supported and enabled to understand the option of progressing to pursue integrated status, and supported to do so;
4. Ensuring that as part of the shared education agenda, resources are in place to promote and facilitate integrated education as the most intensive and sustainable form of sharing;
5. Ensuring that integrated education representatives have a place at Area Based Planning bodies, and other decision making bodies, so that each area can be required to make fair and equal provision to meet parental demand for an integrated school;
6. Enacting the recommendations in the International Review Panel on Teacher Education in Northern Ireland, which points to the need for a desegregated approach to teacher training;
7. Planning ahead for the transformation of the education system to become fully integrated by the year 2024. This would include making clear commitments and plans for the expansion of integrated education in future Programmes for Government and strategies such as Together Building a United Community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I welcome shared education only as a series of steps towards achieving a fully integrated education system in Northern Ireland. I would urge the Committee to attend to local and international research which shows clearly how essential this is to long term reconciliation and stability, and to note the evidence on parental choice which shows that, despite the strength of sectoral interests, there is a growing appetite and readiness for fully integrated education. Integration should be viewed as an opportunity rather than a threat, and a key building block to sustainable peace. This is how it is viewed the world over by experts working on peacebuilding in range of societies.

I urge the Committee to be bold in its recommendations and set a timetable for full integration. This will truly offer children the best opportunity for the future locally and globally, and give Northern Ireland a rightful place as an exemplary peace process rather than one that is viewed internationally as having made significant steps but is still hampered by sectoral interests that maintain divisions that have fuelled the conflict over the years and continue to do so. Without this the society will constantly remain at risk of ongoing and future conflict.

About the Author

Professor Brandon Hamber is Director of the International Conflict Research Institute (INCORE), an associate site of the United Nations University based at the Ulster University. He is also an Associate of the Transitional Justice Institute at the university. He has recently finished a term as a Mellon Distinguished Visiting Scholar in the School of Human and Community Development at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (2010-2013). He was born in South Africa and currently lives in Belfast, where he has been working since 1996. In South Africa he trained as a Clinical Psychologist at the University of the Witwatersrand and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Ulster. Prior to moving to Northern Ireland, he co-ordinated the Transition and Reconciliation Unit at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in Johannesburg. He co-ordinated the Centre's work focusing on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He was a visiting Tip O'Neill Fellow in Peace Studies at INCORE in 1997/1998. He was also the recipient of the Rockefeller Resident Fellowship (1996) and was a visiting fellow at the Centre for the Study of Violence in Sao Paulo, Brazil. He has consulted to a range of community groups, policy initiatives and government bodies in Northern Ireland and South Africa. He has undertaken consulting and research work, and participated in various peace and reconciliation initiatives in Liberia, Mozambique, Bosnia, the Basque Country and Sierra Leone, among others. He has written extensively on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the psychological implications of political violence, and the process of transition and reconciliation in South Africa, Northern Ireland and abroad. He has published some 40 book chapters and scientific journal articles. He is the author of "Transforming Societies after Political Violence: Truth, Reconciliation, and Mental Health" published by Springer in 2009, and published in 2011 in Spanish by Ediciones Bellaterra. His most recent book, edited with Ingrid Palmay and Lorena Nunez, is entitled "Healing and Change in the City of Gold: Case Studies of Coping and Support in Johannesburg" and was published by Springer in October 2014.

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Professor Hughes QUB Centre for Shared Education

Briefing Notes from the Centre for Shared Education at Queen's University to the Committee for Education, Northern Ireland Assembly

The Centre

The Centre for Shared Education was established by the School of Education in Queen's University in May 2012.

Vision

We are an applied and interdisciplinary Centre committed to researching and promoting evidence based practice in all areas of shared education. Shared education is broadly defined as,

Collaborative activity between schools from different sectors that is underpinned by a commitment to reconciliation objectives and can contribute towards school improvement, access to opportunity and more positive intergroup relations in divided societies.

We are particularly interested in the role of shared education in societies that are divided on ethno/religious lines, and our work is underpinned by a commitment to the principle that all schools have role to play in promoting social harmony.

Mission

Our mission is to promote shared education as a mechanism for the delivery of reconciliation and educational benefits to all children. This mission is delivered through 3 core strands of interlinked activity:

Research

The Centre supports a programme of comparative national and international research that aims to enhance understanding of school-based sharing, the collaborative process, and associated outcomes. Our work is theory driven and empirically based, and we work in partnership with leading experts from a range of academic disciplines.

Programme

A major Programme for Sharing Education (SEP) in Northern Ireland is delivered through the Centre. SEP offers a model for exploring the possibilities of sharing in a deeply divided society that is seeking to build peace after a long period of violent conflict. The model can be shared globally and we are currently working with academics, policy makers and practitioners in other divided jurisdictions to develop similar programmes.

Education and training

We have an established training programme for practitioners in Northern Ireland, and we have offered in-country courses to other jurisdictions. Our aim is to consolidate and extend existing training provision and to develop a short course programme that can be tailored to meet the requirements of practitioners in a range of sharing contexts. In addition, we are in the process of developing Masters pathways in Collaborative Education and Intercultural Education. We anticipate that these programmes will be delivered in regular and online formats.

In this briefing we present the rationale for shared education in divided societies and offer a summary of our research and programme activities. Drawing on our work to date, we present the Shared Education Continuum, which has been developed as a conceptual model for

representing the stages involved in developing and delivering a partnership or programme. We conclude with an assessment of the value of shared education in situations of ethno-religious division, and a consideration of enabling and inhibiting factors.

Rationale for Shared Education

Since the foundation of the State in 1921, the education system in Northern Ireland has been characterised by separation along ethno-religious lines, tempered only by the emergence since the early 1980s of a distinctly integrated sector and, more recently, by a smaller Irish Medium sector. Currently, around 94 per cent of pupils attend either Maintained (predominantly Catholic) or Controlled (predominantly Protestant) schools (Department of Education (Northern Ireland), 2014).

In the context of a protracted conflict that began in the late 1960s, the separate education system has come under considerable scrutiny (Gallagher, 2004). In 2010, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Owen Paterson, argued that Northern Ireland's segregated schools system involves a 'criminal waste of money' (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2010a). In a speech some days later, Northern Ireland's First minister, Peter Robinson described the education system as a 'benign form of apartheid' (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2010b). Responding to the First Minister's remarks, a Catholic bishop argued that parents should have the right to choose a faith-based education for their children, and that faith schools are a 'hallmark of a stable and pluralist society' (*Belfast Telegraph*, 2010c).

The positions adopted in this exchange of views are resonant with more global debates that concern the right to a separate education (based on ethno-religious criteria) in a pluralist society, against the role that separate schools are perceived to play in perpetuating division and sectarianism (Berkeley, 2008; Gallagher, 2004; Grace, 2003; Short, 2003). Separate school protagonists argue that faith schools are well placed to contribute to the common good because they can provide children with a moral and religious framework that engenders confidence in their own identity, and helps them to be respectful of the beliefs and values of others (Halstead and McLaughlin, 2005). Detractors argue that separate schools, de facto, pose a threat to social cohesion because they lead to a fragmentation of society (Hand, 2003; Judge, 2001; Short, 2003). In Northern Ireland, representative bodies for faith-based education have publically challenged the view that their schools feed inherited prejudice and promote sectarian tension, arguing that faith schools have an important role to play in building the peace (Catholic Council for Maintained Schools, 2007).

Despite the intuitive appeal of 'common' or integrated schools in divided societies, education systems are often characterized by the persistence of separation (e.g. NI, Israel) or, where common schools exist, by a crusade on the part of minority ethnic or religious groups for separate education (e.g. states of the former Yugoslavia). This dominance of the separation theme in divided societies is undoubtedly linked to the relationship between the school as a representation of cultural, political and religious identities, and the sources of tensions that exist between different groups in society (disadvantage; discrimination; competing claims of sovereignty; lack of agency etc.). Hence, in Northern Ireland, despite a long campaign of advocacy for integrated education that began in the 1970s, officially designated integrated schools account for only around 4% of overall provision. Other societies, such as Macedonia, Bosnia and Kosovo, have seen the demise of formerly integrated school systems in the wake of the interethnic conflicts that led to the breakup of the former Yugoslavia.

Accepting the reality of separate education as a legitimate expression of community identity, against the fact that such a system tends to deny children an opportunity to directly experience 'the other', shared education offers a model for building relationships between different groups.

Theory Underpinning Shared Education

One of the most prolific strategies for improving intergroup relations, and the theoretical underpinning of shared education, is the hypothesis that contact between members of different groups can, under certain conditions, reduce prejudice, better known as the 'contact hypothesis' (Allport, 1954). These conditions include contact that promotes equal status between the group members in terms of power, influence or social prestige, encourages the pursuit of common or shared goals, is characterised by cooperation between groups, not competition, and has institutional support or the sanction of appropriate authority figures.

Attesting to the hypothesis' robustness, research supports the potential of contact to reduce prejudice across a variety of situations, groups, and societies. The contact hypothesis has been tested and supported by a range of research methods and procedures. Prejudice reduction has been found in the form of both subtle and direct prejudice (Hamberger & Hewstone, 1997; Pettigrew, 1997), automatic processes associated with prejudice such as implicit associations (e.g., Aberson & Haag, 2007; Prestwich, Kenworthy, Wilson, & Kwan-Tat, 2008; Tam, Hewstone, Harwood, Voci, & Kenworthy, 2006; Turner, Hewstone, & Voci, 2007a) and automatic physiological threat responses to outgroup members (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, Lickel, & Kowai-Bell, 2001). These positive outcomes have been found not only for racial and ethnic groups, but also for a variety of other stigmatised social groups including the elderly (Caspi, 1984), the mentally ill (Desforges et al., 1991), and victims of AIDS (Werth & Lord, 1992). Further, a recent meta-analysis (a statistical procedure examining the results of multiple studies) by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) of 515 studies and more than 250,000 participants in 38 nations found conclusive evidence that intergroup contact typically corresponds with lower levels of intergroup prejudice. A relationship that is enhanced when contact is structured according to Allport's conditions.

Since its original formulation, research on the topic has increased rapidly and extended in new directions (Hewstone & Swart, 2011). In recent years, significant progress has been made towards understanding the underlying process of when contact is most likely to be effective, as well as how contact promotes more harmonious intergroup relations. In addition to the original optimal conditions, research suggests that contact situations which provide the potential for cross-group friendships to develop can be extremely effective. However, it is important to note that structuring contact situations to engender opportunities for cross-group friendships to develop requires repeated contact that is intimate and sustained rather than superficial in nature (Davis, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011; Pettigrew, 1998). The introduction of these scenarios which invokes many of the optimal conditions, facilitates self-disclosure, and provides the time and space for friendship developing mechanisms to occur.

Research also has explored the psychological mechanisms which underlies the relationship between contact and prejudice reduction. A number of variables have been investigated and a second meta-analysis conducted by Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) reveals the critical role that affective responses, such as intergroup anxiety, empathy, and perspective taking, play in the reduction of prejudice. Expectations of negative consequences for oneself during intergroup encounters, from the outgroup directly or from the reactions of the ingroup, can lead to high levels of anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) which may lead to awkward interactions (e.g., Shelton, 2003; Wilder & Simon, 2001) or in some cases to the avoidance of contact all together (Plant & Devine, 2003; Shelton & Richeson, 2005). Research consistently demonstrates that positive experiences of intergroup contact have the ability to reduce expectations of negative consequences therefore reducing experiences of anxiety.

Additionally, intergroup contact, particularly where it is more intimate and may lead to the development of cross-group friendships, has been found to enable participants to take the perspective of, and empathise with, members of the 'out' group leading to improved intergroup relations (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Swart, Hewstone, Christ, & Voci, 2010). Contact appears to have the strongest impact on prejudice by reducing negative affect, such as intergroup anxiety, and by inducing positive affective processes, such as empathy and perspective taking.

It is important to understand that contact is not a panacea for prejudice or the improvement of intergroup relations. It is only under key conditions and through specific psychological mechanisms that positive, sustained intergroup contact may illicit more harmonious relationships. At the Centre for Shared Education, we have expertise in the theoretical and practical underpinnings of intergroup contact and have used this expertise to inform the structure of shared education supported through our programmes.

Network Theory and Collaborative effectiveness

Shared education is also underpinned by a range of theoretical perspectives which are broadly termed network theory and interrelated research which focuses on the characteristics of collaborative effectiveness. Importantly collaboration between schools should be thought of as activity which ultimately leads to school improvement.

Katz and colleagues (2008; 2009 & 2010) have developed a networked learning theory of action and propose six key features which define successful and effective networked learning communities (Katz & Earl, 2010). These features include: a clear purpose and focus for the collaboration; strong relationships which connect individuals/institutions and provide social capital; the type and extent of collaboration; creating opportunities for collaborative enquiry and professional reflection; strong leadership which supports collaboration; opportunities for support and capacity building for individual and collective learning to take place. If these characteristics are present both within schools and forged between schools they are likely to create the conditions in which schools can improve. Other related research which focuses on collaborative effectiveness in educational contexts has also been influential (Atkinson et al., 2003; Higham & Yeomans, 2009; Hodgson & Spours, 2006; Woods et al., 2006).

In addition, Wenger's communities of practice (1998) has been useful in this context in regards to discussions about the formation of networks, through joint enterprise, mutual engagement and the formation of a shared repertoire of resources. Wenger's (2000) descriptions of effective communities of practice identify how organisations such as schools act as social learning systems and are capable of creating porous boundaries and bridging processes between each other and thus off-setting organisational myopia (Muijs et al., 2010) and creating conditions in which schools can in collaboration, share expertise, resources and create new knowledge and develop a type of collective competence (Boreham, 2000).

Research evidence demonstrates that effective collaboration can help schools improve in terms of: improving pupil performance and engagement (Chapman & Muijs, 2014; Chapman, Muijs, & Collins 2009; Chapman, Muijs, & McAllister 2011; CUREE 2005; Hadfield & Chapman 2009; Hadfield et al., 2006); impacts upon school leadership (Chapman, 2008; Hadfield and Jopling 2012; Hargreaves 2010; Kubiak and Bertram 2010; Harris, 2008); and on teacher development, performance and motivation (Ainscow, Muijs, and West 2006; Chapman 2008; Chapman, Muijs, and Collins 2009; Hadfield and Jopling 2012; Hadfield et al., 2006; Harris and Jones 2010; Ofsted 2011; Muijs, West, and Ainscow 2010). School collaboration and networking is also promoted as a strategy for offering wider curricular choice and broadening opportunity in order to meet the diverse needs of pupils (Muijs, West, and Ainscow 2010; Pring 2009).

Centre for Shared Education Research Activity

Research undertaken by members and associates of the Centre can be categorised as follows:

- Background or foundational literature
- Intergroup contact
- Evaluation and context of shared education
- Impact of Shared Education

Background and foundational literature

Output in this category represents a foundational framework within which to locate the origins of shared education. Gallagher (2004) provides a starting point locating and comparing the education system in Northern Ireland with other societies where there is ethnic or racial division. Set within this context, education is considered as a vehicle for promoting a shared and more cohesive society. Gallagher (2005) argues that the largely separate education system which exists in Northern Ireland perpetuates ethnic division in a society trying to emerge out of conflict. Similarly, Hughes (2010) argues that separate education system may promote both ethnic and cultural isolation amongst children. Gallagher (2004; 2005) outlines how over recent decades, a series of educational initiatives have sought to mitigate the impact of ethnic division and improve community relations. These initiatives are represented as having limited impact and a case is made for the collaborative approach that characterises shared education (Gallagher, 2005).

A number of studies from Queen's University (Atkinson et al., 2007; Donnelly and Gallagher, 2008; O'Sullivan et al., 2008) and wider (Russell, 2009; Oxford Economics, 2010) sought to ascertain the extent and context of inter school collaboration to provide baseline data for the first shared education programme. Atkinson and colleagues (2007) provided a significant review of literature on interschool collaboration; Donnelly and Gallagher (2008) explored the existing context of collaboration between schools and concluded that the principle of collaboration was met with enthusiasm by schools.

Alongside this research, Fishkin and colleagues (2007) carried out a deliberative poll in an ethnically divided market-town in Northern Ireland. The poll focused on exploring parents perspectives on education; elements of this poll identified that parents were largely supportive of the idea of schools working co-operatively. This literature helped build a case for shared education and more broadly, intersectoral collaboration between schools, in turn, this led to securing significant funds from Atlantic Philanthropies and International fund for Ireland for the Sharing Education Programme.

Intergroup contact

The concept of shared education is underpinned by 'Intergroup contact' theory, and a number of research studies have explored the context and the quality of contact between pupils who engage in shared educational activities. This body of literature (Hughes, 2010; Hughes et al., 2012; Hughes, 2012; Hughes, 2012a; Hughes & Donnelly, 2012; Hughes & Donnelly, 2012a) indicates a number of important findings:

- Separate schooling can be divisive whereby minimal and superficial contact between pupils can lead to physical and cultural isolation.
- The Sharing Education Programme offers a potentially more effective contact model than previous 'short term' educational initiatives.
- Sharing offers significant community relations benefits and improved intergroup relations.
- Pupils who engage in shared education demonstrate reduced levels of anxiety; demonstrate positive action and more trust towards members of the other ethno-religious community.

One of the Centre's largest research projects is the exploration of intergroup contact in post-primary schools in Northern Ireland. Funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, this project is a 5-year longitudinal study designed to explore young people's attitudes and experiences of intergroup contact within various school contexts. The first phase of the research began in June 2011 when we conducted an online survey with all Year 8 pupils in approximately 70 postprimary schools, these pupils will be surveyed each year of their post-primary experience as they move from Year 8 to Year 12. As one of the few longitudinal studies of attitudes and experiences of intergroup contact in the UK, the research will shed new light on the complex issues pertaining to schools and intergroup relationships in divided societies. Further, as

pupils progress through their post-primary education, some will have experiences of shared education. As such, this project is uniquely placed to follow these pupils and to compare their progression with those of their classmates from across Northern Ireland.

Currently in the final year of data collection, we have had the opportunity to analyse cross-sectional data collected from the early years of the project. This research demonstrates that opportunities for contact with members of the 'other community' at school are associated with more positive intergroup attitudes and experiences. Comparing Controlled, Maintained, and integrated schools, findings indicate that pupils attending integrated schools generally outperformed pupils in Controlled and Maintained schools on measures of intergroup contact and outgroup attitudes. For example, pupils in integrated schools reported more experiences of contact, higher quality contact, and a larger number of cross-group friends than pupils in Controlled and Maintained schools. These results point to the role that the diversity within the pupil body population may have in experiences with and attitudes towards members of the other community; therefore, a second set of analyses were conducted to explore in more detail the make-up of the pupil body within the Controlled and Maintained sector schools in our sample.

While Controlled schools primarily draw pupils from the Protestant community and Maintained schools primarily draw pupils from the Catholic community, there is a broad range in the percentages of 'other' group members within each of the sectors. Therefore, in addition to three original school categories – Controlled, Maintained, and integrated – further school categories were created based upon the percentage of the 'other' community within the school. We classified schools that had 10% or more of their school body from the other religious community as 'super-mixed' schools. Further, we classified schools that had 5-10% of their school body comprised of pupils from the other religious community as 'mixed' schools. In addition, we examined the group of respondents who were a clear ethno-religious minority in their school, Catholic students attending a Controlled school or Protestant students attending a Maintained school, whom we refer to as the 'numerical minority' group.

Comparing these new categories – mixed, super-mixed, and numerical minority - with single identity Controlled and Maintained schools (less than 5% of the other community in attendance) and integrated schools, we see a new pattern emerging. In general, pupils from single identity school, regardless of whether it was Controlled or Maintained, reported equivalent scores, while the pupils attending schools with a more heterogeneous school body reported more favourable responses. For example, pupils attending super-mixed and integrated schools did not differ from each other in the amount of reported contact, the general contact quality, and the number of cross-group friendships. As such, it seems that the opportunity for contact regardless of school type is a crucial factor in promoting more positive cross-group relationships. Further, these beneficial effects of increased opportunity for contact on outgroup attitudes are driven by a large extent to the perception of positive ingroup norms. We can conclude then that the opportunity for contact and the formation of cross-group friendships in a climate of supportive perceived norms, rather than a generally conducive school ethos exclusively, are the key contributory variable that account for the more positive outgroup attitudes in the more mixed schools.

Cross-sectional analyses of the longitudinal data also reveal key differences between pupils in their experiences of intergroup contact and their attitudes towards members of the other community. Comparative analyses of the level of relative deprivation that a child experiences, measured in the form of free school meals, reveals that pupils receiving free school meals reported less pleasant interactions, more experiences of negative contact, were more anxious interacting with members of the other community, and believed that their own community would be less likely to approve of intergroup contact than those who were not receiving free school meals. They also reported lower levels of empathy and trust, and less positive attitudes than those who were not receiving free school meals. In the context of empirical evidence that posits a relationship between social deprivation and more negative experiences

of conflict, it follows that negative intergroup interaction is more likely to be the norm for those experiencing greater levels of deprivation.

Evaluation and context

There are a number of studies carried out recently which evaluate or provide contextual data on sharing and collaboration between schools. An evaluation of the first cohort of the Sharing Education Programme (FGS McClure Watters, 2010) provides perspectives from pupils, teachers and school leaders. Knox (2010) provides a non-formal evaluation of 12 partnerships in SEP1, this report reflects the perspective of teachers and school leaders and focuses on four key areas, implementation, impact, sustainability and how shared learning and school collaboration can shape policy. Studies by Duffy & Gallagher (2012; 2012a; 2014a 2014b) evaluate number of school based partnerships and identify effective practice and conditions which are most likely to lead to sustainable partnerships.

Our largest context driven work to date, the Foyle Contested Space Partnership, (see also Duffy & Gallagher, 2014b) explores shared education initiatives within contested spaces (Morrissey & Gaffikin, 2006). Contested spaces tend to be characterised by bounded containment where individuals are limited in their exposure to the other community because of intra-area movement, a lack of concerns about the workings of the other community, and fears of travelling to the other community; with many of these fears being sustained by intergenerational and peer influences.

Schools within Derry/Londonderry face a unique challenge that is compounded by historical division, political violence, and a unique geography, namely a river, which sustains ethnic division and effectively locates the Protestant minority on one side and the Catholic majority on the other. However, evaluation suggests that the partnership has demonstrated effective movement of over 1000 participants across the contested space and into each other's communities over a regular and sustained period of time. Shared learning, teacher collaboration between participants has had the effect of reducing anxiety about the other and normalising the experience of shared education.

Research reveals that relationships between pupils are forming that extend beyond the classroom; for example, pupils are meeting each other outside of school and through social media. Through various educational seminars and parental showcase events, the partnerships have encouraged greater engagement between parents and schools. And through the use of schools and other venues across the city as a conduit, the partnership has successfully encouraged interaction and movement into the other community. A key finding is the significant impact of the relationship that has developed between schools and external agencies. These agencies, presenting in shared classrooms, support teachers in the delivery of the social need themes and share resources. An example of note involves the relationship between schools and the PSNI.

In 2011 the Catholic Church and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools [CCMS] have, as part of a peace building strategy, developed a strategic partnership with the Police Service for Northern Ireland [PSNI], endorsing a programme which encourages Catholic schools to develop links with the police, including access to classrooms. This strategy however, has met with some resistance in a number of predominantly nationalist communities. Parents and local community representatives have voiced their concerns in national and social media outlets. Parents have concerns that the PSNI will use access to schools as a long term strategy for recruiting Catholics. Others argue that poor relationships between the police and the community continue, despite recent police reforms as part of the peace process. Moreover, the PSNI should not have access to what has been described as neutral learning environments. However in the partnership the PSNI regularly visit many of the schools, some of which are in Nationalist communities. The police have delivered lessons on internet safety, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. Interviews with PSNI representatives reveal that the partnership enables the PSNI to access pupils across the city particularly in shared settings. While there are two maintained schools where PSNI are still not welcome,

parents do not object to their children visiting their partner schools where the police deliver lessons to shared classrooms. Key to this success comes from the fact a representative from the PSNI was invited to sit on the partnership steering group and thus developed a close relationship with teachers and leaders.

Given the context of a denominationally divided education system, the Foyle Contested Spaces Education Partnership demonstrates a strategy in which systematic and sectoral boundaries can be challenged. The collaborative network established between the schools offers a model of education that is effectively nascent in Northern Ireland.

Programme Impact

Additionally, research has sought to understand the logistics and benefits of sharing and collaboration, (Hughes et al., 2010; Duffy & Gallagher, 2012; Duffy & Gallagher, 2012a; Duffy & Gallagher, 2014a; Duffy & Gallagher 2014b; Gallagher et al., 2010; Donnelly & Gallagher, 2008; Knox, 2010; FSG McClure, 2010).

Comparisons between schools involved in the SEP and those who were not found that involvement in SEP directly impacts intergroup attitudes and behaviours towards members of the other community and that it does so by increasing cross-group friendships and reducing intergroup anxiety (Hughes et al., 2012). Looking more closely at those pupils participating in shared classrooms, a quasi-experimental design was constructed in which pupils participating with SEP were compared with pupils from the same school who were not participating in the programme. Analyses revealed that involvement with the programme was associated with a reduction in bias towards the ingroup, greater trust towards the outgroup, reduced anxiety when interacting with members of the outgroup, and more positive behaviours towards the outgroup including a greater desire for future contact (Hughes et al., 2010).

This body of evidence suggests that on the whole shared education can positively impact intergroup attitudes and behaviours and that it does so in a manner which is consistent with contact theory. However, not all schools and not all children will enter the programme with the same set of beliefs, attitudes, and experiences, and contact research suggests that some individuals and groups are more open to contact than others (see Dixon et al., 2005).

To investigate this possibility two shared education partnership from localities with varying degrees of current, and historical, intergroup tensions were examined (Hughes, 2013). The first partnership had been relatively less affected by violence during the Troubles and current community relations are considered to be stronger than other areas in Northern Ireland. The second partnership was considered a 'hotspot' during the Troubles, experiencing a high number of conflict-related incidents, and current community relations are quite strained with a number of contentious interface areas. Analysis of interviews and focus groups reveal that there are clear differences in how individuals understood and experienced contact. Where there was greater consonance between school and community values in terms of contact, higher levels of engagement between the school and community, and lower historical tension, pupils expressed more positive responses to intergroup contact. In comparison, where there was greater dissonance, lower levels of engagement, and more intense historical tensions, pupils expressed initial trepidation about contact.

The influence of these contextual differences on initial pupil readiness for intergroup contact is supported by quantitative findings. Survey data suggests that pupils attending SEP schools in more divided areas were less likely to indicate that they had formed cross-group friendships and more likely to report feeling anxious interacting with pupils from the other community than pupils who were in SEP schools located in less divided areas (Hughes et al., 2010). However, it is important to note that even in a more divided context, those pupils attending a SEP school are still more likely than those in non-SEP schools, regardless of whether it is a more divided or less divided context, to view the outgroup more positively.

That shared education has been found to improve intergroup relations for pupils who attend schools that are located in more divided areas, where intergroup relations can be extremely tense is perhaps the strongest endorsement of the programme's efficacy.

Additionally this research outlines, as a consequence of schools collaborating, pupils benefit in terms of enhanced curricular delivery and access to a broader range of subjects and resources. This literature base also highlights how teachers benefit from collaborative practice with other schools both in terms of professional development through shared practice but also personally where, like pupils, teachers involved in delivering shared learning have the opportunity to work with other teachers across sectors - teachers report valuing this opportunity. Further, schools benefit in terms of developing stronger institutional relationships. As a consequence senior leaders and governors across sectors work more closely together and in some cases collaboration becomes a vehicle for school improvement.

Centre for Shared Education Programme Activity

Programme experience within the Centre can be traced back to the implementation and development phase of the Shared Education Programme (SEP1) in 2006. The past seven years have seen this widen out both in impact in Northern Ireland and in transferability to other contexts such as Macedonia. A brief overview of programmes delivered to date can be found below.

Northern Ireland

Sharing Education Programme 1 – (2006-2010) Introduction of Sharing Education into schools in Northern Ireland and development of models and implementation strategies. Throughout these first years of the programme approximately 3,500 pupils from 65 schools benefited from additional educational opportunities across a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities. The first cohort of schools demonstrated the effectiveness of crosssectoral collaborative activity and the potential for schools to form effective interdependant relationships. SEP1 was initially an activity based programme encouraging the development of institutional links and trust through working together.

Sharing Education Programme 2 – (2010-2013) SEP2 partnerships started in September 2010. Working with 72 schools both primary and post-primary and annually approximately 5,000 pupils. In many cases the initial partnerships were based on Area learning Community collaboration. Learning and research from SEP1 looked at the creation of institutional trust and interdependent relationships at all levels of schools. The result is a more robust model of school collaboration based on common need and focusing on societal, educational and economic outcomes.

Sharing Education Programme 3 - (2011-2014) Working with partnerships from all previous programmes (43 schools making up 17 partnerships and over 4,000 pupils) the SEP team is working to take a number of key school partnerships to a higher level of collaborative relationship that compliments current Departmental policy around Area Based Planning. The strategy is to present the Department with key collaborative partnerships that can demonstrate delivery of the curriculum, economically, efficiently and within a shared environment – providing the Department with both an educational and societal return.

Foyle Contested Spaces – (2011-2014) The Foyle Contested Space programme is a schools based initiative made up of 3 post-primary and 5 primary schools in Derry/Londonderry with a total of 1,161 pupils. The core aims of the programme involve offering sustained shared classes, focusing on a number of key areas which impact both on pupils and the community at large. The eight schools have developed an educational programme for pupils between the ages of 8 to 15 which utilises elements of the curriculum to address social issues facing young people. Together they are now sharing expertise, resources, space, pupils, energy and ideas. The issues are addressed through a shared and collaborative approach in schools

using the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding curriculum at Key Stage 2 and the Learning for Life and Work curriculum at Key Stage 3.

Macedonia

On the basis of expertise and experience of the Shared Education Programmes in Northern Ireland UNICEF (Macedonia) invited the Centre to tender for a project aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Macedonian education system to promote and enhance ethnic and cultural diversity. Over two years the QUB team worked with senior officials and educationalists in Macedonia to deliver a national level programme for intercultural education. Drawing on the shared education model (NI) a plan was developed to connect separate Macedonian and Albanian schools on the basis of shared educational outcomes, that would also facilitate the opportunity for extended intergroup contact (thereby addressing 'reconciliation' objectives). The development of the programme involved key officials visiting Northern Ireland for a study tour of educational initiatives currently ongoing, and a series of 'in-country' workshops delivered by the QUB team in Macedonia.

UNICEF has now ended its association with the initiative. However, another NGO (USAID) working together with the Centre for Human Rights in Macedonia is involved in taking the initiative forward. The Centre for Shared Education continues to be involved in a consultancy role. The programme now being delivered is a state wide shared education programme modelled on the activity based SEP1 but with key learning in terms of institutional links and leadership training. The advocacy model of the SEP programmes is also being implemented.

Israel

The work in Israel remains relatively exploratory, with expressions of interest coming to learn more about the rationale and practice of shared education in Northern Ireland. An initial study visit involved presentations and meetings with Israeli and Palestinian educators. Following these initial discussions, a small number of Arab and Jewish schools are undertaking shared education initiatives, and others are under consideration.

A subsequent visit involved more substantial discussions, including an invited presentation on the work in Northern Ireland to the Minister of Education and his senior team. A meeting was also held with a number of members from key Palestinian education NGOs in Nazareth. In addition a working relationship has been established with the Center for Education Technology in Tel Aviv, which in turn has been working for some years with a network of Arab, Jewish, Christian and Muslim schools in the city of Ramleh. Initially this work was advanced through paired schools, but as a consequence of discussions on the shared education model, the schools have decided to build wider network connections. Additional interest has been expressed by Jewish and Arab schools in the Negev and a study visit by Israeli educators to Northern Ireland is planned in Spring, 2015

United States

A collaborative relationship has been forged between the School of Education at Queen's and the School of Education at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Since 2012 staff from each school have visited each other's settings to explore the context of school collaboration. In the Los Angeles Unified School District different school types including: traditional schools, charter schools magnet schools and pilot schools are often required to co-locate on the same site. This poses challenges both at local and systemic levels but also offers significant opportunities for schools to work together and in particular share resources, space and expertise. The context of shared education in Northern Ireland has proved very useful for academics, schools leaders and teachers in the US in regards to how schools collaborate.

Collaboration Continuum

Based on research evidence to date and our experience of programme delivery Duffy, Gallagher, Stewart and Baker (2014) have developed a collaboration continuum. The model offers a conceptual typology of shared or collaborative models of education ranging from schools operating in isolation of one another to a model of collaborative education whereby schools become so institutionally close that a type of interdependency or symbiosis emerges. The continuum categories are described below. It is important to note that the category described at the right end of the continuum is best thought of as aspirational at this point; there are currently no cross-sectoral partnerships in Northern Ireland that can be entirely described as institutionally interdependent. However, given the DENI announcement in June 2014 regarding shared campuses the idea of interdependent cross-sectoral arrangements could be realised given the right conditions. The continuum is intended to describe the diversity and importantly the depth of collaborative initiatives which currently exist in Northern Ireland. The model implies the potential to evolve from unsustainable models of partnership towards more effective models of collaboration which are sustainable and focused on core school activity as opposed to characterised by other shared education initiatives which are often located on the periphery of school activity and less sustainable.

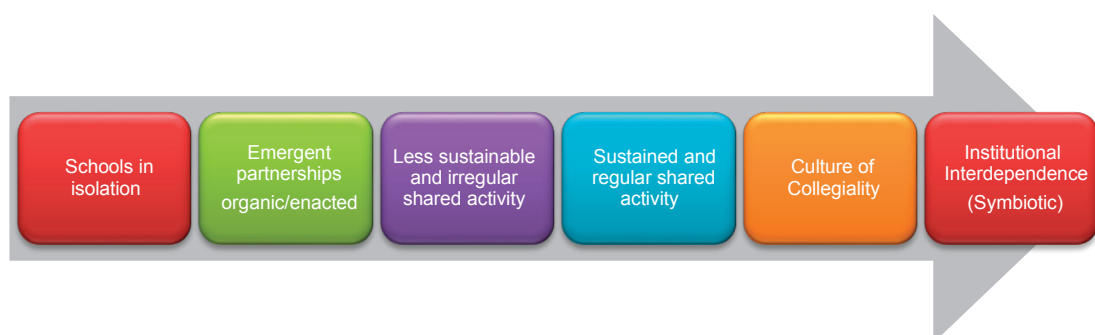


Figure 1: Collaboration Continuum: Duffy, Stewart, Baker & Gallagher, 2014

Continuum descriptors

Schools In Isolation

Schools which are in isolation of one another, where there is little to no collaboration with other schools.

Organic and Emergent

Emergent partnerships are those where collaborative activity first begins. This may be characterised by limited and ad hoc contact between schools. A distinction may be made between organic and enacted partnerships whereby the former is partnership activity motivated by the schools themselves as opposed to partnership activity which is motivated or enacted by an external agency.

Less sustainable and irregular shared activity

Characterised by more frequent contact between schools, activity may be defined by limited teacher and leader contact. Elements of shared learning between pupils may occur. Activity between schools is likely to be programmatic, with defined and short periods of contact such as joint school trips, visiting partner schools of short learning programmes. Collaborative activity is limited in terms of sustainability.

Sustained and regular activity

Collaboration between schools is increasingly regular and well-co-ordinated. Collaborative activity involving staff and pupils occurs over a sustained period of time. Shared learning

between pupils is regular, timetabled and embedded within the curriculum. Senior staff begin to form partnership infrastructure.

Culture of collegiality

Schools have been involved in sustained collaborative activities and are developing strong institutional relationships characterised by high status curricular shared learning between pupils and increased collaborative activities between teachers and leaders. Management and co-ordination of collaboration is distributed across staff. A strong partnership infrastructure is evident and the practice of collaboration begins to normalise. Collegial relations embed. Teachers and leaders have more frequent contact and generate shared resources. New knowledge and shared resources are created.

Institutional interdependence

Schools develop a kind of organisational symbiosis in that collaboration has normalised, is based on common need, involves significant shared learning and where staff, leaders and Governors recognise the value of collaboration. Schools have reached a point where they pool resources in terms of expertise, finances, teachers, and facilities. While schools remain distinct and maintain their separate identities they enter into an interdependent relationship. Collaboration becomes a vehicle to deliver education more effectively.

The Value of Shared Education in a Divided Society

Drawing on our research and programme experience, we see the unique value of shared education as relating to the following:

There is now a considerable body of internationally generated evidence that endorses intergroup contact as a mechanism for ameliorating prejudice and promoting mutual understanding. Shared education affords pupils and teachers an opportunity for the type of contact encounter that is known to be most effective. Hence, the emphasis on educational outcomes can be seen as a *superordinate goal* that schools can only achieve through *working collaboratively*; the nature of the intervention facilitates *sustained contact* that allows participants to develop the type of friendship relationship that is associated with reduced anxiety, prejudice reduction, trust building and perspective-taking. Shared education, because it is curriculum based, requires considerably more commitment from schools than short-term, one-off projects. For the initiative to work, a high degree of *institutional support* is required. Finally, schools participate in contact on an *equal basis* and, by dint of the fact that schools are separated on ethno-religious grounds, *identity is salient* throughout, not least in the form of the uniforms worn by children who move between schools.

Attempts to build community relations through education in divided societies tend to fall into two categories; the establishment of desegregated schools, and the promotion of policy initiatives that support short-term contact initiatives. Often, as is the case in Northern Ireland, both approaches exist as options within the dominant divided system. Research has shown that integrated education, whilst an effective mechanism for relationship building, has only limited appeal – with the overwhelming majority of parents in Northern Ireland and other divided societies where such schools are an option (eg Israel), opting to send their children to separate schools. It has also been shown that short-term contact initiatives, whilst sometimes symbolically important, tend to be limited in terms of positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes impact, and can sometimes exacerbate tensions between groups. The shared education approach bridges a gap between integrated education which has very limited reach, and short-term, largely ineffective, contact initiatives, by offering pupils and teachers an opportunity for engagement that is sustained and curriculum based.

The elevation of educational outcomes as opposed to the foregrounding of reconciliation objectives, enhances the appeal of the initiative in divided contexts amongst stakeholders

who are wary of state sponsored 'community relations' initiatives, fearing that the latter are designed to denigrate or assimilate distinct identity groups.

The fact that shared education objectives are consistent with the educational outcomes prioritized by schools can enhance engagement. Unlike other contact initiatives that are often resource-intensive, and perceived as achieving little in respect of educational targets, there are tangible associated benefits to be accrued from participation in shared education.

Educators in divided societies are often fearful of engaging with controversial issues in the classroom. In Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions this is often associated with the absence of appropriate training, and a perceived conflict in the minds of teachers between the role of teacher as a Professional, and the extent to which they (teachers) should be responsible for taking on the ills of wider society. A core strand of the Shared Education Programme is the provision of support for those delivering the initiative - potentially assuaging the fears of those who might be committed to community relations work but are anxious about undertaking it, and better preparing them for it.

Barriers and Enablers

Local Level

Given that shared education is a relatively new educational approach, research and evaluation is essential to help contextualise school partnerships. The local research highlights a number of common logistical challenges that often accompany sharing and collaboration between schools (Donnelly & Gallagher, 2008; Duffy & Gallagher, 2012, 2014a, 2014b; Knox, 2010). These include:

- Location and proximity of partner schools
- Travel time between schools
- Timetabling
- Adjusting to cultural differences in schools

Interviews with teachers and school leaders reveal that proximity, travel between schools and timetabling are the most significant logistical issues facing schools in partnership. Importantly these issues are often interrelated. However the most effective partnerships find solutions to these thus providing key learning for existing and emerging partnerships.

By design, pupils who are involved in shared learning will visit each other's schools and this requires elements of time and travel from one site to another. In some contexts pupils can walk between schools but in other settings transport is required. Schools that are closely located together find it easiest to engage in effective collaboration, but even when schools operate at a distance, innovative approaches to a re-thinking of the traditional school curriculum provide a means by which little or no teaching time is lost. Research from the Foyle Contested Space Partnership suggests that pupils not only enjoy the experience of travelling, but highlight that, in the absence of shared education they would be reluctant or anxious about visiting each other's community given the context of city.

Timetabling differences between schools can present logistical issues as the structure of the timetable often differs between schools. This practical challenge has been overcome through a variety of means, including: aligning sections, but not all, of the timetable; co-ordinating an agreed time for shared learning to take place; and strategically positioning shared lessons on timetables to facilitate travel time.

The practice of shared education exposes pupils and educators to a broad array of differences in terms of cultural practice and, more prosaically, the ways schools are managed and operate. For example in some partnerships, participants talked about cultural differences such as the use of national and religious symbols, cultural terminology, and different

denominational practices and rituals. In other contexts the challenges for pupils have been about adjusting to gender differences in shared classrooms. Others have talked about adjusting to different school rules and policies in their partner school. Many pupils talked about initial anxieties about taking part in shared lessons but over time these anxieties have abated and pupils talk more readily about feeling more confident and enjoying shared education. Teachers have talked about adjusting to differences in approaches to teaching and learning and coteaching. Macro-level

At macro level a particular barrier is the lack of agreed policy around shared education. A number of key policy and strategy documents reference shared education and the value of collaboration between schools in terms of societal, educational and economic benefits. However these have not been presented as part of a coordinated policy strategy and there remains no agreed definition of shared education in policy or legislation. The absence of agreement around definition has led to a policy vacuum. In turn this affects the depth of shared education activity and limits its potential for change. For example the basic understanding of Shared Education being activity between schools from different sectors can be anything from limited activity represented by joint extra-curricular trips to regular and sustained curricular activity leading to enhanced educational outcomes. The absence provides a space to present shared education as being light touch and as having limited potential for systemic change and therefore supporting the current status quo within the education system. A coordinated policy strategy would include a clear agreed definition and would involve a review of key DENI policies and initiatives including Area Learning Communities, the Entitlement Framework, the Sustainable Schools policy and the current Area Based Planning process. This lack of clarity is a clear barrier to the advancement of Shared Education. To the contrary support within policy is a vital enabler.

As such, the most significant enabler for Shared Education would be to create legislation providing a consensus around definition and the basis for development of policy and strategy. Currently the Department has presented its externally supported Shared Education initiatives to date (SiEP, SESP) as being pilot programmes that may lead to future policy. The research and programme evidence from the SEP initiatives of QUB and others provides the foundation for legislation and policy. There is no longer a requirement for further piloting. Legislation is required to move implementation into the system itself rather than being at the pilot level.

Shared education and the theory that underpins it places emphasis on facilitation of cooperative and harmonious encounters and as shown by the quantitative research reported earlier, there is little doubt that attitudes towards the 'out' group do change for the good as a consequence of participation. However, the challenge faced is to ensure that the nature of the encounters does not intentionally or unintentionally suppress the differences that preserve the institutional, social, and political structures which, in turn, can perpetuate stereotypes and prejudices, particularly in contexts characterised by asymmetries of power and status between groups (Abu-Nimer, 2004; Dixon, Durrheim & Tredoux, 2005; Nagda & Derr, 2004). The problem is exacerbated in Northern Ireland where cross-cutting cleavages in the education system are reflected not only in faith orientation but also in social class leading the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education to recommend that the objectives of shared education can only be achieved within a more fully egalitarian system of post-primary education (MAG, 2014).

Duffy and Gallagher (2014a; 2014b) identified a series of collaborative effectiveness characteristics which include: the formation of a strong collective identity, which in turn is supported by a partnership infrastructure; school leaders needing to be involved and supportive of the partnership. An effective partnership is one where personal and professional relationships flourish through sustained and regular contact, and where additional opportunities for collaboration are encouraged and seized. The extent and quality of the collaborative activity between individuals (pupils, teachers and leaders) is important. Effective collaboration should provide opportunities for professional development and

capacity building for teachers and leaders. Collaboration should produce tangible collective commodities in the form of shared resources, new knowledge and joint approaches.

The most effective collaborators are those where shared activities permeate throughout schools and are not bounded or constrained by delineated activities. The most effective and sustainable models demonstrate the capacity to innovate and evolve. Importantly shared learning needs to be located in core curricular areas. When this occurs, the practice of collaboration and shared learning is more likely to become embedded in schools and develop new habits of sustainable activity.

Based on our research, the partnership infrastructure is an important characteristic of effectiveness. This infrastructure is underpinned by supportive advocates at strategic levels, and should include school leaders and committed teachers to oversee the management of the partnership. In some cases we have observed partnerships which have invited representatives from external bodies to assist and advise schools in the delivery of collaborative activity (examples include representatives from community and statutory agencies or local education authorities). Our evidence suggests that the more effective a partnership becomes, the more likely a strong institutional relationship will develop based on mutual benefit. When this occurs schools are more likely to be able to identify common needs and share resources.

Within Northern Ireland, our strongest partnerships provide clear evidence of school improvement outcomes including: sustainable teacher and school leader networks which offer capacity building and professional development opportunities for staff; partnerships share resources, such as expertise, space and equipment; schools generate new knowledge and practice, while working together enables schools to offer pupils a broader curricular choice. Our research also indicates that pupils find shared learning impactful and engaging. Shared education and collaboration offers social benefits, including: the movement of pupils, educators and parents across contested space settings into each other's communities; provides meaningful contact between participants from different cultural and religious backgrounds; and helps form social relationships between participants. In some partnerships, the relationship between schools, and external statutory and voluntary agencies has developed or improved.

Summary

Accepting the reality of separate education in divided societies, against the fact that such a system tends to deny children an opportunity to directly experience 'the other', shared education offers a useful model for building relationships between different groups.

There is clearly an appetite for shared education in Northern Ireland and in other jurisdictions. The Centre for Shared Education at Queen's operates as a hub for research, programme and educational activity associated with the shared education agenda.

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Briefing Notes from the Centre for Shared Education at Queen's University to the Committee For Education, Northern Ireland Assembly

Attempts to build community relations through education in divided societies tend to fall into two categories; the establishment of desegregated schools, and the promotion of policy initiatives that support short-term contact initiatives. Often, as is the case in Northern Ireland, both approaches exist as options within the dominant divided system. Research has shown that integrated education, whilst an effective mechanism for relationship building, has only limited appeal – with the overwhelming majority of parents in Northern Ireland and other divided societies where such schools are an option, opting to send their children to separate schools. It has also been shown that short-term contact initiatives, whilst sometimes symbolically important, tend to be limited in terms of positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes impact, and can sometimes exacerbate tensions between groups.

Accepting the reality of separate education as a legitimate expression of community identity, against the fact that such a system tends to deny children an opportunity to directly experience 'the other', shared education nurtures distinct social identities, whilst simultaneously offering a model for building relationships between different groups. At the Centre for Shared Education at Queen's University we broadly define shared education as,

Collaborative activity between schools from different sectors that is underpinned by a commitment to reconciliation objectives and can contribute towards school improvement, access to opportunity and more positive intergroup relations in divided societies.

Sharing Education promotes sharing and collaboration between schools, where pupils from different schools can learn together and where schools and teachers can share resources and expertise with the aim of developing sustainable institutional relationships. In doing so, the Sharing Education Programme (SEP) is committed to enhancing pupils' educational opportunities, demonstrating how resources between schools can be shared and used more effectively, while providing enhanced opportunities to explore denominational and cultural differences. A core element of SEP involves creating cross-sector collaborative networks of schools which offer shared, regular and sustained learning experiences for pupils in core curricular areas.

The School of Education at Queen's University Belfast has led the way in regards to promoting shared education through research and supporting schools involved in shared learning and broader collaboration. The Sharing Education Programme has been supporting school partnerships since 2007, broadly this has involved 41 partnerships, involving 137 primary and post primary schools and over 10,000 pupils all supported by teacher and school leader networks across Northern Ireland.

The Centre for Shared Education at the School of Education also supports a programme of comparative national and international research that aims to enhance understanding of school-based sharing, the collaborative process, and associated outcomes. Our work is theory driven and empirically based, and we work in partnership with leading experts from a range of academic disciplines.

The collaborative activity supported through shared education responds to claims that integrated education has limited reach, and contact initiatives have been shortterm and largely ineffective, by offering pupils and teachers an opportunity for engagement that is sustained and curriculum based. The elevation of educational outcomes as opposed to the foregrounding of reconciliation objectives, enhances the appeal of the initiative in divided contexts amongst stakeholders who are wary of state sponsored 'community relations' initiatives, fearing that the latter are designed to denigrate or assimilate distinct identity groups. The fact that shared education objectives are consistent with the educational outcomes prioritized by schools can enhance engagement. Unlike other contact initiatives that are often resourceintensive, and perceived as achieving little in respect of educational

targets, there are tangible associated benefits to be accrued from participation in shared education.

A key theoretical underpinning of shared education is based upon the contact hypothesis. As one of the most prolific strategies for improving intergroup relations, the hypothesis states that contact between members of different groups can, under certain conditions, reduce prejudice. These conditions include contact that promotes equal status between the group members in terms of power, influence or social prestige, encourages the pursuit of common or shared goals, is characterised by cooperation between groups, not competition, and has sanction of appropriate authority figures. In addition to the original optimal conditions, research suggests that contact situations which are intimate and sustained, rather than superficial in nature, facilitates self-disclosure and provides the time and space for friendship developing mechanisms to occur. There is now a considerable body of internationally generated evidence that endorses intergroup contact as a mechanism for ameliorating prejudice and promoting mutual understanding. Further, this work suggests that contact appears to have the strongest impact on prejudice by reducing negative affect, such as intergroup anxiety, and by inducing positive affective processes, such as empathy and perspective taking.

It is important to understand that contact is not a panacea for prejudice. It is only under these key conditions and through specific psychological mechanisms that positive, sustained intergroup contact may illicit more harmonious relationships. At the Centre for Shared Education, we have expertise in the theoretical and practical underpinnings of intergroup contact and have used this expertise to inform the structure of shared education supported through our programmes. As such, shared education affords pupils and teachers an opportunity for the type of contact encounter that is known to be most effective. Hence, the emphasis on educational outcomes can be seen as a superordinate goal that schools can only achieve through working collaboratively; the nature of the intervention facilitates sustained contact that allows participants to develop the type of friendship relationship that is associated with reduced anxiety, prejudice reduction, trust building and perspective taking. Shared education, because it is curriculum based, requires considerably more commitment from schools than short-term, one-off projects. For the initiative to work, a high degree of institutional support is required. Finally, schools participate in contact on an equal basis and, by dint of the fact that schools are separated on ethno-religious grounds, identity is salient throughout, not least in the form of the uniforms worn by children who move between schools.

Pupils who engage in shared education demonstrate reduced levels of anxiety; demonstrate positive action tendencies and more trust towards members of the other ethno-religious community. Further, shared education has been found to improve intergroup relations for pupils who attend schools that are located in more divided areas, where intergroup relations can be extremely tense. This is perhaps the strongest endorsement of the programme's efficacy. In total, research suggests that shared education can positively impact intergroup attitudes and behaviours and that it does so in a manner which is consistent with contact theory.

Shared education is also underpinned by a range of theoretical perspectives which are broadly termed network theories and interrelated research which focuses on the characteristics of collaborative effectiveness. Importantly collaboration between schools should be thought of activity which ultimately leads to school improvement. Given the divided nature of education in Northern Ireland shared education offers a means of creating porous boundaries and bridging mechanisms between the sectors and thus creating the conditions where schools can, in collaboration, share expertise, resources, create new knowledge and develop a type of interdependent and collective competence.

Effective partnerships demonstrate a clear purpose and focus for the collaboration; strong relationships which connect individuals/institutions and provide social capital; the type and extent of collaboration; creating opportunities for collaborative enquiry and professional

reflection; examining how leadership supports collaboration; the types of support and capacity building for individual and collective learning to take place. If these characteristics are present both within schools and forged between schools they are likely to create the conditions in which schools can improve.

At the local level, interviews with teachers and school leaders reveal that proximity, travel between schools and timetabling are the most significant logistical issues facing schools in partnership. Importantly these issues are often inter-related. However the most effective partnerships find solutions to these thus providing key learning for existing and emerging partnerships. At macro level a particular barrier is the lack of agreed policy around shared education. A number of key policy and strategy documents reference shared education and the value of collaboration between schools in terms of societal, educational and economic benefits. However these have not been presented as part of a coordinated policy strategy and there remains no agreed definition of shared education in policy or legislation. The absence of agreement around definition has led to a policy vacuum. In turn this affects the depth of shared education activity and limits its potential for change. As such, the most significant enabler for Shared Education would be to create legislation providing a consensus around definition and the basis for development of policy and strategy.

PTA Northern Ireland



Parents and Shared/Integrated Education

A response on behalf of PTA NI

PTA NI

PTA UK is one of the largest voluntary sector membership organisations in the UK. We have over 13,600 PTA members that represent 1 million volunteers. We are a charity. Children and schools are at the heart of what we do. For almost 60 years we have been supporting PTAs to build parent communities, run effective and efficient organisations that raise money and run activities to support their school.

Within Northern Ireland, PTA NI is working with an estimated 100,000 parents through our 300 PTA members; PTA NI represents the largest group of parent communities in statutory education in Northern Ireland. Based on the 2011 census results, there are an estimated half a million parents with dependent children in Northern Ireland. Through our membership, PTA NI is working with 20% of the NI parent population.

Our membership is representative, comprising 243 primary, 45 post-primary and 12 special schools (respectively 28% of primary, 20% of post-primary and 30% of special schools). PTA NI membership engages across all political and religious affiliations.

PTA NI has an existing reputation in providing access to NI parent opinion. We have supported the Education Committee to gain parent opinion on Common Formula Funding and Area Based Planning, with an emphasis on ensuring representation and geographical spread.

Mission

It is our vision for every school to have the benefit of a successful and supportive PTA to enhance the education and futures of all our children.

To achieve this, our mission is:

- To be the voice for all parents and PTAs
- To provide credible, well research and authoritative support
- To enable PTAs to achieve more and serve their community
- To innovate and inspire as an expert voice
- To be market leaders in the benefits, services and practical tools we offer

Over the next year, PTA NI membership will increase by 10%, growing our parent community to around a quarter of all NI parents with dependent children. By 2018, PTA NI membership will be close to half of all schools.

Parental involvement

PTA NI's specific interest with regard to the Shared Education and Integrated Education policies is parental involvement. We welcome the findings of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Education, *"Parental involvement was seen as crucial to ensuring that shared education becomes a reality.....Barriers to the advancement of shared education outlined by parents included perceived prejudices in the wider community in relation to disability, racism and*

sectarianism and the teaching of religion in schools. Some felt that parents themselves may need to be educated to deal with prejudices they may have which can be passed on to their children”.

The influence parents have on their children’s learning is well document and is expressed in terms of attainment¹. PTA NI therefore welcomes this inquiry’s focus on parents and the need to engage effectively.

PTAs and parental involvement

Our PTA members have a proven track record in parental involvement and supporting the implementation of Shared Education and Integrated Education:

1. Case study 1: Shared Education

After many years of Shared Education, the PTSA at Brookeborough Primary School has forged an excellent relationship with the PTA at St Mary’s PS Brookeborough.

Through the Shared Education programme, children, staff and parents from both the controlled and maintained schools have engaged in Shared Education classes covering respecting difference, choral speaking, drama, history and art projects. Highlights have included the pupils joining together in choral speaking for the Fermanagh Feis. The children won this section and followed on with both schools producing a drama on racism.

This shared working was infectious and led to the PTSA considering working together. The focus was on how to enhance the local village. The objective was for something that visually showed how the two groups had readily taken on a project together. Children from both schools came together with the Friends of St Mary’s representatives and the Brookeborough Parent Teacher Support Group to plant flower boxes in the village. Grandparents also helped. The local community enjoyed the colourful floral display that enhanced the village.

Recently the cross-community Playgroup Committee organised a Halloween disco for 0-P3 age group and their parents. The PSNI provided the music and this was another example of Shared Education in Brookeborough for all the children in the village.

Following a consultation process with parents and the community, the playgroup and two schools are currently preparing an application for a Shared Education campus in Brookeborough.

Both schools, supported by their parent groups continue to look at ways to work together to continue to develop a vibrant community spirit and shared community environment.

2. Case study 2: Integrated Education

Rowandale Integrated Primary School was founded in 2007 by a group of local parents responding to a need for Integrated Education in the area. Continually supported by these and many other parents, the school has grown significantly in the past eight years and today prides itself on providing a wonderful and stimulating environment where 198 pupils are educated together as equals, sharing and celebrating each other’s faiths and beliefs.

1 “Typically parents and caregivers are a child’s first and most interested teachers. This role does not cease to exist when children enter school; in fact, families play a critical role in the education of their children. Working with the school, parents and caregivers can help create collaborative partnerships that support all aspects of a child’s achievement at school”, (Parental Involvement: The Missing Link in School Achievement, Larocque, Kleinman and Darling, 2011). Sacker et al (2002) states that parents have five times more influence on achievement at age seven than school. This diminishes as children get older but parents still have more influence on achievement than school at age 11. Whilst school has much more influence at age 16, parents still have some influence. Desforges, (2003) states that “parental involvement in the form of ‘at home good parenting’ has a significant positive effect on children’s attainment and adjustment even after all other factors shaping attainment have been taken out of the equation”.

Parents founded their own Council to strengthen the school and assist its growth, to foster community relations and share the positive message of integration throughout the area. Children at the school do not experience segregation; they know one another as individuals, not stereotypes and together they explore the diversity of their country. Value is placed on the importance of playing, creating and learning together. Monthly art clubs are run for all children in the area and a Community Playgroup has been opened giving families the opportunity to access an integrated environment at the earliest possible opportunity.

Fundraising by parents is always important to any school but for a newly opened one it is vital and the Parents' Council has organised many events both in the school and the surrounding area which raise money and local awareness of Integrated Education. Whether it be Christmas bag-packing in supermarkets whilst wearing Rowandale t-shirts, successfully gaining sponsorship for the school cross-country kit from local businesses, running the popular annual Christmas craft fair, entering teams in the Belfast Marathon, organising social events or putting on simple fundraising initiatives such as car boot sales, parents are involved in the school and the community with significant benefit. As a direct result of fundraising many items have been provided including cameras, interactive whiteboards, iPads, kindles, e-books and musical equipment. The Parent Council has also successfully applied for grant funding which allowed the school to develop an 'extended care' scheme including a breakfast club and an extensive range of after-school activities. At the heart of these activities is a desire not only to provide for children but also to spread the positive message of integration far beyond the school walls.

3. Case study 3: Parental Engagement

The Parent Teacher Association of Carnalridge Primary School was set up over 25 years ago, and right up until 2010 was exclusively involved in fundraising activities. Since then, it has explored other ways to benefit pupils and the school community. Over the past 4 years, it has introduced new after school activities, such as archery and golf, and assisted with running these by supplying volunteers to help the coaches. The PTA has expanded its work to promote increased engagement between parents and school governors, with the latter becoming much more visible and accessible as a result.

In short, the PTA's focus has shifted from fundraising developing a closer and stronger partnership between the school and PTA, with the benefit felt across the school community.

Opportunities

PTA NI provides a range of opportunities to support and enhance the implementation of Shared Education and Integrated Education:

1. **Giving parents a local voice:** as the only parent organisations that exist within the majority (75%) of all NI schools, PTAs are the prime opportunity by which to engage and consult locally with parents around the implementation of Shared Education and Integrated Education, achieving the recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group. PTA NI is working to ensure every school has a parent organisation that gives parents the opportunity to be part of the school environment, to have a say on what is happening in school and developments that effect their children's education.
2. **Supporting implementation:** as shown by the case studies, PTAs are a valuable asset in delivering activity that supports the implementation of Shared Education and Integrated Education. They bring additional resource and support to help achieve these policies and crucially are the means by which to get parents actively involved, providing ownership and engagement.
3. **National consultation:** with our reach to the NI parent population, proven track record and credibility with parent groups, PTA NI provides a unique opportunity to consult nationally with parents on Shared Education and Integrated Education. This could be used to benchmark parental attitudes towards both initiatives using a demographically

weighted sample, assess barriers to participation and then monitor movement in perceptions and engagement. PTA NI also provides opportunities to understand attitudes in depth with assessment through focus groups and parent representation at the Education Committee enquiry.

Summary

Parents are important in achieving Shared Education and Integrated Education; without engagement parents may become a barrier to the success of both policies. PTA NI has a well-established and extensive parent reach within statutory education. Our PTA members are already working to support the implementation of Shared Education and Integrated Education. This provides a range of opportunities to consult and engage parents as well as harnessing PTAs to help deliver Shared Education and Integrated Education policies.

Rowendale Integrated Primary School



Mrs Frances Hughes Principal

18 Clarehill Road

MOIRA

BT67 0PB

Telephone: 02892613946

Email: Info@RowendaleIPS.co.uk

Website: www.RowendaleIPS.co.uk

24 October 2014

Response to Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Rowendale Integrated Primary School in Moira opened in September 2007, with an intake of 18 pupils. It now has an intake of 198, is oversubscribed and currently has a development proposal before the Minister to expand to 2 form entry. This proposal received 130 letters of support initially.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the call for evidence from the Committee on their Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education. The Department for Education has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education in Article 64 of the 1989 Act. The subsequent judicial review earlier this year and the ruling by Justice Treacy clarified this duty and how it applies to education policy. This ruling should enable the expansion of integrated education to meet local demand.

At present we do not consider that the Department is fulfilling its existing duty with regard to integrated education. As part of the judicial review an attempt was made to provide a definition of “shared education”. We are strongly of the view that any attempt to put a duty on the Department to promote and facilitate shared education would further dilute and impede the Department’s to avoid their existing, and currently failed, statutory duty to promote Integrated education.

Shared and Integrated Education are not the same, neither are they mutually exclusive. It is our belief however, backed up by years of academic research and evidence that shared education is not a viable alternative to integrated education in social, academic or financial terms. Rather shared education perpetuates division, with children being labelled according to the school they attend and the uniform they wear.

Shared Education sustains the segregation. The children remain taught in separate classrooms by different teachers on different topics. There is limited or no attempt to learn about their own or each other’s beliefs to try and break down societal divisions.

It can be described as promoting education apartheid, and whilst we recognise that it is better than no effort being made at all, programmes such as CRED have little lasting impact.

Our parents have chosen integrated education for their children because they wish to have their children from across the communities educated in the same school, by the same teachers, wearing the same uniform and being taught the same things as their peers of different religious backgrounds and none. Lasting and meaningful change can only be achieved by stopping the prejudices and barriers from being built in the first place.

Rowendale, as with other integrated schools, seeks to provide an environment which promotes a united community through celebrating diversity and respecting all cultures and backgrounds all day and every day. It is ingrained in the ethos of our school and we seek to do this not just in the classroom but within our local community, as recognised by the awarding of the Queens Award for Service to the Community to the school in 2009.

We would be happy to meet members of the Committee, either formally or informally to discuss further the key aspects of integrated education. If the Committee wishes to meet pupils, parents, staff or Governors of the school at Stormont we will facilitate that, or would welcome any MLA who wishes to spend time at the school and begin to understand why so many parents seek an integrated school for their children.

Rowandale Integrated Primary

Rural Community Network

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education



Rural Community Network

SUPPORTING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Response to the Inquiry by the Committee for Education by Rural Community Network

For further information contact:

Rural Community Network
38a Oldtown Street
Cookstown
Co Tyrone
BT80 8EF

T 028 8676 6670
aidan@ruralcommunitynetwork.org

October 2014

Introduction

RCN welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Committee for Education's Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education. Our response is informed by a series of public conversation events between November 2011 and June 2012 delivered in partnership with the IEF and local community. These events were designed to:

- Provide parents and communities with information on policy changes in education
- Explore how changes in policy and funding may impact on local schools and,
- Explore the potential for shared and integrated solutions to maintain education provision in rural communities

Overall a total of 419 people attended the 10 events held across Northern Ireland.

Since then RCN has supported rural school communities who have approached the organisation in relation to responding to the Area Planning consultations and some of those schools who have been identified for closure as a result of area planning.

More recently RCN in partnership with Youth Action, NI Youth Forum, University of Ulster, NEETS Forum (Belfast) and Mencap, have engaged with young people living in rural areas (aged 16 – 25 years) to gather their views and opinions in relation to shared education and integrated education. To date one event has been held in Newry with another two events planned for Ballymena and Derry/Londonderry before end of December 2014.

The Nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education

The definition of integrated education is, in our view, reasonably clear both in practice and in law. The recent Judicial Review taken by Drumragh Integrated College in May 2014 of the Department's refusal to allow the school to expand because of the spare capacity within the post primary sector in the Omagh District, further clarifies the definition of integrated education and differentiates it from shared education. The Judge took the view that:

"However, upon analysis I consider that 'Integrated Education' is a standalone concept and the second part of the sentence i.e. 'that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic Pupils' clarifies the type of integrated education that is to be supported, i.e. integration between Protestant and Catholic Pupils as opposed to integration within school of any other distinct sets of pupils. The provision plainly envisages education together at the same school."

Justice Treacy further clarified that a school that has a predominantly Catholic or predominantly Protestant ethos cannot be said to be delivering integrated education because as part of its constitution, as an institution, it is fundamentally oriented to one religious cannon over another. Against this an integrated school strives to achieve an equal balance in relation to worship, celebration and exposure to both faiths.

The Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education which reported in March 2013 defined shared education as:

"Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion."

Both integrated and shared education are to be encouraged in a society, still emerging from conflict and still deeply segregated particularly in rural areas. Whereas the definition of integrated education is clear in law the development of shared education is a more recent phenomenon and can involve a range of contact from schools attending joint one off events to pupils from different schools being educated together on the core curriculum for most of the school day. The spectrum of shared education can span many facets depending on the level of sharing a school wishes to engage in.

RCN is of the view that a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education would be useful in the context of Area planning. In our view, education provision is rationalising within sectors rather than developing grass roots shared solutions which have the potential to be more sustainable in rural communities into the future.

We believe that shared and integrated education can be seen as part of a continuum and that they should not be seen as either/or by policymakers.

Key Barriers

Within many rural communities, segregation remains widespread. Whilst divisions may not be as apparent as in urban areas, they still exist. Patterns of land ownership, patterns of residence and the legacy of the Troubles underpin segregation in rural communities. This has obvious implications for the development of shared education especially at primary level where children are, for the most part, educated within their local community and primarily on a single identity basis. This may be less of an issue at post primary level where pupils travel longer distances to (for the most part) towns and villages to access post primary schooling. However the numbers of primary schools in rural areas are almost double that of the secondary sector, therefore efforts should be made at a primary level to promote shared or integrated education, when young children formulate friendships and attitudes towards others.

Segregation within the education system is a symptom of the wider division in society and this historical legacy is hard to address. In practical terms it may be logistically difficult in

some parts of Northern Ireland, which are still highly segregated, to identify partner schools for shared education work. There may also be an unwillingness within the individual schools to engage in shared education as there is no statute in law.

The concept of shared education is not widely understood amongst parents and the wider community as it is still relatively new. This was evident through feedback received from the events held by RCN and the IEF. Local communities need to be fully informed in relation to this concept and how it can and does shape a more inclusive, shared rural community.

RCN believes that it is critically important that parents and the whole community are involved in planning for education in their area. Again this was evident through the localised events, where parents and members of the community were not aware of the area planning process and how their views and opinions could assist and shape education in their own community.

We acknowledge that this is not an easy task for officials whose previous experience of public engagement may only have concerned school closures and is largely negative. RCN is of the view that the promotion of sharing in schools across sectors (if it can be done sensitively with local community support) offers some hope for retaining some rural schools which would otherwise close.

Currently within the area based planning process, no pathway for grassroots shared education models to emerge has been set out. The Terms of Reference for Area Based Planning published in December 2011 includes: "Identifying realistic, innovative and creative solutions to address need, including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross-sectoral basis."

RCN is concerned that the Education and Library Boards and CCMS have embarked on a twin track process that implements area based planning within the controlled and maintained sectors separately. This twin track process means that shared education options are less likely to emerge from communities. Schools that may have been viable on a shared basis will close leading to further segregation within the education system and longer travelling distances for pupils from rural communities. An obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education should make the area planning process more sensitive to shared solutions where community support exists.

In terms of how a shared school might look and feel, in terms of symbols and emblems displayed, sports played and general ethos, these are difficult issues in rural communities as they are in urban communities. The sports that schools play, the symbols and emblems they display and the ethos they adopt in relation to religion, are existential representations of our communities and our different allegiances and aspirations. These issues can be even more sensitive in areas which were badly impacted by the Troubles and where the descendants of victims and survivors carry a legacy of hurt around what happened to their loved ones as well as a strong sense of identity.

Issues of ethos and identity in shared education must be addressed but this will take time and will involve negotiations that will need to be resourced. The Integrated school movement can offer some learning from the practice of education in their sector over the past 30 years and their approach to issues of ethos and identity. However the context of parents choosing to send their children to integrated schools is different in that it demonstrated a commitment to "shared education" that only a small minority of families made. Approximately 7% of all pupils attending school at present attend Integrated status schools, therefore the concept of parental choice in relation to their children engaging in shared education programmes as well as attending shared schools, needs to be fully considered.

Parents may harbour fears about sending their child to a school where they are in a significant minority. These views were expressed at some of the localised events held by RCN and IEF and explicit fears around sectarian bullying and health and safety were identified.

Shared approaches to schooling appear to work best where two schools from different sectors are relatively evenly balanced in terms of enrolment. Where one school is well below

enrolment threshold and a neighbouring school is above it there is much less incentive for the latter school to enter into a shared education project. This can significantly impact rural areas where there is a potential for a school closure but no willingness for other schools in the geographic area to engage as their own enrolment numbers are sustainable.

Key Enablers

The area planning process, if delivered in a more holistic way with much more input from local communities, could be an enabler for shared and integrated education in rural communities if people are made aware at an early stage and are involved as part of the process. Currently we believe area planning is being done “unto” communities rather than being done “in partnership with them”. To make area planning truly effective will require a completely different mindset from educational managing authorities.

The experience of the shared education projects that QUB have developed and delivered with a range of stakeholders across Northern Ireland are practical examples of what can be achieved and can inspire other schools across the region to explore the potential for shared education. The joint submissions from several of the school partnerships in Fermanagh to the Area Planning process seeking shared solutions is further evidence of the effectiveness of shared education.

Advancing shared and integrated education

The best way to advanced Shared Education is to keep promoting the shared education projects that Queens and other stakeholders have developed across NI. These are practical examples of what can be achieved in local communities and demonstrate the practical, educational and societal benefits. The recent announcement of additional funding for shared education will allow these projects to continue and deepen the links between schools from across different education sectors.

The Department of Education needs to make a clear commitment to shared education solutions and provide a clear pathway for such solutions that have grass roots support to emerge. ELBs need to examine where resources can be pooled and shared within schools in a locality. Shared education should continue to be promoted through the implementation of the CRED policy in relation to the potential for local cross community school partnership projects. These initial partnership projects, whereby children and parents begin to make links in terms of relationships, also break down barriers and fears in relation to the concept of sharing across different sectors.

With regard to integrated education the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education should remain in place. RCN recognise that whilst parental choice for children is paramount, support should be given by the Department to integrated schools wishing to increase their enrolment numbers and capacity to deal with the increasing number of people wishing to send their children to local integrated schools.

Seaview Enterprises Limited

‘mes que un club’

FAO Peter McCallion (Clerk to the Committee)

Education Committee,
Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw,
Stormont,
Belfast BT4 3XX

Submission of Seaview Enterprises Ltd to the Education Committee Inquiry into Shared Education

This submission relates to the experience of Seaview Enterprises Ltd in leading an Expression of Interest application on behalf of schools and tertiary level training and education providers in Lower North Belfast to the recent March 2014 Department of Education call for Expressions of Interest to the Shared Education programme.

Seaview Enterprises Ltd is the social enterprise company of two North Belfast football clubs, Crusaders FC and Newington FC, set up to utilize the power of sport to achieve social goals – notably in education, health and crime prevention – see at <http://morethanclub.org.uk/> Under the banner of the “Mes Que un Club” (More than a Club) programme, the company has worked with over 32 Primary schools and 20 Post Primary schools in its programmes. Paradoxically, perhaps, at the time of the Ministerial announcement of the opening of the Shared Education programme to Expressions of Interest, Seaview Enterprises Ltd was in a better position to lead a collaborative bid than any North Belfast school or any education support body. The evidence we had through the North Belfast Area Learning Partnership was that Post Primary inter-school curriculum collaboration was limited, and Primary level shared education was sporadic, random and sub-optimum for the times that we are in.

As such, we were in an ideal position to develop a shared education Expression – the Lilliput Complex, a shared sports curriculum project based at Loughside Playing Fields, Shore Road, Belfast. The landowner, Belfast City Council, agreed in principle that the land be used for this purpose.

From the outset, we understood that an Expression of Interest from the social enterprise company of two football clubs would be, at minimum, perceived as somewhat “left field”. As such, prior to undertaking the significant work of bid-preparation we sought advice from:

- The CEO of Belfast Education and Library Board, and
- The Minister for Education’s Special Advisor

Neither, at that stage, discouraged us and – in particular – we judged that the process could be an “open process” (ie: there did not appear to be too many “pre-earmarked” projects to make putting significant effort required in bid preparation a nugatory exercise)

Taking advice from the School of Shared Education at QUB, and a cross sectoral sub-group of Principals, as well as the 12 schools concerned, we developed a well founded Expression of Interest (see attached). With bids limited to 12 pages, none could reasonably provide detailed curriculum content or timetabling data.

Critical to the bid to DE was the key requirement for the “endorsement” of the BELB, the lead body in Area Planning. We are, regrettably, of the view that the BELB, through the offices of its

CEO, wrongly and unfairly disadvantaged our Expression of Interest to the Shared Education Campus Programme with the DE panel.

The following, then, sets out our experience with BELB.

- The BELB applied a new (non DE) criteria to our application which was different and distinct from those in the DE Protocol document; in particular, this ‘made-up’, ‘on-the-hoof’ criteria of the BELB was that the land proposed by Seaview Enterprises was not “education land”. Of course, had this criteria have been applied to the “Iodestar” Lisanelly project (using MoD land in Omagh) it would never have seen the light of day;
- The BELB, having indicated to us through senior education staff that they would “not be assessing” any bid and would be acting merely as a “post box” instead decided, mid-stream, to apply an assessment process to submitted Expressions;
- The BELB, in applying their own (ie: not DE’s) criteria, did not make clear to Bidders/Applicants what the process was, despite requests;
- The BELB have not applied their (as opposed to DE’s) process fairly or equally;
- It is unclear whether there was a BELB panel, whether this panel consisted of no-one except the CEO;
- The CEO of the BELB declined to meet us to discuss our concerns;
- The BELB Board have had no part to play in any of this;
- The Chair of the Board, did accede to a meeting, then changed her mind, deciding unilaterally that a meeting was “not appropriate”;
- The BELB determinations on whether to support expressions or not have been made at senior level, below the level of the Board but above the level of the Senior education advisors who engaged with and gave advice on the Expression.

Frankly, the behaviour of BELB, and its CEO is unacceptable. The only conclusion that we could draw was that the BELB is not a fit body to administer or assess Shared Education programme bids in the future. BELB’s ignorance of the issues on the ground was wanton, and its behaviour prejudiced potential benefits to its own Controlled schools within the bid, let alone schools from other sectors.

Seaview Enterprises took legal advice on the potential to judicially review the decision of BELB. Our legal advice was that we would win such a case. However, it would have been a pyrrhic victory. Our Counsel indicated that – were they advising BELB - the best way for the BELB and DE to proceed was be to mark/assess the bid in such a way as to disable its progress. That, we believe, is precisely what happened. And, in receiving a letter of rejection, it was made clear that Seaview Enterprises Ltd (the group the put the bid together with the support of the schools) could not receive – or would be excluded from – feedback from DE or the panel.

From the perspective of Seaview Enterprises Ltd, our core business is Community Relations. Our location is in working class Lower North Belfast. North Belfast is the most divided and segregated quarter in Northern Ireland. There are more NIO Peace Walls in North Belfast than in all other 17 constituencies of Northern Ireland put together. The area suffered, pro-rata, more conflict related casualties than any other. The highly segregated areas are pock-marked with territorial and interface disputes, some of which threaten the stability of the Good Friday Agreement political institutions. The area has high levels of deprivation, high rates of suicide, a high incidence of mental illness, is marked by educational under-achievement and by poor access to the sort of leisure provision provided for in the bid.

Any civil servant seeing an Expression of Interest with such a strong range of committed partners (from all school sectors, from tertiary education, and from the community) as that led by Seaview Enterprises – even if that partnership was in its infancy – would (or should)

immediately seek to support and build on the those efforts. That BELB did not see the opportunity in front of their eyes is the best commentary as to their unsuitability to make future decisions on Shared Education.

Finally, in regard to DE's role, our understanding is that the Shared Education programme had its genesis within the NIO and OFMDFM, probably influenced by the QUB Centre for Shared Education. It did not "transfer" well to DE, a more traditional, staid, culturally conservative Department unused to the flexibility and 'intelligent risk' required to support innovative projects such as the Lilliput Complex proposal.

Conclusion: The conclusion that we draw from a sorry saga are follows:

- BELB is not a fit body to play any determining role in future Shared Education programme bidding;
- That DE lacks sufficient understanding of the community relations 'buttressing' required for school sharing projects emanating from and supported by the community;
- That the Committee consider the merits of devolving future Shared Education programme bidding rounds to the QUB Centre for Shared Education;
- Alternatively, the Committee could consider the merits of appointing an Independent panel by public appointment, to ensure that decisions in relation to future rounds of Shared Education programme funds are assessed by fair process.



Department of Education – Shared Education Facility Expression of Interest Information

THE LILLIPUT COMPLEX: A Shared Educational Sports Campus for Lower North Belfast at Loughside



31st March 2014

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"North Belfast is made up of many small, isolated communities. The area is highly segregated along religious lines and has suffered more, as a result, from sectarian violence than any other part of Northern Ireland..... As a direct result of its highly diverse and segregated nature, the area has failed to fully benefit from many of the initiatives aimed at economic development, with statutory agencies being widely perceived by the local community as not having supported, nor invested in, the social, infrastructural, economic, educational or recreational development of North Belfast. Without doubt, the image of the area has contributed to North Belfast's inability to attract sufficient resources."

Rev John Dunlop & Fr Tom Toner: The Report of the North Belfast Community Action Project

PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Title: The Lilliput Complex, a shared Educational Sports Campus for Lower North Belfast takes its name from Dean Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels Cavehill in Belfast was the inspiration for the novel. Swift imagined that the mountain resembled the shape of a sleeping giant safeguarding the city. Belfast has remembered Swift and Gullivers travels through the street name Lilliput Street (off North Queen Street in the Limestone Road area). By coincidence, Belfast's Lilliput Laundry provided many players for the original Crusaders football team (est 1898) to the extent that the team was nicknamed 'the Smoothers'

Planning Authority – Belfast Education and Library Board

Managing Authorities Involved: In addition to BELB, the project has the support of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

Other Key Organisations: The project has the involvement of many local primary and secondary schools in the locality (details provided in later sections). The bid has also been coordinated and promoted by Seaview Enterprises Ltd. Seaview Enterprises is a not for profit social enterprise, managed by a project advisory board of Crusaders FASC and Newington FC, working within North Belfast and Newtownabbey, promoting good relations, vocational training, education and sports development. Some other key organisations that have formally supported the project include Belfast Metropolitan College, Stranmillis University College, the Integrated Education Fund, Bryson FutureSkills, Fingerprint Learning, NI Youth Forum, Peace Players International, LCAP, Belfast Community Sports Development Network, the Sports Partnership Group, Monkstown Amateur Boxing Club (including the 'box Clever' schools initiative), the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, the Association of Managers in Education, the Irish Football Association. As the land owners, Belfast City Council is also formally supportive of the bid (please see extract from Council Minutes in Appendix 1)

Area Planning: The project proposers have closely studied the Belfast Education and Library Board's Area Plans for Primary and Post Primary schools. These include the following:

SECTION 1

- Area Plan for Post Primary Education Consultative Report, 26 Feb 2013
- Area Plan for Post Primary Education, 26th February 2013
- Area Profile for Post Primary Education, 27th June 2013
- Area Profile for Primary Education, 27th June 2013
- CCMS Viability Audit, 6th March 2013

At a meeting with senior BELB officials, Catherine Burnett and Paul Lawther, on 26th February 2014 it was confirmed that all schools listed in the Seaview Enterprises Ltd led bid in respect of Loughside Playing Fields were considered viable going forward within the context of the Area Planning exercise.

Senior Responsible Officer – Dr Clare Mangan (signed off in Appendix 13)

Early Overview of the Project

The project aims to establish a shared education sports campus on a main arterial route (Shore Road) of Lower North Belfast. With 18 partner schools (all with their own physical education and sports facility deficits), and a host of other educational partners, the project aims to develop a range of shared sports educational facilities, to include a six court indoor sports hall, teaching rooms, sports science labs, fitness suite, and a host of floodlit outdoor sports pitches (various sizes and surfaces). The project can only be realised if the land is forthcoming from Belfast City Council (as the land owners) of Loughside Recreation Centre.

These facilities would allow individual and joint school access to the facilities to deliver physical education, competitive sports and shared classes. There will be many shared topics taught at the facilities ranging from GCSE and A Level Physical Education for the secondary schools, to BTEC's and sports science qualifications, etc. The educational programme for the campus is still very much in the embryonic phase, but the benefits of 'doing something' in this locality far outweigh the economic and educational costs of 'doing nothing'.

For the avoidance of any doubt the location of the project site is detailed in Appendix 2

PROJECT OVERVIEW

SECTION 1

PROJECT OVERVIEW (Cont'd)

The following tables present key information that link directly to the essential and desirable criteria for the programme;

Essential Criteria	Additional Information on Partner Role
Number and Management Type of Schools	<p>Formal School Partners: BELB: Seaview PS, Currie PS, Cedar Special School, Lowwood PS, Loughshore Alternative Education CCMS: St Mary's Star of the Sea PS, Holy Family PS, St Patrick's PS, Little Flower Girls (CCMS), Voluntary: Hazelwood Integrated College, Other schools/Users: Glengormley HS, BRA, Ben Madigan (Voluntary)</p> <p>Other Educational Bodies: Belfast Metropolitan College, Bryson Future Skills, Stranmillis University College, Fingerprint Learning, Integrated Education Fund, Association of Teachers and Lecturers, Association of Managers in Education</p> <p>Cliftonville IPS, Hazelwood IPS, Newtownabbey CHS, Monkstown CHS (NEELB) and Dominican Fortwilliam have been consulted as part of bid development and are supportive but not formal partners yet.</p>
Evidence of Endorsement from Managing Authorities	<p>The project has the formal support of the Belfast Education and Library Board, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.</p>
Evidence of Community Support	<p>The Local Community Partnership – the Loughside Community Action Partnership and Belfast Community Sports Development Network will be the strategic community partners. Stranmillis University College (with Fingerprint Learning) will advise on the Learning Zone concept which will be integral to securing community support.</p> <p>Additional commitment and support has been forthcoming from Co-operative Alternatives (Community Shares), Peace Players. The Northern Ireland Youth Forum, Brantwood FC, Loughside FC and the Irish Football Association. An indicative list of 'Ambassadors' in North Belfast who have indicated support for the concept of a shared sports educational village (since it was formally launched in August 2008) is attached for information.</p>
Context of Planning	<p>At a meeting with senior BELB officials, Catherine Burnett and Paul Lawther, on 26th February 2014 it was confirmed that all schools listed in the Seaview Enterprises Ltd bid in respect of Loughside Playing Fields were considered viable going forward within the context of the Area Planning exercise.</p>
Desirable Criteria	Additional Information on Partner Role
Location	<p>As this is a bid for enhanced facilities and a shared sports campus, Appendix 12 provides a list of the partner schools and how far they are situated from the campus project site</p>
Evidence of Existing Sharing	<p>Appendix 4 provides a list of the partners' schools and information and evidence on the current sharing arrangements with and between the partner schools. Please note that this will be factually documented at stage 2 of the process if successful.</p>

RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

SECTION 2

■ RATIONALE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim and vision of this proposed project is to;

“To create a world class shared educational sports campus allowing for the development of our schools, our young people, their families and the subsequent wider community of this segregated area of Lower North Belfast”

The proposed project is underpinned by a clear evidence of need and will in turn meet the following objectives;

Project Objectives

1. To develop a world class shared education sports campus in a highly segregated and disadvantaged area of North Belfast that will be used by 18 partner schools, their pupils and their families.
2. To provide a North Belfast-wide shared physical education curriculum to all the partner schools and use this project as the first step to further mainstream sharing in the locality
3. To develop a shared and coordinated approach to addressing the high levels of sporting facility deficits that exist across the partner schools in North Belfast.

From the Needs Analysis carried out with the partner schools as part of this SOC and a subsequent review of the DE Guidance within the schools handbook, the following facilities have been proposed;

- Education Hub building, three stories containing 2 classrooms, a lecture hall, 1 IT lab, 1 Learning zone for informal learning, 1 small meeting/mentoring room, 1 office
- 1 full size 70 x 110 3G pitch to FIFA 2 star standard
- Multi Use Games Areas and Field Hockey Pitch
- Indoor Sports Arena – 6 Court Sports Hall & Fitness suite, Futsal area, fixed table tennis area, dance studio and indoor handball court
- Boxing, Judo and Martial Arts Facilities
- Associated car parking and Ancillary environmental works
- Will be fully DDA compliant

■ RATIONALE FOR LOWER NORTH BELFAST

Lower North Belfast remains a highly polarised and segregated environment. In terms of current patterns of residential segregation, almost half of the 88 identified interface barriers in Belfast are located in North Belfast, and an interface barrier was erected as recently as 2007 in the grounds of Hazelwood Integrated Primary in the Whitewell area (CRC 2009).

In part these divisions are a direct legacy of the Troubles as the region was the second most impacted part of Northern Ireland with regards to deaths attributable to the violence (after West Belfast). In total, 563 people (more than 25% of all of those killed during the Troubles) were killed in North Belfast in the three decades between 1968 and 1999 (McKittrick et al. 1999). A third of these victims were killed within 250 metres of an interface, while 70% of all deaths occurred within 500 metres of an interface (Shirlow 2003: 81).

The violence of the conflict impacted upon the club directly on a number of occasions. This included the 12th January 1980 killing by the PIRA of an RUC constable who was on duty at the Crusaders versus Portadown game, with the game subsequently being abandoned (McKittrick et al. 1999). The year previous to this, Crusaders and Cliftonville set an unfortunate record in British and Irish football which to this day has not been surpassed – the highest number of recorded police officers on duty at a game in the British Isles (1,900).

Although political progress and hard work in local communities have decreased tensions and drastically reduced levels of politically motivated violence, there are still a number of issues impacting upon communities in North Belfast. Tensions across the interface can fluctuate in relation to contemporary disagreements over the route of the annual Tour of the North or Ardoyne shop front parade, as well as the tension over marches at Donegall Street, which perennially seem to have the potential to act as trigger events for communal violence and rioting.

FACILITY DEFICIT NEED IN NORTH BELFAST SCHOOLS

In addition to the above, Appendix 3 shows the proposed partnering schools and the proposed facility deficits that exist across these 13 schools. The key headline information across these 13 schools is a deficit of 18 outdoor pitches, 15 courts and 2 gymnasiums. This provides a solid legislative rationale for these schools coming together to develop shared educational sports facilities in this locality. Schools will agree to cede some agreed element of their schools facility deficit in return for usage at the shared provision

RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

SECTION 2

■ RATIONALE FOR LOWER NORTH BELFAST

Indeed, these elements combined to cause the postponement of a recent Crusaders Vs Cliftonville match at Seaview – halted by a flag protesters' demonstration. Crusaders coaches have been involved in diversionary activities to relocate young people who may potentially get involved in interface violence away from the area. Crusaders and Newington have secured small amounts of funding for diversionary activities to work with young people at risk of engaging in interface violence. This drive towards community relations based activities by the club is in part a recognition of the broader societal divisions in which they find themselves. The club's home ground, Seaview is located along the Shore Road and bordering the M2 motorway in the Duncairn ward, which according to the 2011 Census was 63.8% Protestant in terms of the background of residents (NISRA 2011). In 2001 Census, this figure was above 90%, which shows a changing demographic in the locality. This location of the club within a predominantly 'Protestant' area is highlighted by the Union (and at times paramilitary) flags that fly outside Seaview on lamp posts and red, white and blue kerbstones which clearly demarcate the territory as being the 'space' of one ethno-political community.

Not only therefore is the immediate home of the club located in a residentially segregated area, but the area also suffers in terms of socio-economic deprivation. The Duncairn ward was the 14th most deprived of all 582 wards across Northern Ireland according to the Multiple Deprivation Measure in 2010 (NISRA 2010). In line with this, the residents of the area suffer from poor levels of educational attainment, with 80.9% having no or low level qualifications which compares very unfavourably both with the North Belfast average (68.6%) and the overall Belfast average (56.6%). See, NISRA 2010.⁶ These issues are important because they document the environment in which Crusaders currently exist as a club in terms of the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland, as well as in terms of the socio-economic deprivation which characterises many working-class communities right across Belfast and beyond. The location of the proposed Loughside Shared Education Campus, in "territory" perceived to be within the PUL. In the context of North Belfast, however, demographics are shifting traditional 'territory' and collaboration on the ground of sports and education in relatively uncontentious.

If the club are going to increasingly embed themselves in their local community, it is therefore useful to note the current 'state of play' on the ground, which will in turn inform what steps the club can practically take to increase their sustainability as a community orientated club. The following sub-section documents some of the history of the club before going on to record some contemporary activity with regards to community relations.

■ EDUCATIONAL RATIONALE

The case for the education benefits of shared education has largely been made. This research and evidence is set out in several documents, notably by University of Ulster, QUB the report of the Ministerial Advisory Group and by the CCMS. The economic case has been developed by Oxford Economics. One of the Project Team putting forward the bid is Mark Langhammer, Director of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. Mark chaired the working group on Educational Disadvantage in Protestant Working Class areas set up by Dawn Purvis, then MLA for East Belfast. He co-authored the final report which was widely and critically acclaimed at the time and developed thinking at the heart of government.

The concept of shared education is supported by a number theoretical perspectives. One such perspective, inter-group contact theory, explores the context and the quality of contact between pupils who engage in shared educational activities. This body of literature (Hughes, 2010; Hughes et al. 2012; Hughes, 2012; Hughes 2012a; Hughes and Donnelly, 2012; Hughes and Donnelly, 2012a) indicates a number of important findings (i) separate schooling can be divisive whereby minimal and superficial contact between pupils can lead to physical and cultural isolation (ii) sharing offers a potentially more effective contact model than previous educational initiatives (iii) sharing offers significant community relations benefits and improved intergroup relations and (iv) pupils who engaged in shared education demonstrated reduced levels of anxiety; demonstrated positive action and more trust towards one another other.

Educational benefits are supported by research literature where collaborative activity between schools is frequently promoted as activity which is beneficial for schools (please see Appendix 8). In effect the data exploring this relationship appears to define school improvement in a broad sense. By working in partnership and drawing more institutional interdependence, the schools in Lower North Belfast intend to continue to focus energies on school improvement. A number of thematic areas emerge:

- Pupil attainment, engagement and performance (Chapman et al. 2009; Chapman et al. 2011; Hadfield et al. 2006; CUREE, 2005; Hadfield and Chapman, 2009; Chapman and Muijs, 2013)
- School leadership (Ofsted, 2011; Hargreaves, 2010; Kubiak and Bertram 2010; Chapman et al. 2008; Hadfield and Joplin 2012)
- Teacher development, performance and motivation (Hadfield et al. 2006; Harris and Jones, 2010; Chapman, 2008; Ofsted, 2011; Muijs, et al. 2010; Chapman et al. 2009; Hadfield and Jopling, 2012; Ainscow et al. 2006)
- Offering wider curricular choice and opportunity (Pring, 2009; Muijs et al. 2010)

RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

SECTION 2

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS / OFFER

This draft curriculum offer is informed by the following consultations:

- Tertiary:** QUB Centre for Shared Education, Belfast Metropolitan College, and Bryson FutureSkills
- Managing Authorities:** BELB, CCMS, NICIE
- Schools:** Meetings with all schools listed in the document
- Others:** Meetings with the North Belfast Area Learning Partnership Co-Ordinator, the Integrated Education Fund, the Irish Football Association School Curriculum Coaching programme

Foundation (P1, P2), and Key Stage 2 (P5, P6, P7) At Foundation stage, study will focus on the <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LL Language and Literacy• MN Maths and Numeracy• A The Arts• WAU World Around Us, the modules on interdependence, movement, Place and Change over Time allow meaningful opportunity for interaction and community relations intervention• PDMU Personal Development and Mutual Understanding• PDM Physical Development and Movement (fundamental movement skills, including Jumping, Running, Catching, Hopping, Balance and Sprinting). <p>Ideal inter-school partnerships will develop organically from existing relationships between schools. However, where individual schools are willing, but lack partners, the Partnership Manager will seek to 'pair' schools with one or more partners. The methodology utilized will be the same as that currently used by Seaview Enterprises <i>Mes Que un Club</i> initiative whereby groups of 16 Primary Schools per term are paired (normally Controlled with Maintained) and work together on Curriculum work. Using the concept of <i>'Maximised sharing'</i>, schools will be incentivised and rewarded with facility booking of sports amenities. For example the Seaview Enterprises 'Mes Que un Club' initiative has used its Champion's League Primary Schools Project (using the cities and countries of the champions league participants to learn of the geography language, culture of these countries) as a methodological 'hook'.</p> <p>The Education Hub facilities will lend curriculum focus on the WAU, PDMU and PDM units, but, with classrooms, IT lab and lecture hall, there will be scope to undertake shared learning in LL, MN and Arts. Whilst all except PDM are non-sports, these can be accommodated at the Education Hub and mixing sport with non-sport learning in 'blocks' may be easier to accommodate in harmonised school timetables. The 'carrot-stick' incentivisation of facility hire through 'maximised sharing' may, initially, allow non sport courses to be taught where class size viability at individual school level is questionable.</p>
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Key Stage 1 (P3, P4) and Key Stage 2 (P5,6 and 7) All areas of the Key Stage 1 & 2 Curriculum could be taught in shared classrooms at Loughside (Language and Literacy, Mathematics and Numeracy, The Arts, the World Around Us, PD&MU, PE and RE). Focus is likely, however, to be placed on WAU, PD&MU and PE. At KS2 Physical Education for Key Stage 1 will focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Athletics• Dance• Games• Gymnastics All can be accommodated at Loughside with 'maximised sharing' the means through which access to facilities will, ultimately, be determined. The Key Stage 1 curriculum, as set out in the NI Curriculum (Primary) guide (colloquially known by teachers as "the golden book") The NICIE developed 'Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning' resources and methodologies will be utilized to support teachers in teaching shared classrooms. Section: Exploring Diversity, Identity and Values contains particularly relevant preparation and exercises for learning and teaching in shared environments. These resources were developed under the IFI's shared Education Programme and are accessible at www.scdi.co.uk At KS 2 swimming is added to the curriculum, catered for at the nearby Grove Leisure Centre.	Key Stage 3 (years 8-10) At KS3 the Loughside curriculum offer will focus on; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning for Life and Work• PE• Games In addition, the Shared Campus prospectus will focus on thematic units in; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Understanding Who am I?• Citizenship Growing up in Northern Ireland• Education for Sustainable Development Within PE, the focus is on; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive attitudes to enjoyment of physical activity• Awareness of positive impact of physical activity upon health and well-being• Positive relationships, sportsmanship, fair play and respect for differing capabilities
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RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

SECTION 2

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS / OFFER

<p>Keys Stage 4 (Years 12 & 12) and 5 (Years 13 & 14)</p> <p>At KS4 schools are obliged to take account of the report on Advancing Shared Education as a mechanism for the delivery of the entitlement framework (Conolly, Purvis and O'Grady, 2013) with schools collaborating with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners. Schools should take into account this report when considering their Key Stage 4 curriculum provision. From 2015-16 onwards the statutory obligation under the "Entitlement Framework" will be for 24 subjects at KS4</p> <p>Qualifications Offered at KS4 and KS5 will be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocational BTEC First Diploma in Sport• City & Guilds Diploma in Playwork• Level 1, 2, 3, 4 BMC• Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing• Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Personal Training• Active IQ Level 3 Certificate in Fitness Instructing and Personal Training• Edexcel Level 3 Diploma in Sport (not including Football Academy)• Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Sport and Exercise Sciences• PE "A" Level• PE GCSE• L2 Sports Studies BTEXC• L3 Sports Studies, Cambridge Technical• L2 BTEC Dance• L3 BTEC Dance• Psychology "A" level• Psychology GCSE <p>Coach education programme for post 16 pupils to include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Sports Leadership Level 1• Using Sport to Tackle Youth Crime, Level 1• Sports Leadership award L2• Dance Leaders Award at L2• Sports Leaders UK• Nutritional Development Level 1 Body Lab, see http://www.bodylabnli.com/• Nutritional Development Level 2 Body Lab• Stripping it back: motivation & team dynamics' <p>Europa League Post Primary Schools Project (using the cities and countries of the Europa league participants to learn of European conflicts, causes and the resolutions reached applied in these countries)</p>

<p>Post Primary Enrichment:</p> <p>The Loughside Shared Campus will provide an enriched curriculum to include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OCN Level 1 and 2 in Developing Community Relations through Sport• Employability & Entrepreneurship taster seminars• Careers Days• Positive Mental Health• Alcohol & Drug Abuse workshop• Mind Your Mate Suicide Awareness, PIPS• Body Lab Personal Development programme• Study Skills for Parents• Boxercise and 'Box Clever' programme <p>We will work with the Council's corporate citywide Health Plan, Belfast Healthy Cities and the Health Trust to incorporate an EU Healthy Stadia network methodology to the Education curriculum.</p>	<p>Additional Curriculum Offer</p> <p>Tertiary: BMC will offer a full Community Education Programme, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fitness Health & Sport, including elements of the Sport Academy, notably Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND in Sport (Coaching and Sports Development) and Edexcel BTEC Level 5 HND Diploma in Sport and Exercise Science• Hospitality & Tourism• Community Based Learning• Essential Skills• Catering• Creative Studies <p>Bryson Future-Skills will offer a full range of employment, employability and labour market initiatives including Apprenticeships NI, Training for Success, Steps to Work, Young Persons Employment Initiative, Graduate Acceleration Programme and the 50+ employment initiative</p>
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The project promoters and the partnering schools do acknowledge that there is still quite some work to do to ensure that the curriculum offer and the timetabling meet the needs of the students in question. At this early stage in the development process, that has yet to be worked up, it is worth noting that if progressed to stage 2, the entire breadth of the curriculum offer, the timetable, the access policies, the transport and the management will all be worked up and agreed.

CONSTRAINTS

SECTION 3

The following table will consider and highlight some of the potential constraints to the successful development of a shared education campus at Loughside. These are important in any outline case as they will inform the possible pitfalls and areas of concentration for any development to proceed.

Technical	Economic
<p>This site will contain a diverse mix of sports facilities, required to service the needs of a vast schools cohort. (P10) Given the range of sports currently offered or desired in these schools, it is important that site configuration reflects this need.</p> <p>Given the nature of the funding stream this case has been prepared aggressively with outline and broad agreement reached on many issues. The relationships between the schools and their representative governance will require more work.</p> <p>Based on the above point the schools and the sports played there will allow for social mobility and acceptance given the geographic location of the site in a predominantly PUL community.</p> <p>The site is currently managed by Loughside Boys FC. It is important that their needs are considered and met in any re-development on this site. An agreement has been reached with Loughside Boys as the incumbent. The management function on the site will require work and strong governance arrangement. KPMG have already conducted a detailed study and provided suggestions on the management and governance structure of a project similar to this.</p>	<p>This facility will require appropriate levels of investment to realise the vision as proposed.</p> <p>The ongoing revenue costs for the management and sustainability of a range of facilities of this kind will be large and so income generation must be seen as a priority focus.</p> <p>The site currently hosts a Council Leisure Facility which is subsidized by Belfast City Council. The development proposed may allow the Council to consider an arms length "lease and management" or other arrangement.</p> <p>To ensure acceptance and agreement on all the above issues, a robust financial planning process will be deployed with sensitivities and scenarios applied to mitigate any risks.</p>
Legal / Environmental	Political
<p>Belfast City Council currently own the site with a management arrangement in place with Loughside Boys FC.</p> <p>No planning application has currently been submitted nor succeeded for the development of these facilities, however upon progression to Stage 2 of this process an application will be prepared and submitted.</p> <p>An initial meeting has been held with DoE Planning Service. A planning application on behalf of ASDA supermarket recently tested usages on the site. Whilst the usage proposed is not significantly more intensive than current usages, the proximity of wetlands at Belfast Lough will require an Environmental Impact Assessment."</p> <p>The vast range and levels of stakeholders on this site will necessitate the development of a robust management structure.</p>	<p>Belfast City Council own the land and any decision pursuant to the Council Minutes in March and April (see Appendix 1) will require a structured consultation process which the proposers will agree with Council.</p> <p>The site is in a predominantly PUL community. As such, cross party and cross community support will be necessary to promote a welcoming, accessible, sage and good quality space.</p> <p>There are a number of high profile partners / stakeholders to this process who must be satisfied that governance and management arrangements are appropriate and acceptable to all.</p>

STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

SECTION 4

STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

Stakeholders: The following table provides some key information on the stakeholders involved and committed to the project, their issues and how this project can help to deliver a long term solution to their issues. Please note that a key outlining the stakeholder groups is presented in appendix 7.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	IDENTIFIED ISSUES	SOLUTION ACHIEVED THROUGH THIS PROJECT	SIGNED UP AND SUPPORTIVE
Managing Agencies (BELB, CCMS and NICIE)	Require land and viable solutions for the development of shared educational facilities in North Belfast, and require creative thinking to help address the facility deficits that exist across the 13 partner schools.	A successful application will go some way to meeting the facility deficits that exist across the 13 schools and also provide a location for the future of sharing of PE and sports education.	All agencies have signed up and are supportive of this proposed project and it has been approved at Senior Management Levels within these organisations; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BELB – Formal support approved CCMS – Formal support sought on 20th March NICIE – Formal support approved on 25th Feb 2014
Formal School Partners (13 schools)	Require the use of appropriate school sports facilities and have long term ambitions for future collaboration and sharing.	A successful application will go some way to meeting the facility deficits that exist across the 13 schools and also provide a location for the future of sharing of PE and sports education.	All schools have formally signed up to be partners of the proposed project and have offered letters of support
Other School / Users	Require the use of appropriate school sports facilities and have long term ambitions for future collaboration and sharing.	A successful application will go some way to meeting the facility usage requirements of these schools and all believe that this is a much needed project in the locality.	All schools have formally signed up to be users of the proposed project and have offered letters of support.
Other Educational Partners	Are seeking a suitable shared venue in North Belfast to lay down roots and deliver their programmes to a this hard to reach community audience.	A successful application will help many of these signed up educational partners meet their corporate, educational and community goals.	All other educational partners have offered letters of support and have offered to deliver the services from the site.
Community Partners	Many of the community partners are campaigning for the development of shared sports facilities in the locality.	The community access to the proposed project during the extra curricular periods would satisfy this key stakeholder issue.	All community partners have offered their support and have agreed to deliver their services and support the development of this project.
Belfast City Council (Landowner)	Belfast City Council are currently operating a Leisure Centre on the site. It is the project promoters understanding that Belfast City Council do not have any long term plans for the centre and have been actively seeking disposal or a different use for the site for the last decade.	A successful application would allow Belfast City Council to provide the land and play a key role in developing a shared space that will retain its civic benefit and encourage regeneration along this main arterial route.	Belfast City Council approved that Seaview Enterprises could proceed with the application to the Department of Education on the site and may provide the land if the funding application is successful. It went through the Parks and Leisure Committee on the 13 th February 2014 and was approved at Full Council on the 3 rd March 2014.
Seaview Enterprises Ltd	Have been campaigning for development of shared sporting facilities for Lower North Belfast for the previous 5 years and have an ambition to take on a management and development role in this project.	A successful application would help to address the key needs of Seaview Enterprises and their constituent member groups.	The Board of Seaview Enterprises are fully behind the scheme and will play an active and central role in any outworkings of the stage 1 Strategic Outline Business Case.

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 5

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Preliminary Management Considerations: The Strategic Investment Board, assisting Crusaders FC and Newington FC to pursue their plans for a shared sports & educational village for North Belfast, have already commissioned a detailed report on proposed governance structure. This study was undertaken by KPMG in June 2009 and funded by SIB. At Expression of Interest stage, it is understood that the precise governance of the project will be a matter of discussion and, in particular, the main funder (DE) and the land owner (BCC) will have views to consider. In the first instance, however, the proposers would offer three potential Governance options. Ultimately, it is accepted that DE will determine the matter of governance. The proposers have also taken full account of the Sport NI Publication – 'Your School, Your Club'.

Option 1 Seaview Enterprises Ltd the existing social enterprise company of Crusaders FC and Newington FC could expand its Board of Directors, widened to include Education, Council & Community representatives – KPMG Report. In addition, there would be a specific **Project Board** for the Loughside project, together with a **Campus Education Group** and a **User & Community Board**.

Option 2 Would see a new **Community Interest Company** created representative of the main interests – Education, Community, Clubs and Council. As with Option 1, there would be a specific **Project Board** for the Loughside project, together with a **Campus Education Group** and a **User & Community Board**.

Option 3: A Community Benefit Society incorporated under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965 would allow the promoters to raise capital funds through a Community Shares offer (see <http://www.coopalternatives.coop/community-shares/>) in order to deepen and widen cross community involvement and ownership across the North of the City.

The Curriculum Offer - How will it work? In addition to the proposals for the Governance of the Campus set out above, the Educational Partnership surrounding the Shared Campus will require a degree of sophistication. For the Loughside Facility this would include:

- **Service Level Agreement** signed by all School Principals. There may be a distinct or separate Primary from Post-Primary SLA.
- **Partnership Manager:** Employment, at least in the first 3-5 years, of a Partnership Manager tasked with maximising usage, shared and educational outcomes. Funding for such a role will be sought through BELB, CRED, IEF, PACT, BELTIE and other funds.
- **Lead School:** The Partnership Manager will be employed by a lead school. It was not thought that the Area Learning Partnership, for instance, was sufficiently robust to undertake this function. The work of the Manager will be informed and overseen by a Campus Education Group made up of representatives of the Schools, which would meet every term.
- **Partnership Protocol:** The Partnership Protocol (see Appendix 10) has been drafted for the Teachers Negotiating Committee and is currently under negotiation.
- **Link Teachers:** In each participating school, remunerated (subject to size) through a TA1 or TA2 teaching Allowance.
- **Timetabling:** The Manager will work with schools on the timetable, seeking to maximise harmonisation to facilitate class sharing. A sample timetable for Primary schools is included at Appendix 9.
- **Facility booking:** The Partnership Manager will adopt a direct incentivisation criteria to facility booking – those schools practicing 'maximised sharing' will gain priority for sports facility booking.
- **Facility Management:** It is envisaged that Seaview Enterprises Ltd undertake the facilities management and booking function. An integrated web and intranet-based booking system (currently in place and operational), will be coupled with a 'Teamcard' CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System will provide a seamless facility management support and information service. This system is currently in place through Seaview Enterprises Ltd.
- **Transport to and from the Shared Educational Campus from Partner Schools:** Transportation is a critical driver in any shared educational project, this will be considered in detail at economic appraisal stage, taking account of the recent PEDU report into school transport and the forthcoming recommendations from the Ministerial Working Group on home to school transport.

COSTS, BENEFITS AND RISKS

SECTION 6

COSTS

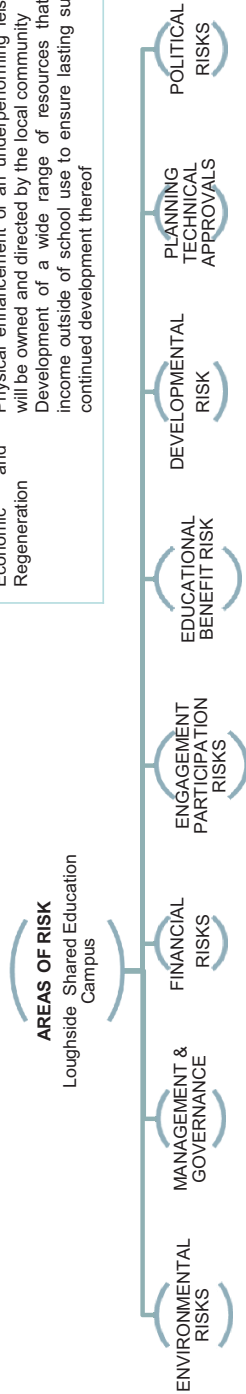
As part of the development of the outline business case the project promoter's commissioned the support of a Quantity Surveyor. The early indication of costs for the associated project and scheme outlined in Appendix 5 and 6 is detailed below;

Facility and Construction Element	Early Indication of Cost
Pitches and Playing Facilities	£2,169,000.00
Indoor Sports Block and Changing Pavilion	£8,100,000.00
Car parking, roads and infrastructure	£910,000.00
Sustainability and green technology	£600,000.00
Total Approx Cost	£11,779,000.00

NB* Please note that this figure does not include VAT, statutory or professional fees

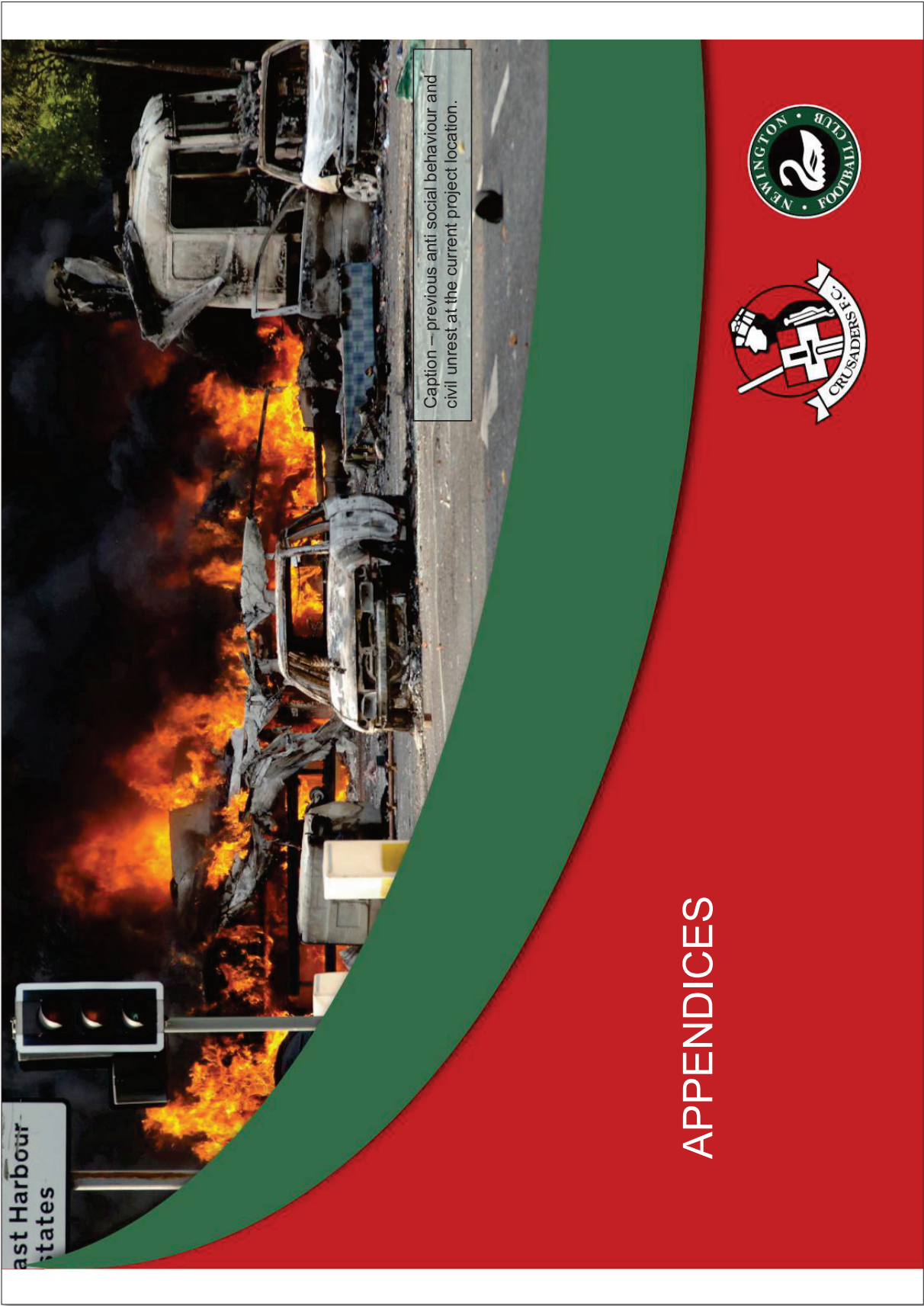
RISKS

The graphic below represents the broad thematic areas where risk, that can limit, inhibit or stop the progress of the project could be encountered. These risks will reflect those issues identified in the constraints aspect of this proposal but also those specific to pre construction, construction and post construction phases. All aspects of risk will be considered in greater detail in the course of any economic appraisal commissioned on this project.



BENEFITS

Area of Benefit	Further Detail
Shared Space and Destination	Creation of a flagship sports resource that will promote and guarantee integration on a daily basis Development of a facility that will engage and inspire schools, communities and the sporting fraternity Allaying of traditionally perceived and long held fears of racial or sectarian tensions through the medium of sport
Educational Enrichment	Ability for schools cohort identified to fulfil and exceed aspiration and base requirements for PE Curriculum. This will enhance their motivation , pride and support increased attendance and retention. Ability for pupils of all schools to engage in a wider range of sports opportunities through the medium of a shared space and help them understand different learning styles. Increased marketability of the schools as a collective and appeasement of issue of academic selection specifically in an area of mixed educational attainment Promotion of integrated education and good relations.
Social Mobility	Ability for people from across North Belfast to define and pursue their aspirations in life Ability for the schools and the provision on site to reach and provide for a much more diverse cohort Ability for new and enhanced opportunities for volunteering, employability and entry to employment
Community and Societal benefits	Reduction in crime and more importantly fear of crime in the area Increased relationships within and between communities Shared resources demonstrating the value of community in NI
Economic and Regeneration	Physical enhancement of an underperforming leisure facility that will be owned and directed by the local community Development of a wide range of resources that can generate income outside of school use to ensure lasting sustainability and continued development thereof



Caption – previous anti social behaviour and civil unrest at the current project location.

APPENDICES

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL MINUTE

APPENDIX 1

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL – EXTRACT OF MINUTE

- Loughside Sports Educational Village
- [Meeting of Parks and Leisure Committee, Thursday, 13th February, 2014 4.30 pm \(Item 6.\)](#)

•Minutes:

•The Committee considered the undernoted report:

- “1. Relevant Background Information
- The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of an emerging proposal from Seaview Enterprises in respect of Council owned land at Loughshore. The land in question is the site of the Loughside Recreation Centre and associated football pitches at Loughside, which is adjacent to Shore Road / Mount Vernon. Clearly at this stage of the Leisure Transformation Programme no decision has been taken about the future of the Recreation Centre.
- Members may be aware that the Department of Education has recently released a call for expressions of interest in respect of its Shared Education Campuses Programme. This is part of the wider ‘Together: Building a United Community’ initiative from the First Minister / Deputy First Minister.
- A preliminary meeting between Council Officers and representatives from Seaview Enterprises (SE) has indicated that it wishes to make application to the programme for funding to deliver a ‘Shared Campus’. To do SE has identified the Loughshore site as its preferred location and has asked for the Council’s support in a number of ways:
 - 1. To agree in principle to lease land to SE to enable the project to proceed; and
 - 2. To be a partner to the bid and participate in the development of the bid and the project moving forward
- The indicative scheme includes a 5,000 seat stadium, however, at this time; this is not included in the proposal going forward to Department of Education, although the proposal will include the provision of a 3G artificial turf pitch.
- 2. Key Issues
- There are a number of issues which members may wish to consider at this time;
 - 1. This project is at a very early stage in development;
 - 2. The proposal cannot proceed without the land;
 - 3. At this stage, detail regarding the terms and conditions of the funding are not known;
 - 4. Based on the guidance notes accompanying the call for expressions of interest there is no requirement at this time in relation to security of tenure;
 - 5. The proposal presents a potential opportunity to secure funding which would enable an existing sport and leisure facility to be regenerated and offer potential benefits to the wider community in North Belfast;

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL MINUTE

APPENDIX 1

■ BELFAST CITY COUNCIL – EXTRACT OF MINUTE

3. Resource Implications

Asset and Other Implications

The proposal presents an opportunity to regenerate the site within similar existing land use parameters and would provide additional modern facilities to support programmes for the local community.

5. Recommendations

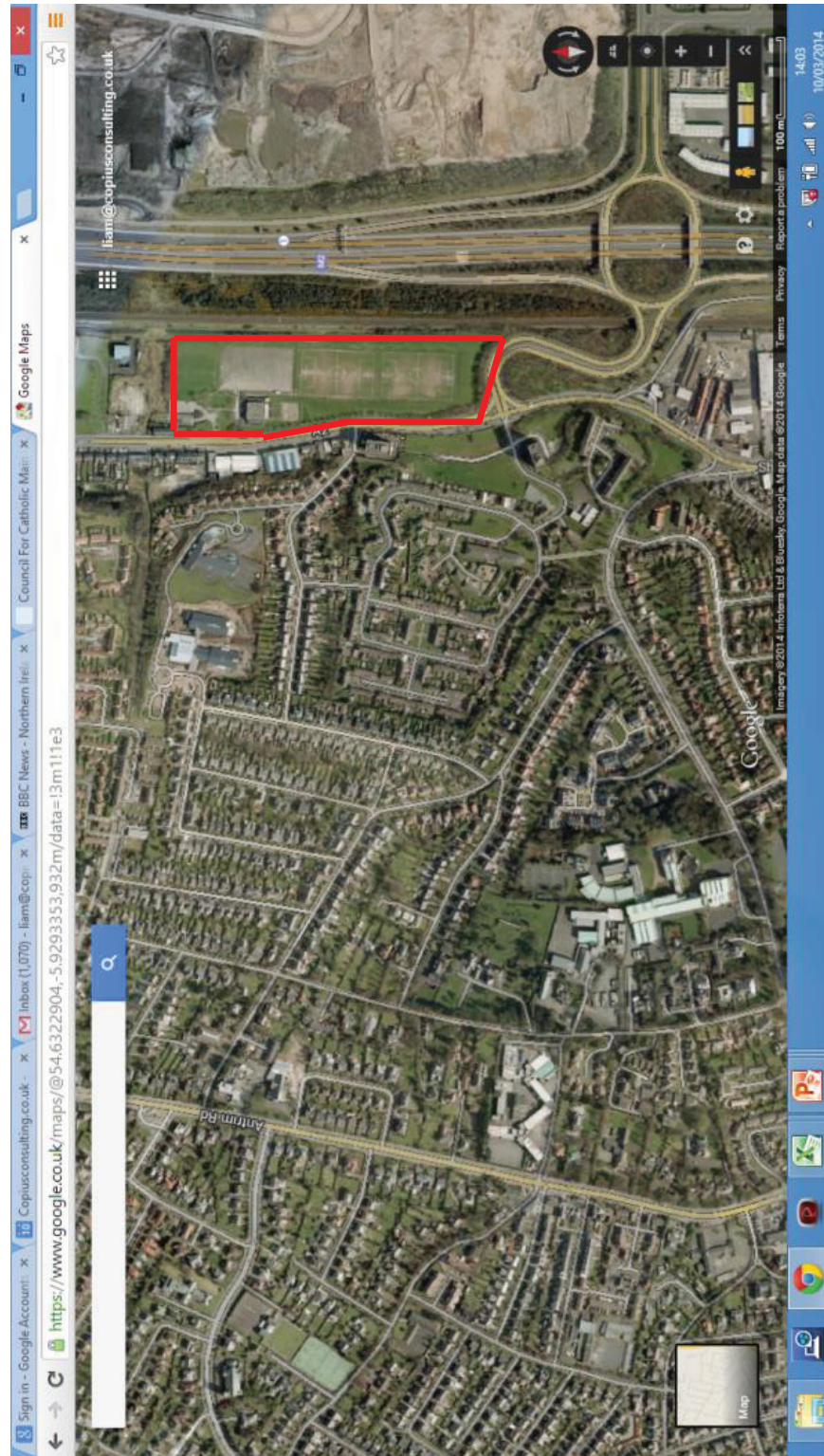
The Committee is asked to give consideration to agreeing to authorising Officers to represent the Council on a Project Board to progress the bid to Expression of Interest Stage with a view to the potential use of the existing land at Loughside Recreation Centre to facilitate the proposal;”

During discussion, a Member expressed concern that the plan which had been formulated by Seaview Enterprises had been placed within the public domain prior to it being considered by the Council. Concern was expressed also that the current users of the facility, together with Loughside Boys’ Football Club, had not been consulted in respect of the plans and it was suggested that the proposers would undertake to rectify this matter.

After discussion, during which the Director undertook to write to representatives of Loughside Boys’ Football Club in respect of the proposals, the Committee adopted the recommendation as set out within the report.

APPENDIX 2

PROJECT LOCATION



CURRENT AND REQUIRED SCHOOLS PROVISION

APPENDIX 3

SCHOOLS CURRENT PROVISION

The following tables present information on schools located within the North Belfast area for the potential Shared Education Campus at Loughside. Utilising the Schools Building Handbook (separate handbooks for primary and post-primary schools), the table details schools' minimum requirements for physical education facilities. According to the primary schools handbook, all schools should have a multi-purpose hall (up to 20 classrooms). Schools with more than 21 classrooms should have a secondary multi-purpose hall.

According to the secondary schools handbook, the NI Curriculum Programme for PE includes athletics, dance, gymnastics, games, swimming and outdoor adventurous activities. The teaching of PE requires the provision of a sports hall in ALL post-primary schools. Enrolments of more than 600 should include an additional gymnasium and fitness activity area. In schools less than 600, a multi-purpose hall is also to serve as a gymnasium. In terms of pitch provision, the table on the right sets out the recommended guidelines for the number of pitches based on school enrolment numbers.

School Enrolment	Category	Pitches	Courts
Up to 349	Boys	2	2
	Girls	2	4
	Co-educ	2	4
350 to 549	Boys	3	2
	Girls	3	4
	Co-educ	4	4
550 to 749	Boys	4	2
	Girls	4	5
	Co-educ	4	5
750 and Above	Boys	5	2
	Girls	5	5
	Co-educ	5	5

CURRENT AND REQUIRED SCHOOLS PROVISION

APPENDIX 3

■ SCHOOLS CURRENT PROVISION

	School Name	Principal Name	Head of Physical Education	Number of Pupils	Current Sports / PE Facilities	School Entitlements According to Schools Handbook	Facility Deficits	School Immediate Requirements
1	Cedar Special School	Louis Little	June	220	Multi Purpose hall; Make shift Grass	Multipurpose hall	None	-Athletics Track; -Separate Sports hall (or net to co-ordain off)
2	Cliftonville Integrated P.S	Brenda Mc Mullan	/	250	Assembly Hall	Multipurpose hall	None	Pitches; Bigger Hall; Suitable hard-court surfaces
3	Currie P.S	Ms A Galway	Mr King	178	School gym; Large Play Ground Medium Grass Area;	Multipurpose hall	None	Grass Pitch; Coaching; Equipment
4	Dominican College Fortwilliam	Miss McGahan	Mrs Rosie Campbell	1100	Hall; 30M L x 14M; 4 Tarmac courts; 2 tennis courts	5 pitches 5 courts Sports Hall Gymnasium/Fitness Activity Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -5 pitches Gymnasium 	3G Pitch
5	Glengormley Integrated P.S	Mr Nigel Arnold	/	300+	1 Grass Pitch; Hall 116.6M2	Multipurpose hall	None	Hard court Space (Basketball); Multi Sports
6	Hazelwood Integrated College	Kathleen Gormley	Stuart Cole	900	Sports Hall(3 Badminton courts)	5 pitches 5 courts Sports Hall Gymnasium/Fitness Activity Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -5 pitches -5 courts Gymnasium 	3G Pitch Bigger Hall
7	Holy Family P.S	Dinah McManus	VP-Siobhan Mc quade	440	Assembly Hall; Tarmac playground roughly 80x 15m; Astro -5 a side	Multipurpose hall	None	Grass/ 3G Pitch

APPENDIX 3

CURRENT AND REQUIRED SCHOOLS PROVISION

SCHOOLS CURRENT PROVISION

School Name	Principal Name	Head of Physical Education	Number of Pupils	Current Sports / PE Facilities	School Entitlements According to Schools Handbook	Facility Deficits	School Immediate Requirements
8 Little Flower	Miss M Collins	Grainne	690	A PE Hall; Sloping Playground	4 pitches 5 courts Gymnasium/Fitness activity area	-4 pitches -5 courts	Indoor facilities; 3G Pitch; Other outdoor Facilities.
9 Loughshore AEP	/	Stuart	80	Sports Hall; Small fitness suite; 1 near Full size grass pitch	Multipurpose hall	None	3G Pitch; Changing facilities
10 Lowwood P.S & Nursery	Mr David Patterson	/	250	Multi Purpose Hall(dinning/PE) 20m x 10m ; Tarmac Play Surface	Multipurpose hall	None	Separate Hall; 3g Pitch/ Outside area.
11 St Marys Star of the Sea (Greencastle)	Mr K McGarry	/	125	Assembly Hall 20M x 8M	Multipurpose hall	None	Grass pitch/3G Pitch
12 St Patricks(New Lodge)	Ms p Stuart	Carl Mc Cabe	750	Small Gym hall 20x12m ;Rare 3G 40/50m x 25m Small fitness Suite in a classroom	5 pitches 5 courts Gymnasium/fitness activity area Sports Hall	-4 pitches -5 courts	Provision of a fitness suite; Gym hall revamp/ Bigger Gym hall
13 Seaview P.S & Nursery	Marian Bell	/	400 + 52	Assembly Hall; 2 badminton courts ; Full size grass pitch- 1/3 transformed to tarmac	Multipurpose hall	None	Provision of a table tennis and badminton club in the local area.

CURRENT AND FUTURE COLLABORATION

APPENDIX 4

SCHOOLS CURRENT FUTURE COLLABORATION

	School Name	Principal Name	Head of Physical Education	Number of Pupils	Details of Current Collaboration activity	Reason for Collaboration	With enhanced facilities what other collaboration would you do?
1	Cedar Special School	Louis Little	June	220	Collaborate with a cluster of 18 schools	Cultural	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day / Fun day
2	Cliftonville Integrated P.S	Brenda Mc Mullan	/	250	Collaborate with various schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day / Fun day (dependant upon financial arrangements)
3	Currie P.S	Ms A Galway	Mr King	178	Collaborate with a cluster of 18 schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day / Fun day (dependant upon financial arrangements)
4	Dominican College Fortwilliam	Miss McGahan	Rosie Campbell	1100	Various schools	Sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day
5	Glengormley Integrated P.S	Mr Nigel Arnold	/	300+	Various Schools	Cultural(Irish dancing etc) /sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day
6	Hazelwood Integrated College	Kathleen Gormley	Stuart Cole	900	Various Schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day
7	Holy Family P.S	Dinah McManus	VP- Siobhan Mc Quade	440	Collaborate with a cluster of 18 schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day / Fun day (dependant upon financial arrangements)

CURRENT AND FUTURE COLLABORATION

APPENDIX 4

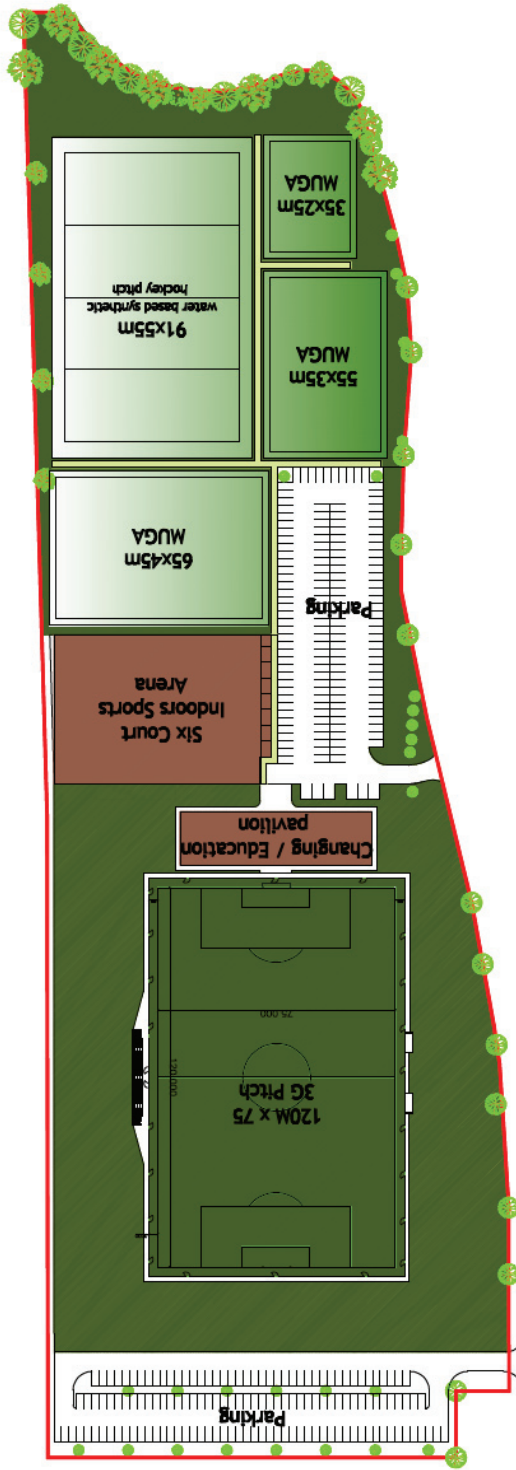
SCHOOLS CURRENT / FUTURE COLLABORATION

	School Name	Principal Name	Head of Physical Education	Number of Pupils	Details of Current Collaboration activity	Reason for Collaboration	With enhanced facilities what other collaboration would you do?
8	Little Flower	Miss M Collins	Grainne	690	Various Schools	Sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day (dependant upon financial arrangements)
9	Loughshore AEP	/	Stuart	80	Various schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day / Fun day
10	Lowwood P.S & Nursery	Mr David Patterson	/	250	Collaborate with a cluster of 20 schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day
11	St Marys Star of the Sea (Greencastle)	Mr K McGarry	/	125	Hazelwood P.S & various other schools	Cultural/sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day
12	St Patricks(New Lodge)	Ms P Stuart	Carl Mc Cabe	750	Various Schools	Sports competition	P.E Curriculum activities / Sports Day
13	Seaview P.S	Marian Bell	/	400 + 52	Collaborate with a cluster of 18 schools	Sports competition	Dependant upon financial arrangements

PROPOSED LAYOUT AND CONCEPT PLAN APPENDIX 5

■ EARLY CONCEPT LAYOUT OF POPOSED CAMPUS

Please note that these drawings will be further developed at stage of the project and more detailed design will be required following detailed and committed consultation with school partners.



EARLY COST ESTIMATES FOR PROJECT

APPENDIX 6

EARLY INDICATION OF CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Education					
A	PITCHES				
	1 120x75 fifa 2 star soccer	600000.00			
	2 800 lux floodlights for item 1	300000.00			
	3 91x55 water based hockey pitch	400000.00			
	4 500 lux floodlights for item 3	180000.00			
	5 65x45 muga	117000.00			
	6 200 lux floodlights for item 5	40000.00			
	7 55x35 muga	77000.00			
	8 200 lux floodlighting on item 7	30000.00			
	9 35x25 muga	35000.00			
	10 200 lux floodlights on item 9	20000.00			
	11 pathways and fencing	120000.00			
	12 contingency	250000.00		2169000.00	
B	Indoor Sports Block		8100000.00		
	Education Suites and Classrooms				
	Changing Areas				
C	Car parking				
	600 spaces	360000.00			
	egress roads	350000.00			
	street lighting	200000.00			
			910000.00		
D	Sustainability				
	PV installation	500000.00			
	Rainwater Harvesting	20000.00			
	Solar	80000.00			
			600000.00		
					11779000.00

Please note that these costs will require further testing if the project moves to stage two of the process.

KEY FOR THE STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

APPENDIX 7

■ STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

Stakeholders: The main stakeholders in the project are as follows (letters of support attached)

Managing Authorities: BELB, CCMS, NICIE

Schools: Seaview PS, Currie PS, Cedar Special School, Lowwood PS, Loughshore Alternative Education (all BELB); St Mary's Star of the Sea PS, Holy Family PS, St Patrick's PS, Little Flower Girls (CCMS), Dominican Fortwilliam (Voluntary) Hazelwood Integrated College, Hazelwood IPS, Cliftonville IPS

Other schools/Users: Glengormley HS, Newtownabbey CHS, Monkstown CHS (NEELB), BRA, Ben Madigan (Voluntary)

Other Educational Bodies: Belfast Metropolitan College, Bryson Future Skills, Stranmillis University College, Fingerprint Learning, Integrated Education Fund, Association of Teachers and Lecturers, Association of Managers in Education

Local Government: Belfast City Council (see Council Minutes attached)

Community: LCAP, Belfast Community Sports Network, Co-operative Alternatives (Community Shares), Peace Players

Levels of Commitments & Strategic Roles : All schools listed above will be users of the project and will be signatories to the Partnership Service Level Agreement (SLA). The strategic roles and specific commitments are as follows:

- **Belfast City Council:** Provision of land, will contribute to determination of Governance
- **Education Curriculum Offer:** QUB Shared Education Centre through Dr Mark Baker will oversee the development of the educational curriculum prospectus. He will be joined by Principal Kathleen Gormley, ex Principal Noreen Campbell, Principal Geri Cameron and a CCMS representative in the development of the Post Primary prospectus.

- **Tertiary Offer:** Belfast Metropolitan College will offer evening community education, literacy, numeracy and ICT classes along with a core Sports Science offer. Heather Hedley, Curriculum Manager for School Partnerships will be a key contact. Bryson Future Skills (chaired by Geri Cameron., Principal of Loughshore Alternative Education Provision) aim to open an office in the Education Hub to offer Employability assistance and DEL funded labour market initiatives such as *Apprenticeships NI, Training for Success, Steps to Work, Young Persons Employment Initiative, Graduate Acceleration Programme and the 50+ employment initiative*.¹²

- **Community:** LCAP and BCSN will be the strategic community partners. Stranmillis University College (with Fingerprint Learning) will advise on the Learning Zone concept which will be integral to securing community support.

Further Consultations: In addition to the consultation with Managing Authorities, Schools, Users and Community Interests, the following consultations have been undertaken or are scheduled:

Political Parties; DRD Planning Service; Irish Football Association (school coaching curriculum programme); 30+ stadia facility visits (2008 to present) in England, Scotland, Republic of Ireland, France, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Macedonia, Australia, & USA; Integrated Education Fund; Supporters Direct Network; European Fans Association (Hamburg).

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

APPENDIX 8

■ ADDITIONAL RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF SHARED EDUCATION

Information provided by Mark Baker - Programme Manager - Centre for Shared Education, Queen's University Belfast

Other demonstrated benefits of collaboration and networking include: motivating disengaged and at risk students (Hadfield et al. 2006); helping schools cope with challenging circumstances (Ainscow et al. 2006); combatting negative effects of competition (Hodgson and Spours, 2006; Ainscow and West, 2006); and helping schools make more effective use of resources by providing economies of scale. Research from Bell et al. (2006) argues that collaborative arrangements between schools tend to be more effective when there is specific and focused goal driving partnership. By extension, Chapman and Muijs, (2013) demonstrate that impact is strongest in federated arrangements which had an explicit focus on student performance and school performance.

For a selected review see (Muijs, et al. 2010; Chapman et al. 2011; Chapman et al. 2009; Hadfield and Jopling, 2012; Harris & Jones, 2010; Ainscow et al. 2006; Hadfield and Chapman, 2009) Research which focuses on the Northern Ireland context can equally demonstrate that sharing and collaboration can have positive impacts on educational outcomes. This literature can similarly be divided into the similar categories as outlined above: pupil performance (Borooah and Knox, 2012a; Borooah and Knox, 2012b; FGS McClure Watters, 2010; Gallagher et al, 2010); teacher development and perspectives of school leaders (Knox, 2010; Duffy and Gallagher, 2012a Duffy and Gallagher 2012b; FGS McClure Watters, 2010; Hughes et al 2010; Gallagher et al, 2010) and economic improvements (Borooah and Knox, 2012a Borooah and Knox, 2012b)

APPENDIX 9

Harmonised Closures	teachers due in school 195 days
Teaching Day	pupils between 185 and 190
5 Baker / Inset Day (non-teaching days)	
School Development Day (up to 5days)	
OPTIONAL	

Draft Document on Learning Partnership Guidance

APPENDIX 10

Hard copy of draft document is presented overleaf

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

APPENDIX 11

Hard copy of 'letters of support are presented overleaf, but a summary of the letters provided are presented in the grouped table below;

Group \ Section	Organisations that Have Provided Letters of Support
BELB Linked Schools	Lowwood Primary School Seaview Primary Currie Primary School
CCMS Linked Schools	St Marys Star of the Sea Primary Little Flower Girls School St Patricks Primary School Holy Family Primary School St Patricks College 'Bearnagee'ha'
Other Voluntary and Post Primary Schools	Belfast Royal Academy Glengormley High School Hazelwood Integrated Colleg
General Educational Organisations	Belfast Metropolitan College Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Fingerprint Learning Stranmillis University College Integrated Education Fund Association of Managers in Education Association of Teachers and Lecturers
Community Organisations	North Belfast Partnership Board Peace Players International Northern Ireland Youth Forum Monkstown Boxing Club Strive NI Community Interest Company Sports Partnership Group Irish Football Association

Geographic Proximity of Partner Schools to Propose Campus **APPENDIX 12**

SCHOOLS CURRENT PROVISION

	School Name	Amount of Miles from Loughside / Site of Proposed Campus
1	Cedar Special School	0.2 miles
2	Cliftonville Integrated P.S	1.5 miles
3	Currie P.S	1.4 miles
4	Dominican College Fortwilliam	0.6 miles
5	Glengormley Integrated P.S	2.7 miles
6	Hazelwood Integrated College	0.7 miles
7	Holy Family P.S	1.5 miles

	School Name	Amount of Miles from Loughside / Site of Proposed Campus
8	Little Flower	0.6 miles
9	Loughshore AEP	0.8 miles
10	Lowwood P.S & Nursery	0.1 miles
11	St Marys Star of the Sea (Greencastle)	0.4 miles
12	St Patricks(New Lodge)	0.7 miles
13	Seaview P.S & Nursery	0.6 miles



SIGNED BY BELB SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER APPENDIX 13

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Dr Clare Mangan, Chief Executive of the Belfast Education and Library Board

SIGNED: _____

DATED: _____

SEELB



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

Headquarters Offices

Grahamsbridge Road, Dundonald, Belfast BT16 2HS T: +44 (0) 28 9056 6200 F: +44 (0) 28 9056 6266/7
www.seelb.org.uk e-mail: info@seelb.org.uk

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.

Appendix A

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
Moirá Primary School	Rowandale Integrated Primary School
Lagan College	Grosvenor & OLSP
Derryboy Primary School	St Caolan's Primary School

Southern Education and Library Board (SELB)

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education

Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education

October 2014

Background

The Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) serves the district council areas of Armagh; Banbridge; Cookstown; Craigavon; Dungannon and South Tyrone; Newry and Mourne.

The SELB has been involved in leading, managing and promoting a range of school-based cross-community contact programmes since the early 1980s. These programmes have included the Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) Programme, the Schools Community Relations Programme (SCRIP) and the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity policy and strategy (CRED). More recently, the SELB has led the implementation of two Shared Education Projects, funded through the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI's) 'Sharing in Education' Programme: the 'Primary Curriculum Partnership Programme' (PCPP) and the 'Welcoming Schools' Project (2011-2013).

Under current legislation, the SELB has no direct powers or responsibilities in relation to the promotion of shared education, but through the work of its Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (CASS) and its Youth Service, all schools and youth groups are encouraged and supported to engage in meaningful cross-community collaboration and sharing. Through its leadership of the IFI funded Sharing in Education programmes, the SELB has facilitated the development of a number of local school-based examples of meaningful shared education programmes, which have helped to establish sharing as normal practice. Examples include the development of sharing and curricular collaboration between the two primary schools in the village of Moy, which have led to those schools' joint application for funding from the Department of Education's (DE's) Shared Campus Programme. This application was one of only three which have recently been approved for funding and work to create a shared campus is now underway.

The SELB also has a limited role, under current legislation, in relation to Integrated Education, with its major responsibility being to facilitate elements of the 'transformation' process, through which a school may apply for change of status and become formally recognised as 'integrated'. The SELB, in common with all ELBs, is required to respond to parental requests for information on integrated education and on the process for transformation to controlled integrated status and will collaborate with the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) where such requests arise. While there are a number of Grant Maintained Integrated Schools within the SELB, there are only two that fall under the management of the SELB, as Controlled Integrated Schools, namely Brownlow Integrated College in Craigavon and Kilbroney Integrated Primary School in Rostrevor.

1. Definitions

1.1 Shared Education

Shared Education has been defined by the Department of Education as follows:

Shared education means the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;

- involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Shared Education encourages schools from across all the educational sectors within Northern Ireland to work together for the greater good of their pupils. It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children from differing Section 75 groups (e.g. children from different racial backgrounds, children with and without disabilities, children who are carers or school age mothers) and from differing socio-economic backgrounds to learn together at school and in less formal education. Within shared approaches to educational provision, the right of parents and pupils to choose to attend a school with a particular ethos is fully respected.

1.2 Integrated Education

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education has defined Integrated Education as follows:

“Integrated schools bring together children and adults from Catholic, Protestant and other backgrounds in each school. The schools strive to achieve a religious balance of pupils, teachers and governors and acknowledge and respect the cultural diversity they represent.

Integrated schools educate children in an environment where self-esteem and independence are developed as priorities. Self-respect and respect for others are strongly encouraged. The integrated ethos is nurtured to ensure inclusion of people from different religions, cultures, genders, abilities and socio-economic backgrounds.”

- 1.3 Both shared and integrated approaches to the provision of education have the potential to provide learners with enhanced opportunities to acquire a range of transferable skills and capabilities including those of decision making, problem solving, leadership and teamwork - all of which will be of benefit to them in later life. Positive participation in shared/integrated activities has been shown to build pupils' self-esteem, self-efficacy and ability to express themselves and their identity with confidence, whilst being respectful of the identities of others. Such approaches support pupils to take responsibility for their actions, and to demonstrate that they can work together with others from different backgrounds and cultures.

1.4 Links with Key Education Policies

Shared Education and Integrated Education can both be clearly linked to key DE policies including the 'Every School a Good School' School Improvement suite of policies and the 'Community Relations and Equality and Diversity' policy, through their promotion of child-centred provision, high quality learning and teaching, effective leadership and schools connected to their community. Through shared education projects, schools are providing value-added educational experiences which link clearly with school improvement. In its evaluation of the IFI Funded 'Sharing in Education Programme,' the Education and Training Inspectorate concluded:

“The evidence demonstrates that high-quality shared education contributes to better learning for young people. The young people demonstrated positive attitudes and dispositions to learning, developed their thinking skills and personal capabilities and displayed good personal and social skills.”

ETI Final Evaluation of the Sharing in Education Programme, Oct 2013.

Both models of provision also clearly support the N.I. Executive's 'Together Building a United Community' Strategy as both are focused on improving community relations and in supporting the development of a more unified and shared society.

2. Key Barriers and Enablers

Through the experience of leading and managing the implementation of Shared Education programmes, as well as many years of supporting cross-community contact programmes, SELB officers have concluded that the quality of shared education and integrated education provision depends significantly on:

- a school's ethos
- the effectiveness of the leadership within the school and on
- opportunities for the professional development of members of staff, especially when dealing with more controversial issues and the attitudes and values present within the community the school serves.

2.1 Barriers and Enablers - Shared Education:

The table below identifies the key barriers and enablers for shared education, based on SELB officers' experience of developing and implementing shared education programmes.

Barriers	Enablers
<p>Lack of Effective School Leadership:</p> <p>Lack of leadership and vision to promote and see the value of shared education will be a significant barrier.</p> <p>The development and sustaining of shared education will be hindered if it is not a high priority for a school's leadership team, including the Board of Governors.</p> <p>Lack of leadership ability and capacity within a school can also be a barrier, as the development of shared approaches to provision requires a high level of skill, in terms of building understanding, bringing people on board, overcoming resistance, etc.</p>	<p>Effective School Leadership:</p> <p>An environment where there is a clear commitment within school leadership to the development and sustaining of shared education is key to success. In such schools, the commitment to the development of shared provision is evident and is fully embedded in the ethos, values, practice and professional relationships.</p> <p>In such schools, school leaders show vision and commitment to the development and sustaining of shared provision, particularly during critical points in the development of collaboration, when difficulties may be encountered.</p> <p>Existing good relationships between school leaders and staff from participating schools is clearly beneficial in providing a foundation upon which collaboration can be built.</p>
<p>Shared education viewed as an additional initiative to be implemented within an already crowded curriculum</p> <p>Failure to see shared approaches and collaboration as a means towards enriching existing curricular provision rather than as an additional aspect of provision which has to be fitted is a substantial barrier to development.</p>	<p>A perspective which views shared provision as an opportunity to enrich and enhance the existing curriculum, rather than an additional initiative to be implemented</p> <p>When shared education and shared classes focus on enhancing the quality of provision of elements of the already existing NI curriculum, teachers and pupils see meaning and value in the approach, in terms of its potential to support learning and achievement, as well as achieving reconciliation objectives.</p>

Barriers	Enablers
<p>Lack of staff expertise and training</p> <p>School staff will often be unwilling to participate in shared education initiatives due to a perceived lack of expertise and experience in dealing with sensitive and controversial issues related to cross-community contact.</p>	<p>Availability of high quality professional development for all staff</p> <p>High quality professional development provided for teachers, enabling them to explore and develop their own understanding in relation to more sensitive issues, has been shown to be crucial in building skill, competence and confidence in school staff.</p>
<p>Time:</p> <p>Timetabling issues, especially in post primary schools, may be seen as a significant barrier to enabling shared and collaborative provision, particularly within Key Stage 4 and post-16 provision, due to pressure of covering exam syllabuses. Additional work is required of staff involved in organising and delivering collaboration and a lack of time to facilitate this may become a barrier.</p> <p>The contact between schools needs to be regular and sustained throughout the academic year if shared provision is to be effective. This may also be a challenge for many schools.</p>	<p>Time:</p> <p>In the most effective practice, school leaders prioritise time for the developing of relationships between partner schools, time for provision of whole school professional development, time for planning and sharing work by teachers and timetabling that enables shared classes to take place.</p> <p>Through planned, regular and on-going pupil contact, there is a reduced anxiety/ sense of threat within staff and pupils which may sometimes be associated with shared and collaborative provision.</p>
<p>Pupils:</p> <p>In most schools only a minority of pupils are likely to be resistant to working with pupils from another sector. This will often stem from resistance by parents and the wider community, as well as from fears of intimidation from 'the other sector'. These concerns must be acknowledged and attended to.</p>	<p>Pupils:</p> <p>Generally, a majority of pupils enjoy and see the benefits of shared education experiences. Experience has shown that many pupils consider differing religious or cultural backgrounds as less important than shared interests when they engage in shared activities.</p>
<p>Funding:</p> <p>Lack of adequate funding or removal of funding will inhibit the quality, depth and sustainability of sharing and collaboration.</p>	<p>Funding:</p> <p>If adequate funding is sourced and made available to fund core activities, shared classes, transport and professional development for staff, there is evidence of a greater level of effective and sustained collaboration. This has been shown to be particularly important in the early stages of developing shared provision.</p>
<p>Resistance from parents/ local Community:</p> <p>Existing community tensions and a lack of willingness to engage with other communities can create difficulties for schools in developing sharing opportunities with another sector.</p>	<p>Supportive parents/local community: Research indicates that the relationship between the school and the local community is an important factor in the promotion of collaboration and may be an important determinant of local community receptiveness to it. Supportive parents understand that shared education will not detract from or threaten the values, beliefs and ethos of each community.</p>

3. Models of Good Practice

3.1 Experience of Shared Education in the SELB area

- 3.1i The SELB has limited powers and responsibilities in relation to the promotion of shared education, but actively encourages schools to engage in collaboration and sharing through a range of programmes and projects. The SELB has been involved in supporting shared and collaborative provision for over twenty years, through Programmes such as EMU and SCRP and CRED. There are also more recent examples of meaningful shared education programmes where sharing in schools has become the accepted normality. Examples include the 'Primary Curriculum Partnership Programme' (PCPP) and the 'Welcoming Schools' project (2011-2013), both projects were funded by the International Fund for Ireland and managed within the SELB.
- 3.1ii The PCPP project was a cross community project, whereby schools within the same community, village or town, and from different religious backgrounds, worked in partnership with each other. The project provided shared training and support structures for staff to deliver lessons in shared classrooms. The project required whole school involvement, working with Principals, Board of Governors and all members of the school staff and the wider school community, including parents. The rationale for this approach was that the whole school community would benefit from meaningful collaboration and that the work was linked very closely to school improvement, aiming to improve the quality of teaching and learning. With whole school involvement and the project being a central part of the school development plan, there were clear examples of the more efficient and effective use of resources, and the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. ETI evaluation of the project clearly indicated the improvements in learning and teaching:
- 3.1iii SELB schools have engaged positively in other shared education work, including the IFI funded project 'Sharing Classrooms, Deepening Learning' aimed at post primary schools and delivered through the Area Learning Communities and through participation in the Queens University Sharing in Education Programme, funded by IFI and Atlantic Philanthropies.
- 3.1iv A key feature of the Entitlement Framework in the SELB is the extensive collaboration between schools in order to support effective delivery of the required range of GCSE and Post 16 courses. There is an even greater need for sharing costs and resources with schools and pupils from across the sectors working together in order to maximise the effectiveness of resources and increase educational choice. This is particularly pertinent given the current economic situation, coupled with the Entitlement Framework requirements which many schools will struggling to provide without collaboration.

"The children and staff handled controversial and sensitive issues more effectively. This resulted in raising standards of learning and teaching in PDMU for the children and schools."

ETI Second Interim Evaluation of PCPP, June 2013.

- 3.1v The SELB has been managing the CRED schools' programme through which a number of schools are involved in collaboration and sharing on a range of Section 75 issues. Projects have included work between all sectors, including mainstream and special schools where significant benefits have been recorded. The broader approach to inclusion, equality and diversity, promoted through CRED has stimulated and enabled new areas of collaboration between schools and the tackling of a broader range of issues.

4. Priorities and Actions:

To support the Committee's consideration of what priorities and actions to be taken to improve sharing and integration, the SELB, based on experience of leading and facilitating the development of shared education, would suggest the following:

1. It is vital to engage with schools and communities to raise awareness and develop a deeper understanding of shared education. Targeted engagement with school leaders and Boards of Governors is required in order to promote, encourage and challenge their commitment to developing shared models of educational provision.
2. The concerns of the teaching staff involved in shared education projects and the key role played by the principal and Senior Leadership Team need to be considered and addressed in any development work. In particular, adequate professional development and adequate planning time is necessary to prepare principals, staff and governors for engaging in shared education developments.
3. Close engagement with parents and the local community is essential, especially in areas where there may be community tensions around sharing and collaboration between and across sectors.
4. In the development of shared education practice, it will be helpful for schools to have a range of tested models of effective practice available for consideration, together with advice and guidance on that range of models for shared provision. A collation of existing and previous effective models of shared education would provide a useful resource.
5. The integrated sector has substantial experience of dealing with difficult issues such as sectarianism and conflict resolution as well as experience of teaching children about diversity, respect and tolerance for others. This learning and experience should be drawn upon in the further development of shared and integrated models of provision.
6. It is apparent that no one model of provision fits all situations and contexts. The most appropriate model will be the model that has the support of the community which a school or schools serve.

Shauna Mulligan (an integrated education alumnus)

To the Committee for Education in Northern Ireland,

I would like the following views on shared and integrated education to be considered by the Education Committee as part of your ongoing review.

I am one of 6 siblings all of whom have attended an integrated primary and post primary school in Omagh. I am also a member of the Integrated Education Alumni Association in London. I have just graduated with a degree in English Language and Special Needs Education from a university in London and have a great passion and interest in education in general. As part of my degree I had to do research into the different types of education providers and the ratio of school places needed and those available in different localities and the impact of parental choice. I was shocked to discover that in Northern Ireland we have a massive duplication of provision and as a consequence our education system is not economically viable or cost effective. With future austerity measures looming now is the time for those decision makers in our midst to take brave decisions and bring our finances back into shape. In my own town of Omagh we have a total of 7 post primary schools an equivalent area here in London with similar population size has 2. It is obvious that 3 times the amount of provision is definitely overkill and needs to be addressed as this is only one area of Northern Ireland what must it be if the whole of Northern Ireland were to be surveyed.

When talk of a shared education campus was first mooted I was only in my third year at my post primary school, myself and my classmates were not quite sure what it all meant but we were eager to hear more. Eight possibly 9 years on, millions of pounds spent and not a brick built. Young people in the area still have no say in what is being provided decisions are being made by service providers and politicians instead of listening to the service users the students. What we do know is that when the shared education campus is complete we will still have 7 post primary schools in the area thus continuing the duplication of provision, young people will still be segregated as each school will still have their own building and there is no provision for any integration of sport facilities or outside space as each school will have separate times for use of such facilities and to crown it all the only Integrated post primary school in the area has been refused permission to relocate to the site. What is being proposed is also not going to save any money at all in the future and therefore offers no financial savings and poses the question what are the benefits?

Our hope at the time a Shared Education Campus was announced was that there would be one large school for all in the Omagh area regardless of gender or religion up to the age of 16/17 and then a Sixth Form College catering to the needs of young people. This would have been a truly courageous initiative putting our needs before those of our outdated institutions who are only interested in protecting themselves. Calling it an Integrated Campus or Shared Education Campus is irrelevant what it provides is much more important.

I feel very privileged and thankful that my parents supported integrated education and bravely chose our local primary and post primary integrated schools for us to attend. They went against what their families, friends, neighbours and church believed in. Attending schools not dominated by one view, belief or idea and so open minded that it allowed all of us not to be afraid to discuss our differences, be less judgemental and respect what makes us all different while at the same time pushing us to academically achieving our best whatever that might be. Being educated alongside

those with learning disabilities helps us develop our communication and interpersonal skills and allows us to integrate with those who find life more challenging than others. I have found this foundation so relevant during my studies for my degree and my present employment with Greenwich Council. There is so much we can do to make our education system in Northern Ireland better. It should start by educating us all together from nursery right up to leaving

school. If young people choose to go down the vocational route and attend one of our FE colleges they have an integrated education why not then if we choose the academic route.

Integrated Schools in Northern Ireland have been a choice for parents but so many are oversubscribed and their expansion blocked by religious and social groups that it is not available to all children and therefore so many are losing out. To learn side by side and in a completely neutral environment where differences are celebrated discussed and explored should be a right and not a choice and this is what NI should be aiming for rather than continuing with segregation.

In conclusion I would like to state that although I am not a fan of the shared education concept it is a tiny step towards integration but is it sustainable and where is it going? It appears to be just a buzz word for politicians and others who are afraid of the term integration . If it is such a great concept then why not be brave, save money and take a big step rather than a tiny one and recommend full integration of our education system including our teacher training and provide an exciting future for young people now and those not yet born. I know I would like to believe that any children I might have will have the right to an integrated education not the possibility of one.

Finally I thank you for allowing me to submit my thoughts and I would ask that you speak to as many young people like myself and those still attending school as you can. We know what we want our schools to provide, we know what makes a good lesson a good teacher and what makes us want to learn and helps us to learn.

Shauna Mulligan

Past pupil of Omagh Integrated Primary School, Drumragh Integrated College Omagh, University of East London and presently employee of Greenwich Council London

Shimna Integrated College



Shimna Integrated College *Specialist School*

The Lawnfield, King Street, Newcastle, BT33 0HD

T: (028) 4372 6107 F: (028) 4372 6109

E: info@shimna.newcastle.ni.sch.uk

W: www.shimnacollege.org.uk

Principal: Kevin Lambe B.A. (Hons) M. Ed., Dip. Ed.

Submission to the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Shimna Integrated College was founded by local parents who wanted an education for their children, which is Integrated, academically excellent, all-ability, child centred and parent friendly. Many of those involved in founding Shimna were parents of children at All Children's Integrated Primary School, the first Integrated school in Northern Ireland outside Belfast. Shimna grew as an Integrated school from its community, and Shimna has since 2006 run the Sharing Languages, Sharing Cultures programme for sixteen of our local primaries. The SLSC programme serves sixteen primaries which are, all but two, single identity school, and provides a regular, weekly element of Shared Education throughout the school year to a whole year group of children. Integrated schools are founded by parents who choose to do so. Integrated school respect absolutely the wishes of other parents for other kinds of schools. Our SLSC was founded in response to the desire across all educational sectors for an element of sharing as a normal part of the experience of all children in all schools. We are very proud to be able to offer the service. Shared Education should never be seen in opposition to Integrated Education. Shimna's roots in in Integration inspired our long-running Shared Education programme.

Of course, those of us who believe that the best system for Northern Ireland is Integration would prefer to see a fully Integrated system. We would prefer not to see resources go into further institutionalising separation, even within a campus. However, we have the greatest respect for thoroughgoing, purposeful, community led Shared Education projects, such as the Fermanagh Trust project. We respect the fact that the Fermanagh project is at the point on the spectrum of Integrated and Shared Education which the community has chosen. We recognise that in such a mature and complex Shared Education programme, the processes of Integration we value are strongly present. We also note the steady increase in contact, joint planning and holistic approach which has been apparent in the Fermanagh. We have found exactly the same dynamic within the communities served by our SLSC, and believe that that dynamic should be facilitated in bringing communities as close together as they continue to choose. Of course, as an Integrated school, we would love to see full Integration as the outcome. However, we repeat, our school is founded on the principle of parental choice, and we respect that choice for all parents.

We would regret a situation where students' opportunity to share education or to integrated would depend merely on joint projects, on occasions, on events. This is simply not enough.

Integrated Education is a commitment to living and learning together, and to addressing difference. We integrated because we disagree, not because we agree or imagine we have found a solution. It is a privilege we wish for every student, and we believe that the integrative effect on a local community is a powerful force towards social cohesion.

The effect in our small community has been substantially stabilising. A strong demographic swing has been stemmed, and our community remains mixed. Among our staff are members of our local minority community, who have now settled in the area, married and started families.

Our request to the inquiry team is for continued investment in Integrated Education. We would also request access for deeply rooted, sustained Shared Education programmes, so that they can be staffed appropriately with teachers who are subject/sector specialists and who have ongoing access to training in developing cross community work.

Our SLSC is in its eighth year, and has had to, temporarily we trust, downsize due to the end of funding. We have worked hard to establish our infrastructure and staffing expertise and we believe that we have a replicable, cost effective model of Sharing, which gives children in single identity schools access to regular, content and process rich, normal learning together. The main cost is staffing, and the only other essential cost is for transport, though we have designed our project to bring nearby schools together, both to minimise cost and to have the maximum community impact.

Shimna Integrated College is in its twenty first year. The evidence of our success is now to be seen in the generations of successful OldScholars now bringing Integration into every aspect of their adult lives. Integration has never been a quick fix, but makes a sustained and long term contribution to a cohesive society. The Integrated sector is small if measured in school and student numbers, but the impact of the injection of Integrated values into our education system has been massive.

We would draw the inquiry's attention to two current disappointments: that the Integrated sector has not been given full representation in proposed new structures; that the current CCMS submission to this inquiry has focused so much on abolishing the Integrated sector. We will not ever be campaigning against any other sector, nor against its full recognition.

Principal and Governors of Shimna Integrated College

22nd October 2014

"Learning from each other"

Sir Bob Salisbury

Committee for Education Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Submission from Sir Robert Salisbury

I do not represent any organisation and write as a private individual, resident in Northern Ireland. In the past I have chaired the Task Force on Literacy/Numeracy, Chaired the Funding Review and a Review of FE Colleges in NI. I have also worked for many years with schools and school leaders in NI, UK and internationally.

For brevity my submission will be in bullet point format, but I will be happy to expand the content at a later date if the Committee for Education think this would be helpful.

- 1 Virtually every political or educational observer from outside Northern Ireland sees our divided educational system as one of the root causes of the social unrest, innate mistrust 'of the other side' and a crucial factor in prolonging the ongoing tensions which exist in this small country. Many have urged the political and religious leaders to move with speed towards an integrated system which educates all of our young people together. To the neutral observer - and though I have lived in NI for thirteen years, I still regard myself as such - separating children, often from the age of three, into different educational channels where they seldom converge, inevitably fosters misunderstanding and prejudice. In my view the overarching thrust of this review should not be about deciding the relative merits of either Shared Education or Integrated Education, because they clearly both have strengths and weaknesses, but about moving towards a system which is fit for the 21st Century and educates **all** of our children together.
- 2 Perhaps a starting point is to ask if we are beginning this debate from the wrong end. It might be more useful to ask a fundamental question of all sectors in our present educational system. Are we truly focussed on fulfilling the needs and aspirations of our young people for the next twenty to thirty years or are we tinkering at the edges of what is for many students a failing system and still looking back to a world which is no longer relevant? Flexibility and adaptability, global awareness, co-operation and networking, confidence in meeting ever-changing circumstances, technological competence and high quality communication skills will be vital attributes for all children who are currently moving through our schools. Are our schools actually providing those vital foundations or are we still far too preoccupied with digging our heels in and defending our corner? Young people are our future. We should ask them what they think and all those with vested interests should begin to soften their traditional resistance to change and put the needs of young people before the needs of institutions or particular faiths. Arbitrarily divided education, whether it be in pseudo-academic terms or on religious grounds is surely out of its time and we should all have the confidence and strength to take a truly fresh look at what should happen in our schools.
- 3 If our current system of schooling was successful enough to compete with the best in the world and all of our young people were being given the confidence, skills and qualifications to be successful in life, there would be some virtue in maintaining the status quo and sticking with what we have. Sadly this is not the case and though many of our top students achieve high standards there is a long tail of underachievement, especially in the inner city areas, where results are some of the worst in the whole of Europe. Whatever changes we consider to the present system must therefore have as a central tenet - the pressing need to raise educational achievement for **all** young people.
- 4 Consideration of the future shape of our schools must also take into account the current financial situation. During the recent Funding Review it was very clear that Northern Ireland has too many small schools and too many 'types' of school to be economically viable as budgets decline. For example Omagh has six post primary schools with salaries, buildings

costs etc and Retford in Nottinghamshire, with an almost identical population has two post primaries. Replicate this across NI and the financial implications are obvious. Maintaining the duplication of the Controlled and Maintained sectors, Grammar Schools and High Schools is expensive and will increasingly become financially unsustainable. All ability integrated schools are clearly in the long term a more workable and affordable option.

- 5 Amalgamations and closures of small schools are inevitable in the future. Not only are many of these small establishments costly to maintain, but a restricted curriculum, lack of opportunity for sporting and cultural events and limited educational experience for the pupils increasingly occurs as numbers on roll decline. Of course no one relishes the closure of schools, especially those in rural areas, but it was very disappointing to discover in the recent Area Planning exercise, that more consideration was given to the separate rationalisation of Controlled or Maintained schools than to the possibility of integrating small schools in order to maintain at least one educational establishment in an area. Taking a school out of an area almost always means more travel and less convenience for both pupils and parents so when closures are proposed, communities should always be given the option to consider cross-sector amalgamations and integration as a possibility. This should take precedence over the present 'divided' area planning process which is now taking place.

- 6 Clearly, in educational terms, one of the main attractions of bringing small schools together to form a larger unit in order to maintain a school in an area, brings wider curricula opportunities for the children, greater diversity amongst the teaching staff and a secure future for the establishment. Integration of this type would also bring disparate communities together because though we hear a great deal about 'small rural schools being the heart of the community' in reality having separate Controlled or Maintained establishments a few miles apart is the very thing which divides populations.

It may be that to encourage governors, principals and parents to consider 'integrated amalgamations' a new range of financial incentives and new build opportunities for the school have to be offered. Similarly an attractive financial package, akin to that arranged for police officers when the PSNI was re-organised, might need to be put together to encourage principals to retire early, thus facilitating and encouraging opportunity for school amalgamations.

- 7 Finally we regularly hear 'parents must have the right to choose the school they want' which, though it may be understandable, inevitably comes with a cost in terms of transport, financial support for small schools etc which as has been mentioned earlier, is a situation which is unlikely to be sustainable in the future. Eventually parents making such a choice will undoubtedly have to contribute financially, especially towards transport, but a move towards local 'integrated' schools might anticipate and alleviate this problem.

- 8 The 'integrated schools' movement has made significant strides over the past years but for various reasons has still not achieved the major break-through in terms of student numbers that it initially hoped for. This may be because:

- a) Early development of the movement concentrated more on setting up new schools (which exacerbated the issues mentioned earlier in terms of small schools and the range of schools in NI) and was much less encouraging to schools which wanted to 'transform' into integrated establishments.
- b) The movement considered that mere 'integration' was enough to make them successful and failed to understand that high achievement for all students was also crucial to reputation and sustainability.
- c) Schools too often aped the local selective schools and missed the opportunity to create a unique, truly integrated ethos which had high aspirations for all pupils from all backgrounds and all traditions. As one successful former principal put it to me 'my hope for this school is that we will have students winning places at Oxbridge, students

with special needs reaching their full potential and everything in between. In short, a school which truly does provide the best for all students.'

- d) For years there has been a lack of strong, committed political support for integration, the continued existence of a selective system, widespread and systematic covert and overt pressure from the various religious groups to block integration, the 'capping' of integrated school numbers and the absence of schools in some areas are factors which have all had a detrimental effect on the expansion of integrated schools.
- e) Sadly the emergence of the 'shared education' movement seems to have been met with defensive animosity by some members of the 'integrated' sector. As one principal put it to me, 'they have stolen our thunder', which seems an odd reaction when the aspiration to teach all children together is surely common to both movements.

9 'Shared Education' should be viewed as a step in the right direction but there are some fundamental short-comings both in its philosophy and to its long term sustainability:

- a) Some schemes are clearly designed as a survival device to protect small schools which may be under threat from closure, thus prolonging the issues raised above.
- b) Educational outcomes are usually reported as very positive, though are often ill defined and difficult to quantify and prompt the obvious question that if these schemes work so well on restricted contact, why not fully integrate?
- c) Logistically 'shared' educational schemes have a finite limit so definitely do not offer a permanent solution. Planning joint timetables, arranging transport of staff and students quickly begins to exert a negative influence on the rest of the school. There is usually a substantial financial cost involved in this process and it is reasonable ask if the funding ceases in the future is the initiative likely to survive?
- d) Some schemes which have young people sharing the same building but having different uniforms and entering by separate doors are patently absurd and a better way to perpetuate difference is hard to imagine.
- e) It would be useful if all shared educational schemes are time-bound so that development of the initial idea is seen to be moving forward as the various parties become accustomed to working together. Hard evidence that all schemes are benefitting the educational and social outcomes for the children should also be a pre-requisite of any coming together between schools.
- f) In the long run, for 'shared education' schemes to work practically the structure, purpose and composition of the Governing Bodies of schools will need to be reviewed.

10 There are three areas where full integration would be relatively easy to achieve and would have a significant impact:

- a) All pre-school and nursery schools should be integrated. By school starting age many prejudices are already entrenched.
- b) Integrated Teacher Training should be introduced with some urgency because professionally it is ludicrous, duplication is expensive and potentially restricts the career opportunities for teachers.
- c) Development of joint Post 16 centres linked to FE colleges. Far too many school sixth forms offer restricted curricular packages, compete unashamedly with neighbouring schools for students and are uneconomic. An integrated regional approach to the provision of post-sixteen education based firmly on the needs of students rather than the individual institutions would be a rational move in the right direction.

- 11 Northern Ireland has moved forward massively in the last few years but huge divisions still exist in our society and many of these are clearly perpetuated by our segregated education system. Powerful religious and social groups conspire to maintain this situation and repeatedly seek to block any move towards teaching all pupils together. Historically there was clearly a need to develop a separate catholic education system to counteract the restricted opportunities experienced by people coming from that tradition in NI. However what was once an understandable route to achieve equality is no longer a solution but is now clearly part of the problem. Similarly, the birth of integrated education initially faced huge obstacles and its proponents had to be single-minded in the pursuit of their aims so that nothing less than 'full integration' was envisaged or tolerated. It would be a shame if these parties and indeed any others with 'self' interest in maintaining segregated education cannot now moderate their entrenched views and begin to see the immense benefits both educationally, socially and economically of bringing all children together into a single system.

For years now I have been asking the question of these vested interest groups 'What do we actually lose if our schools become integrated?' and so far have been unable to get any quantifiable or indeed honest response. Interestingly the only submission to this inquiry which came from young people who are part of the next generation (NUS-USI) unequivocally urges the committee to move with all speed towards integration and argues forcibly that 'children in NI should be educated together within an Integrated Educational system'. Perhaps asking all young people what they feel a modern school system should offer them for their future success and well-being might be a worthwhile starting point for this debate and would I am sure prove very illuminating!

Sir Robert Salisbury

Oct 2014

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Education Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry Submission from the Speedwell Trust

Executive Summary

The need for all schools to facilitate cross-community contact for their pupils on a regular basis is clear. The evidence suggests that nearly a quarter (24%) of young people in Northern Ireland who consider themselves either 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' have no friends from the 'other' main religious community. Moreover, 45% of 16 year olds report having nowhere in their area where they could meet young people from a different religious background. There is also robust evidence that cross-community friendships and social activity are more likely among young people who have been given opportunities at school or in youth groups to mix with their counterparts on a cross-community basis.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need for the Education Minister to introduce a statutory definition of shared education which defines it in such a way that it must facilitate sustained and meaningful contact between children from the two main religious traditions in Northern Ireland. We are concerned that the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education defined it in a way which appears to allow for a much wider interpretation of 'shared education'. We are further concerned that the Department of Education appears to be using a wider interpretation.

Moreover, it is vital that schools are placed under a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage shared education. The need for this obligation is demonstrated by the fact that, in a recent schools' survey carried out by the Department, only 54% of schools said they had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis. As the Department's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy does not require schools to facilitate cross-community contact for their pupils, there is no obligation for schools to ensure that their pupils are provided with the opportunity to mix in this way.

There is also robust evidence that lack of sufficient funding is a major barrier which is currently impeding schools from participating in shared education and in the Department's CRED programme. In this regard, we are concerned that there is currently no dedicated statutory funding scheme for shared education, and that the Department has significantly cut the funding it provides for community relations and cross-community programmes in schools.

Our recommendations for taking forward shared education and CRED are as follows:

- The Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.
- Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.
- The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and CRED programmes on a regular basis.
- The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared

education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.

- The Department should introduce an award scheme for schools which provide outstanding examples of good practice in shared education and CRED.

Introduction

The Trust greatly welcomes the decision by the Committee to hold an inquiry into shared and integrated education. These two forms of education are of the upmost significance in helping to ensure that the two main communities in Northern Ireland can move forward constructively and with a greater degree of understanding than hitherto.

Our comments will be confined to shared education and the implementation of the Department of Education's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy, as our work involves supporting schools in implementing shared education and CRED, but does not extend to the implementation of integrated education. In addition, while we are able to deal with the most of the questions outlined in the Inquiry's terms of reference as they relate to shared education and CRED, we will not be commenting on special schools as we have no experience of work in this type of school. In addition, our comments on models of good practice are confined to our own work in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, as we have no direct experience of models of good practice elsewhere.

The Speedwell Trust

The Speedwell Trust is a charity which has 23 years' experience of delivering educational programmes designed to facilitate constructive contact and greater understanding between children from different religious and cultural backgrounds. It is based near Dungannon, but works with schools and youth groups across Northern Ireland and, on occasion, in border areas in the Republic of Ireland. To date, the Trust has provided services to more than 200 schools. Within the last financial year alone (2013/14), Speedwell delivered programmes in partnership with more than 100 schools.

The nature and definition of shared education

The need for shared education

Before discussing the precise nature and definition of shared education, we believe that it is vital to examine why both shared and integrated education are so important. One of the main reasons that cross-community contact between children and young people is so crucial is that the evidence suggests that a significant minority – just under a quarter – of young people in Northern Ireland who would consider themselves either 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' have no friends from the main religious community in which they did not grow up. In 2012, the annual Northern Ireland Young Life and Times (YLT) survey found that 24% of 16 year olds from the Protestant or Catholic religious community reported having no friends in the other main religious community.¹ Moreover, a previous YLT survey, carried out in 2011, found that such friendships were more likely among those who had previously participated in a cross-community scheme, or who had attended a planned integrated school.² Those who fall into these categories were also more likely to socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community.³

1 Devine, Paula (2013) Research Update No. 83: Into the mix. ARK Northern Ireland.

2 Devine, Paula and Robinson, Gillian (2012) Research Update No. 79: No more 'us and them' for 16 year olds. ARK Northern Ireland.

3 Ibid.

Furthermore, 45% of respondents to the 2012 YLT survey said that there were no facilities in their area where they could meet young people of a different religion, and 77% thought that cross-community relations would improve if there were more cross-community projects.⁴

Thus, there is a clear need for all children and young people who regard themselves as belonging to either the Protestant or Catholic community to be provided with opportunities to participate in cross-community programmes – both because these facilitate cross-community friendships and social activity, and because such a high proportion of young people cannot easily meet their counterparts from the ‘other’ community.

In addition, there is specific evidence that children and young people benefit from experiencing such contact on a sustained basis within an educational setting. A research team at Queens University, Belfast, found that children at schools which had participated in a shared education programme run by the University were less worried and more positive about the ‘other’ community than children at schools which did not participate in such a scheme.⁵ This finding applied even when the team confined its comparison to schools which were located in areas viewed as having greater divisions.

The need for a statutory cross-community definition of shared education

The above evidence provides strong support for the value of shared education. We are heartened, therefore, that the Northern Ireland Executive’s current *Programme for Government 2011–2015* contains a commitment to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015.⁶ We also welcome the commitment in the OFMdfM policy document, *Together: Building a United Community*, to deliver ten ‘shared education’ campuses⁷, and the subsequent pledge by the Education Minister in January 2014 to deliver on this promise.

However, if shared education is to form a central element of the Executive’s approach to cross-community relations, as we believe it most certainly should, it is essential that all involved are using the same clear definition of ‘shared education’, and that any ‘shared education’ will facilitate sustained and meaningful contact between children from the two main religious traditions in Northern Ireland.

We have been disappointed, therefore, to discover that there is no clear statutory definition of ‘shared education’, and that the Executive seems to be using a definition which appears to allow collaboration between Catholic grammar and non-grammar schools, on the one hand, and between predominantly Protestant controlled or voluntary grammar and non-grammar schools, on the other, to be viewed as ‘shared education’. It also appears to allow for collaboration between a Catholic primary and Catholic post-primary school, or a predominantly Protestant controlled primary school and a predominantly Protestant controlled or voluntary post-primary school.

The definition in question was drawn up by the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education. This Group was tasked by the Executive with providing a set of recommendations on how best to take forward shared education. It reported in March 2013. It defined shared education as follows:

Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality

4 Devine, Paula (2013), op. cit.

5 Hughes, Joanne et al. (2010) *School Partnerships and Reconciliation: An Evaluation of School Collaboration in Northern Ireland*. Queen’s University, Belfast, p. 40.

6 Northern Ireland Executive *Programme for Government 2011 – 15*, p. 51.

7 See: <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community>

*of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.*⁸

Crucially, however, the report further clarifies that: “By ‘different sectors’, the definition refers to schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance.”⁹ Such a definition seems to allow the ‘single community’ interpretations referred to above.

Moreover, the impression that something close to the Group’s definition is being used by the Department of Education and by schools is reinforced by the fact that, in the “shared education” section of an Omnibus survey of schools carried out by the Department in March 2013, the Department lists a number of types of ‘shared education’ collaboration in which each school might have participated and includes, as an option, collaboration with a school “from the same sector (e.g. controlled, maintained, integrated, Irish medium)”. Thus, although the Department has a different definition of the term ‘sector’ from the Ministerial Advisory Group, it appears to share the view that ‘shared education’ does not have to involve cross-community collaboration.¹⁰

Any such ‘single community’ collaboration, while it may bring many other benefits, is not going to facilitate the type of cross-community contact which the evidence shows is so important in helping to increase cross-community understanding and foster good cross-community relationships in Northern Ireland.

We appreciate that the Education Minister has since committed to bringing forward a definition of shared education and appreciate that the final statutory definition may differ from the above.¹¹ However, we are concerned that, in the absence of any official definition, the definition recommended by the Working Group will be used, in the meantime, by the Department of Education, education boards and schools in working towards the Executive’s current policy objectives concerning shared education. Moreover, until a firm statutory definition is produced, it will be impossible for the Department to monitor robustly the degree and quality of shared education which is taking place, as it will not be clear what it is monitoring.

The need for a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage shared education

We welcome the Education Minister’s commitment to bring in a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage shared education. However, as outlined above, it is essential that this relates to a cross-community definition of shared education.

The need to both require and encourage schools to participate in cross-community shared education is underlined by the fact that, of the 568 schools which responded to the Department’s ‘shared education’ survey, only 306 (54%) had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis. In other words, nearly half (262 or 46%) had not participated in cross-community shared education.¹²

Moreover, the survey also found that only 15% of schools which had participated in shared education had done so in a way which involved the whole school.¹³ We believe it is essential

8 Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education (2013) *Advancing Shared Education*, p. xiii. Available at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/Filestore/Fileupload,382123,en.pdf>

9 Ibid.

10 Department of Education Omnibus Survey: Shared Education, October 2013, Table 10.

11 Education Minister. *Advancing Shared Education*. Ministerial Statement to Assembly, 22nd October, 2013. Available at: http://www.deni.gov.uk/advancing_shared_education_-_22_october_2013_docx.pdf

12 Department of Education, *op. cit.*, Tables 5 and 10. Table 10 gives a percentage for involvement in cross-community shared education which excludes those schools which did not participate in any shared education. It is important, therefore, to read both these tables in conjunction with each other to discern the actual level of cross-community engagement.

13 Department of Education, *op. cit.*, Table 8.

that all children from either the Protestant or Catholic tradition in Northern Ireland are given the opportunity to engage in a meaningful way with children from the other main community on a regular basis. This can only happen if each class in every relevant school is provided with such an opportunity. It is also the only way in which the Programme for Government target, referred to previously, can be achieved.

Furthermore, the 2012 Northern Ireland Kids' Life and Times Survey, which surveyed children in P7, found that only 58% reported having taken part in an activity with a child from another school.¹⁴ Although the YLT survey in the same year found that a much larger proportion - 82% - of 16 year olds reported having taken part in such activity, only 72% of those who had participated in shared education (i.e. 59% of the whole sample) said that some of the pupils from other schools had been from a different religious background.¹⁵ In other words, it would seem that substantial proportions of both primary and post-primary pupils are not being given any opportunity by their own school for cross-community engagement with children from another school.

Key barriers and enablers for shared education

Key barriers

The Speedwell Trust recently carried out a survey of 130 of the schools with which it has worked.¹⁶ Schools were asked what they thought were the most significant barriers to participation in shared education activities with another school. By far the most commonly cited issue was the cost of transport; 85% of respondents thought this was a key barrier to participation in shared education (see Table 1 on p.12 of this submission).

This issue is obviously more relevant in some areas than others; in some parts of Belfast, for example, many schools whose pupils are predominantly Protestant or Catholic are within walking distance of at least one school whose pupils are mostly from the 'other' community.

On the other hand, the only Catholic maintained post-primary school in the Waterside area of Derry/Londonderry is due to close in 2015, meaning that predominantly Protestant post-primary schools in that area which wish to collaborate with Catholic maintained post-primary schools will have to organise transport for their pupils. There are also many towns in Northern Ireland where the population is predominantly from one religious community and, therefore, most or all of the schools have pupils which are from the same community. In such situations, it would clearly be impossible to ensure all schools can have shared education partners located in close proximity to their own institution.

The related issues of the distance between potential shared education partner schools and transport costs are obviously most acute for schools in relatively sparsely populated rural areas. In addition, not all schools have the space to accommodate large numbers of additional children participating in a joint activity, and some schools prefer that cross-community engagement takes place in a neutral, external venue, rather than in a school.

Indeed, The Speedwell Trust offers such a facility at our headquarters in Parkanaur Forest near Dungannon, where children have the opportunity to experience a range of outdoor activities in the forest setting, and to make use of indoor accommodation which is designed to accommodate large groups of children. The facility has proved very popular with schools. However, for those schools travelling from further afield than the Dungannon area, the transport cost is obviously an important issue.

14 Kids' Life and Times 2012 Survey results. Available at: http://www.ark.ac.uk/klt/results/Shared_Education.html

15 Young Life and Times Survey 2012 Survey results. Available at: http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/2012/Shared_Education/

16 The survey was carried out online in June 2014. An invitation to take part in the survey was issued by email to 130 schools. 65 (50%) responded.

As can be seen from Table 1, the second most commonly cited barrier was curriculum pressures. This chimes with one of the findings from a schools' survey carried out by the Queen's University team referred to earlier. 71% of respondents to their survey stated that the additional workload for teachers which was involved in shared education was a barrier.¹⁷

Clearly, many schools view shared education as an 'add-on' where time permits, rather than an essential element of the learning experience for their pupils. This perception reinforces the need for a statutory requirement for schools to engage in cross-community shared education in order to encourage schools to give it greater priority, and to view it as part of their mainstream educational offer. In addition, we believe that the Department could do much more to raise awareness among schools of the ways in which cross-community engagement fits with and can enhance the delivery of the existing curriculum, and of the extent to which some subjects can be delivered more cost-effectively in a shared education context.

The third most commonly cited factor, selected by more than half (53%) of the respondents, was lack of resources. Lack of resources was also the most commonly cited barrier in the Queen's University schools' survey referred to above. 83% of their respondents selected this factor.¹⁸ These findings, together with our survey evidence highlighting the issue of transport costs, point to a need for an easily accessible source of public funding for shared education. At present, schools can apply to their local education board for funding to implement CRED. However, there is no dedicated public funding stream for shared education, and schools have told us that they find the CRED funding application process cumbersome.

Key enablers

In light of the above evidence, it is not surprising that availability of funding was seen by the schools which responded to the Queen's University schools' survey as one of the two most important 'enablers' for shared education; 84% of schools cited this factor. The other factor which was cited most frequently was the relationship between the leaders of the schools in question, selected by 85% of respondents.¹⁹ In this regard, in addition to providing adequate and easily accessible funding, it is vital that the Department does more to encourage school principals and senior managers to develop positive and constructive relationships with their counterparts in schools with a different religious composition. 76% of respondents to the Queen's University schools' survey also cited 'the commitment of other staff' as an important enabling factor, suggesting that shared education works best where all staff in a school are firmly committed to it.

The issue of geography was also highlighted in the Queen's University survey with 69% of schools selecting the geographical proximity of the schools in question as a key enabler. This finding reinforces the need for the Department to work to assist school in addressing issues posed by geographical location to ensure that this is not an insurmountable barrier for any schools.

Models of good practice

The Inquiry's terms of reference refer specifically to alternative approaches and models of good practice in other territories. As mentioned earlier, the Speedwell Trust has no direct experience of good practice models in other territories, beyond our own work in border areas of the Republic of Ireland. However, we believe it is vital that the Committee examines models of good practice within Northern Ireland as well as elsewhere, not least because the Inquiry is focusing on how best to take forward shared education in Northern Ireland. Below we highlight three of our most successful programmes which we believe provide models of good practice which could be rolled out more widely.

¹⁷ Hughes, Joanne et al., op. cit., p. 23.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ op. cit., p. 22.

Diversity and Drums

The success of our Diversity and Drums programme illustrates the value of facilitating children in directly addressing cultural difference and potentially contentious issues, and encouraging them to understand, respect and appreciate cultural diversity. For the children, the highlight of the programme is generally the opportunity which it provides them to have a go at playing a variety of different types of drum, including both the bodhran and the Lambeg drum. Participating in an activity which most children find hugely enjoyable is a great means of breaking down barriers and reducing any anxieties which the children may feel. However, the programme, through an educational thematic unit, also enables children to find out how drums have been used in different periods of history and in different parts of the world. As part of the programme, children also discuss sensitive issues such as bullying, sectarianism and racism, including the ways in which discriminatory and aggressive behaviour and attitudes impact on people, and on what can be done to address these issues.

The Diversity and Drums thematic unit, which is aimed at children in Key Stage 2, consists of 12 inter-related activities which are designed for use across one or two school terms by two schools whose pupils are each from predominantly different religious traditions. Schools are encouraged to deliver this module to joint groups of pupils from each of the partner schools. To date 30 schools have taken part in this programme and the feedback from them has been overwhelmingly positive.

Connecting Communities

The Connecting Communities programme is also aimed at children in Key Stage 2 and has been very successful. As with Diversity and Drums, Connecting Communities does not shy away from contentious issues, but rather encourages children to think about cultural difference. This is a very practical, hands-on programme and provides opportunities for children to examine, explore and investigate flags, emblems and symbols associated with diversity in our community. It is also a collaborative programme with input coming from the PSNI and local church representatives. Children are provided with opportunities to interact with their local neighbourhood policing team as well as visiting various churches in their community.

The Connecting Communities thematic unit consists of 14 inter-related activities which are designed for use across one or two school terms by two schools whose pupils are each from predominantly different religious traditions. In this instance, the module explores how our concept of community is formed, the differences within a community, and how we come to think of some people as being 'inside' or 'outside' our community. Participants are also asked to imagine what it would be like to be a newcomer to their own community and how they might feel.

To date, 15 schools have taken part in the practical workshops and, once more, feedback has been very positive.

Speedwell Schools' Engagement Project

This project is designed to build on the Speedwell Trust's long-established work in the area of fostering an appreciation of diversity within and between schools. It involved 'Catholic' and 'Protestant' Primary Schools in the various locations throughout Northern Ireland coming together to engage with each other and, crucially, the PSNI. The project facilitates the delivery of core PSNI safety-related work (internet safety, road safety, 'stranger danger' and fireworks safety) but its real value is in (a) bringing together of children and teachers from different educational sectors and (b) introducing PSNI officers and their work to schools/communities where they traditionally might not have had a place/presence.

To date 64 primary schools have taken in the Schools Engagement Project. The process involved (1) a team-building event at Parkanaur involving Schools from the two communities and PSNI officers (in plain clothes) (2) a shared event in one of the Schools exploring cultural

traditions, diversity, flags, symbols and identity issues (3) a shared event in the other School where the PSNI officers appear in uniform and deliver safety awareness training

This project was evaluated by an independent assessor with very positive outcomes.

Priorities and actions to improve shared education and cross-community interaction

The Inquiry's terms of reference state that, under the above heading, the Inquiry will consider the effectiveness of relevant parts of the Department of Education's CRED policy, the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers, and the role of special schools. As mentioned previously, we will be confining our comments to CRED and the need to engage with parents/carers, as we have not worked with special schools.

Effectiveness of relevant parts of CRED policy

As the Committee will be aware, in 2011, the Department of Education published *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education* (CRED), a new policy which was designed to encourage all schools to foster mutual understanding and good community relations.²⁰ The Department now provides some funding on an annual basis to schools and youth groups to help implement CRED.

We have a number of concerns about the effectiveness of CRED. Our principal concerns relate to the lack of any obligation for CRED to incorporate cross-community interaction, the current inadequate arrangements for monitoring the extent to which schools are delivering CRED, and the insufficient level of funding available to implement the policy.

In particular, the CRED policy document stipulates only that schools should provide opportunities for their pupils to interact with others from different backgrounds "within the resources available"; in other words, where a school feels it cannot afford to initiate such cross-community engagement, that engagement does not have to take place.²¹ Taken together with the broad Advisory Group definition of 'shared education', referred to earlier, this means that schools whose pupils belong predominantly to one of Northern Ireland's major religious communities (i.e. Protestant or Catholic) are not required to ensure that their pupils have opportunities to mix with pupils from the other major community.

The 2011 YLT survey found that 70% of their 16-year old respondents reported having engaged, at some stage, in activity which would fall under the umbrella of the CRED policy, either in school, in a youth group, or in both types of setting. Most of these respondents (60% of the whole sample) had taken part in such activity at school. Conversely, 30% of respondents said they had not participated in such activity.²² However, this survey did not examine how many of these young people met members of the other main religious community as part of this activity.

In our view, it is absolutely crucial that the degree of cross-community interaction which takes place under CRED is robustly monitored. As we have already stated, cross-community engagement is of fundamental importance if children and young people are to develop real understanding and awareness of those who have different cultural or religious traditions from themselves, and if they are to be facilitated in forming cross-community friendships, where desired.

20 See: Department of Education (2011) *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education*. Available at: <http://www.credni.org/contents/what-is-cred/>

21 Ibid. para. 6.5.

22 Devine, Paula (2013) *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED): Findings from the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey ARK Northern Ireland*

When we asked the Department of Education how it was monitoring the implementation of CRED, it stated that the only evaluation it had commissioned to date was the above-mentioned YLT survey. We do not believe that this survey is sufficient as, while it contains valuable data, it relies on the impressions of young people who may not always be sure whether or not they have participated in an activity which was intended to form part of CRED. Moreover, while the survey sample was large (1,208 respondents), there is no guarantee that the schools attended by the respondents is in any way representative of all schools in Northern Ireland.

The Department has stated that it will commission a similar suite of questions on CRED to be included in the 2014 YLT survey, and that it is also asking the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) to undertake a review of the CRED policy in schools. While we welcome these moves by the Department, they are insufficient on their own. We assume that the Inspectorate's review will follow the approach of similar thematic reviews previously carried out by ETI and will draw on inspections carried out at a sample of schools. While this work will be very helpful, we believe that all schools should be required to report to the Department on an annual basis on both their CRED and shared education work, and that the resulting data should be published. Where schools are failing to engage in such activity, the Department should proactively assist them in participating in such work.

We are also very concerned about the level of funding which is made available to schools and youth groups for the implementation of CRED. The Department of Education has significantly reduced the resources which it allocates for the support of community relations in schools. Up to March 2010, it allocated some £3.6m annually for such support in both formal and informal educational settings. It now allocates only £1.2m approx. annually.²³

Only 15% of schools (181) took part in projects which were allocated funding by the Department through this programme in 2013/14.²⁴

We further note, from data in OFMdfM's most recent 'Good Relations Indicators' report, that the proportion of schools engaging in community relations activity fell drastically between 2006/07, when it stood at 43%, to 2011/12, when it stood at 21%.²⁵ It is not clear, from the report, how the OFMdfM data is compiled. It may refer only to schools which have been allocated funding for community relations programmes. Obviously, some schools may participate in community relations activities without recourse to external funding. However, the figures are undoubtedly a cause for concern. Moreover, they mirror informal feedback which we have received from schools which suggests that far fewer schools are now participating in such activity than was the case previously.

Parent/carer engagement

In general, we have not found parental attitudes to present any barrier to the work that we carry out. However, we appreciate that some schools may be reticent about engaging in cross-community programmes because they fear the reaction which they may receive from some parents. We further note that, while most of the schools which responded to our survey did not see lack of support from parents as a barrier to shared education, 11% of respondents did feel it was an obstacle (see Table 1).

However, while parental attitudes may not represent a significant obstacle to such engagement in most instances, the evidence does suggest that parents have a major influence on the attitudes and friendship patterns of their children. A study which was

23 The previous figure is cited in Department of Education (2011), op. cit., p.8, para. 2.4. In Assembly Written Answer AQW29095/11-15, the Education Minister stated that his Department provided £1.163m in 2012/13 to fund the delivery of CRED.

24 The figures quoted are drawn from statistics supplied by the Education Minister in Assembly Written Answer AQW 29626/11-15.

25 OFMdfM (2012) Good Relations Indicators – 2012 Update, 4.11. Available at: <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/pfg-economics-statistics/equalityresearch/research-publications/gr-pubs.htm>

published in 2010, involving 1,700 children in Northern Ireland and 880 of their parents, found that parental social attitudes were the most powerful factor influencing the social and political attitudes of their children.²⁶ This certainly suggests that, if we are to encourage children to have open and positive attitudes towards those from different cultural and religious traditions, it is vital to engage with parents.

Our own experience suggests that one of the most effective ways to engage with parents is to ensure that our cross-community programmes include a performance by the children involved to which parents are invited. Where this opportunity is offered, it is generally taken up by most parents who respond positively. Such opportunities enable parents to have a better understanding of our programmes and to engage with each other on a cross-community basis.

In addition, on those rare occasions where there is real opposition from parents, we have also found that it can be very helpful to engage directly with such parents in an open and constructive way prior to commencing a cross-community programme. Moreover, where there is any parental mistrust, it has never arisen from the cross-community contact per se, nor from the actual content of the programmes. Parental objections have only been raised on very infrequent occasions due to the location of a particular school (i.e. being in an area which is viewed as associated with paramilitary supporters), or due to the involvement of an institution which has a negative symbolic significance for the parent(s) concerned e.g. a particular church or the PSNI.

Recommendations

Our recommendations for taking forward shared education and CRED are as follows:

- The Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.
- Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.
- The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and CRED programmes on a regular basis.
- The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.
- The Department should introduce an award scheme for schools which provide outstanding examples of good practice in shared education and CRED.

In addition, we believe that consideration should be given to synthesising the Department's shared education and CRED policies as there is clearly a considerable degree of overlap between them. However, if this is done, it is vital that the definition of shared education remains one which gives a central role to the importance of cross-community contact between Protestant and Catholic schoolchildren. Clearly, religious division is only one form of division in Northern Ireland, and we welcome the fact that CRED is also designed to address other divisions and stereotypes. At the same time, Northern Ireland will be unable to move forward into a truly harmonious and peaceful society if its most fundamental division is not addressed in schools.

Table 1: Speedwell Trust survey responses to “What are the main obstacles to shared education activities with schools from a different education sector?”
(N = 65. Respondents could tick more than one option.)

–	Agree–	Don’t know–	Disagree–	Number of respondents responding to option
– cost of transport	85.25% 52	1.64% 1	13.11% 8	61
– lack of training for staff	38.60% 22	19.30% 11	42.11% 24	57
– lack of support from parents	10.91% 6	9.09% 5	80.00% 44	55
– local community tensions	17.54% 10	19.30% 11	63.16% 36	57
– no suitable facilities	22.22% 12	11.11% 6	66.67% 36	54
– lack of resources	53.45% 31	15.52% 9	31.03% 18	58
– curriculum pressures	63.16% 36	5.26% 3	31.58% 18	57
– lack of willingness from staff	5.36% 3	16.07% 9	78.57% 44	56
– poor relationship with partner school	5.45% 3	7.27% 4	87.27% 48	55
– lack of partner school	16.36% 9	10.91% 6	72.73% 40	55

Sperrin Integrated College



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

t (028) 7963 4177 . f (028) 7930 1711 . e info@sperrin.magherafelt.ni.sch.uk

Sperrin College

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.
	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

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

Spires Integrated PS



Spires Integrated Primary School

84 Moneymore Road, Magherafelt, BT45 6HH.

Telephone: (028) 7963 1014

Fax: (028) 7930 1382

Website: www.spiresips.org.uk

E-Mail: info@spiresips.mfelt.ni.sch.uk

Principal: Mrs J Bell

23 October 2014

Dear Mr McCallion

Spires Integrated Primary School, Magherafelt, owes its birth to the hopes and dedication of local parents and grandparents. People, who differed greatly in background, shared a common desire – to see children from different cultural and religious backgrounds educated together in an environment in which the traditions of all are valued equally. It opened in September 1999 catering for 58 children in P1 – P4 and has grown steadily to an enrolment of over 200. Having an enrolment figure of 29 each year, which is set by the Department frequently results in children being denied an education in an integrated setting. Indeed last year eleven children were denied the opportunity to attend Spires Integrated Primary School.

As an Integrated school we bring families and communities together; integration, respect for differences and cultural awareness seeps into the wider community as a direct consequence of the existence of our school.

The 2011 Census indicated a clear demographic change in Northern Ireland and the Integrated Sector can accommodate this trend very effectively. There is a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education and it is, therefore, disappointing to see that this is not actually apparent in Northern Ireland.

Communities face barriers at the initial stage of establishing a school, as DENI give more consideration to the impact on existing schools rather than parental choice. Similarly, capped enrolments ensure that only a limited amount of children can avail of the unique and diverse experiences offered through Integrated Education.

To develop Shared Education would put additional pressure on an already restricted Education Budget. As past experience (EMU) and current policy (CRED) have shown, schools are willing to participate in these programmes primarily for two reasons; (i) DENI requirement (ii) financial incentive. If these were removed it is doubtful how many schools would engage in such initiatives. I feel there is a similar attitude towards Shared Education. Schools may engage in it for financial reasons without any real commitment towards establishing strong, worthwhile connections to schools from different sectors.

Rather than allocate additional funds to Shared Education, money should be provided to grant further places for children within integrated schools and allow them to grow in accordance with parental choice. Shared Education and Integrated Education are not the same. Integrated schools have existed for over thirty years now and are having a major impact on strengthening relationships across the religious divide.



On a daily basis, pupils at our school engage in open and meaningful discussions with each other both inside and outside of the classroom. Integrated schools are very effectively bringing communities together because they are planned, desired and there is a commitment to their success, as opposed to Government initiatives that are taken on board due to requirement or financial gain.

Integration works. It is an extremely significant and positive step towards a peaceful future in Northern Ireland. In order for the Education Committee to make an informed decision regarding Shared and Integrated Education, it needs to **experience** integration and **engage** in purposeful discussions with all elements of the integrated sector namely Governors, Staff, Pupils, Parents and NICIE.

The children are the future and their voices should not only be heard but given serious consideration when the Education Committee meets to discuss this area.

I have also attached the thoughts and feelings of some of the pupils from Spires Integrated Primary School.

Yours sincerely

J Bell

Principal

Minutes of School Council Meeting

Monday 20th October 2014

Mr Clarke welcomed everyone to the school council meeting and Lee was voted as chair person and Alanagh as secretary.

Examples of how Integrated Education is good

- Learn about religions and celebrate them.
- Learn, eat and play together, if we eat together we know what our friends like or what they don't like.
- We get to play sports together.
- All the classes work together as a whole school on Tuesday evenings – mixed age groups for literacy and numeracy.
- We don't only learn about other religions and languages, we get to share experiences, we don't just learn about Catholics doing their confirmation we can see it and talk about it.
- If your parents are different religions you get to choose which one.
- You get to make very close friends with people who are very different or have disabilities.
- You get to experience being with different people.
- We do activities with other schools.
- Going to an integrated school makes you more tolerant a reason why is, you have friends that are different, so you understand.
- A good rule is don't do something mean to someone, if you don't want it done to you. (Would I like them to do it to me?)
- We get to make friends with different people, we get to celebrate some things like (St Patricks day and 12th July, Orange Order) but we celebrate everything.

Meeting finished at 2.50 pm.

People that were here:

Katie, Lee – P6

Alangah, Tiarnan – P7

Rhys, Emily – P5

Harry, Olivia – P4

21st October 2014 P5 Class Council

- We talked about why Integrated schools are important.

The following reasons were given:

- Everyone has the right to an education.
- It doesn't matter who you are or what language you speak.
- Everyone is equal.
- Everyone has the right to have friends. It shouldn't matter what religion they are.
- We get to learn other languages.
- We get to learn about other religions.
- You get to play more sports such as gaelic and camogie.

What Integration means to me



What Integration Means to me

Integration means that I can meet people that are from different cultures, different Religions and believe in different Gods. For example; My Mum is Protestant and my Step dad is Catholic, It doesn't matter to them or me because to us, everyone is the same and God loves all of us no matter what.

Why Does Skin Colour Matter?



In my opinion skin colour doesn't matter. We are all the same in my eyes. No matter what religion, culture, what God we believe in or what skin colour we are. My best friend is Priya. Her mum is Indian and her dad is Northern Irish, so she is half Indian. She gets treated the same as everyone else and I think everyone should be treated like her.

God Everyone No Matter What



The Meaning Of Integrated

To make into a whole
by bringing all parts
together; unify

My School

My School is an Integrated School. I really like it because I get the chance to mix with people from different backgrounds, cultures and religions. I get to learn about their beliefs (if they believe in a different God etc.) In some assemblies priests or ministers come in to talk to us, I find it really interesting because I get to find out things that I never knew before.



Integration is AWESOME!!!



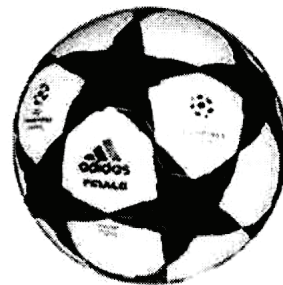
Thank You For Watching!!

**THANK
YOU**

By Ellie Montgomery P.7 ©

In my school we have the chance to participate in many different sporting activities such as:

Rugby
Hockey
Football
Gaelic
Athletics
Swimming
Basketball
Dodge ball



Once again many of these sports were new to me when I started Spires and as a result, I have met many different people and have made some good friends 😊

Spires Integrated Primary School

Board of Governors

Spires Integrated Primary School was established in 1999, through the recognition of both parents and the local community of the need for an Education System that would provide a forum for all and every faith and none.

Through successful pioneering and lobbying this was achieved for the greater good of the Mid Ulster Community.

For the last 15 years this School has thrived and every year we are over subscribed. One long term barrier to us, is that we have a limited number of places to allocate and as a result every year we are turning families away that wish to avail of Integrated Education.

As the demographics of our Society change, we now more that every needs to offer our children and young people the opportunity to integrate and socialise with other faiths and cultures, to widen their opinions, address prejudices and widen outlooks throughout their school lives.

The school still receives great support from the community, for example we have great attendance at open events, we have partnerships with various local companies for reading schemes and we received generous sponsorship for different elements of our recently added Outdoor classroom.

Finally may we remind you of the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education in article 64 of the 1989 act, there was a judicial review that clarified that the education policy should enable the expansion of integrated education to meet local demand - we have demand in Magherafelt at both primary and secondary level.

Caroline Keatley - Vice Chair

Lucy McCulloch

Board of Governors

Spires Integrated Primary School

St. Mary's Limavady

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry : Request for Written Evidence

As a school with a history of more than forty years of shared, cross – sectoral educational delivery, we are delighted to contribute to this current inquiry by the Education Committee.

We would invite the committee to reflect on our submission below and would welcome the opportunity to meet and speak with the committee. Should the Committee wish, they would be welcome to visit and experience first-hand our Shared delivery of Education.

To contribute to this current inquiry effectively we will address the committees terms of reference directly:

1. Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education

We feel it is important at the outset to clarify that Shared Education and Integrated Education are not the same.

Both have clear definitions which clearly identify the main differences. Shared Education allows sectors to maintain their own identity (religious ethos, academic selection etc) and yet share their delivery of education for mutual benefit. Integrated education is the creation of a separate shared sector in which all participants accept their identity is determined by the sector ethos which does not endorse religious or academic difference.

As clear formal definitions exist (Dr. Paul Connolly proposed a definition for Shared Education, NICCE proposed a definition for integrated Education) we do not feel there is a need for the committee to do likewise. Should the committee see the need for these to be adopted as statutory, we do not see the need for revision before doing so.

Obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education

Given the obligation on the Education Minister to facilitate and encourage Integrated Education, given the small percentage of the school population which attend the integrated sector, it would appear logical that the Education Minister facilitate and encourage Shared Education. The Shared Educational Campuses Programme, alongside recent Atlantic Philanthropies funding which will be overseen by the Education and Library Boards, are both initiatives upon which to build.

2. Key barriers and Enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education.

The failure of educational authorities to address the underlying issue of school age population V school places makes true sharing across sectors very difficult. The underpinning competition between sectors to fill places means schools can only share to a certain degree.

The key enabler of Sharing is always mutual benefit – be these curriculum, economic, social or otherwise. The greater the advantages that can be identified, the greater the enablement.

The Key barriers and enablers of Integrated Education are better identified and discussed for the committee by educators from within the integrated sector.

3. Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice.

We believe ourselves, St. Mary's Limavady and Limavady High School have an excellent model to reflect upon and learn lessons from. Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School also enjoy a mature and effective model of Shared cross sector delivery.

Our model includes shared classes at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 seeing close to 500 students experience shared lessons weekly. This is underpinning by shared staff planning, shared staff

training, shared parents evenings, shared student enrichment activities, joint student councils and Shared Capital Programmes. At all levels our model of Sharing is putting in place a Shared future between the two schools.

4. Priorities and Actions which need to be taken

The main issue to be addressed in the current Northern Ireland Education system is the underlying issue of school age population V school places. Only when schools have a certain and sustainable future can they firstly exist and secondly share in confidence and trust.

The CRED policy, the role of parents, inclusion of Special Schools are all aspects which a dynamic and programme of Shared Education encompasses.

St Martin's Primary School Garrison

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education:

Submission from St. Martin's Primary School, Garrison

St. Martin's PS has been involved in the Shared Education Programme since its inception. Initially the programme was with another primary school in Co. Donegal. In recent times, the school has established links with other schools in the locality which led to the establishment of the Erne West Learning Community in 2012. The programme has been integral to school life and all pupils have had opportunities to take part in shared classes. Teachers have also had the opportunity to take part in cluster groups concentrating on upskilling and professional development across a number of curricular areas including Literacy, Numeracy, ICT. SENCOs have also been working together and facilitated an information evening for parents from all schools on the theme of dyslexia. Teachers have also been released for one day per week to facilitate a utilisation of their skills in other schools where there has been a deficit of skill e.g. music, ICT.

Significant financial resources have allowed Shared Education to permeate school life and it is thanks to Fermanagh Trust through Atlantic Philanthropies for taking this work forward with enthusiasm and putting it high on their agenda of work.

The schools of the Erne West Learning Community employed the services of a consultancy group to determine the views of staff, governors and parents in relation to Shared Education. The pupils have displayed overwhelmingly their support for the programme and look forward to its future with enthusiasm.

Benefits

- Children building positive relationships with other children from the locality
- Relaxed atmosphere of learning for pupils – sharing of ideas, working together, constructive work on different projects
- Focus on what they have in common as opposed to what makes them different
- Pupils feel comfortable visiting other schools
- Parents have become interested as to what shared education means for their children and for schools
- Parents building links with parents from other schools
- Teachers sharing information, resources and coming together in cluster groups
- Shared School Development Days
- Alignment of work within School Development Planning Process
- Joint submission to the Area Planning Process
- Ethos of each school is respected
- Access to services and programmes for children which individual schools could not afford to provide
- Acquisition and sharing of resources between schools
- Support from Boards of Governors and Trustees for the Shared Education programme
- Parents willing to see an expansion of the programme to include strengthening of links between parent groups
- Educational benefit has led to raising of attainment levels

- People in leadership with shared vision to take the programme forward
- Agreed objectives for the schools to take Shared Education forward
- Agreement that Community background / Culture should be an integral part of the Shared Education programme
- Department of Education has agreed recommendations as to the definition of Shared Education and how it should be implemented

Challenges

- Uncertainty of future funding
- Adequate funding to keep the programme at a high level which has been seen in the school over the last 5 years
- Streamlining of funding and application process
- Paperwork and workload as demanded by DE may lead to less enthusiasm for the programme
- Wealth of information and knowledge and experiences from Fermanagh schools may not be tapped into
- Bringing all parents on board
- Piecemeal approach due to funding or direction
- Shared Education is not the same as CRED
- Up until now Shared Education has had many facets – what is looks like in Fermanagh has been very different for other organisations involved.
- How will Shared education look in 5 years time?
- Vision of DE for Shared Education
- Schools should be further supported in their aspirations and work in relation to Shared Education. There is a need for Government to back this crucial work in the community also. It will be a lost cause if schools have to take on the work alone.
- School leaders not sharing the same vision for Shared Education
- Resistance in other parts of Northern Ireland – the need to move sensitively
- Shared Education can be seen as an ‘add-on’. If this is the view, it will have no meaningful place with a school
- Diminishing school identity
- Small school of a different ethos from larger schools could feel overwhelmed

While this submission does not address the terms of reference clearly, it is a snap shot of the experiences which this school has had over the last number of years. The list of benefits and challenges is a reminder of the positives which have been had and also is a marker as to what needs to be addressed to enable a positive and meaningful implementation of Shared Education across Northern Ireland.

St Paul's Bessbrook and Newtownhamilton High School

Response to the Education Committee-

Introduction/Background to Partnership;

Within the Newry and Mourne ALC there are 16 member schools including the Newry Campus of SRC. Given that the geographical span of our ALC is so wide, stretching from Newtownhamilton through to Kilkeel, we have divided the community of schools in to more feasible collaborative partnerships comprising of what we term as;

- The Western Campus (Schools in the South Armagh area)
- The Central Campus (Schools in the Newry City area)
- The Eastern Campus (Schools in Warrenpoint and Kilkeel)

Our partnership in the **Western Campus** includes four schools;

1. St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
2. Newtownhamilton High School
3. St Joseph's High School, Crossmaglen
4. Newry High School

Together we offer a bespoke menu of collaborative courses at both KS4 and KS5 including:

KS4

- GCSE ICT
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE Agriculture
- GCSE Psychology
- Btec Children's Play, Learning and Development
- Btec First Sport
- Btec Engineering
- Btec Media

KS5

- A Level Biology
- A level Physics
- A Level Psychology
- A Level Travel and Tourism
- A Level History
- A Level Music
- A Level Maths
- A Level Irish
- Btec Engineering
- Btec Construction

1. Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education

Barriers-

Micro- level (Within our partnership);

We have worked very hard within our partnership to overcome a range of barriers including-

- Establishment of a shared vision and trust which will enable support for sharing in a cross-sectoral partnership (from staff, students, parents, Board of Governors and wider communities) which is located in a traditionally very divided area
- Economic challenges- as our schools are rurally located access to transport (taxis and buses) is both necessary and costly to support our shared courses.
- Lack of funding for essential cover to enable continued vital shared planning time, joint staff training and PD opportunities and team building experiences for staff, students and very importantly for parents and the wider community also
- Resources-With growing numbers in shared course classes, the costs for more ICT equipment, books etc is growing
- In order for a partnership to run successfully strong leadership is crucial and as the number of shared ventures grow the role of the co-ordinators has grown and the time demands related to this are costly

Barriers

Macro Level;

Inhibitors

There are a number of common inhibitors to inter-school collaboration, but one of the most frequently cited barriers tends to be linked to finance. In the current economic climate school budgets are already stretched and this puts a strain on schools (for example) who would like to collaborate but cannot afford to meet the costs in relation to transport. Duffy & Gallagher (2012) also found that finance acted as a potential inhibitor to sharing between schools, noting that the withdrawal of funding presented many of the SEP 1 schools with difficulties in relation to sustaining their collaborative activity.

Researchers in this field have also identified an array of other contributory logistical challenges that could potentially inhibit collaboration between schools, including differing approaches to time-tabling as well as the challenge of synchronising school calendars. Other commonly cited inhibitors included inconsistencies in school policies and perceived inequality in the deployment of resources (Knox, 2010; Donnelly and Gallagher, 2010; Hughes et al., 2010).

Aside from these more practical issues, a range of less tangible considerations stemming from poor leadership, competition between schools, lack of trust, fear of losing identity/ethos and an imbalance of power can also feature as inhibitors to collaboration (Perry, 2011; Knox, 2010).

Interestingly, many of the components which are listed as potential inhibitors are also considered to be vital elements of effective collaborative practice when taken from a positive perspective, for example, strong leadership, trust and good relationships and parity are all deemed as being features of successful inter-school collaboration.

Potential barriers to advancing shared education in Northern Ireland

To date DENI have failed to recognise the benefits from collaboration and sharing apart from seeing sharing as a community relations function; whilst sharing has a contribution to make regarding relations between communities, sharing can also significantly contribute to

educational benefits. DENI needs to pro-actively promote the shared model as a means for schools to widen provision and improve outcomes.

The area based planning process demonstrates the difficulties the ELBs, CCMS and DENI have when tasked with identifying:

“...realistic, innovative and creative solutions to address need which include opportunities for shared schooling on a cross sectoral basis.”

Sectoral interests are also a potential barrier, particularly with regard the area based planning that is described above.

The funding formula is crucial to enabling shared education; currently this is largely based on pupil numbers, thereby encouraging schools to compete for pupils. Some element of competition is useful, but the current arrangements make collaboration difficult as it may encourage perceptions of ‘poaching’ between schools. If any new funding formula contains some element of support for collaboration then this will provide a positive incentive for schools to engage in shared education.

Enablers

Micro level-

Key stakeholders within the partnership are committed to sustaining and growing their links as they recognise the educational and social benefits which such sharing can bring.

A range of enabling factors currently support this partnership include;

- Strong support for a vision of working together to create further opportunities for the provision of high quality education for all young people in our area irrespective of their cultural or religious backgrounds
- Strong buy-in or support and very importantly, growing trust between all key stakeholders
- Established infra-structure to support collaboration at all levels within the partner schools
- Strong and effective leadership across the partnership
- A proven record of well-established and effective collaborative links between the partner schools
- High up-take of shared courses and good exam results

Macro- level

Enabling Factors

There are a number of significant enabling factors already in place within the current system which support the notion of collaboration. A culture of community networking already exists to some degree within Northern Ireland, as does a favourable political agenda (Hughes et al., 2010). In addition, the geographically small nature of the country could be deemed as another enabling factor to inter-school collaboration.

With regards to schools widening provision and raising educational standards, sharing can benefit all of those groups mentioned in Section 75. Over the last 6 years the sharing education programme has provided the opportunity for well over 15,000 pupils from over 120 schools to benefit from regular sustained curricular activities.

SEP has demonstrated that by working together schools from across the sectors can address a number of issues for pupils, staff and parents, all of whom feature in the Section 75 categories above, including:

- Provision of key accredited curricular subjects on a shared basis
- Provision of extra-curricular activities on a shared basis
- Provision of accredited programmes for pupils with special educational needs
- Provision of key elements of KS2 curriculum for primary schools
- Provision of transition activities between primary and post-primary school
- Provision of formal training and accreditation for teachers
- Development of next practice for teachers and educational managers through the creation of institutional links
- Provision of accredited and non-accredited short courses for parents
- Opportunities parents and teachers from different backgrounds to meet at shared events (Parent/Teacher evenings, celebration events etc.)
- Opportunities for schools to manage resources strategically for the benefit of all pupils

Whilst this list is not exhaustive it demonstrates that sharing increases the benefits and effectiveness of existing school resources for all stakeholders.

The promotion of shared education allows schools to maintain and celebrate their ethos and identity, whilst also providing opportunities for teachers and pupils from different backgrounds to meet on a regular, sustained basis. Through this prolonged contact participants get opportunities to share perspectives on ethos and identity.

It should be remembered that schools will only engage with sharing in a meaningful way if there are clear improvements in educational outcomes – this use of sharing as a means of delivering key elements of provision will ensure that appropriate structures are in place to address the rights of learners.

Through SEP schools have been able to ensure that pupils can learn together in a positive environment, this is because “sharing” is seen in these schools as a normal means of delivering education, no different from any other, therefore normal rules and procedures apply. Additionally some partnerships have started the process of creating shared pastoral policies and code of conduct such is the extent of sharing between the institutions.

In partnership, schools can offer a wider range of activities, whilst improving outcomes, at the same time as maintaining their individual ethos and identity.

Shared education initiatives between locally based schools from diverse backgrounds, and with diverse expertise and facilities, helps fundamentally to provide access to, and delivery of, the full range of the entitlement framework for pupils. Schools working together in this manner also provide opportunities for investment in shared facilities, of a higher standard than any single school can ever hope to develop, and available to the widest possible group of pupils. Shared staff development activities within locally based collaborative networks will not only allow support and improve the quality of teaching and learning within the network, but will also allow for the sharing of expertise and experience among teachers across diverse types of schools.

Through sharing schools across Northern Ireland have been able to provide a much broader range of curricular choice for pupils; this includes accredited KS4&5 activities, KS2&3 curricular and a range of extra-curricular provision.

Partnerships have also began the process of delivering PDMU and LLW on a shared basis with the aim of tailoring the statutory curricular provision in order to make it more relevant to the local context in which they operate

We believe that shared education can be advanced in ways that ensure equality of opportunity and access to education for all learners.

There are clear lines of division within the education system in Northern Ireland with regards quality of provision this is particularly stark at post-primary when we look at the difference in results between the selective and non-selective sectors. In light of the continued uncertainty with regards transition from primary to post-primary, sharing empowers schools to work together to offer learners the best educational provision possible, to maximise the resources at their disposal; for instance through a collaborative approach to timetabling schools can ensure that subject specialist teachers spend a higher percentage of their time delivering their specialism across a number of schools rather than covering a range of subjects.

In partnership, schools can ensure that all learners are better able to access the educational pathways that best suit their needs.

By working together schools start to form institutional interdependencies, allowing them to make joint decisions regarding provision, teaching and learning, target setting, quality assurance and pastoral policies in order to ensure high quality provision and full access for all learners.

2. Alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions

SEP- A Model of Good Practice-

In addition to our close working relationships through our ALC links, St Paul's High School and Newtownhamilton High School have established a wide range of sustainable and meaningful links as a result of their collaborative ventures arising from their involvement in SEP 11.

The SEP partnership between the two schools involved a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular based activities spanning a range of subjects and encompassing the participation of students from both Key Stages 3 and 4. Moreover, a considerable cross-section of staff from both schools were involved in the planning, implementation and leading of the various components of the collaboration, as well as engaging in very beneficial and meaningful staff development and joint professional development opportunities.

The Sharing Educational Programme (SEP)

SEP was introduced in September 2007 to encourage schools to make cross-sectoral collaborations an integral part of school life, creating educational and personal development opportunities for everyone involved (Hughes et al., 2010, p.3).

The project which is funded by the Atlantic Philanthropes Group in conjunction with the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) made over £7 million pounds available to support collaborative activity between participating schools. The idea of shared education within the SEP programme promotes positive interdependence between schools that otherwise would exist as totally separate institutions. However, unlike the concept of integrated education, the rationale behind the type of shared education approach promoted through SEP is perceived by many as less threatening in terms of institutional boundaries. It was hoped that such a programme would enable schools to retain their own unique identity and ethos, while at the same time "challenging the potentially divisive effects of silos by finding practical ways of

making institutional boundaries more porous and developing interactive bridges between otherwise separate institutions.” (Duffy and Gallagher, 2012, p.7)

These views were operationalised in the Sharing Education Programme by potentially enabling students to access an enhanced curricular choice, supporting the implementation of shared courses and giving rise to opportunities for enriching personal, social and educational experiences through collaborative ventures. Another objective of SEP was the creation of links between teachers and school leaders, opportunities for sharing of good practice and for the pooling of resources between neighbouring schools. However, one of the core objectives of the programme was the development of cross denominational partnerships between schools in Northern Ireland with a view to promoting social cohesion in a divided society by enabling young people to learn about and respect religious and cultural diversity.

The SEP team decided not to adopt the standard approach to educational reform measurements which involves looking at existing models of best practice and using these as a template to draw up a specific prescriptive framework with narrow guidelines within which participants must work. Instead the aim of SEP was to attempt to develop “next practice” by giving schools virtually “carte blanche” to develop creative, innovative ideas, systems and approaches to delivering shared education in a way that would best suit the specific needs of the student body, staff, partner schools and wider community of their partnership. This dynamic approach of allowing senior leaders and teachers in schools to explore ideas and experiment with possibilities which they deemed fitting for their area marked a significantly different approach to previous funding schemes. Mr Denis Rooney from the International Fund for Ireland at the SEP Next Steps Conference in Belfast (September 2011), described the merits of such a dynamic model of collaboration as having the potential to create a “springboard to lasting change”.

Research has shown that previous contact programmes designed to mitigate the impact of separate education rolled out across schools in Northern Ireland in the late 1990’s and early part of the last decade, including Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU), and curricular initiatives such as the introduction of Local and Global Citizenship and common history and religious curricula, have had little meaningful impact (Duffy & Gallagher, 2012; Smith & Robinson, 1992; Leitch & Kilpatrick, 1999; O’Connor, Hartop & McCully, 2002; Gallagher, 2004; Smith & Robinson, 1996). Speaking at the “Next Steps Conference” (2011), in Queen’s University Belfast, Professor Tony Gallagher, explained how the growing body of evidence around effective inter-school collaboration suggests that in order for shared education initiatives to be successful, collaboration must be based around core curricular activity and that the notion of shared education needs to become a central and sustained part of school life rather than an add-on or occasional joint venture with a neighbouring school.

Recent changes in educational policy (such as The Education NI Order, 2006), coupled with the introduction of a range of new initiative (such as the Sharing Education Programme, 2007), have impacted greatly on how some schools in Northern Ireland are currently working together. In addition, the growth of shared courses now being offered through the Entitlement Framework funding within Area Learning Communities (ALC) across Northern Ireland have led to a new appetite for sharing between schools. Moreover, this type of joint curricular venture is considered to be mutually beneficial for all participants as it offers a more sustainable and effective collaborative model for schools than previous initiatives (Gallagher, 2010a).

An array of government led initiatives and educational legislative changes have resulted in the emergence of a wide range of collaborative partnerships between schools. However, it is important to consider that as yet inter-school collaboration is not a statutory requirement in Northern Ireland, although the vast majority of schools are working at some level in an effort to meet the requirements of the Entitlement Framework by September 2015. Another point worth noting is the very diverse approaches and depths of collaborative practice that exist within the province (Atkinson et al., 2007; Perry, 2011). Some schools have only begun to

tentatively dip their toes into partnerships whilst others have fully embraced the opportunity to work with neighbouring schools and collaborative structures and practice are now embedded into their fabric (IEF Scoping Paper 2010).

Within recent literature there are a range of examples including the Boston College-Allston/Brighton Partnership in America, (Walsh et al., 2000), the Excellence Clusters in England (McMeeking et al., 2004) and the case studies in relation to the Shared Educational Campus in North Lankashire in Scotland (O'Sullivan et al., 2006) whereby collaboration was used as a vehicle for promoting social cohesion within the context of divided societies, and although many societal benefits have been attributed to the increased contact with the out-group in these examples, a recurring theme within the research is that contact or sharing needs to be supported by a range of social initiatives beyond the school in order for it to be effective.

What priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration?

In order to advance shared education it is essential that the schools recognise and clearly benefit from the process of sharing; simply relying on altruistic, emotive reasoning will not lead to sharing becoming embedded in schools. For schools to value the concept of sharing and gain the most benefit it must be demonstrated that there are significant educational benefits arising from working together.

In order for this to take place a number of things must happen. In the first instance a mechanism must be found to incentivise sharing – to be clear this should not be interpreted as a request for additional funding, rather schools should be given the support and freedom to use existing resources in partnership in order to provide the widest curricular provision for all pupils regardless of ability or preference. The current funding model also mitigates against sharing, as it puts schools in competition with each other for pupils – schools should be encouraged and supported to be innovative in their approach to enrolments and how sharing can help address issues regarding competition between schools.

Schools should be encouraged to identify areas of common need and then adopt a joint approach to addressing these; this could involve the provision of additional curricular choice in order to meet EF requirements, or a joint strategic approach to shared areas of concern e.g. literacy/numeracy. The initial steps regarding partnership working should be based on shared activities between pupils, as this demonstrates the immediate benefits arising from sharing; perhaps more crucially it also allows the process of relationship building to start and through this schools' can begin to forge institutional links.

Statutory bodies will need to properly support and encourage the creation of cross-sectoral partnerships where practical. Principals, senior leaders, heads of departments and key Governors must be given explicit time and space to identify key areas of school business that will benefit from sharing, in order to properly plan, resource and provide the activities. Schools will require assistance in drawing up agreed strategies for bench marking, target setting, improving of standards, timetabling, provision of training opportunities for staff, agreed curricular pathways and maximisation of resources. All of these steps are crucial to ensure that sharing is embedded and central to the partnership, rather than a peripheral activity.

Running parallel to this there should be on-going consultation with Boards of Governors and other stakeholders e.g. parents – this provides vital support and encouragement of the evolution of the partnership. It is important to be very explicit in terms of identity and ethos – sharing in no way compromises school identity and ethos; rather it protects and celebrates the identity of the schools involved, through empowering the schools to offer high quality educational and pastoral provision. The role of governors and parents in providing support for this process is essential, as they can assure the institutions of wider community support for the partnership. It is fundamentally important that all stakeholders are comfortable with the

notion of sharing as a means of improving educational outcomes and not as an inexorable move towards amalgamation/integration.

It is essential that the shared work that schools engage in is seen to be valued by DENI and the Inspectorate, this will require the shared nature of any partnership to be commented upon and evaluated in the same way as any other part of school business. The Inspectorate should also be encouraged to share good practice across all schools as they see fit in order to ensure the greatest effectiveness.

Supporting notes (pertaining to the partnership)-

The SEP Co-ordinator within the partnership completed in-depth research into the partnership as the focus of her Master's Degree (Collaborative Leadership and Management) dissertation. This study involved a range of research methodologies including online surveys and interviews with key staff in the shared education partnerships across all areas of learning, she also drew on existing evidence pertaining to former research involving students and parents from both school communities. In line with existing academic research, the study concurred that in order for effective collaboration to take place a number of key ingredients were necessary namely;

- A Clear and Strategic Vision
- Depth of Collaborative Practice and Relationships between Staff
- The Leadership Dimension
- Level of trust

Each of these key factors were identified as being existing and strong components of the partnership between St Paul's High School, Bessbrook and Newtownhamilton High School-

Clear and Strategic Vision

Effective models of collaboration are often characterised by schools which can articulate a clear and strategic vision (Woods et al., 2006) and the research would suggest that the partnership have successfully achieved this. All respondents to the questionnaire agreed that a clear and strategic vision has been established between the two schools and 97% indicated that they had a clear understanding of the aims of the partnership. The leaders of the partnership all indicated that they recognised the importance of carefully crafting a clear, strategic and in the words of the Principal of St Paul's High School, an "appealing vision", in order to engage and mobilise staff and other key stakeholders. It would appear that the leaders of the partnership are cognisant of the need to align the focus or vision with its members' practices and values gauging from the strong support from the staff surveyed. Hadfield & Chapman (2009) support this approach claiming that in order to achieve the necessary "buy in" from all key stakeholders it must be justifiable for all parties and worthwhile in terms of expenditure of their limited resources. The two Principals and SEP Leaders discussed in their interviews, how they had spent a lot of time during the initial application and planning stages defining and creating a shared vision as they were determined to "get it right" and "create a strong and meaningful vision which would reflect the needs and aspirations of both school communities"

In the interviews, 5 out of 6 of the participants described the vision as being "strong" and they spoke about how this was crucial to the success of the partnership, a view which concurs with Kotter's assertion that a weak vision or ambiguity in underlying principles will almost always lead to the failure and dissolution of a partnership (Kotter, 1998). Hodgson and Spours (2006, p335) also stress the importance of a strong vision in a partnership, referring to it as being the "glue that binds actors together".

Kotter (1998) suggests that a critical mass of at least 75% must support the vision in order for it to be successful. Moreover, he points out that a successful vision is one that

is understood by all key players and it needs to be a “living part” of the partnership. In the interviews with key leaders, participants were asked about how well the vision was articulated among staff within their schools and they indicated that they had used a wide range of on-going opportunities and media, to articulate and re-affirm their commitment to the shared vision. The Principals spoke about how they had presented the vision and detailed plans for the partnership to all staff at a whole school meeting, as well as convening a meeting of the Board of Governors for this purpose. Before the submission of the final application for SEP, both Principals and their Chair of the Board of Governors also had to sign a contractual style document affirming their approval and support for the vision and all aspects of the planned 3 year project. One Principal spoke about how he introduced and began to embed the vision within his school;

“In the beginning I called whole staff meetings as well as some more specific meetings with those who were directly involved in implementing the projects... I discussed the vision of the partnership with my staff and, in all honesty, there was some resistance from a minority of staff, this was also the case with a small number of parents. However, I think that I used every opportunity, when I had captive audiences, to speak about the vision, strengths and indeed success of our collaboration”.

SEP leaders stated that they were committed to their shared vision and that they had already witnessed what a SEP Coordinator described as a “sea change” in attitudes now that people had witnessed the benefits of sharing. One of the Principals stated however, that support for the vision had only “gradually grown over the three years among some members of his staff and indeed within the wider community”. Conversely, the other Principal commented that he did not meet with opposition from any section of his school community in relation to the vision of the partnership. Therefore, despite some reluctance to begin with, from a minority of staff (11%) and a small number of parents in one School, overall the support for the vision was relatively high across the partnership. Furthermore, the feedback from the interviews and questionnaire would suggest that support for the vision has not only grown within the staff but that parents are increasingly recognising the benefits of and supporting collaboration between the two schools.

An interesting point that was made by a Senior Teacher was how the Senior Leadership Team in his school had recently met to review their schools aims and objectives and having discussed the impact and importance that interschool collaboration had assumed within their school, they decided to re-draft part of their mission statement. Moreover, the current School Development Plans for both schools now heavily reflect the joint commitment to their shared vision, with plans for sustaining and developing new collaborative activities listed as key priorities within both documents.

4.2 Depth of Collaboration

When considering the depth or extent of collaboration between the two case study schools, the researcher looked at a number of areas as identified by Woods et al.(2006) including group identity; organisational infrastructure; professional collaborative activity and penetration below senior management as well as considering normalised collaboration as part of the schools’ culture.

In relation to group identity, the data would suggest that the case study partnership appears to have developed a very real sense of its own unique identity. The Principals spoke about the importance of “creating an identity for the partnership” during their interviews. They talked about how during the initial planning stages they had spent a considerable amount of time discussing a name for the partnership which would successfully “convey a sense of their shared vision”. They also designed a logo which both schools have included on all school letter headed paper and on the home page of their school websites. The data suggests that both principals are very aware of the need to continually exploit all opportunities to raise the

profile and build capacity of their collaborative work and shared identity through the media. One Vice Principal in School commented;

The fact is that at our Area Learning Community meetings other schools in the area very much acknowledge and indeed admire our partnership and how far we have come in a relatively short period of time. We have developed a very real sense of shared identity within the partnership. PEACE (Partnership for Education and Community Enrichment) is very significant for us and those words speak volumes about what we are committed to achieving together. I also believe that our Sports students in particular who designed their own shared uniform are very proud of this new and unique identity, their jersey carries the crests of both our schools as well as our PEACE logo. Equally however, it's important to us that whilst we create and are proud of our shared identity, that we still celebrate our different heritage, ethos and backgrounds and that is why the joint LLW Diversity Celebration Events are so important where the students get a chance to learn about our different cultural heritage and traditions

Many staff praised the work which had been carried out in relation to celebrating the different cultures within both schools. Before Christmas each year, an event is organised to showcase aspects of all cultures represented within the partnership including customs, dance, music, sport etc. Last year a pipe band and Ulster Scots dancers participated in a show in School A. This event was a momentous occasions for both communities and a lot of staff and all of the leaders commented on the significance and symbolism of this event. One teacher remarked "I never thought that in my lifetime that our band would march and play in their school and receive such a respectful and warm welcome" Another teacher said that

It was more significant for us the staff and the parents, our youngsters were just curious and there wasn't the same sense of something ground breaking is happening here

Many respondents in the questionnaire alluded to this event as being important, in the sense that both communities were proudly exhibiting aspects of their cultural background and that they weren't just assuming a new, shared identity that ignored their individual ethos or one which one Principal referred to as "bland"; instead there was recognition of and respect for diversity.

In relation to organisational infra-structure, the partnership has established over the past three years, a range of logistical structures which were necessary to facilitate the wide range of collaborative activity contained in the SEP projects. The schools have worked very closely to develop a more synchronised school calendar and a lot of time, effort and imaginative planning has went into designing a series of timetables which contain the necessary degree of flexibility for further collaboration.

The data revealed how a lot of preparation went in to setting up the shared GCSE course in terms of staff training (in techniques for the effective induction and integration of students), the development of a detailed Service Level Agreement and the creation of a new school uniform for the collaborative class. A common induction process and induction booklet has been created within the partnership to ensure that students and their parents have all the necessary information pertaining to their collaborative course and the partner school. In addition, the schools share pupil information through SIMS and they have developed a "Pupil Passport" containing all relevant information for subject teachers. A number of staff within the two schools were also appointed to positions of responsibility in relation to managing the partnership to ensure the smooth running of the collaboration. It is the responsibility of this appointee to liaise with subject teachers, EF Co-ordinators, Exams Officers and if necessary the designated teacher for Pastoral Care. Other evidence illustrating how the partnership have developed a range of vital organisational infra-structure to support and enhance collaboration was the establishment of a Peer Mentoring Scheme which is primarily a student led support system which was set up to help new collaborative students to integrate better into the partner school. A teacher with training in mediation and mentoring was appointed to oversee it. One Vice Principal noted how the organisational infra-structure is developing quite rapidly

and how professional collaborative activity between teachers in relation to sharing of good practice is also becoming more common;

Aside from the tiers of management which have been put in place to facilitate collaborative practice in a range of different areas, staff in both schools are naturally forming their own alliances with each other for their mutual benefit. Documents, policies, resources, information and ideas are being shared and exchanged between Subject Departments, Pastoral Care Teams and Entitlement Framework Co-ordinators. It's as if this culture of sharing is taking on a life of its own

This growing level of professional collaborative activity which is taking place at a number of levels is characterised in many examples offered by respondents to the survey as well as from interviewees. Some staff gave examples of how they were working together to prepare resources, whilst some of the leaders mentioned how they were tapping into expertise that existed in the partner school. From the research conducted with the Senior Leaders and Principals it is clear that they are fully committed to collaboration and that they have a range of infra-structure in place to facilitate this.

Analysis of information arising from the questionnaire reveals that approximately one third of the teaching staff in St Paul's HS are involved in SEP collaborative projects whereas in Newtownhamilton HS over half of staff participate at some level. However, given that it is significantly smaller than St Paul's HS this is to be expected. Hargreaves (1992) comments on the concept of "bounded collaboration" whereby the impact of collaboration is restricted or constrained, and as a result it fails to penetrate deeply enough into the school's culture. One instance of this would be in the case of the collaborative practice being confined to managerial level only, and this is not the case in this study as there is a wide range of staff from technicians through to principals involved in the process. Another instance of bounded collaboration is whereby the penetration is deep (includes a range of levels) but that it only involves a small sphere of people who for example are linked to a specific subject area. In the case study partnership, the impact is wide as the programme spans a large range of curricular areas and this increases the scope for involving an increased number of pupils in collaboration.

Moreover, the data would suggest that support for the collaborative partnership is quite high in both schools with the majority of respondents indicating positive sentiments. In relation to the depth of collaboration, it would appear that for the most part the partnership have developed a range of organisational infrastructure both structurally and in a personnel sense to advocate and support collaborative activity.

Furthermore, within the partnership there exists some degree of shared leadership but each school is governed separately. The data supports the notion that institutional links have been forged between both partners and that a considerable amount of strong infrastructure is now in place to support current and future collaboration.

4.3 Leadership

Given the highly complex nature of collaborative practice it is a given that strong leadership will be a key component of effective collaboration (Ainscow et al., 2006). Therefore, in this research study participants were asked to consider the role of leadership within the SEP partnership. More specifically they were encouraged to comment on whether the Principals, Vice principals and the SEP Coordinator provided strong leadership across the three years of the programme. Most participants (92%) in the questionnaire indicated that in their opinion the leaders effectively adopted a new style of leadership required for collaboration, some staff used examples to substantiate their opinions and a Vice Principal stated how;

Within both schools, the principals empowered key staff and created another tier of managers to implement and oversee projects- this strategy worked very well and it meant that different

levels of staff from across the curricular areas were involved and were committed to this partnership

Atkinson et al., 2007, support this approach, they posit that leadership needs to be firmly located within the partnership with a focus on distributed leadership in order to avoid domination by one key player and that all participants need to feel part of the process. A teacher in stated that;

The Principals played central roles and were very much singing off the same hymn sheet from the outset. The VP and the SEP Co-ordinator in our school done most of the organising and management of the projects by meeting with subject heads etc... who in turn cascaded information to subject teachers and coaches or technicians. They held regular planning and review sessions which ensured that everyone felt included and their input was valued.

It would appear from the feedback that most staff felt that leaders successfully adopted a new style of leadership and they created a new leadership structure within the partnership which staff approved of. Cribb (2009, p10) asserts that adopting an appropriate leadership style is crucial in order to “empower and mobilise participants”. Like many other researchers he believes that leadership (within a network) needs to be distributed to allow decisions to be made. This idea is further supported by Knox (2010) who found that the most successful collaborative partnerships involved leaders who favoured shared responsibility in their own schools. The Principal in one school concurred with this approach he commented that a good leader needs to employ different leadership styles to suit the circumstance or environment in which they find themselves. However, he noted that distributive leadership would (in the majority of situations) be the most apt style in a collaborative context;

I think if you give responsibility and allow them to grow through the responsibility, that you have a much stronger organic unit developing, which is less dependent on the one leader and that takes on its own momentum and moves forward, with each of the new leaders looking for new ways to improve the organism of the school or in this instance the partnership

However, the other Principal in stated that he believed a more “top-down approach” was needed within his school especially at the beginning of SEP. He stated that particularly when the collaboration was still in its early stages, it was important that he managed and led staff in a tentative way, advocating a “small steps” approach.

I was acutely aware of the concerns and misgivings of some teachers and some of our parents and wider school community- SEP was a big gamble for us

He did however acknowledge the need for this to change and that his Vice Principal and some other teachers within the school were now assuming stronger leadership roles. Significantly, both principals commented on their age profile and the fact that they both are nearing retirement. They stressed the importance of ensuring that there would be staff in place who could replace them or other key players (who may leave or retire for example) and the need for them to be committed and skilled to sustain and grow the collaborative partnership. One of the Vice Principals also commented on the importance of having the right personnel involved in managing and leading collaborative projects;

“The right personnel are crucial in terms of leading collaboratively. The SEP Coordinator has been a key driving force in all of this in terms of making sure the collaboration works, if there were any issues at all she dealt with them, she was not afraid to say if there were any problems. She was off school last year and her absence impacted on the partnership”

Another key element of successful leadership within this type of collaborative arrangement is the need for leaders to show sensitivity and understanding. A teacher spoke about how the project leaders showed sensitivity to the specific needs of staff and issues in relation to localised context of the partnership. There was agreement among the vast majority of staff in the questionnaire that the leaders within the partnership were able to deal effectively with contentious issues and unexpected problems. A Vice principal noted;

There was quite a serious issue in relation to a sectarian incident that happened outside of school, and although it did not involve our pupils, there was some bad feeling in the other community over it. As a result some parents in one school were reluctant to support the continuation of the programme. However, both principals took a united stand on the issue and stood together in defence of the partnership and that sent a very strong message out to the community

The leaders were also acutely aware of the need to get the timing and pace of the project delivery right, the Vice Principal in one school in particular stated very clearly how he needed to move slowly particularly during the first two years;

When the partnership was in its embryonic stages and there was a degree of uncertainty within some quarters as to whether it was a worthwhile venture.... It is vital that leaders take account of the feelings and views of others and that they adjudicate what is the best way forward considering all angles

The teaching staff also indicated that they felt supported and appreciated by the SEP leaders. 90% noted that leaders engaged in regular consultation with them and were supportive of them. They commented on the fact that the leaders celebrated the small success stories from SEP and that this was important in ensuring staff felt appreciated and that their effort and success were recognised. In addition, 97% indicated that the leaders made staff feel valued and 90% felt that leaders had recognised their achievements within the programme. Hill (2009) asserts that the ability to respect others' achievements is crucial in network leadership.

The studied literature highlights how it is good practice to have a measure of flexibility in the aims so that activities can be tailored to the individual needs and context of participating schools (Powell et al., 2004; Wohlstetter et al., 2003). Fluidity and compromise are key elements of effective collaborative networks (Hadfield & Chapman, 2009; Hanford et al., 1997). The data suggests that leaders within the case study partnership appeared to understand this and that they listened to the needs of staff and responded accordingly, even if this required them deviating from a planned path.

However, there were a couple of areas in relation to leadership which a significant number of staff felt needed to be improved. 21% of the teachers felt that leaders had not provided them with enough training for working as part of a collaborative partnership and 23% of staff felt that they did not receive sufficient incentives to participate in SEP. Another point made by 17% of staff conveyed an opinion that leaders should have given staff more opportunities to get to know teachers from the partner school;

"I would have appreciated more time to get to know staff in (name of school) prior to working in the shared classroom environment as it was a bit awkward at the start"(Teacher in School B)

I think staff in both schools should have more opportunities, particularly at the beginning of the programme, to meet and even engage in team building activities in order to encourage deeper relationships and trust (SEP Teacher)

However, in general, the feedback in relation to the leadership provided by the principals in both schools was very positive. Both in the questionnaire and interviews it was clear that the principals had a lot of genuine respect and admiration for each other and that the staff within the partnership felt this also. Staff used a multitude of complementary phrases to describe their approval of these leaders including; "visionary leaders", "Charismatic leader", "highly respected within the community", "transformational leadership", "genuine values", "Christian morals", "inspirational drive and commitment" and "deep camaraderie". In some cases participants specifically attributed the overall success of the partnership to the vision, drive and courage of the two Principals. The Vice Principal in one school noted that the Principal in his school was a long standing appointment who was very well respected and that he has built up a close rapport with the wider community. He asserted that it would have been "a

step too far” in building community relations to suggest this type of partnership for anyone else other than the current principal because the community trust him implicitly. He stated that his Principal and the partner Principal were brave leaders who were not afraid to take risks and that this was central to the success of the partnership.

4.4 Trust

Trust is a key component of any relationship and therefore it follows that all of the respondents in this research study placed a very strong emphasis on the development of trust as being central to the success of the partnership. Given the traditional rivalry that has been cultivated over many years between schools in Northern Ireland, very often there is an undercurrent of competition between neighbouring schools which is not conducive to collaborative working and this can create an atmosphere mis-trust and suspicion (Hughes, 2010).

School budgets are dictated by pupil numbers and so schools in the same area may be competing for students (McMeeking et al., 2004; Bell et al., 2006) and this coupled with the pressure on schools to compete for better results than other schools in their area can lead to a reticence to collaborate (Woods et al, 2006; Leonard, 1999). The data however, would suggest that neither of these considerations were pertinent to the relationship between the two case study schools. The trust issues instead tended to stem mainly from a fear of working with the “other community”, and to a lesser extent questions around a potential imbalance of power and an inequality in relation to effort and staff workload.

If schools are to work together effectively, key participants at all levels must establish relationships which are characterised by a sense of equality, parity and above all trust. Both leaders spoke about how “honesty was required from the outset so that they could create a true and meaningful vision” and avoid the creation of what Hadfield & Jopling refer to as “comfortable collaborative partnerships and instead strive for meaningful and worthwhile collaboration”(2007,p9). This process requires members to engage openly and critically about what they want to achieve, their values, the current issues and problems within their school; there is no point in setting unrealistic aims. Somekh (1994) uses the analogy of “inhabiting each other’s castles”, implying that in order to develop an in-depth understanding of each other’s schools, head teachers must be prepared to open their doors to their partners in a “warts and all” type approach. The data would suggest that staff within the partnership are growing increasingly honest and open with each other as trust develops between them. One of the Vice Principal alluded to this, when they stated:

We are now moving from the embryonic stages of building a collaborative relationship whereby participants are very polite but not always totally honest with each other. We are increasingly engaging much more openly and are confident to have the more difficult conversations with each other and I suppose that is indicative of how much trust has grown between our two schools

The data supports the notion that the development of trust between staff involves a process which takes time and commitment and moreover, it requires participants to take risks and to weather the storm together during challenges which may present themselves. Within the research the establishment of a sense of parity and equality between partners were also considered to be vital in the development of a trusting relationship among all of the key leaders. However, the reality is that within any partnership there will often be an imbalance of power to some extent, for example one school could be perceived to be a more powerful partner due to its size, the persona of the principal, or even based on the sector which it belongs to could cause a perceived inequality. The Principal and all of the Senior Leaders in one school spoke in their interviews about how they were very conscious of the need to avoid being portrayed as the dominant partner, owing not only to the dramatic difference in size of the schools but also because their school was deemed the “lead school” within SEP. The Vice Principal stated that it was important to them that the partnership was seen to be fair and

equal and that all decisions were made together. In addition, they were keen to avoid what the Principal described as “one-way traffic” which would see the majority of events or projects taking place in their school based on the fact that they were better resourced than the other school.

Another potential trust issue stems from the perception that one partner is perceived to be “not pulling its weight” and leaving all the work to others, this can impact on relationships and ultimately trust.

Overall however, within the case study, the fear of working with a school from a different sector or engaging with people from the “other community” presented the greatest concern for some stakeholders. The Vice Principal in one school summarised this challenge in relation to trust building for the partnership stating;

Prior to SEP the two schools had little or no contact with each other. The fact that the partnership is cross-sectoral and that both schools are located in South Armagh which has been deeply affected by the troubles, with both communities having suffered greatly over the years, hostilities, fear and suspicion of the other side still exist today, so the issue of building up trust is at the core of the success of our partnership

One Principal recognised that for him it was not as challenging “to sell the vision” as it was for the other Principal. He attributed this in part to the fact that within his school they had already established collaborative links with other schools and it was “no big deal” to see students in different uniforms in their school. Another possible reason for the more open and positive attitude to the partnership within this school was attributed by some staff to the fact that they were very secure, they were the bigger school and significantly the area in which the schools are located is very predominantly Catholic, one teacher suggested;

During the troubles we didn’t experience the same sectarian fear as they did living in South Armagh and so for us it was not such a big deal to work with Protestants and to travel to our partner school, plus we were already collaborating with two other schools in the area

Both Principals also spoke about the need for them to continue to provide opportunities for staff, students, parents and governors to meet more regularly not only in a formal environment but also to provide social interaction which could potentially build trusting friendships as well as professional relationships between all key stakeholders.

The data would suggest that the partnership has developed the stated ingredients for effective collaboration. The vast majority of the participants responded positively in each of the four key areas but there were some areas where staff indicated that they were concerned about.

4.5 Sustainability

All of the interviewees expressed a very real desire to sustain and further develop their collaborative partnership. Equally, the data arising from the questionnaire revealed that 96.6% of teachers believe that there exists a strong determination to build on the collaborative work completed to date. Participants spoke about a genuine willingness and commitment to ensure that what they had achieved would not be lost and that after SEP has ended that they will pursue new collaborative ventures together for the mutual benefit of both partners. 96.6% of staff also indicated that the experience of working in collaboration through SEP would encourage them to participate in further future collaborative initiatives. One of the main reasons for this impetus to sustain the partnership stemmed from the fact that “trusting relationships and indeed friendships have developed between staff in both schools” Moreover, recognition that collaboration between the two schools had proved to be beneficial for students in terms of accessing a broader curriculum, and facilitating enhanced personal and social development opportunities, was a key motivating factor in relation to sustainability;

Together we have been able to provide a menu of new courses for students and there is no doubt that attending lessons in the partner school has been a very enriching for all parties. I think this type of experience is very positive as it allows our young people to experience a new educational environment and access subjects which are not offered in their home school. It would be a shame if this were to stop now (Senior Leader)

Some consideration was also given to the need to sustain and grow the culture which was emerging between the two schools of sharing of good practice, expertise and resources. The Vice Principal in one school noted how this type of sharing was very “productive” and that he hoped that this type of practice would continue beyond June 2013 (the end of SEP funding). In all of the interviews the data revealed a determination to maintain the growing institutional links and strong relationships (at senior management level) that had developed within the partnership.

However, there was an overwhelming notion that the current level of collaborative activity spanning a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular areas at Key Stage 3 would be largely unsustainable once funding ceased.

There is no way that we would be able to maintain all projects once the funding has gone. Although we are very much committed to sustaining our partnership, we are faced with growing budget cuts which will mean that schools will struggle to meet their basic costs, so any extra activities outside of core curricular considerations will not be an option. For this reason, we are endeavouring to strategize together to come up with alternative ways of sustaining at the very least our Key Stage 4 collaborations (Principal)

25% of teachers also felt that the current level would be unsustainable and all of the interviewees stated that due to transport and sub-cover costs they could not continue with the vast majority of Key Stage 3 activities without funding. However, the research illustrated how the schools have worked very closely over the last year in particular to plan for more sustainable and cost effective collaborative ventures, including an increased shared curricular offer at GCSE. Duffy & Gallagher (2012, p23) noted how many of the partner schools in their research study had used the “lexicon of collaboration provided through SEP to create a foundation at institution level” and this could also be said of the partnership in this research study. The two schools have gone beyond the original SEP plans and they have used their SEP experience to create a new, more informed and sustainable model of sharing based around the unique circumstances and needs of their partnership.

Steiner Waldorf School Fellowship

Dear Members of the Assembly for Northern Ireland,

I wish to make a brief submission to your enquiry into integrated & shared education on behalf of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship &, in particular, our member school in Northern Ireland, Holywood Steiner School (www.hollywood-steiner.co.uk).

Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) education is a world-wide grouping of schools working with an educational philosophy & curriculum, the bases of which were developed for the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart, 1919. There are now approximately 3000 Waldorf settings (including kindergartens & all-through schools to age 18) in over 60 countries. In a number of these countries the education is publically funded, either as “schools of distinctive character” (e.g. New Zealand, Germany &c) or full members of the public education system (e.g. Holland, Finland &c). The SWSF (www.steinerwaldorf.org) is the member organisation for Steiner Waldorf schools throughout the UK & the Republic of Ireland, with some 48 members including full schools & early years centres (not including initiative groups or other affiliate members). In England four members are publically-funded under the Academy programme & in the Republic of Ireland two members are Steiner National Schools (both in County Clare). European co-operation is achieved via the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (www.ecswe.net) at which the associations for Waldorf education are represented, both those within & out with the European Union or EEA (e.g. Russia & Armenia). All schools are comprehensive, co-educational & run as co-operative enterprises with parents.

The principles of Steiner Waldorf education are intended to support young people to develop as resourceful, creative, & active citizens with a deep sense of tolerance to inform an awareness of, & respect for, cultural & other varieties of human background & experience. Relevant to this Enquiry & to the contribution of Waldorf education in this regard are the findings of Dr Christian Pfeifer of the Department of Criminology for Lower Saxony which found Waldorf pupils to show statistically lower intolerant or racist responses than young people of the same age in other types of German Secondary school (www.uni-konstanz.de/rtf/ki/Download_Abridged_Version.pdf). Furthermore, Waldorf schools have not infrequently worked across divided communities, including, for example, combined Palestinian & Israeli schools in Israel, a school for children orphaned during the civil war in Sierra Leone &, during the apartheid era in South Africa, the provision of integrated education in integrated classrooms. In the view of SWSF, educating children together, with a care for the development of social & emotional intelligences alongside academic skills, is essential & the only sound basis for building healthy societies.

Our member school, Holywood Steiner School, has been in existence since 1974. Throughout this time, operating, reluctantly as a private school (although charitably registered) it has attempted to explore options that would make it more accessible to a wider demographic. Negotiations have taken place with past holders of the education mandate. On a number of occasions, the school has been advised to try to obtain integrated school status. They have children on roll from both traditions & none, but the route to integrated status has been blocked by a simple, dilemma: they have maintained a policy of not requesting at admission any information about religious affiliation. In this respect the school seeks to be blind to what might otherwise act as a divisive label.

We understand that the number of Integrated schools in Northern Ireland is gradually increasing. We also recognise the exceptional work being done by teachers throughout the country to provide opportunities for children to come together. While we respect the intent & positive results of this work, we wish to point out that, with an estimated 93% of pupils still attending segregated schools, the Enquiry seems to need a broader view (the 93% quoted here is based on the Department of Education's own estimate that Integrated schools educated around 7% of pupils). The Integrated Education Fund clearly does very

important work, but this has its limitations as a result of the criteria it has to apply. Shared education schemes too have their unintended draw-backs (partially acknowledged in the March 2013 Ministerial Advisory Group report, Advancing Shared Education & set out in stronger colours in an article in the Belfast Telegraph, 14/10/2014 by Steven Agnew). SWSF would, consequently, propose that the Committee explore how greater diversity of educational philosophy & provision could be actively encouraged. In our view, the Holywood Steiner School, which has struggled with inadequate resources for so long, at least represents one model the Committee might be advised to examine. While greater unity through diversity might sound a counter intuitive approach, it is one that has been successfully applied for centuries in the Netherlands from a time when itself was emerging from a period of self-destructive conflict.

A more modest, & readily implementable proposal might be simply to add it as a requirement for your inspectorate to comment on the contribution of any school in fostering community cohesion. This could be done with or without introducing a specific standard. The inclusion of an overview judgement in published reports would be a stimulus to all schools to demonstrate what they do & provide essential evidence for future or ongoing review of progress. ETI reports might include such a comment either under part 7, "Leadership & Management", or as a discrete judgement, as a part 8 (i.e. above the "conclusion" of reports as currently written). It must be a matter of disappointment, if it reflects general practice, that none of the available inspection reports briefly surveyed in the writing of this submission made reference to this important aspect of a school's potential contribution.

Please refer to the undersigned if your Committee wishes to discuss any aspects of this email.

With respects,

Yours faithfully,

Kevin Avison

Stranmillis University College



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

A College of Queen's University Belfast

Stranmillis University College Response to Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry

0. Summary

- 0.1 We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the debate on shared/integrated education and support the need for agreed definitions and obligations in statute.
- 0.2 We believe that agreement should be sought on principles governing shared education but that, as a developmental approach is required, these principles should allow for many existing models of practice to exist and indeed for schools to develop their own models of practice if appropriate.
- 0.3 We acknowledge a range of barriers to shared education including wider societal issues and identify key enablers such as developmental work and equipping teachers and other education professionals.
- 0.4 We identify the need for key strategic investment in this area that encompasses the broad educational spectrum. Such investment needs to be sustained and systematic.

1.1 Brief introduction to the organisation

Stranmillis University College (a College of Queen's University) is an autonomous institution academically integrated with Queen's University.

The University College has been providing a high quality learning experience for its students for over 90 years. This is reflected in its exceptionally low dropout rate and high success rates. The most recent figures published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency indicate that in relation to the employment of leavers obtaining degrees from full-time courses, Stranmillis had a 95.7% success rate.

The current educational policy context presents many challenges but the University College remains committed to nurturing a student-centred learning environment where students are encouraged to engage in critical enquiry and academic challenge. The University College's increasing focus on international engagement and partnership is helping to transform its culture by enriching the learning community and widening the horizons of staff and students. Teaching, which is informed by scholarship and research, continues to be our primary focus, in the words of our motto: **Docendo Discimus: by teaching we learn.** In both our teaching and scholarship we seek to pursue a vision which aims to have a positive impact on the local community and beyond through sharing learning and resources. We believe education can have transformative power in the lives of individuals and communities.

1.2 Brief biography of response authors

Dr Patricia Eaton

Dr Eaton has experience in post-primary schools and in Stranmillis University College, where she teaches on the undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes and researches in

the field of education. She was project director of the International Fund for Ireland funded CREDIT (Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers) project. The core aim of the CREDIT project was to provide substantive in-service courses for existing teachers across Northern Ireland in primary and post-primary schools to assist them in developing awareness and practical skills in dealing with division, diversity, inclusion and community relations/reconciliation in the classroom and on a whole school basis. Since she joined the staff of Stranmillis University College she has been a member of the Diversity and Mutual Understanding (DMU) Committee, with responsibility for designing and delivering DMU programmes to students. She is Head of Continuing Education with responsibility for Continuing Professional Development including master's level programmes.

Ms Lisa McKenzie

Ms McKenzie previously taught in the post-primary sector for 8 years and now teaches in Stranmillis University College on the undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes, in addition to research in the field of education. She has a keen interest in contributing to the development of Learning for Life and Work in the curriculum. She was deputy project director of the CREDIT project and is also a member of the Diversity and Mutual Understanding (DMU) Committee, with responsibility for designing and delivering DMU programmes to students. Within College she has also contributed to the work of the DAISY project (Diversity Awareness Intervention: Start Young) and projects with Barnardo's developing resource materials to aid skill development of children and young people.

Dr Brian Cummins

Dr Cummins is Head of Widening Participation (WP) in Stranmillis University College and lectures in Education Studies at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. In his WP role he is focused on ensuring that Stranmillis is a fully inclusive institution that welcomes diversity and offers a variety of support to students from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups within Higher Education. Dr Cummins is a strong advocate of direct community engagement as a core part of Stranmillis WP policy and practice and this includes providing opportunities for children from all backgrounds to meet and work together on campus activities. Within his teaching role Dr Cummins coordinates the year 1 education studies module which covers the History of Education in Ireland, introducing students to the development of shared schooling, the problems this faced and the debate surrounding the wider societal goals of schooling.

Dr Norman Richardson

Norman Richardson teaches Religious Studies and intercultural education to student teachers at Stranmillis University College, Belfast, where he has also been significantly involved in organising the inter-college Diversity & Mutual Understanding programme and contributing to the CREDIT project. A former teacher, he worked for over a decade as Peace Education Officer with the cross-community Churches' Peace Education Programme and has had a long-standing involvement in community relations, inter-church and inter-religious activities. He is currently the Secretary of the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum and an Executive member of the UK Inter-Faith Network. He has written and lectured regularly in the field of religious and cultural diversity in education and is a member of several local, national and international professional and academic bodies concerned with religious education and inter-faith relations. He has also developed classroom resources to support work in inclusive religious education and related curriculum areas, particularly from the perspective of developing awareness of diversity and mutual understanding. Recently retired from full time work he continues to contribute as an Honorary Lecturer in Stranmillis and is also involved with various research projects and as a contributor to other cross-community and intercultural educational initiatives. Among his most recent publications are *Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding: the experience of Northern Ireland* (2011 – co-edited and co-written with Professor Tony Gallagher of Queen's University Belfast) and *Sharing Religious Education:*

a brief introduction to the possibility of an inclusive approach to Religious Education in Northern Ireland (2014).

2. Factual Information

Stranmillis University College

The Bachelor of Education (BEd) degrees in Stranmillis provide students with a professional education in the foundations of teacher education from the Foundation Stage to Post-16. A Primary and Post-Primary BEd are offered and these programmes include Curriculum/Subject Studies, Education Studies, Professional Studies and School Placement. These parallel strands reflect the competence-based approach to initial teacher education required by the Department of Education, the relevant accreditation body, and the teacher competences as detailed by the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI). On both BEd programmes students follow common Education Studies modules for the first 3 years and then choose from a menu in their final year. The concept of Shared and Integrated provision is explored in all years.

In response to GTCNI competence 2 that, 'Teachers will have developed a knowledge and understanding of contemporary debates about the nature and purposes of education and the social and policy contexts in which the aims of education are defined and implemented' all BEd students in year 1 are introduced to the history of education in Ireland and required to know that a statutory system of 'Shared' education was implemented in 1831 and 1923 but that it subsequently failed in this ideal due to religious and political wrangling. The establishment of the current Integrated school sector is introduced to students along with Irish medium education. Post-Primary Students also have the opportunity in their first year to visit a Controlled, Maintained and Integrated school. A major part of assessment in the year 1 BEd is to investigate school aims and this requires students to appreciate the common and shared features of educational provision as well as why divisions exist in relation to religious and academic segregation. Theoretical insights provided on the module combined seminar discussions with peers who have experienced a different school system (controlled, maintained, international, further education) along with new personal experiences of different school types ensure that BEd students have a solid understanding of education to contribute to any debate surrounding shared education. Education Studies does not promote one preferred system but ensures that students are knowledgeable of the foundations of the system and appreciate the challenges and opportunities that changes may bring.

In Year 2 of the BEd, Education Studies begins to look beyond religious divisions towards fully inclusive education and meeting the needs of diverse learners, conscious of the need to develop in student teachers, 'a knowledge and understanding of the need to take account of the significant features of pupils' cultures, languages and faiths and to address the implications for learning arising from these' (GTCNI Teacher Competence 8). Through presentations, reading and sharing of experience, BEd students are prepared to engage in debate and are professionally prepared to deal with inclusion. Stranmillis does not promote either full inclusion or special provision; students are introduced to what exists and are encouraged to make their own professional judgements based on a greater degree of knowledge.

GTCNI Teacher Competence 9 states that, 'teachers will have developed a knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and know the features of the most common special needs and appropriate strategies to address these'. In the 3rd year of the BEd, Education Studies focuses on Special Educational Needs provision. Students have the opportunity to build up their knowledge of how to meet the learning needs of students on the SEN continuum both in a mainstream environment and in a Special Needs School/Unit. This builds on the insights provided in year 2 and every BEd student undertakes a compulsory one week placement in a Special Needs School/Unit. Students experience first-hand a shared learning environment in which the focus is on meeting the needs of each child.

In the final year of the BEd, students undertaking Education Studies can choose from a variety of modules that highlight the importance of a shared approach to improving educational attainment for all children. Some modules are focused on particular aspects of SEN and meet with GTCNI competence 21 that, 'Teachers will employ strategies that motivate and meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special and additional educational needs and for those not learning in their first language'. Another focus is on the role played by community and other key stakeholders in addressing educational needs and this is in line with GTCNI competence 12 that, 'Teachers will have developed a knowledge and understanding of the interrelationship between schools and the communities they serve, and the potential for mutual development and well-being'. Students can undertake modules in DMU and Social Disadvantage that require a greater understanding of the impact of social division on educational aspiration and attainment. In Year 4 students undertake an education dissertation and in many cases they will carry out a small-scale research study that focuses on inclusion, diversity and shared education policy and practice.

In short Education Studies in Stranmillis progressively engages students in the contemporary inclusion and sharing debate, from introductions in year 1 through to in-depth studies in year 4. Drawing on arguments from the literature and other sources Education Studies encourages critical reflection on professional practice among students with a synthesis between the development of theoretical and practical aspects and the students' own personal philosophical position in relation to education. The role played by International students on Education Studies modules is crucial to inform and challenge local students on the system of education that exists here. Stranmillis students are clearly prepared to play their role in the debate regarding shared and integrated education based on informed insights into educational structures and systems.

2.1 Diversity and Mutual Understanding Programme

The Inter-College Diversity and Mutual Understanding (DMU) programme has operated for many years as a joint initiative between Stranmillis and St. Mary's University Colleges. It seeks to offset some of the obvious disadvantages of nominally separate teacher education and schooling by preparing student teachers for the challenges of living and teaching in a still divided and increasingly diverse Northern Ireland. It also seeks to offer broad global and intercultural perspectives on issues associated with the understanding, acceptance and management of difference in society and in schools. It provides a series of joint seminars and interactive workshops for BEd and PGCE students to challenge them to think through the personal and professional issues around identity, diversity and the creative handling of conflict, and it offers training and support in dealing with controversial issues. There are opportunities for students to engage in training as peer leaders/facilitators, for international and intercultural exchanges and for establishing links with organisations involved in supporting schools and other community groups in these areas. In these ways the DMU programme helps to support students in their preparation for the curricular areas of Personal Development & Mutual Understanding (primary) and Local & Global Citizenship (post-primary), and in their general awareness of the Department of Education's Community Relations, Equality & Diversity (CRED) policy.

2.2 CREDIT Programme

The CREDIT (Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers) project delivered during the period 2011-2013 was funded by the International Fund for Ireland (£839,000) and administered by the Department of Education. It was developed by Stranmillis University College, in joint collaboration with St. Mary's University College and aimed to help all qualified teachers, working in all phases and sectors, to develop skills and confidence in dealing with issues of diversity, inclusion and community cohesion in the classroom and on a whole-school basis. Youth workers and other educational professionals were also invited to participate.

The CREDIT project provided practitioners with insight into the broader diversity issues that impact upon young people beyond the classroom and helped to develop the practitioners' personal awareness, skills and confidence working in these areas within and between schools, in relation to the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, community involvements and whole-school policy and practice. It did this in a way that encouraged participation and long-term continuity. While supporting the development of specific curriculum areas such as Personal Development & Mutual Understanding (primary) and Local & Global Citizenship (post-primary), the courses also addressed other relevant curriculum areas.

The project developed a suite of professional programmes. These included the Exploring Skills in CREDIT course which was aimed at teachers who felt they would like to develop basic skills in this area of diversity and community relations. Extending Skills in CREDIT was a more in-depth course for teachers who had shown an existing awareness of community engagement issues and helped to equip participants to embed good practice in this area into their own settings. A Leadership Skills in CREDIT course was suitable for principals who wanted to lead the school forward in CRED practices through practical consideration of planning, implementation, monitoring and reviewing at a whole-school level. Each course aimed for a balanced representation to facilitate optimum sharing of experiences, learning and engagement at all levels of education.

The CREDIT project has emphasised the need to focus on skilled practitioners and has highlighted the power of transformation in providing teachers with the time and space to embed good practice. A central feature was the inclusion of an interim period in each course, in which each participant returned to school to reflect on their own learning and consider the next steps appropriate to the individual setting prior to returning to the programme, to reflect on how they had or were planning to change practice as a result of engagement with the programme. The collective wisdom of teachers and educationalists across the continuum of education provided a rich learning experience for everyone. Further the course accentuated the mixing of education and community as a powerful way of moving forward.

Ultimately CREDIT empowered teachers to help children and young people to learn to live peaceably together in a more inclusive and less divisive society and to help young people to reach their full potential and become meaningful contributors to society, better equipped to deal with specific challenges.

2.3 Community Engagement

Strategic Aim 8 of Stranmillis University College's Operational Plan is to 'support and inspire students from the widest possible range of educational, social and cultural backgrounds'. This is achieved through the College Widening Participation policy which clearly demonstrates that the University College is a shared and integrated learning community. Stranmillis University College is strongly committed to ensuring that the environment can be shared by as wide a range of people as possible, including through its International and Erasmus programmes and Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning courses which have attracted the local community to participate in a varied and interesting programme. The University College recruits students and staff from all sections of the community and the Widening Participation policy is attracting students from varied social backgrounds who may not in the past have considered Stranmillis University College as a place to study. We recognise that our student body is representative of all sectors of the Northern Ireland community. Through Widening Participation support our Health and Leisure Degree programme offers a 2-day residential induction to enable students from across, social and religious backgrounds to break down pre-conceived views of others and to begin their degree with a positive attitude to those from a different background to themselves.

While Stranmillis University College educates teachers to draw the best from every pupil they teach, we also recognise that schools alone cannot raise educational aspiration and attainment; what is required is effective partnership with communities and the various groups that serve them. With a core business in teacher education Stranmillis University

College is influential in relation to community engagement. Our daily business concerns working directly with schools, the Regional FE Colleges and communities. While this informs student modules/placements and our research activity, our outreach work directly impacts on the wider community. Stranmillis has established strategic partnerships with various community groups struggling with social deprivation and educational underachievement. This generally involves homework clubs, support for special needs, games/sporting and enterprise activities. As part of our WP activity we bring children onto our campus to engage in 'curriculum enrichment' mini-university days that both raise their aspirations and contribute to achieving better educational attainment. On these days student groups are from different religious backgrounds and while the focus is on university insight, the opportunity to mix with someone from a different community replicates what it is like to attend a mixed university having come from a segregated community. Such initiatives have a direct relevance to community relations. Racial and sectarian incidents are most common in inner city socially deprived areas and when communities have low self-esteem and little expectation of a future in productive employment, they can too easily look at newcomers to their area with suspicion and resentment. Education can help to address the central issues of expectation and self-worth and Stranmillis University College provides quality volunteers to support communities in identifying solutions to local issues. In the main this involves working with community groups to support the work that they are undertaking in building good relations within and across communities. Student volunteers provide a link between communities and the resources that are available within Stranmillis. Commitment to Widening Participation and Community Engagement within Stranmillis University College ensures that support for local communities is integral to its mission. Crucially this support is not simply vocal or passive but can be seen in action within communities. Numerous initiatives have incorporated bringing sections of the community together, to raise aspirations in a shared neutral environment. The value of higher education involvement in supporting local communities cannot be underestimated in promoting a shared education culture.

2.4 DAISY

The DAISY (Diversity Awareness Intervention: Start Young) programme, funded by Lisburn-Castlereagh PEACE III, focused on diversity practice in early years settings. A team from Stranmillis University College was awarded the tender to deliver a project aimed at increasing awareness amongst children, parents and staff in the identified cluster areas (Lisburn and Castlereagh) of diversity and inclusion related issues, including other cultures, religions and traditions. The early years' practitioners were engaged in a series of interactive sessions that involved many practical activities. Initially the sessions were based around raising knowledge and confidence of the practitioners, but towards the end of the planned series of sessions the onus moved towards the practitioners working directly with parents and children in their own settings. A mentoring process with staff and students of the University College supported practitioners, enabling them to start where they felt comfortable, providing them with the skills and support they needed to implement change within their practice.

As a result of involvement in the project, early years practitioners believed it has heightened their awareness of prejudice, increased their confidence in dealing with challenges to diversity and inclusion and made it more likely that they would challenge bullying or prejudicial behaviour.

3. Terms of Reference

3.1 ***Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;***

We acknowledge the need for clear definitions and the attempts in recent publications to develop clarity of language and purpose in shared or sharing or integrated or integrating education. Our understanding of the realities of the current situation means we do not need to opt for one model at the expense of others but that we do need to work together on many

models with a common purpose and aim of ensuring a shared future for our society. It is important that this happens at all educational phases from early years through to the end of formal education and beyond. We would welcome statutes for the facilitation of shared education, and the need for clearly defined and agreed definitions. We believe that agreement should be sought on principles governing shared education but that, as a developmental approach is required, these principles should allow for many existing models of practice to exist and indeed for schools to develop their own models of practice if appropriate.

It is also evident that if schools are to be at the forefront of new models of shared education then it is essential that teachers, pre-service and in-service, are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop this work. Together Building a United Community, section 2.67 recognises the central role for teachers in stating *“It is therefore important that educators have the necessary continuous training and development to ensure that they are best equipped to play their part in addressing these issues adequately.”*

The CRED policy also identifies insufficient training for teachers as one of the weaknesses in the current policy.

3.2 *Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;*

The barriers to this type of approach in education include our existing divided society which is not conducive geographically to sharing in any form. Socio-economic factors can impinge as can an unwillingness for schools to be out of step with perceived attitudes in their own communities. There is also a danger in assuming that education alone can deliver solutions to a much wider societal issue – educational initiatives need to be couched in a broader societal framework.

Enabling approaches include:

- Equipping teachers and other education professionals(pre-service and in-service) with the skills, knowledge and confidence to ensure that they can engage in this work effectively;
- ensuring that this work is developmental so that schools are encouraged to move on from their existing position and not to have a “one size fits all” approach;
- ensuring that this work is embedded across all areas of school life and curriculum;
- developing an appreciation that this work is more than contact for its own sake and that any shared activities need to be prepared and planned over an extended period of time so that the work has a clear purpose and identified outcome;
- ensuring that shared education programmes are not token or superficial, but that they provide genuine opportunities for interaction and exchange, including the exploration of issues of identity, diversity and the creative management of difference;
- ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation of programmes that focuses on ensuring long-term change and sustainability rather short term goals. It is easy to measure if an activity has happened and more challenging to find effective ways to measure what impact such activity has and yet it is crucial to encourage schools and other agencies to ensure they are evaluating this long-term impact.

3.3 *Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;*

The challenges of separation and division are not unique to Northern Ireland, and it is possible to learn generally from an awareness of international experience. Models similar to integrated education and shared education can be found in situations such as Israel/ Palestine and the Balkans, although the additional complication for these regions is linguistic, which tends to limit the opportunities for shared education experiments. In all such cases known to us, however, the focus is on shared facilities, a shared curriculum and a supportive, open ethos of inclusion. Training and policy support is crucial for such work. Some

international bodies, notably the Council of Europe and UNESCO, have developed support mechanisms in the form of publications and conferences and have encouraged positive policy development on the part of governments. If we are to learn anything from this it is surely that integration/sharing in education does not just happen automatically when pupils and students find themselves in the same place together. It requires careful preparation, training, planning, policy development, curriculum development and conscious regular oversight of such initiatives in order for them to be effective.

3.4 Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools;

3.4.1 Investment

While we are aware of the budget constraints across all of Northern Ireland government at present, it is very clear that any serious commitment to understanding and promoting shared education of any sort requires substantial and sustained funding. Small scale projects and short term projects are incredibly valuable to support shared education but only as out-workings of a broader strategic investment. On their own they cannot bring the province-wide and education-wide development that is required. Investing in teacher development is critical as teachers are working in classrooms delivering, shaping views and modelling practice every day. Excellent models already exist of effective teacher development such as the CREDIT project which was evaluated very highly by ETI and such models should be developed and built upon. The CREDIT project demonstrated high impact on schools and on long term development of work in this area and should be developed as a model for future teacher development.

3.4.2 Sharing of Good Practice

Too often in the past, initiatives have come and gone without having real sustained impact on the system. We need to be prepared to invest for the long term so that good practice is shared and becomes embedded in education.

3.4.3 Cohesion across the Education Continuum

Initiatives that can make a real difference need to be across all phases and sectors of education, from beginning and pre-service teachers to leadership teams and governance of schools, from early years to post-compulsory and across all of Northern Ireland. Local small scale programmes then become supporting elements of a broader strategic vision rather than isolated pockets of excellence that can flourish briefly and then fade if key personnel move on. In relation to this, a small number of highly effective educational support NGOs have worked for many years (from long before government took these issues seriously) to assist schools and teacher educators in the development of this work. They have often provided the continuity that schools have not been able to sustain internally when committed members of staff move on. Yet their own work is also threatened by a tendency to dismiss their contribution and short-term thinking on the part of government officials. It would have been impossible for Stranmillis to develop its own work in these areas (DMU, CREDIT, etc.) without the support of such experienced and well trained professionals and it is highly disappointing to see their work side-lined and threatened by constant funding crises. The contribution of such organisations has been invaluable and needs to be recognised and properly engaged. Work on shared education cannot be in addition to other educational initiatives but should be an integral part – for example, area learning partnerships already provide an opportunity for shared work so should be built upon rather than duplicated; existing work with parents, governors and other educational agencies needs to reflect the shared education agenda.

Dr Anne Heaslett

Principal

23 October 2014

The Aspect Group of Prospect



The Aspect Group of Prospect represents nearly 3,000 professionals in the education, children's services and social care field. It is the major organisation representing Advisory and support staff in the education and examinations sector in Northern Ireland

They are based throughout the UK, and work across a range of sectors serving the interests of children and young people, including the public, private, faith, voluntary and community sectors.

The main activities of ASPECT members in N. Ireland are the training and development and ongoing support of teachers, managers and governors within schools and the continued development of those schools. The Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (C.A.S.S.) and C.C.E.A. operate in a complex and changing environment within the constraints of increasingly limited resources.

The notion of "shared identity" in Northern Ireland is problematical with the community at large divided along Unionist/Nationalist lines. Cultural identity and sectarianism are issues that remain deeply influential in many areas. In recent years newcomer families have settled in many areas of Northern Ireland and are making significant contributions to the life of their local communities. Aspect group members support the schools' efforts to integrate these children and young people into the education system.

'Despite almost 20 years of relative peace since the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994, many scars of 'The Troubles' remain visible in daily life. While the recent riots are an obvious example, the Protestant and Catholic communities remain divided, often physically, with education also, largely, split along religious lines. (Neil Ferguson and Maren Michaelsen, Royal Economic Society's 2013)

That being the case there is a need for an education system which provides and encourages access for all to high quality education which concentrates on the needs of society and provides young people with the skills and opportunities to meet those needs.

The focus should be on how schools can explore a range of shared options based on educational provision and access rather than on a political or philosophical basis. The QUB Centre for Shared Education defines the concept as

"any collaborative activity within or between schools or other educational institutions that can: contribute towards school improvement, provide access to opportunity, encourage more effective use of resource and promote social cohesion"

The Department of Education "Sustainable Schools Policy" and the principles of Area Based Planning, reflect the need for children to be educated in accordance with an acceptance of diversity in the nature of education provision, including Controlled, Catholic Maintained, Integrated, Irish Medium or other.

Not everyone is at a stage where a shared campus would be a viable option. In the most developed arrangements there is a history of collaboration between the schools involved with support from communities, CASS service and employing authorities. The Department of Education should consider how it can facilitate a range of options to promote cooperation, ranging from very low key arrangements to very high levels of collaboration among schools from different sectors and ensure that the climate across all sectors is conducive to the promotion of shared education.

There is a need for engagement to be carefully planned and reflective of the context of the history and culture of the local area. The desire to be part of this undertaking must come from the schools themselves by assessing the situation in their local community and identifying a 'sharing partner' or partners with whom they are keen to collaborate. This element of the process allows schools to gauge local attitudes and come forward with appropriate solutions. Such an approach is crucial to fostering ownership and commitment, attributes vital to the potential future success of any partnership. Support should be provided to assist school partners to address the issues that arise in such endeavours.

The PíEE Project initiated by the N.E.E.L.B. supported "regular and sustained engagement between pupils and teachers from two or more schools of different management types, and concluded that the benefits from a Shared Education approach include:

- (i) Educational Benefits; to provide an enhanced quality of educational provision and experience to the schools and young people involved
- (ii) Societal benefits; to improve community relations, reconciliation and community cohesion in light of a divided and troubled past
- (iii) Economic benefits; to maximise educational provision and resourcing in light of a diverse and often rural schools estate which has experienced pressures, ('How to Create and Maintain a Primary Partnership', NEELB, 2013)

The Curriculum Advisory and Support Service (C.A.S.S.) made a key contribution in initiating and sustaining this work, providing strategic direction, governance and support and in recent times Board officers have been involved in innovative work involving sharing at a local community level.

The result of these efforts, based on rigorous evaluation, has proven to have a significant impact on local communities.

Aspect Group of Prospect is supportive of the Shared Education concept and sees it as part of the progressive improvement and normalisation of the way the different sections of our divided society interact and coalesce. Aspect is also supportive of the inclusion in the Programme for Government of efforts to increase the level and scope of shared education. Our members will continue to make significant contributions to the shared education initiative and to lead from the front in researching and establishing sustainable projects in the future.

The Association of School and College Leaders



Response to the Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry request for written evidence from the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee

Association of School and College Leaders Northern Ireland.

As an association of school leaders, we believe in the need to promote system leadership which encourages school leaders to care for and work for the success of other schools as well as their own. This idea has relevance to many countries but especially those like Northern Ireland which are emerging from sectarian conflict.

In recently published research on Area Learning Communities in Northern Ireland by McGuinness, Abbott and Cassidy (2013), evidence is drawn from the direct experience of former ASCL heads who participated in innovative area learning communities in Limavady and Ballymena. They argue that the problem in the case of Northern Ireland, is that schools for decades that have been divided on sectarian grounds do not easily collaborate. This provides unique challenges for school leaders and teachers. Schools need to agree and prioritise an inclusive, intercultural vision. There must be support for professional development for teachers and leaders engaged in this difficult work. Innovative use of technology and the help of expert outside agencies are vital to stimulate change and progress. Most importantly, leaders in government departments need to ensure that overall strategic plans make provision for the widest possible uptake of Area Learning Community schemes and to lobby for the necessary funds to ensure that the plans can be translated into practice. In the ASCL national strategy document “Blueprint for a Self-Improving System” (2014), it is suggested that, “the role of government is to remove obstacles and create the conditions for a self-improving system”.

Key barriers in Northern Ireland to the effective development of this approach on Shared Education are both the level of delegated funding and the demotivating complexity of funding delegation. The evidence shows that collective ownership of the collaboration by the schools involved and a high degree of autonomy bring about significant change. Practical measures like the funding of an executive co-ordinator relieves the tensions between school leader allegiance to their own school and ALC plans. Concerns about dividing focus between ALC objectives and individual school accountability to inspection pressures can also inhibit school leader commitment to collaboration.

In ASCL (2014), it is argued that we can learn from initiatives like London Challenge;

“...where a strong sense of collective endeavour, accountability, a focus on students’ outcomes and deep partnerships between and among schools, brought about significant improvement including and especially for children and young people from economically deprived backgrounds”.

“School Leaders took on a shared responsibility for the quality of education of all young people in their area, not just those in their own school. There is a strong commitment to principled strategic partnerships, including with higher education institutions.”

This last comment ties in well with the best practice in N Ireland Learning Communities where local FE colleges provide a strong, well equipped, shared, vocational provision and are

linked in curriculum collaborations with schools. In these type of contexts shared education becomes a reality.

One of the great strengths of Northern Ireland society is the deeply rooted value systems which inform principled citizenship and are exemplified in the ethos of schools from all traditions. There is already shared understanding and commitment to providing the best opportunity and future for the young people in our care, in spite of the anxieties, hurt and residual tensions from our difficult past. The leap of faith needed for schools to move from separate self-interest to educational collaboration needs support and encouragement from government and equally, respect for the excellence and genuine commitment to the existing educational contexts in which schools operate.

Shared education will be enhanced more by changing minds than changing structures. We start from where we are by supporting financially those in collaborative settings who are on that journey however modest their initial projects. This type of change cannot be legislated into existence, it must grow from the local leadership and the emerging confidence of schools and parents.

Frank Cassidy BEM Regional Officer ASCL Northern Ireland

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Tor Bank School

Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education

Submission from Colm Davis on behalf of the Governors, parents, staff and pupils of Tor Bank School, Dundonald.

My name is Colm Davis and I'm both privileged and proud to be Principal of Tor Bank School (a Special School for children and young people who have severe learning difficulties). I also represent National Association of Head Teachers at both local and national levels and have extensive knowledge and understanding of educational working models in England, Wales and NI. I co-chair the Strategic Leadership Forum for Special Schools in NI and represent special schools on the General Teachers' Council. I also Chair the Dundonald Extended Learning Community, a partnership with 5 other mainstream and special schools. I have been teaching 33 years and have a strong passion for ensuring that children and young people with learning disabilities get the best possible inclusive opportunities to enable them to function independently in the local community in which they are expected to work and live. I've also been involved in many Charities over the past 30 years that have focused on promoting equality while supporting peace and reconciliation, my more recent success being with the charity in which I was Chair and Director Forward Learning.

Up until 1987 children with Severe Learning Difficulties were often deemed uneducable and were therefore denied the right to education in a school under DENI control. Social Services and institutions such as Muckamore Abbey Hospital provided a caring environment for them and they automatically transferred or transitioned to Day Centers or Adult workshops. Employment within the Community was rarely attainable and their rights were often compromised by being denied the right to progression routes to employment or life-long learning.

However, thankfully history was made when the 1987 Education Act handed the responsibility of educating these children and young people to DENI (now DE) and the Education and Library Boards. Under the umbrella of the controlled sector, special schools for children with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD – includes children with profound and multiple learning difficulties) were born and a new phase in their lives (and in education) began. With it, the drive for equality of opportunity gathered momentum and partnership working with Colleges and supported employment agencies gave these young people hope that they could get real jobs beyond Adult Workshops for the Mentally Handicapped. Many of the Adult Workshops were closed and the concept of Supported Employment Agencies gathered momentum. Parents were grateful that at long last their children and young people were being given the same rights to education as those children in mainstream schools. However, we believe their rights continue to be undermined and their opportunities limited by the many initiatives from DENI (in the past) and DE which tend to focus on more enhanced opportunities for mainstream school children to the detriment of those SLD Sector. With the lack of clarity in much of the guidance for schools as to how these children and young people 'could be fitted in' to many of these mainstream initiatives, school leaders of schools with an SLD designation have continued to 'second guess' or to put their own interpretation into how the recommendations contained within this guidance can be implemented successfully with-in the context of an SLD environment. As a result of staff enthusiasm and determination, the schools and pupils within them have continued to thrive and parents have felt their children are included rather than excluded.

We believe that now is the time for NI to take another 'crucial' step in making history once again by giving schools who have children with Severe Learning Difficulties 'integrated status' and the benefits that goes with that branding, label or status. Let me outline and clarify our case further on the next few pages.

Tor Bank School Context

During 2013-2014 school year, Tor Bank received the **UNICEF Level 2 'Rights Respecting School Award'** for their outstanding contribution and commitment to the principles of upholding and supporting children's rights. As an 'outstanding' community school (ETI March 2012) Tor Bank caters for the specialised individual needs of 171 children and young people who have severe to profound and multiple learning difficulties. As a positive and vibrant inclusive community, it provides a supportive and empathetic environment in which parents, teachers, classroom assistants, therapists, nursing staff and other stakeholders share and work in collaboration to plan, design and deliver high quality programmes to meet the holistic needs and complex learning preferences of the individual pupil. Tor Bank considers itself to be an enabling school which is strongly committed to an inclusive agenda for all pupils. We seek to provide an 'enriched' curriculum for each individual pupil in a carefully structured environment which enables them to learn happily and effectively. We strive to work in partnership and collaboration with parents and other stakeholders to meet the 'holistic needs' of each individual pupil throughout their schooling career.

Throughout all aspects of teaching, learning and development, pupils are presented with curriculum strategies and opportunities specifically designed to help them to make connections with the world in which they are expected to live presently and in the future. We strongly believe that connected learning will help our pupils to make sense of the world they are expected to live in and therefore realise their full potential.

The curriculum offered is designed to meet both the Northern Ireland statutory requirements and the individual needs of the pupil. At all times the focus therefore is on needs of the individual child. Curriculum programmes and opportunities therefore are presented to the pupil in small steps and progressive stages of development to enable pupils, staff and parents alike to monitor and record progress systematically. The outcomes from this process enable staff to plan activities for the next stage of learning based on success to date.

The curriculum offered at Tor Bank also aims to provide relevant learning opportunities to enable each young person to develop as an individual, as a citizen and as a contributor to the local economy and the environment. The key elements that underpin our curriculum are contained within our cross curricular themes, all aspects of curriculum delivery and everyday life in Tor Bank.

Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;

Recommendation: "The current definition should explicitly refer to learners of all abilities in all schools"

Currently shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners within an ethos of promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. Integrated education has similar aims and explicitly seeks to educate together children from protestant and catholic traditions, as well as those of other faiths and none, in an inclusive, welcoming and aspiring environment.

Tor Bank strives to deliver the aims and educational benefits attributed to shared education and, moreover, have an intake from protestant and catholic traditions, as well as those of other faiths and none. The population within Tor Bank has always been multi-faith and multi-cultural. Arguably the first controlled integrated and fully inclusive schools, special schools have been denied the opportunity to be considered as Integrated schools yet have possibly the best models of shared education that have been developed over the past 60 years or so in collaboration with partner schools within their local community.

Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education for Tor Bank.

Recommendation: ‘Special schools need to be enabled to become integrated in law’.

1. Barriers for Special Schools regarding Shared Education and Integrated Education;

Under NI legislation, all but one of the existing Special Schools in NI is considered to be under the control of the ‘Controlled Sector’. Special Schools like Tor Bank, were the first integrated schools in NI yet we have been excluded from being re-branded ‘Integrated’ by legislation which continues to ignore this fact. We strongly believe that the staffing and pupil composition meet all the requirements to be considered to have integrated status. We have therefore embarked on a consultation process with NICIE to investigate the possible transformation into a fully inclusive and integrated specialist school. Representatives from NICIE have met with staff and Governors to seek out their views and we strongly believe that we making positive steps along the path to becoming a ‘Fully Inclusive’ School. We are excited about these prospects but will seek out more views.

The fact that Tor Bank is perceived as a controlled school inhibits its journey to becoming a fully inclusive school. Being a special school, parents do not have choice about which sector to send their children to; it is therefore all the more important that it should be formally recognised as an integrated school in order to provide maximum assurance and welcome; maximum confidence for internal and external perceptions. Additionally, if the school is seen as a controlled school the school will not be seen as a community space and will be limited in its ability to promote community cohesion.

2. Enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;

Shared and Integrated education’s focus on raising school standards and to following a school improvement agenda which gives greater curriculum entitlement and inclusive opportunities to all children is in harmony with the aims and objectives of Tor Bank School.

Tor Bank’s enrolment reflects the increasing number of ‘New Comers’ or ethnic minorities in the community. The school’s knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures is becoming more enhanced as newcomers become more fully integrated into Tor Bank Community.

We believe that Tor Bank is now uniquely placed to act as a hub for community inclusion and peace reconciliation, the new building generating a new phase in its life and development.

Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;

The function of a special school is to ensure that our children and young people are equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding to become more fully included and independent members of their local community in which they are expected to live and work. This has been fully recognised by DE, by the Health Trusts (in its closure of Institutions such as Muckamore Abbey for Children with its focus now being on Community re-integration) by parents and by mainstream schools alike in that they have continued to endorse and be supportive of the role a special school plays within-in the seamless continuum of specialist educational provision available to nurture and support the needs of all learners in NI. In Tor Bank like many of our other Special Schools in NI, the commitment to relationship building, respecting others, showing unconditional positive regard towards others and valuing people has been recognised as models of ‘best practice’ by educators and stakeholders alike. However, it is worth noting that this continuing success has not been nurtured or cultivated in a segregated vacuum of isolation, but rather with-in a collaborative partnership framework with other schools and agencies that schools with SLD created before any recent policy direction ‘pushed’ other mainstream schools down the collaborative route.

My colleague Dr Peter Cunningham in his submission succinctly describes this in his statement below:

“It is my view that mainstream schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all and while I believe that there will always be the need for special school provision it need not be segregated provision. The day of the inclusive special school is very much with us and the invaluable contribution we continue to make recognised by our mainstream school partners”. (Dr Peter Cunningham – Ceara Special School, Lurgan).

Some recent examples of effective and existing collaborative activity in Tor Bank can be found in the following snapshots of partnership activity:

- There is a trend toward increased connectivity, collaboration and partnership working between special schools and mainstream schools, and special schools and special units in all areas of NI;
- All Special schools are now part of every Area Learning Community (ALCs) in NI and the collaborative strand is deeply embedded in most of the collaborative work that exists within and between schools, despite special schools not being suitable platforms for delivering the requirements of the Entitlement Framework because of the type of accreditation opportunities offered for their special learners within their school;
- In many ALCs, staff in special schools often advise and support their colleagues in ‘mainstream’ schools to help deliver the inclusive agenda to enable them to cope with the diverse range of pupils with SEN within their schools.
- Tor Bank now plays an instrumental role within the Dundonald Extended Schools Learning Community and is leading the way regarding the transformation of the remaining schools into Rights Respecting Schools.
- To encourage further understanding of disability and the challenges of supporting effective inclusive practices, Tor Bank encourages students from the local Grammar Schools and Secondary Schools to participate in work experience and community placements within the school. On average in most weeks throughout the school year, as many as 15 students spend at least 1 week in the school for this purpose and some of these students also support our students to attend Brookland’s Youth Club.
- Tor Bank School Development Plan commits to strengthening more inclusive links and collaborative partnerships with local mainstream schools. It already has strong collaborative links with Bloomfield Collegiate, Tullicarnet Primary School, Brooklands Primary School, Dundonald Primary School, St Joseph’s Primary School, Downpatrick Primary School, Brooklands Primary School, Lagan College, Newtownbreda High School, Knockbreda High School, Longstone Special School, Dundonald High School and Our Lady and St Patrick’s Grammar School.

Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools;

Recommendation: “Special schools need to be enabled to become integrated in law”

We strongly believe that ‘**integrated and shared education**’ aims to provide high quality learning experiences for all our young people. While there are some efforts to engage special schools in shared education the fact that they are often viewed as being part of a completely different sector impacts negatively upon the learning opportunities and experiences of young people attending special schools - many of whom come from the most disadvantaged parts of society. The fact that special schools are **not allowed by law to be recognised as integrated in law** compounds this obvious discrimination and limits their present and development. Their Governance and freedom to control their own destiny, future and status is being continually undermined by an ‘antique’ and ‘antiquated’ funding system that continues to allow ELBs to control the budget allocation and enrolment criteria. However, despite this we have continued

to lead the way in producing the highest quality education for our children and young people and ETI inspection reports continue to recognize and endorse the high standards that are within our special schools.

It is important that existing and new parents of children attending Tor Bank School continue to get Governor, Staff and ELB reassurance about the inclusive, integrative nature of Tor Bank School. However, we strongly believe that only formal recognition of the fully inclusive nature of Tor Bank by the Assembly, DE and legislation, will provide further persuasive evidence. It would also help to create and extend the range of existing opportunities through the additional funding streams and support required to help prepare our young people more effectively for the additional challenges they will encounter in their everyday lives outside of Tor Bank School.

Teachers, Classroom Assistants, parents, other stakeholders and partners working collaboratively with Tor Bank welcome the opportunity to remove any perceptions of Tor Bank as a **“controlled”** school and any discussions to rebadge it as an **‘integrated school’**. This would enable the child-centered ethos to be more formally recognised and supported within an inclusive community framework. They firmly believe that ‘Tor Bank – **‘A fully inclusive School’ and/or Tor Bank as ‘a Specialist Integrated Community School’**’ can only serve to benefit the staff, children, parents and stakeholders even further.

More importantly, demographically, Dundonald is considered a predominantly protestant community who are proud of Tor Bank School and have embraced it as ‘their school’. However, they’re fully aware that even in the darkest times of the troubled past, children of all faiths and backgrounds were transported into Tor Bank School from all areas and traditions and this was accepted by them. Throughout that period and even during this current phase of Tor Bank’s history, the enrolment criteria continues to be defined and controlled by SEELB. In this new era of ‘Shared Futures’ it is crucially more important to be able to provide firm reassurance to parents and the wider community that Tor Bank is being recognised as a fully integrated community specialised school and as such, is playing an instrumental role in the creation of community inclusion and cohesion.

Tor Bank School Development Plan commits to strengthening more inclusive links and collaborative partnerships with local mainstream schools. It already has strong collaborative links with Bloomfield Collegiate, Tullycarnet Primary School, Brooklands Primary School, Dundonald Primary School, St Joseph’s Primary School, Downpatrick Primary School, Brooklands Primary School, Lagan College, Newtownbreda High School, Knockbreda High School, Longstone Special School, Dundonald High School and Our Lady and St Patrick’s Grammar School.

I strongly believe that Tor Bank is now uniquely placed to act as a hub for community cohesion, community inclusion and peace reconciliation, however, recognition of its fully inclusive, integrated character is the vital strap line to enable this ideal to succeed. We urge you to strongly consider the role and status of Tor Bank School within any present or future strategic thinking on Shared Futures.

Colm Davis

Principal
Tor Bank School (Special)

23rd October 2014

Transferor Representatives' Council



Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC)

Submission to the NI Assembly Committee for Education
Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry

October 2014

Submission by the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) to the NI Assembly Committee for Education: Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry

The TRC welcomes this opportunity to offer comments on Shared/Integrated Education at the request of the Assembly Education for views and opinions to inform its Inquiry. It submits this response on behalf of the Boards of Education of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland.

Introduction

The three transferor churches have in recent years strongly affirmed by resolution at their annual meetings of General Synod, Presbyterian General Assembly and Methodist Conference, their commitment to the concept of shared education. In 2014 for example the following resolution was passed by the Presbyterian General Assembly:

That the General Assembly warmly support the on-going development of Shared Education in Northern Ireland and call upon the Department of Education to ensure that its policies and schemes provide a range of incentivised options to encourage and facilitate schools to participate in models of sharing appropriate for their local community.

Sharing is a challenging concept to develop with schools especially as they have for many years been encouraged to become self-reliant and responsible for their own governance and educational outcomes. It certainly makes sense at a time of scarce resources for schools to find ways of working together to provide the maximum learning opportunities for pupils. One key imperative is the educational benefit particularly at post-primary level, because sharing enables schools to provide pupils with access to a much broader range of courses and qualifications. There are also demonstrable reconciliation benefits as contact with the 'other' community enables traditional barriers to be broken down, understanding to be meaningfully developed and friendships engendered.

There have been a variety of independently funded shared education programmes running in schools across NI for a number of years. The TRC has been represented on the advisory body for the Shared Education Programme (SEP) led by Queen's University Belfast. Our experience of being involved in this work over several funding phases has been extremely positive. We have been impressed by a remarkable development of curriculum focused shared education initiatives across a very wide range of schools delivering beneficial outcomes for pupils and schools alike. There is also clear benefit for the community of enhanced social cohesion and promotion of good relations.

Responses to the terms of reference set out in the request from the inquiry:

- 1. Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including consideration for the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education.**
- 1.1. The Ministerial Advisory Group on shared education which reported in 2013 endorsed a definition of shared education from its remit: it ‘involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion’.
- 1.2. The Group examined all barriers to advancing sharing including different types of schools, underachievement, academic selection and socio-economic status. The Group made 20 recommendations. Three recommendations identified the need to address the vexed issue of academic selection; these are unlikely however to attain widespread support due to the diversity of views on this educational issue. However the TRC believes that the main recommendations addressed issues could be tackled immediately: the need to mainstream shared education; supporting schools in shared education; schools and other institutions working together; area-based planning and the school estate.
- 1.3. In his response to the report, the Minister committed to include a statutory definition of shared education in the hoped for Education Bill and provisions for the new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) to encourage and facilitate it. We now know that the Executive has decided not to pursue the establishment of the ESA. It is important that a definition of shared education is agreed and that the new Education Bill to create a single Education Authority includes provision to encourage sharing.
- 1.4. The TRC sees shared education as a spectrum of types of sharing – shared facilities, courses, pupils, staff, and buildings. There can be a variety of modes of sharing with neighbouring schools working together to share campuses, classrooms and programmes for the educational benefit of their pupils with no threat to the ethos of any school. This can include teachers and or pupils moving from school to nearby school across sectoral divides and phases or purpose built facilities shared by two or more schools. We would also see the Integrated schools having an important contribution to make in sharing alongside other types of schools.
- 1.5. In our view there should be a particular encouragement towards shared education given to the two largest sectors of schools – Controlled and Maintained, which are attended by a majority of children from Protestant or Catholic backgrounds. Incentives should be introduced to promote the development of creative ways to share which are consonant with the local needs and settings of individual schools and their communities.
- 1.6. The TRC believes that Shared Education can make an invaluable contribution to the educational outcomes for pupils and that a statutory obligation to facilitate and encourage it would ensure that the Department of Education would provide a long term commitment to its development and not see it simply as a temporary albeit valuable programme.
- 1.7. The TRC has worked with NICIE particularly in the development of controlled integrated schools and recognises the contribution that Integrated Education has made. Our view is that a fully integrated system of schools while perhaps an ideal is not realistically achievable province wide and that there is so much more to be gained by encouraging and facilitating collaboration and sharing across existing sectors.
- 1.8. The transferors have been supportive of the recently announced DE Shared Education Campus Scheme, where schools are invited to apply for funding to set up shared education campuses. The churches are particularly inspired by the Lisanelly education campus in

Omagh and have worked closely with the WELB and school management authorities in taking forward this visionary shared education project which has government support.

2. Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education.

- 2.1. One of the key benefits of shared education in programmes we have observed is that it encourages collaboration rather than competition in particular between small primary schools. Partnerships developed between schools of different management types have also enabled enhanced community cohesion without compromising the distinctive ethos of any school.
- 2.2. Key to the success of sharing is the need to secure parental and governor support from the outset. It is vital too that account is taken of the local context of the schools. Alongside this it is essential to build the capacity amongst principals to manage sharing within the partnership through support and training. Shared staff development of the wider group of teachers has also been found vital for the establishment and building of good relationships between partner schools. Sufficient resources must be available to provide substitute cover to allow staff to meet and plan their work together.
- 2.3. Teachers have found they need to develop a new range of skills and approaches to teaching pupils from different backgrounds within the same classroom environment. NICIE through its Sharing Classrooms Deepening Learning (SCDL) project has been found to provide very useful training and resources to support teachers in these transformed classroom environments.
- 2.4. Some of the most successful partnerships between controlled and maintained schools particularly at primary level have been with schools in close proximity to each other. This maximises the potential for sharing at many levels of school life. However other programmes eg the University of Ulster's Dissolving Boundaries (DB) programme have used internet technology as an effective way of linking schools which are geographically separate. The DB programme has enabled joint projects through online contact and supplemented by face to face contact. It has been found by teachers to make a good contribution to literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- 2.5. Experience of the outworking of various shared education programmes eg the QUB SEP project and the NEELB PEE project suggests that the ownership of the partnership by the schools was vital. Schools applying in pairs and coming up with a shared programme relevant to their local school circumstances proved the most valuable way of initiating and sustaining collaboration.
- 2.6. The curriculum must be the driver of collaboration; partnerships should be developed in order to meet the curriculum needs of pupils through the provision of subject areas of mutual interest which one school on its own is unable to provide. At post-primary this has been found to be an important way of delivering the entitlement framework of access to 24/27 subjects at KS4 and post 16 respectively.
- 2.7. The downside of programme driven initiatives is that once the funding phase has been exhausted the future of collaboration is jeopardised. It is important that funding for shared education becomes much more mainstreamed to allow relationships to fully develop and for the maximum long term benefit to flow from collaboration.
- 2.8. An issue arises regarding ownership of schools in shared campus settings. We understand that the Catholic trustees are the 'owners' of catholic voluntary and maintained schools while controlled schools are 'owned' by the Education and Library Board. When facilities are designed to be shared a question arises about who owns the buildings of the 'enterprise'. This is a relevant question in a number of shared settings and in particular when the potential of jointly managed schools is being explored.

3. Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes.

- 3.1. The TRC does not have specific knowledge of shared education experience in other jurisdictions although it is aware that QUB has much experience of work in divided societies for example Macedonia.
- 3.2. The transferors and Catholic trustees do however have an interest in developing the concept of jointly managed church schools in Northern Ireland. A small number of such schools exist in GB mostly jointly between the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. During 2013 discussions began between the Transferor Churches, Catholic authorities and the Department of Education on developing a working model for such a school. The proposal is that the three transferor Churches and the Catholic Church would be joint trustees and managers of a school. There would be a jointly appointed board of governors and an agreed vision and ethos for the school based upon the Christian faith. The provision for Religious Education would be agreed by the Churches and parents. Jointly managed schools would offer a different model to formally Integrated schools as they would be organically linked to and supported by the two main Christian traditions in NI.
- 3.3. It is not envisaged that many jointly managed schools will emerge in the future; however it might be considered in certain rural situations for example in a situation where the Controlled and Maintained schools may have separate challenges to their sustainability. Instead of a village losing both schools, a jointly managed school with pupils from both religious communities might have greater viability and enable a school to be retained in the community.
- 3.4. There are many practical matters to be worked out before such a school might be established including the legal issue of joint ownership. However there is willingness among the Churches and considerable openness among many parents to pursue the proposal. A guidance paper is currently being developed by a working group comprising the four churches and Department officials. It is hoped that this will be published by DE in the next few months.

4. Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special schools.

- 4.1. It is difficult to know how widely the concept of ‘shared education’ is known or understood by the wider community. It is likely also that among principals, staff and governors there is a variety of understandings or interpretations of shared education. There is therefore a key communication and training strategy needed to ensure that the concept is better understood. In particular it is essential that the idea of local sharing solutions for local communities is stressed. A clear and accepted definition of shared education would certainly help along with examples of what is and what is not an acceptable expression of sharing.
- 4.2. Research carried out by QUB has shown that meaningful engagement in collaborative partnerships does benefit community relations. There is a considerable body of evidence to show the reconciliation benefits of sustained contact across school sectors. Research suggests that separate schooling is more likely to contribute to bias towards one’s own group and prejudicial stereotyping of those from other groups. By considering the impact of participation in the Shared Education Programme on cross-group friendships and intergroup anxiety, researchers have confirmed the value of contact as a mechanism for promoting more harmonious relationships. The TRC believes that shared education has demonstrated tangible positive benefits for enhancing good relations in communities and urges that it is a priority task for the Department and proposed Education authority.
- 4.3. The importance of support for schools in developing collaborative partnerships has been demonstrated. For the controlled sector this is more challenging as unlike the maintained, integrated and Irish medium sectors they currently have no sectoral support body. The TRC has strongly advocated the establishment of a controlled sector support body, and is pleased

that following the Minister for Education's recent proposals, the executive has agreed a way forward for the creation of a single education authority with a commitment to fund a sectoral body for controlled schools.

- 4.4. A key role for such a body will be to work alongside other support bodies in matters of mutual interest including promotion of tolerance and understanding. A vital component of this aim will be to develop potential for sharing and collaboration across sectors.
- 4.5. The TRC believes that Special Schools are an essential part of the educational provision among the community of schools. Teachers from Special schools have much to offer other schools in terms of skills and expertise in working with children with special educational needs. Additionally the inclusion of special needs pupils in partnership activities will do much to enrich the educational experience of all pupils. Special schools should therefore be included in any proposed shared education plans for a local area. Particular care should be taken to ensure they are included in any proposed partnerships.

Conclusion

A key requirement for the success of shared education is a long term commitment and strategic decision to develop a culture of collaboration. Shared education presents a good model contributing to a better society in NI as it moves forward from its difficult past. Sharing enables children who will eventually live and work in society to spend some of their childhood learning alongside children from other traditions. As Northern Ireland emerges into a brighter future it is important that we find ways of addressing inherited prejudices and negative stereotypes and that young people can be confident in their own identity and beliefs yet develop openness to and understanding of the outlooks of others. Shared education seems to offer one way to help these things happen, not by dismissing differences but by 'creating interdependencies and making boundaries porous' (QUB SEP Learning Forum conference report, 2012)

Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC)

Chair: Rt Revd KR Good

Vice-Chair: Miss SR Rainey

Secretary: Revd IW Ellis

Contact address:

Church of Ireland House,

61-67 Donegall St

Belfast BT1 4QH

Tel: 028 90828860

Ulster Teachers' Union

Position on Advancing Shared Education

UTU is a professional teaching union representing over 6000 teachers and principals in the nursery, primary, post-primary and special education sectors.

UTU believes that every child, regardless of cultural background, ethnicity, race or religion, should be given equal opportunity to access education and to reach their full potential.

UTU welcomed the announcement by the Minister of Education, John O'Dowd, in July 2012 regarding the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education to explore and bring forward recommendations as to how to advance shared education in Northern Ireland. The Group was independent of the Department of Education¹. The Advisory Group was based at Queen's University of Belfast's School of Education. It was chaired by Professor Paul Connolly (QUB) and the other members were: Dawn Purvis and PJ O'Grady.

The Advisory Group published their findings² on 22nd April 2013.

The Ministerial group's report was to inform the development of a strategy to achieve two commitments – namely:-

That all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes.

That there is a substantial increase in the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

The Ministerial Group's Vision of Shared Education:

"Where schools collaborate across sectors to ensure that all children and young people have opportunities to learn together... Shared education can be the core mechanism for improving schools, increasing educational outcomes for all children and young people and preparing them to play a full and active role in building and sustaining an open, inclusive and confident society."

Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational establishments from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion"

"Teachers across the schools and/or educational institutions working together, whether it be in relation to training and professional development activities or curriculum planning and the delivery of lessons; and

Children and young people from across those schools and/or educational institutions actively learning together through face-to-face interaction, whether that is working together on specific projects or through participation in the same classes and/or the same sporting and extra-curricular activities."

The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Patricia Lewsley, launched her report 'Shared Education - The views of children and young people' on the 24th April 2013³ and it will be important to listen to the views expressed in this report.

1 http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/shared_education/shared-education-ministerial-advisory-group.htm

2 <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/Filestore/Fileupload,382123,en.pdf>

3 <http://www.niccy.org/Publications/policyandresearchreportsandpapers/policyandresearchreportsbydate/shared-education-views-of-children-and-young-people>

The Ulster Teachers' Union shares the vision of shared education as set out in the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education Report. Many schools already collaborate across all sectors ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to learn together we would agree that with continued support financially in this area we can continue to allow examples of good practice to be shown and modelled upon by other schools.

The current CRED funding isn't presently enough for every school to take part. The CREDIT courses run by QUB are currently oversubscribed and schools have no access to any other form of training and programmes.

Schools, Education, Teachers and Pupils play an important part in building and sustaining an open, inclusive and confident society as set out in the report and the UTU agree that Shared Education can be a core mechanism in moving this forward.

Pupils, regardless of gender, religion, class or locality should have access to the equal opportunities of Education in Northern Ireland.

The Ministerial Group have proposed twenty recommendations and the Ulster Teachers' Union have commented on each of them.

Mainstreaming Shared Education.

1. The Education Bill should be amended to place a statutory duty on the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate shared education as defined in this report. This should include reviewing all existing and proposed policies within education, and providing advice as required, to ensure that all activities seek to encourage and facilitate shared education where appropriate.

The UTU fully endorses that the Education Bill should be amended to place a statutory duty on Department of Education to encourage and facilitate shared education as defined in the report.

DE should establish a central unit, or identify an existing unit, that should take lead responsibility for encouraging and facilitating shared education. This unit should:

Develop and drive forward a strategy for advancing shared education that includes setting targets and goals, monitoring shared education activities and producing an annual report on progress being made;

Establish and maintain a regional structure for supporting schools and other educational institutions engaged in shared education; and

Commission research and evaluations into shared education and facilitate the sharing and dissemination of good practice.

The UTU supports the idea that a central unit should take lead responsibility for encouraging and facilitating shared education. It should be fully funded and easily accessible to all. Staff should be provided with adequate time and resourcing to carry out their role effectively.

3. As part of the proposed revised common funding formula suggested by Sir Robert Salisbury in his independent review for the Department of Education, a 'shared education premium' should be incorporated into the funding formula for schools and other educational institutions. This premium would recognize the added value of shared education and should be weighted in terms of:
 - The number of children and young people that are engaged in shared education activities, as defined in this report; and

- The proportion of school time that children and young people are engaged in such activities.

The UTU fully supports the proposal suggested by Sir Robert Salisbury in the independent review that a “shared education premium” should be incorporated into the funding formula to recognise the added value of shared education and should be weighted in terms of the number of children engaging in shared educational activities and the proportion of time that children and young people are engaged in such activities.

Supporting Schools in Shared Education.

4. Where schools and other educational institutions are in receipt of a shared education premium, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) should include an explicit review of the use of that funding in its inspection reports particularly in relation to:

- The added value of such shared education activities;
- The value for money of the funding provided; and
- The quality and effectiveness of the shared education activities.

The UTU fully agrees that where a shared education premium is received, then the ETI should include a review of how that funding is used in its inspection reports, especially in relation to:

- **The added value of such shared education activities:**
- **The value for money of the funding provided:**
- **The quality and effectiveness of such activities.**

The impact of shared education with regard to community cohesion.

5. The ETI should produce a biennial report that reviews the current range and extent of shared education activities across Northern Ireland, highlights good practice and makes recommendations regarding how these could be extended and enhanced, within the overall context of school improvement.

The UTU would welcome a complete evaluation on a biennial basis to inform, extend and enhance future provision disseminating best practice across all sectors.

6. The Department of Education, in its review of teacher education and continuing professional development, should develop a framework for supporting the early and continuing professional development of teachers that encourages its delivery through shared education and thus via effective collaboration between schools and other educational institutions. It is recommended that such a framework should encourage collaborative networks of schools and other educational institutions identifying their own professional development needs and being devolved appropriate levels of funding through the common funding formula to commission the training, courses and/or other support that they require from the most appropriate providers.

The UTU recognises that it is of utmost importance that a framework should be developed for supporting the early and continuing professional development of teachers that encourages its delivery through shared education. It is vital that this is fully funded and ring-fenced for Shared Education purposes.

7. ESA should ensure that all teachers and principals in schools and other educational establishments have access to a range of training courses and resource materials, and ongoing advice and support, to help them develop the particular knowledge and skills

associated with effectively organising and managing shared education activities and classes. This should include a focus on:

- Ensuring the meaningful participation of children and young people in the planning and delivery of shared education initiatives (see also Recommendation 11);
- Promoting positive relationships and dealing constructively with any negative incidents and poor interactions between children and young people that may arise;
- Covering sensitive topics and issues which might arise in the context of a diverse group of children and young people; and
- Developing and maintaining meaningful and effective relationships with parents and other care-givers.

The Ulster Teachers' Union fully endorses this recommendation and recognises the importance of each of the above points. However, on a cautionary note, it must be recognised that other agencies should support sensitive issues that arise. Voluntary and Community agencies who specialise in Conflict Resolution are best placed to lead workshops on sensitive issues (core issues that have been avoided in the past) both during teacher development training and pupil participation in programmes.

8. The Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Learning, in conjunction with the higher education institutions responsible for delivering teacher training and professional development courses, should review existing provision to consider appropriate mechanisms for collaboration to ensure that student teachers and teachers returning for professional development can be provided with opportunities to learn together, including in relation to preparation for teaching through shared education.

- **The UTU supports this recommendation as being an essential ingredient if shared education is to be successfully implemented.**
- **Best practice is emerging from CREDIT training programmes QUB.**
- **Teachers currently train together at ELB level**
- **Teacher Training Colleges need a Shared Programme**

Schools and Other Educational Institutions

9. Schools and other educational establishments should develop more meaningful relationships with parents and caregivers to ensure that their rights to be involved in the education of their children are fully respected and supported. To achieve this, it is recommended that:

- DE establish an appropriate network that supports schools and other educational institutions in developing relationships with parents and care-givers and in creating and sharing best practice regionally; and
- Schools and other educational establishments include a specific section in their Development Plans, that includes clear plans and goals, for how they intend to engage parents and caregivers and ensure their active and sustained support in the education of their children.

The Ulster Teachers' Union is in full support of both parts of recommendation number 9. Recognition of the important role played by carers and supporters is essential and it is vital that parents and carers "buy-in" to the advancement of shared education if it is to be implemented successfully. This also promotes the DE strategic plan for Parental involvement in the work of schools.

It is important to recognise Voluntary/Community groups who already exist and deliver conflict resolution/shared programmes and build upon the good practice already there.

10. An independent review should be undertaken of current practice in relation to the delivery of:
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Pre-School Education);
 - Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2);
 - Local and Global Citizenship (Key Stages 3 and 4); and
 - The Curriculum Framework for Youth Work (Youth Service).

The Ulster Teachers' Union fully support this recommendation and call upon the independent review of current practice to be carried out as soon as possible but allowing for enough time for respondents to give a full and measured response. It is also essential that all key stakeholders have an input to this review. It may be necessary for information to be collected in a variety of ways due to the scope of the review.

This must include a collation of existing voluntary and community organisations that have programmes delivered in an educational setting. Many of these organisations already address the above curricular areas and all schools should be able to access their resources and services.

11. In fulfilment of its duties under Article 12 of the UNCRC, the Department of Education should make it a requirement that all schools establish School Councils. Within this, School Councils need to:
- Be fully representative of the school body and of all year groups;
 - Provide a mechanism for consulting children and young people on all school matters that affect them, including plans for shared education activities;
 - Support children and young people in forming and expressing their views; and
 - Include appropriate mechanisms for the views of children and young people to then be considered and given due weight by the school.

The Ulster Teachers' Union support the call for all schools to establish School Councils as a mechanism for children's views to be considered. Furthermore, it is important that these bodies be given due weight by schools.

12. The necessary legislation should be brought forward for schools and other educational institutions to be designated as 'public authorities' under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and thus to be required to comply with the statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. In doing this, consideration should be given to whether it is possible to reduce the demands that will be placed on schools and other educational institutions in terms of meeting their specific responsibilities under Section 75 whilst maintaining their core duties to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

The Ulster Teachers' Union supports recommendation no.12 that Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 be legislated for in a manner in which schools and educational institutions can promote equality of opportunity and good relations without placing upon them added bureaucracy.

13. The Education and Skills Authority, in conjunction with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, should establish a unit to provide training, produce support materials and to advise schools and educational institutions in relation to preparing, implementing and monitoring the equality schemes they would be required to produce under Section 75. It is expected that one aspect of meeting the duty to promote good relations will include engagement in shared education initiatives.

The Ulster Teachers' Union supports the establishment of a fully funded and easily accessible unit where staff can offer support and networking opportunities to schools wishing to avail of shared educational initiatives. We would also point out that there are

also good examples and personnel who already use shared education in practical and substantive ways. These examples should be used and disseminated in practical and meaningful ways

14. The Department of Education should undertake a review of how shared education, and the enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and educational support centres, can most effectively meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with special educational needs. The review should focus on the development of effective models for collaboration that can:
- Ensure, wherever possible, that children and young people are taught in mainstream schools; and
 - For the small minority of children and young people where mainstream schooling is not suitable, that they have meaningful opportunities to learn with children and young people in mainstream school environments.

The Ulster Teachers' Union agree that all schools and educational centres should have equal access to shared education programmes outside of their own sector. The UTU would welcome further collaboration between mainstream and special schools and educational support centres.

Area-Based Planning and the Schools Estate

15. The Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and the CCMS should play an active role in promoting shared education through the area-based planning processes for
- post-primary and primary schools. This should include: Being proactive in identifying opportunities for shared education that may not have been considered and setting out options for schools and colleges to consider; and
 - Supporting and advising schools that wish to develop shared education arrangements, including providing advice on how two or more schools can transfer their status into a 'shared school' whereby they maintain their respective forms of ethos.

The Ulster Teachers' Union firmly believe that Shared Education must be promoted in an active and feasible manner. Schools, School Leaders, Boards of Governors, Teachers, Parents and Pupils must be supported, advised and provided with realistic, feasible and long-term workable arrangements that allow shared education to be developed and sustained with the Educational needs of all students at the heart of the arrangements.

16. Where there is sufficient, viable and consistent parental demand, the Department of Education should actively support the establishment of schools and other educational institutions with a particular religious, philosophical or cultural ethos.

The Ulster Teachers' Union feel that the Department must produce clear and consistent guidelines on what sufficient, viable and consistent parental demand would entail.

17. In relation to all existing schools, the Department of Education should:
- Establish a transformation process for schools where there is clear parental demand wishing to adopt a particular ethos – whether, for example, this be faith-based, integrated, secular or Irish Medium – and to ensure that it is user friendly and not bureaucratic and that parents are made aware of their powers under the processes established;
 - Identify how, in the light of parental demand, the process can be made easier whereby a school can incorporate the badge of a particular school type or sector in its title; and
 - While recognizing the responsibility of the Department to ensure the viability of schools in each local area, where there is clear evidence of over-subscription, it should allow existing

schools to expand, in a phased and careful manner, in order to meet the demand that exists among parents.

While the UTU supports recommendation 17 we would express some concerns that only the Department of Education will be having an input into viability of schools. It is important that all key stakeholders are allowed time to respond to any transformational process that has been suggested for schools.

NICIE currently offer the 'Positive Partnerships for Integration' model which includes all stakeholders in a carefully planned and supported transformation.

Academic Selection

18. The Northern Ireland Executive should, without delay, introduce the necessary legislation to prevent schools from selecting children on the basis of academic ability and require schools to develop admissions criteria that are truly inclusive and egalitarian in nature.

The Ulster Teachers' Union fully support this recommendation and again call for an end to academic selection and any practice of un-regulated testing. The labelling of children at 11 as failures is wrong.

19. The Department of Education, through the area-based planning process should consider how best to plan for sustainable post-primary schools with all-ability intakes. In doing this, the Department should have regard for parental demand in each local area for schools with a different religious, philosophical or cultural ethos and make every effort to ensure diversity of provision to meet this demand where it is feasible.

The Ulster Teachers' Union feel that the Department must produce clear and consistent guidelines on how sustainable post-primary schools will be provided and catered for. As there are many issues to consider stakeholders must be able to express opinions on meeting the needs of the local community. If shared education is to be successful the stakeholders must be able to agree long term solutions which are in the best interests for the pupils, parents and community.

20. The Department of Education should initiate a fundamental review of the use of selection *within* schools with all-ability intakes to explore the benefits and limitations of different models of banding and streaming. The review should be tasked with making recommendations regarding how best to take forward selection within schools so that all children and young people reach their full potential.

The Ulster Teachers' Union agree that models of banding and streaming should be explored by the Department of Education reviewing the many different models which are currently used by schools. However we believe that Principals, School Leaders and Boards of Governors should be able to form their own opinions and have in place a system of class placements which will benefit the students and ethos of every particular school.

UNESCO - Professor Alan Smith



Submission to the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

**Professor Alan Smith
UNESCO Chair, Ulster University
(November 2014)**

Professor Alan Smith is UNESCO Chair in Education at Ulster University with over 30 years experience of education policy and development in Northern Ireland, including advice to the Department of Education on community relations, sharing and integration and as a member of Ministerial Working Groups following the Agreement. He was a contributing author to the 2011 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report which focused on education and conflict, and is currently a technical advisor to a \$200 million UNICEF programme researching education and peacebuilding in 14 conflict affected societies in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Shared Education

1. The concept of shared education is not a new one. Contact and sharing between schools has been taking place at various levels for over 30 years. For example, research from the 1980s focused on the development of inter-school links between schools from different sectors in Strabane, Limavady and Enniskillen – the same communities that are represented in Shared Education programmes today.
2. Many of the practices from these early programmes (sustained and regular contact, a curriculum focus, shared classes rather than fragmented events) are being claimed as ‘new innovations’, and some of the challenges raised about mainstreaming (financial costs, logistical challenges, and sustainability both in terms of level of contact that is achievable and the ability of schools to absorb costs once external funding is unavailable) were also identified in this early research and development work.¹

¹ Smith and Dunn (1990) Extending Inter School Links: An evaluation of contact between Protestant and Catholic pupils in Northern Ireland, Centre for the Study of Conflict.

<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/csc/reports/extend.htm>

3. There is no compelling evidence to suggest that these important policy concerns have been resolved in the intervening 30 years. In fact, based on the Department's own data the evidence suggests quite the opposite. On previous occasions when the Department has cut funding for shared education the result has been a dramatic drop in school participation. For example, when the Department of Education cut funding for inter school contact from £4.5 to £1.1 million in 2009, the number of pupils participating dropped from 10% to 3.8%.²
4. There are positive aspects to shared education. It has been delivered in difficult circumstances and in challenging funding landscapes, primarily through the dedication and hard work of committed teaching and school management staff. However, the primary focus is on change at the interpersonal and intergroup levels. The Department Business Plan for Shared Education (p.49) identifies three main measures of this aspect (Cross group friendships; Positive action tendencies; and Intergroup anxieties). These will measure any progress achieved by shared education programmes, but the baseline should also include the same measures for integrated schools where one might expect equally positive results given that pupils are in sustained contact on a daily basis.
5. More importantly, this focus on interpersonal and intergroup relations does not tell us how any attitudinal or behavioural changes can have an impact on institutional and systemic change. In other words, there is no evidence to suggest that these changes would lead in the direction of more inclusive schools or a more integrated education system. Indeed, the recent literature on shared education seems to avoid stating whether this would even be a desirable outcome.
6. The current policy debate is of utmost public concern due to a number of issues:
 - Court rulings critical of the Department of Education's interpretation of its statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education in Northern Ireland.
 - A policy shift by the Northern Ireland Executive towards shared education and away from its statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education (Art 64, NI Education (1989) Order), as evidenced through commitments in the *Programme for Government* and the *Together: Building a United Community Strategy*.
 - This shift incentivised by philanthropic funding supporting shared education projects.
 - A proposed £25 million programme from the NI Executive to fund shared education.
 - The creation of 10 'shared campuses' by 2018 one of which will cost £125 million.

Government Proposals to Invest in Shared Education

7. The Department of Education has recently developed a business plan to promote a £25 million Shared Education project in Northern Ireland schools over the next four years. Closer inspection of the Business Plan reveals a number of problems and suggests that shared education may be an expensive diversion in the current economic climate which invests in separate schooling rather than tackling what is a de facto segregated education system. This is a time to pause and ask if this course of action is the best use of taxpayers' money in a climate of increasing financial cuts to frontline education services.

² OFMDFM 'Good Relations Indicators – 2012 Update', published Jan 2013.

The costs of shared education projects are not realistic and the full cost is not sustainable.

8. There are a number of concerns with the Department Business Plan, not least that the full cost is unsustainable, even in the short term. The Business Plan estimates that scaling the programme up to apply to the entire system would cost £44 million, but there is no plan for sustainability beyond a commitment from the current Education Minister that the costs will be 'mainstreamed' after four years. The Department's own cost analysis indicates that the annual running cost at the end of four years if scaled up will be £15 million per year (equivalent to £20,000, or one Special Needs Assistant per school) and this will need to be absorbed into already shrinking school budgets. It is not a sustainable solution for schools to find this amount over and above other costs at a time of massive cuts in expenditure. We know from previous experience in community relations that when additional funding runs out schools simply cannot afford to maintain programmes and they have to be cancelled.
9. We also know that these are costs that will need to be incurred every year onwards because the Department's own business case indicates that, of the £25 million allocated to shared education, £5 million will be spent on transport, and a further £15 million on additional teacher cover and other programme costs such as facilitators and renting premises (p.22-23). It also means pupils spending a great deal of their time moving between schools to take part in classes at different times of the week. Simply put, this involves a level of pupil movement between schools which will sound unrealistic and unachievable to most practising teachers and prove a logistical nightmare for most school principals.
10. Perhaps most worrying is that the Plan envisages that only 65% of schools (762) are likely to participate in the programme since the rest will be too isolated to participate (p.19) – ironically the business plan states that *'the application criteria will exclude schools currently working in isolation'* (p.18) which seems to completely defeat the purpose of shared education by excluding the most important target group of the initiative.

Added bureaucracy and administrative costs

11. The Business Plan also plans to set up a bureaucratic structure of committees (at 5 different levels) to oversee the project, including 15 new advisory posts at £36,000 per year (the equivalent of 25 newly qualified teachers), plus additional administrative posts, at a time when the intention is to streamline the Education and Library Boards and reduce costs. It is depressingly clear that the greater part of this investment will be used up on bureaucracy and logistics, while the future of many front line staff is under threat.

The legal basis for spending taxpayer's money on shared education is not clear.

12. The Department Business Plan identifies two pieces of legislation that it suggests provide a basis for spending public funds on shared education:

Article 64 of NI Education (1989) Order to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education (yet a judicial review recently ruled that shared education is a different concept from integrated education, therefore this programme would not be a fulfilment of that duty); and

Section 75 of the 1998 NI Act requires all public bodies to promote equality and avoid discrimination – this does not currently apply to schools, but it does not need to be introduced through Shared Education – OFMDFM already has the power to change this by simply making all schools subject to Section 75.

13. Presumably the lack of a strong legislative basis for spending public finance on shared education is one reason why the Department wishes to create a definition of shared education. This would be a mistake for a number of reasons. Firstly, it would be contrary to the existing statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education which the recent High Court ruling by Justice Treacy is not the same as shared education.³ Secondly, it would actually leave the Department open to new legal challenges if it fails to meet the extremely challenging targets set by the Shared Education business plan.

Shared Campuses (Omagh presented as the 'flagship' costing £125m)

14. Shared education is just one of two 'flagship' initiatives outlined in the business plan - the other is to create 10 'shared educational campuses' by 2018. The plan to bring together six separate schools on one site in Omagh will cost approx £125m, however the logistical challenges of bringing 4,000 pupils together on a single campus, but attending separate schools, each with its own principal, staff, most likely different uniforms, arriving daily to enter separate buildings, share some facilities, but probably leaving on separate buses at the end of the school day, are huge. It is not clear what the added value of this is.
15. International examples include building 'two schools under one roof', which is fraught with problems, for example, in Bosnia, where a two schools under one roof system has heightened animosities leading to the Bosnian Supreme Court declaring them illegal (November 2014).⁴
16. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has also carried out research and spoken against the concept of 'two schools under one roof'.⁵
17. The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Muñoz Villalobos made a report to the UN General Assembly (2007) and raised concerns about 'the excessive fragmentation and politicization of the education system; and the segregation between ethnic groups'.⁶
18. UNICEF (2009) has also produced a research report on the negative impacts of the divided school system Report (2009) on Divided Schools.⁷

³ [http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2014/[2014]%20NIQB%2069/j_i_TRE9202Final.htm)

[GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2014/\[2014\]%20NIQB%2069/j_i_TRE9202Final.htm](http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2014/[2014]%20NIQB%2069/j_i_TRE9202Final.htm)

⁴ <https://news.vice.com/article/bosnia-herzegovina-court-orders-end-to-ethnic-segregation-of-schoolchildren>

⁵ <http://www.osce.org/bih/57446>

⁶ http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/8session/A.HRC.8.10.Add.4_en.pdf

⁷ http://www.unicef.org/bih/Divided_schools_in_BHWEB_1.pdf

Is Current Policy Approach Really Transformative?

19. Despite the rhetoric, little has changed in more than 30 years; 93% of our children continue to attend separate schools based on religious affiliation, separation of our children through education during their formative years is systematic and funded by tax payer's money - this is not a good foundation for an integrated workforce that can compete within a global economy.
20. In the current economic context, with dire warnings over the future of up to 2,500 teaching and support staff in our schools, surely it is time to tackle the fundamental, unnecessary, and financially unsustainable divisions in our education system. Government should not continue to hide behind the smokescreen of 'parental choice'. In reality parental choice is limited by what government chooses to provide.
21. Current government policy is at odds with the wishes consistently expressed by parents that their preference is for all children to attend school together in the same classroom on a daily basis. International experience shows that culture and faith can be respected and provided for within common schools without any detriment to the quality of education - in fact, some would argue that the quality of education is enhanced in these more plural environments.

Some Alternative Proposals for Discussion

This submission should not be seen as a counsel of despair – much good work goes on in our schools on a day to day basis, led by committed teachers. But our teachers and school management should not be the people left facing insurmountable funding decisions in four years when the choices may come down to funding limited sharing or cutting back on front line staff. More sustainable options for the millions to be spent on Shared Education are available, many could be implemented immediately and hold the transformative power that shared education seeks to deliver:

- Instead of using the four-year £25 million fund to promote contact between separate schools, equivalent levels of funding should be offered to schools and Boards of Governors that wish to explore possibilities of **voluntary amalgamations between the traditional school sectors**. The Department should 'encourage and facilitate' this sort of structural and systemic change over the next 4-5 years, rather than underwriting separate schooling.
- Instead of reinforcing existing school sectors why not introduce a range of measures that open up all schools to the possibility of becoming more plural and diverse, in terms of their **management**, their **workforce** and their **enrolments**:

- ✓ **Make all schools subject to Section 75** – this could be a much more direct way of ensuring equality and non discrimination and already within the power of the Executive to implement
- ✓ Change the regulations for **governing bodies** so that every school has a Board of Governors composed of people from diverse backgrounds since all schools are funded by all tax payers.
- ✓ Remove the exemption of schools from **Fair Employment legislation** so that we can begin to see our children taught by teachers from diverse backgrounds rather than one tradition.
- ✓ Fund **teacher education** arrangements that educate our student teachers together. Encourage them to seek employment in any school, rather than the current perception among many student teachers that they are more likely to be employed in the sector associated with their own tradition. (A single teacher employing authority to oversee the fair employment and universal deployment of teachers)
- ✓ **Facilitate genuine parental choice** by giving parents a real say in any education planning decisions that will affect their children, rather than continue with planning arrangements based on the consolidation of traditional 'sectors'.
- ✓ Incentivise and reward existing schools to **recruit more pupils from other traditions.**

WELB 1

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry Request for Written Evidence

Terms of Reference No 1

Nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including the need for a formal statutory definition in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education

The Western Education and Library Board (WELB) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Committee for Education's inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education. The WELB believes that 'Shared Education' is '*an umbrella term*' (currently without a statutory basis) which is encompassed in the following diverse models that it has supported:

1. Non-Denominational Controlled Primary Schools with significant multi-denominational enrolment , e.g. Ballykelly PS; Culmore PS; Greenhaw PS; Londonderry Model PS; Sion Mills PS, Strabane Controlled PS;
2. Controlled Irish Medium Education;
3. Collaboration between schools from different sectors;
4. Area Learning Communities involving schools from different sectors e.g. Post Primary Area Learning Communities and the emerging Primary Area Learning Communities;
5. Integrated Education arrangements i.e. transformed and designated integrated schools' e.g. Groarty PS;
6. Shared Sustainable Educational Campuses (e.g. Lisanelly Shared Education Campus (LSEC), Limavady High School and St Mary's Limavady and the proposed Brookeborough Shared Campus);
7. Proposed Shared Cross-Border Collaboration between Schools involving St Mary's HS, Brollagh; and
8. Collaboration with the Further Education Colleges.

The WELB is of the view that the way forward is in 'integrating education' and in terms of its understanding of Shared Education, would therefore suggest that formal Integrated Education is only one facet of Shared Education. It does not believe that Shared Education and Integrated Education are synonymous. The Integrated Sector is a legal entity, with a statutory underpinning, and through its admissions criteria and, more recently, it enrolls approximately equal numbers of pupils from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds (40% of each), as well as some from other religious and cultural backgrounds (20%), and also caters for the religious observances of both the Catholic and Protestant sectors.

In light of Article 64 (1) of The Education Reform Order (NI) 1989, which states: '*It shall be the duty of the Department to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils*', the WELB is of the view that the legal definition of integrated education is becoming increasingly difficult to define in its own right, with the introduction of the category 'Others' ie pupils from other religious and cultural backgrounds. Examination of the legal definition prompts the question as to what '*integrated education*' means in the Order, as opposed to 'Integrated Education' and if it is implied that '*integrated education*' is an 'umbrella term' and 'Integrated Education' is a Sector within it. Since there is no current legislative provision

for the accommodation of 'Others', the WELB would query if existing legislation in this area requires to be suitably amended with a view to encompassing all sections of our society.

In light of the above, it is very important, therefore, to point out that whilst the criteria of controlled schools do not dwell on the issue of religious balance; nevertheless, the composition in terms of the religious intake of many of them is similar to that of Integrated Schools – with the intakes of such schools being made up of Protestant, Catholic and Others, See Pages 3 and 4 overleaf. Such schools cannot have a particular religious denominational ethos. The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, Article 21 (2) states that: 'In a controlled school the religious instruction required by paragraph (1) shall be undenominational religious instruction'. The WELB, therefore, considers that such schools, whilst not formally categorised as 'Integrated Schools', can increasingly be regarded, in practice, as 'integrated' and as such the Department of Education (DE) has also a duty to encourage and facilitate their development.

The WELB is also of the view that because the Controlled Sector is non-denominational in nature, all models of Shared Education, therefore, sit comfortably within this Sector's remit. The important difference here is that a community has chosen to send its children to its nearest controlled school because it is non-denominational in category. Some controlled schools prefer a governance model that includes four Transferor Representatives whilst others have opted for controlled/integrated status, with two Transferor and two Trustee Representatives respectively, and also prefer to be managed and supported by an Employing Authority (i.e. ELB or CCMS), as opposed to being grant-maintained.

In the promotion of Shared Education and Integrated Education, the WELB would be concerned that the existing work, in terms of natural sharing, within its controlled schools, as detailed below, would be disadvantaged in terms of receiving support from the Signature Project for Shared Education, as the planned funding available for Shared Education is directed towards two, or more, schools from different communities, working together. This would seem to ignore the natural sharing which has evolved, over a number of years, in some schools within the WELB, as shown overleaf.

There is a need for all schools to be treated fairly in the promotion of Shared Education, including the need for the DE to ensure its Open Enrolment and Home to School Transport Policies do not disadvantage or displace provision in some sectors, due to the growth of other sectors.

Census Data - October 2013

			Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		Total pupils
	No	Sector	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Breakdown of all schools in WELB area (excluding Nursery) by religious denomination								
	56	Controlled Primary	5,936	69%	1,591	19%	1,072	12%	8,599
	117	Maintained Primary	103	1%	19,151	97%	521	3%	19,775
	5	Controlled Secondary	2,608	90%	98	3%	193	7%	2,899
	19	Maintained Secondary	50	1%	9,385	99%	85	1%	9,520
	4	Controlled Grammar	1,934	72%	583	22%	184	7%	2,701
	4	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary	332	27%	629	50%	291	23%	1,252
	3	Grant Maintained Integrated Post-primary	607	31%	1,155	59%	202	10%	1,964

	No	Sector	Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		Total pupils
			N	%	N	%	N	%	
	9	Voluntary Grammar	993	12%	7,184	85%	247	3%	8,424
	217		12,563	23%	39,776	72%	2,795	5%	55,134
2 Controlled Primary Schools with 10%+ Catholic Enrolment									
	0207	Ballougry Primary School	28	30%	61	66%	4	4%	93
	0208	Ballykelly Primary School	115	42%	144	52%	18	6%	277
	0209	Bellarena Primary School	30	79%	4	11%	4	11%	38
	0210	Belleek(2) Primary School	32	65%	11	22%	6	12%	49
	0217	Culmore Primary School	13	15%	63	74%	9	11%	85
	0244	Greenhaw Primary School	5	2%	284	96%	6	2%	295
	0245	Groarty Primary School (Controlled Integrated)	4	10%	32	80%	4	10%	40
	0248	Jones Memorial Primary School	121	67%	27	15%	33	18%	181
	0256	Lisnagelvin Primary School	379	67%	70	12%	117	21%	566
	0257	Londonderry Model Primary School	24	7%	252	74%	63	19%	339
	0269	Sion Mills Primary School	88	33%	171	65%	4	2%	263
	0271	Strabane Controlled Primary School	86	33%	146	55%	32	12%	264
	0320	Gaelscoil Neachitain	0	0%	64	94%	4	6%	68
	13	Controlled Primary	925	36%	1329	52%	304	12%	2,558
	23.2%		16%		84%		28%		30%
3 Controlled Grammar Schools with 10%+ Catholic Enrolment									
	1303	Limavady Grammar School	528	59%	304	34%	67	7%	899
	1306	Strabane Academy	366	57%	239	37%	34	5%	639
	2	Controlled Grammar	894	58%	543	35%	101	7%	1538
	50.0%		46%		93%		55%		57%
4 Maintained Primary Schools with 10%+ Protestant Enrolment									
	0513	Craigbrack Primary School	4	17%	16	67%	4	17%	24
	1	Maintained Primary	4	17%	16	67%	4	17%	24
	1%		4%		0%		1%		0%

The WELB would strongly recommend that a **baselining exercise** be undertaken, in the form of an analysis of the intakes to all schools in Northern Ireland (NI), to get a strategic overview as to the extent to which Shared Education is already taking place in practice, as in some cases there may not be recognition of this, and in also to get a better understanding of where

funding for Shared Education needs to be targeted. This analysis needs to be comprehensive and take into account the following categories of schools so that the relevant models can be applied according to the nature and appropriateness of the sharing being undertaken:

- Nursery Schools – Controlled, Nursery Units and Community Nursery Schools;
- Controlled Primary and Post Primary Schools (i.e. non-denominational schools);
- Controlled Integrated Primary Schools
- Maintained Primary and Post Primary Schools;
- Grant Maintained Integrated Primary and Post Primary Schools;
- Controlled Special Schools;
- Controlled Irish Medium Schools, Irish Medium Schools and Units;
- Voluntary and Voluntary Maintained Post Primary Schools; and
- Bi-lateral Schools.

It is important to understand the extent to which certain schools can already be recognised as ‘shared’ before creating an additional ‘category’ of school under the auspices of Shared Education, as this may only be duplicating an existing model.

The WELB is of the view that where Shared Education has been, and is being practised and embedded in certain controlled primary and post primary non-denominational schools, it should be recognised in the proposals contained in the Signature Project for Shared Education.

Terms of Reference Number 2

Key Barrier/Enablers for Shared and Integrated Education

The key enablers for Shared and Integrated Education are:

- Strategic Plan in place by the DE for cross-sectoral collaboration;
- DSC Shared Education Signature Project and Shared Campuses Project are inextricably linked and should work in partnership (ie Estates and Curriculum);
- Policy Framework for Shared Education should be consistent with DE’s other Policies including the Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy;
- Strong collaborative leadership within schools;
- Schools’ curricula sufficiently advanced before responding to the challenges of Shared Education;
- The constitution of the Boards of Governors is not ‘partisan’ but reflects the religious balance in the school to facilitate the promotion of a Shared/Integrated ethos;
- History of close collaboration;
- **Rurality/Close geographical location of schools;
- Cohesion within the community and support for Shared Education (fundamental) and ability to build on community support;
- Facility for transformation from one sector to another;
- No one sector owns the land on which the schools are built (eg LSEC);
- Appropriate governance model for Shared Education Campuses; and
- The identification of appropriate legislation to allow Shared Campuses to be created; and
- Academic Selection.

**There is evidence in the WELB that small rural schools have much to offer each other, in terms of Shared Education, as recently affirmed by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in the case of a recent Primary School's inspection in Co Fermanagh, which was classified as 'Outstanding', and where it was noted the primary school had: 'well established links' with its neighbouring small schools in the areas of music, drama and physical education. The concept of a 'Shared Education Cluster' also exists in the WELB where Principals and Senior Teachers deliver shared staff development, shared pupil learning and shared parental evenings.

The key barriers to Shared Education are:

- The lack of statutory underpinning with no legislative requirement to share;
- No Strategic Plan in place for cross-sectoral collaboration;
- DSC Shared Education Project and Shared Campuses Project working in isolation;
- Policy Framework for Shared Education not consistent with the DE's other Policies;
- Weak collaborative leadership within schools;
- The composition of Boards of Governors is not representative of the religious balance in the school to promote a Shared/Integrated ethos;
- Rurality/Geographical location of schools which are distant from each other;
- Public perception of Shared Education and potential community opposition;
- Proposer of the Shared School (cf Article 14) [Employing Authority]; i.e. Composition of Board of Governors, ethos, etc;
- Inflexibility of the DE Handbook with regard to Shared Schools;
- One sector owns the land on which the schools are built, leading to an adverse impact on public perception;
- Uncertainty as to how Shared Education will be financed in the long term;
- Management and remuneration of teachers on a dual/shared site and
- how employment-related issues (Terms and Conditions of Service) are dealt with;
- A need for an appropriate Scheme of Management for Shared Schools;
- Admissions Policy/Criteria for Shared Schools;
- Lack of financial and legal representation on any Group responsible for Shared Education;
- Lack of funding through the Common Funding Formula;
- Implications for Home to School Transport Policy;
- The negative impact of 'capping' on some schools' intakes by the DE; and
- Academic Selection.

Terms of Reference No 3

Identification and analysis of alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes

The WELB is of the view that this aspect of the Terms of Reference is not relevant in that historical factors, the Local Management of Schools and the large number of small schools in Northern Ireland, all make it difficult to implement models of good practice from other jurisdictions. However, in the WELB, models of good practice exist in Ballykelly PS; Culmore PS; Greenhaw PS; Londonderry Model PS; Sion Mills PS, and Strabane Controlled Primary Schools, without any additional funding for Shared Education at present – an issue that needs to be addressed in the 'roll-out' of the DSC Shared Education Signature Project.

Terms of Reference No 4

Priorities and actions that need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools

In order to improve the levels of sharing and integration, there is a need to ensure a coherent Policy Framework exists, which establishes a clear purpose and rationale for the approach. The CRED Policy has a wide scope in terms of addressing issues of equality and good relations across all the Section 75 Groups. Since this has only been in place three years, the extent to which this Policy is impacting on schools needs to be assessed. The assessment of the effectiveness of the CRED Policy will be an outcome of the forthcoming inspection by the ETI later this year. The outcome of this process will need to inform how the Policy should develop and what actions need to be taken to strengthen this area of educational priorities in NI.

Shared Education is clearly linked to the CRED Policy in respect of those aspects related to reconciliation and good relations work within and between schools. However, there is clearly a need for the development of a Policy Framework in this area which sets out clearly the rationale, aims and purposes of this work. Such a Policy needs to take cognisance of a range of other relevant educational policies, including the CRED Policy and the 'Every School a Good School' suite of Policies. In the absence of such a Policy, there is the potential for 'Shared Education' to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. It is the WELB's view that 'Shared Education' needs to be recognised as one approach to good relations work. However, it is not the only one.

Shared Education, to date, between mainstream schools has been supported with external funding. Given that a range of programmes, involving sharing, have already taken place, future practice in this area needs to be informed by rigorous evaluation, to objectively ensure that resources are being used effectively and are achieving the outcomes identified in the Policy. In advance of 'rolling out' the Signature Project, there is a requirement for the DE to have a strategy for the monitoring of funding and, therefore, a requirement to baseline the current position to identify the sharing and collaboration in schools, funded and non-funded. A baseline will then allow for:

- any financial data to be collated of the cost of 'rolling out' Shared Education to date;
- educational or non-educational measurements against which the funding for Shared Education can be compared; and
- consideration of a cost/benefit analysis before committing to new funding.

The scale and scope of the DSC Signature Project for Shared Education provides an opportunity for a robust baselining exercise and evaluation of the impact of the Programme.

It is evident that, to date, there has been a commitment to Shared Education as long as there is adequate funding to support the teaching staff. The WELB would ask the question: *'If schools were asked to subsidise the additional cost of Shared Education from their own resources, would there be the same commitment to it as there was when they were funded for its implementation?'*

Prior to committing to Shared Education Programmes, schools will require reassurances with regard to the following:

- duration of additional funding for Shared Education;
- funding and managing absence cover for sickness and maternity leave;
- cost of training;
- managing staff during school closures;
- cost of travel; and

■ *commitment required if funding is withdrawn.*

In relation to working with parents and carers, there is already a strong commitment to this partnership reflected in 'Every School a Good School: a Policy for School Improvement'. This Policy may need some further development in the context of a 'Shared Education Policy'.

In closing, and in line with the Terms of Reference supplied, the WELB is of the view that with regard to:

Terms of Reference No 1:

- 1(a) better definitions and criteria are needed in statute to define 'shared' and 'integrated' education as 'Shared Education' means different things to different people;
- 1(b) Shared Education should be implemented with a view to it being 'mainstreamed' into the education system in NI and should not be viewed in isolation as 'a project';
- 1(c) criteria should be drawn up that demonstrate 'mainstreaming' has been achieved in the absence of funding in the long-term;
- 1(d) schools should not be funded unless their vision is to embed Shared Education as 'a way of working';
- 1(e) a capacity building programme should be developed for school leaders that concentrates on developing collaborative leadership and equips schools with the 'tools' to monitor and evaluate progress along the Shared Education continuum; and
- 1(f) thought needs to be given to those schools that do not engage in Shared Education and the impact of their disengagement on the system as a whole.

Terms of Reference No 2:

The enablers and barriers should be addressed as soon as possible.

Terms of Reference No 3:

Existing models of good practice should be recognised and built upon as opposed to importing 'models from other jurisdictions'.

Terms of Reference No 4:

A coherent Policy Framework should be developed for Shared Education that complements existing relevant educational policies.

WELB 2

Western Education and Library Board: Update on Shared Campus Proposals

To date, the WELB has received three proposals: Limavady Shared Campus, Brookeborough Shared Campus and Digital Derry. All three were endorsed by both WELB and CCMS.

The Limavady Shared Campus was successful in the first call of the Programme. The schools worked with the WELB in preparing the documentation.

Brookeborough Shared Campus was unsuccessful in the first call with the proposal being prepared by the schools and Fermanagh Trust. In submitting a proposal under the second call, the WELB and CCMS working with the school Principals and Governors, prepared the main report with supporting information provided by the school. Meetings have also taken place with DE to outline the vision for the proposal.

Digital Derry – WELB and CCMS endorsed the proposal which may require additional information for DE.

The WELB did not receive any other proposals nor did any school contact the WELB with regarding to sharing which they would like explored/developed.

WELB 11th February 2015

WELB 3



Mr P McCallion
Committee Clerk
Committee for Education
Room 241, Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

RW/CS

27 February 2015

Dear Mr McCallion

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

I write in response to your letter dated 13 February 2015, regarding the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

In your letter you are seeking clarity with regard to the constitution of Boards of Governors in Controlled Schools and the facilitation of a Shared/Integrated ethos.

In its paper submitted to the Education Committee for its Inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education, the WELB, under the Terms of Reference – Key Barriers/Enablers for Shared/Integrated Education, indicates that where: 'The constitution of Boards of Governors reflects the religious balance in the school', then this promotes the promotion of Shared/Integrated Education in all schools not in controlled schools in particular, as indicated on Page 6 (enclosed).

I trust this response clarifies your query.

Yours sincerely

BARRY MULHOLLAND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Enc

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: BARRY MULHOLLAND, Cert.Ed., DASE, M.Ed., M.B.A.

1 HOSPITAL ROAD, OMAGH, CO. TYRONE, BT79 0AW
TELEPHONE: (028) 8241 1411 FAX: (028) 8241 1400
TEXTPHONE: (028) 8241 1550
EMAIL: info@welbni.org WEBSITE: www.welbni.org

Finance and Services Committee

22 October 2014

Agenda Item No 11
Report No 5
(To be tabled)**SHARED AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION INQUIRY****REQUEST FOR WRITTEN EVIDENCE****Terms of Reference No 1****Nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education across all educational phases – including the need for a formal statutory definition in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education**

The Western Education and Library Board (WELB) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Committee for Education's inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education. The WELB believes that 'Shared Education' is '*an umbrella term*' (currently without a statutory basis) which is encompassed in the following diverse models that it has supported:

1. Non-Denominational Controlled Primary Schools with significant multi-denominational enrolment , e.g. Ballykelly PS; Culmore PS; Greenhaw PS; Londonderry Model PS; Sion Mills PS, Strabane Controlled PS;
2. Controlled Irish Medium Education;
3. Collaboration between schools from different sectors;
4. Area Learning Communities involving schools from different sectors e.g. Post Primary Area Learning Communities and the emerging Primary Area Learning Communities;
5. Integrated Education arrangements i.e. transformed and designated integrated schools' e.g. Groarty PS;
6. Shared Sustainable Educational Campuses (e.g. Lisanelly Shared Education Campus (LSEC), Limavady High School and St Mary's Limavady and the proposed Brookeborough Shared Campus);
7. Proposed Shared Cross-Border Collaboration between Schools involving St Mary's HS, Brollagh; and
8. Collaboration with the Further Education Colleges.

The WELB is of the view that the way forward is in '*integrating education*' and in terms of its understanding of Shared Education, would therefore suggest that formal Integrated Education is only one facet of Shared Education. It does not believe that Shared Education and Integrated Education are synonymous. The Integrated Sector is a legal entity, with a statutory underpinning, and through its admissions criteria and, more recently, it enrolls approximately equal numbers of pupils from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds (40% of each), as well as some from other religious and cultural backgrounds (20%), and also caters for the religious observances of both the Catholic and Protestant sectors.

In light of Article 64 (1) of The Education Reform Order (NI) 1989, which states: '*It shall be the duty of the Department to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant*

and Roman Catholic pupils', the WELB is of the view that the legal definition of integrated education is becoming increasingly difficult to define in its own right, with the introduction of the category 'Others' ie pupils from other religious and cultural backgrounds. Examination of the legal definition prompts the question as to what '*integrated education*' means in the Order, as opposed to 'Integrated Education' and if it is implied that '*integrated education*' is an 'umbrella term' and 'Integrated Education' is a Sector within it. Since there is no current legislative provision for the accommodation of 'Others', the WELB would query if existing legislation in this area requires to be suitably amended with a view to encompassing all sections of our society.

In light of the above, it is very important, therefore, to point out that whilst the criteria of controlled schools do not dwell on the issue of religious balance; nevertheless, the composition in terms of the religious intake of many of them is similar to that of Integrated Schools – See Pages 3 and 4 overleaf, with the intakes of such schools being made up of Protestant, Catholic and Others. Such schools cannot have a particular religious denominational ethos and the WELB considers that such schools, whilst not formally categorised as 'Integrated Schools', can increasingly be regarded in practice as 'integrated' and as such DE has also a duty to encourage and facilitate their development.

The WELB is also of the view that as the Controlled Sector is non-denominational in nature, all models of Shared Education, therefore, sit comfortably within this Sector's remit. The important difference here is that a community has chosen to send its children to its nearest controlled school because it is non-denominational in category. Some controlled schools prefer a governance model that includes four Transferor Representatives whilst others have opted for controlled/integrated status, with two Transferor and two Trustee Representatives respectively, and also prefer to be managed and supported by an Employing Authority (i.e. ELB or CCMS), as opposed to being grant-maintained.

In the promotion of Shared Education and Integrated Education, the WELB would be concerned that the existing work, in terms of **natural sharing**, within its controlled schools, as detailed below, would be disadvantaged in terms of receiving support from the Signature Project for Shared Education, as the planned funding available for Shared Education is directed towards two, or more, schools from different communities, working together. This would seem to ignore the **natural sharing** which has evolved, over a number of years, in some schools within the WELB, as shown overleaf.

There is a need for all schools to be treated fairly in the promotion of Shared Education, including the need for the DE to ensure its Open Enrolment and Home to School Transport Policies do not disadvantage or displace provision in some sectors, due to the growth of other sectors.

Census Data - October 2013

1

Breakdown of all schools in WELB area (excluding Nursery) by religious denomination		Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		Total pupils
No	Sector	N	%	N	%	N	%	
56	Controlled Primary	5,936	69%	1,591	19%	1,072	12%	8,599
117	Maintained Primary	103	1%	19,151	97%	521	3%	19,775
5	Controlled Secondary	2,608	90%	98	3%	193	7%	2,899
19	Maintained Secondary	50	1%	9,385	99%	85	1%	9,520
4	Controlled Grammar	1,934	72%	583	22%	184	7%	2,701
4	Grant Maintained Integrated Primary	332	27%	629	50%	291	23%	1,252
3	Grant Maintained Integrated Post-primary	607	31%	1,155	59%	202	10%	1,964
9	Voluntary Grammar	993	12%	7,184	85%	247	3%	8,424
217		12,563	23%	39,776	72%	2,795	5%	55,134

2

Controlled Primary Schools with 10%+ Catholic Enrolment		Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		Total pupils
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
0207	Ballyoury Primary School	28	30%	61	66%	4	4%	93
0208	Ballykelly Primary School	115	42%	144	52%	18	6%	277
0209	Bellarena Primary School	30	79%	4	11%	4	11%	38
0210	Belleek(2) Primary School	32	65%	11	22%	6	12%	49
0217	Culmore Primary School	13	15%	63	74%	9	11%	85
0244	Greenhaw Primary School	5	2%	284	96%	6	2%	295
0245	Groarty Primary School (Controlled Integrated)	4	10%	32	80%	4	10%	40
0248	Jones Memorial Primary School	121	67%	27	15%	33	18%	181
0256	Lisnagelvin Primary School	379	67%	70	12%	117	21%	566
0257	Londonderry Model Primary School	24	7%	252	74%	63	19%	339
0269	Sion Mills Primary School	88	33%	171	65%	4	2%	263

0271	Strabane Controlled Primary School	86	33%	146	55%	32	12%	264
0320	Gaelscoil Neachitain	0	0%	64	94%	4	6%	68
13	Controlled Primary	925	36%	1329	52%	304	12%	2,558
23.2%		16%		84%		28%		30%

		Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		Total pupils
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Controlled Grammar Schools with 10%+ Catholic Enrolment								
1303	Limavady Grammar School	528	59%	304	34%	67	7%	899
1306	Strabane Academy	366	57%	239	37%	34	5%	639
2	Controlled Grammar	894	58%	543	35%	101	7%	1538
50.0%		46%		93%		55%		57%

3

		Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		Total pupils
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Maintained Primary Schools with 10%+ Protestant Enrolment								
0513	Craigbrack Primary School	4	17%	16	67%	4	17%	24
1	Maintained Primary	4	17%	16	67%	4	17%	24
1%		4%		0%		1%		0%

4

The WELB would strongly recommend that a **baselining exercise** be undertaken, in the form of an analysis of the intakes to all schools in Northern Ireland (NI), to get a strategic overview as to the extent to which Shared Education is already taking place in practice, as in some cases there may not be recognition of this, and in order to get a better understanding of where funding for Shared Education needs to be targeted. This analysis needs to be comprehensive and take into account the following categories of schools so that the relevant models can be applied according to the nature and appropriateness of the sharing being undertaken:

- Nursery Schools – Controlled, Nursery Units and Community Nursery Schools;
- Controlled Primary and Post Primary Schools (i.e. non-denominational schools);
- Controlled Integrated Primary Schools
- Maintained Primary and Post Primary Schools;
- Grant Maintained Integrated Primary and Post Primary Schools;
- Controlled Special Schools;
- Controlled Irish Medium Schools, Irish Medium Schools and Units;
- Voluntary and Voluntary Maintained Post Primary Schools; and
- Bi-lateral Schools.

It is important to understand the extent to which certain schools can already be recognised as ‘*shared*’ before creating an additional ‘*category*’ of school under the auspices of Shared Education, as this may only be duplicating an existing model.

The WELB is of the view that where Shared Education has been, and is being practised and embedded in certain controlled primary and post primary non-denominational schools, it should be recognised in the proposals contained in the Signature Project for Shared Education.

Terms of Reference Number 2

Key Barrier/Enablers for Shared and Integrated Education

The **key enablers** for Shared and Integrated Education are:

- Strategic Plan in place by the DE for cross-sectoral collaboration
- DSC Shared Education Signature Project and Shared Campuses Project are inextricably linked and should work in partnership (ie Estates and Curriculum);
- Policy Framework for Shared Education should be consistent with DE’s other Policies;
- Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy;
- Strong collaborative leadership within schools;
- Schools’ curricula sufficiently advanced before responding to the challenges of Shared Education;

- The constitution of the Boards of Governors reflects the religious balance in the school to facilitate the promotion of a Shared/Integrated ethos;
- History of close collaboration;
- ****Rurality/Close geographical location of schools;**
- Cohesion within the community and support for Shared Education (fundamental);
- Ability to build on community support;
- Facility for transformation from one sector to another;
- No one sector owns the land on which the schools are built (eg LSEC);
- ~~Appropriate governance model for Shared Education Campuses; and~~
- The identification of appropriate legislation to allow shared schools to be created.

******There is evidence in the WELB that small rural schools have much to offer each other, in terms of Shared Education, as recently affirmed by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in the case of a recent Primary School's inspection in Co Fermanagh, which was classified as 'Outstanding', and where it was noted the primary school had: 'well established links' with its neighbouring small schools in the areas of music, drama and physical education. The concept of a 'Shared Education Cluster' also exists in the WELB where Principals and Senior Teachers deliver shared staff development, shared pupil learning and shared parental evenings.

The key barriers to Shared Education are:

- No Strategic Plan in place for cross-sectoral collaboration;
- DSC Shared Education Project and Shared Campuses Project working in isolation;
- Public perception of Shared Education and potential community opposition;
- Weak collaborative leadership within schools;
- The composition of Boards of Governors is not representative of the religious balance in the school to promote a Shared/Integrated ethos;
- The lack of statutory underpinning with no legislative requirement to share;
- Policy Framework for Shared Education not consistent with DE's other Policies;
- Inflexibility of the DE Handbook;
- Uncertainty as to how Shared Education will be financed in the long term;
- Management and remuneration of teachers on a dual/shared site;
- How employment related issues (Terms & Conditions of Service) are dealt with;
- Need for an appropriate Scheme of Management;
- Admissions Policy/Criteria for such schools.
- Lack of financial and legal representation on any Group responsible for Shared Education;
- Proposer of the Shared School (cf Article 14) [Employing Authority]; i.e. Composition of Board of Governors, ethos, etc;
- Lack of funding through the Common Funding Formula;
- Implications for Home to School Transport Policy;

- One sector owns the land on which the schools are built, leading to an adverse impact on public perception;
- The negative impact of 'capping' on some schools' intakes by the DE;
- Rurality/Geographical location of schools that are distant from each other; and
- Academic Selection.

Terms of Reference No 3

Identification and analysis of alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes

The WELB is of the view that this aspect of the Terms of Reference is not relevant in that historical factors, the Local Management of Schools and the large number of small schools in Northern Ireland, all make it difficult to implement models of good practice from other jurisdictions. However, in the WELB, models of good practice exist in Ballykelly PS; Culmore PS; Greenhaw PS; Londonderry Model PS; Sion Mills PS, and Strabane Controlled Primary Schools, without any additional funding for Shared Education at present – an issue that needs to be addressed in the 'roll-out' of the DSC Shared Education Signature Project.

Terms of Reference No 4

Priorities and actions that need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools

In order to improve the levels of sharing and integration, there is a need to ensure a coherent Policy Framework exists, which establishes a clear purpose and rationale for the approach. The CRED Policy has a wide scope in terms of addressing issues of equality and good relations across all the Section 75 Groups. Since this has only been in place three years, the extent to which this Policy is impacting on schools needs to be assessed. The assessment of the effectiveness of the CRED Policy will be an outcome of the forthcoming inspection by the ETI later this year. The outcome of this process will need to inform how the Policy should develop and what actions need to be taken to strengthen this area of educational priorities in NI.

Shared Education is clearly linked to the CRED Policy in respect of those aspects related to reconciliation and good relations work within and between schools. However, there is clearly a need for the development of a Policy Framework in this area which sets out clearly the rationale, aims and purposes of this work. Such a Policy needs to take cognisance of a range of other relevant educational policies, including the CRED Policy and the 'Every School a Good School' suite of Policies. In the absence of such a Policy, there is the potential for 'Shared Education' to be misunderstood and misinterpreted. It is the WELB's view that 'Shared Education' needs to be recognised as one approach to good relations work. However, it is not the only one.

Shared Education, to date, between mainstream schools has been supported with external funding. Given that a range of programmes, involving sharing, have already taken place, future practice in this area needs to be informed by rigorous evaluation, to objectively ensure that resources are being used effectively and are achieving the outcomes identified in the Policy. In advance of 'rolling out' the Signature Project, there is a requirement for the DE to have a strategy for the monitoring of funding and, therefore, a requirement to baseline the current position to identify the sharing and collaboration in schools, funded and non-funded. A baseline will then allow for:

- any financial data to be collated of the cost of 'rolling out' Shared Education to date;
- educational or non-educational measurements against which the funding for Shared Education can be compared; and
- consideration of a cost/benefit analysis before committing to new funding.

The scale and scope of the DSC Signature Project for Shared Education provides an opportunity for a robust baselining exercise and evaluation of the impact of the Programme.

It is evident that, to date, there has been a commitment to Shared Education as long as there is adequate funding to support the teaching staff. The WELB would ask the question: *'If schools were asked to subsidise the additional cost of Shared Education from their own resources, would there be the same commitment to it as there was when they were funded for its implementation?'*

Prior to committing to Shared Education Programmes, schools will require reassurances with regard to the following:

- duration of additional funding for Shared Education;
- funding and managing absence cover for sickness and maternity leave;
- cost of training;
- managing staff during school closures;
- cost of travel; and
- *commitment required if funding is withdrawn.*

In relation to working with parents and carers, there is already a strong commitment to this partnership reflected in 'Every School a Good School: a Policy for School Improvement'. This Policy may need some further development in the context of a 'Shared Education Policy'.

In closing, the WELB is of the view that Shared Education should be implemented with a view to it being 'mainstreamed' into the education system in NI and should not be viewed in isolation as 'a project'. Leadership in schools should be able to demonstrate 'mainstreaming', in the absence of funding in the long term, and schools should not be funded unless they can satisfy this prerequisite. Thought also needs to be given to those schools that do not engage in Shared Education and the impact of their disengagement on the system as a whole.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Barry Mulholland
Chief Executive
Western Education and Library Board
1 Hospital Road
Omagh
County Tyrone
BT79 0AW
barry.mulholland@welbni.org
Martina.McCrory@welbni.org

13 February 2015

Our Ref: PMcC/PB/1970

Dear Barry

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

The Committee would like to express its thanks to your colleague June Neill for her very useful and informative briefing on 11 February 2015, as part of the Committee's inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The Committee noted the following reference in the written submission from WELB in respect of enablers for Shared and Integrated Education:

The constitution of the Boards of Governors is not 'partisan' but reflects the religious balance in the school to facilitate the promotion of a Shared/Integrated ethos;

The Committee agreed to write to WELB seeking clarity – is WELB suggesting that the constitution of Boards of Governors in e.g. some Controlled schools should be amended to reflect the high level of mixing of Protestant and

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Catholic children in those schools? If so, does WELB believe that this should be accompanied by transformation to Integrated status for those schools? If WELB is not advocating transformation for mixed Controlled schools to Integrated status in all cases, is WELB suggesting the establishment of mixed Controlled non-Integrated schools with non-partisan boards which could then attract facilitation and encouragement from the Department under Article 64 of the 1989 Order?

A response by 2 March 2015 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion
Clerk
Committee for Education

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Youth Council for Northern Ireland

YCNl Response to TBUC inquiry, October 2014

Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNl) wish to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for Education for the opportunity to submit written evidence to the current Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNl) was established in 1990, with a key function to encourage and develop community relations. Over the years a number of initiatives and review processes have highlighted the important contribution of Youth Service to the creation, development and maintenance of a shared and peaceful society (see for example 1999; DENI, A Model for Effective Practice, 1987 (updated 2003); DENI, A Youth Service for a New Millennium; DENI, CRED Policy Guidance notes, 2011).

Youth Work is an important aspect of education. As the Education Minister sets out in his foreword to Priorities for Youth (2013), 'Youth work has an important contribution to make to the development of young people within the context of the education service... It is and should be recognised as a major contributor to improving educational and lifelong learning outcomes'. Priorities for Youth also sets out the central role that youth work has to play in building a shared society; noting that 'equipping children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to recognise, understand and respect difference... is particularly important as we continue to deal with the legacy of the conflict and move towards a shared and inclusive society'.

The YCNl welcomes developments aimed at enhancing the shared experience of our young people through formal education and the vital role this work has to play in continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. Relationship building across divided communities remains central to the process of maintaining lasting reconciliation and Education has an important responsibility within this.

Within Education the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy plays a vital role in supporting both youth service providers and schools to deliver on this area. It promotes a whole organisational approach to embedding the principles and practices needed to build a shared society. YCNl has a key responsibility to support and coordinate the delivery and implementation of the CRED policy across Regional Voluntary Headquarter Youth Organisations. The task of embedding CRED within all youth and school settings is large, and resources limited. Reconciliation is a task for the long term; thus it follows that planning and resourcing should model this.

The YCNl recognises and welcomes the commitment to review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education, including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education. However, this work must not diminish the valuable role and place of Integrated Education nor should it diminish existing CRED related work plans. YCNl endorses the need for a continuum of provision which includes both Shared and Integrated Education.

The YCNl wishes to highlight that youth work practitioners, particularly those with many years commitment to peace and reconciliation work, have much to offer the implementation and delivery of initiatives aimed at enhancing the shared and integrated education experience. A number of voluntary sector youth organisations contributed to the International Fund for Ireland Sharing in Education programme.

The Department of Education's commitment to developing shared and integrated education would benefit from being part of a wider strategy aimed at enhancing the shared educational experience of all, with an accompanying sustainable, well-resourced package and operational plan outlining the breadth and range of underpinning activity required to make this vision a

reality. Prioritisation of financial investment would reflect the stated political commitment to this area. Existing models of good practice should be built upon (including whole organisational approaches to embedding this work such as that modelled by the JEDI initiative (see: www.jedini.com)).

In addition, a regional body, at arm's length to Government, would be beneficial to securing co-ordination and ongoing challenge for all peacebuilding work across all government departments, including that which contributes to the development of Integrated and Shared Education.



Published by Authority of the Northern Ireland Assembly,
Belfast: The Stationery Office

and available from:

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www.tsoshop.co.uk

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£33.38

Printed in Northern Ireland by The Stationery Office Limited
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ISBN 978-0-339-60592-3



Committee for Education

Report on the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education Volume 4

**Together with the Minutes of Proceedings, Minutes of Evidence
and Written Submissions Relating to the Report**

Ordered by the Committee for Education to be printed 1 July 2015

This report is the property of the Committee for Education. Neither the report nor its contents should be disclosed to any person unless such disclosure is authorised by the Committee.

**THE REPORT REMAINS EMBARGOED UNTIL
COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEBATE IN PLENARY**

Powers and Membership

Powers

The Committee for Education is a Statutory Departmental Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Standing Order 48 of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Committee has power to:

- Consider and advise on Departmental budgets and annual plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- Consider relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- Call for persons and papers;
- Initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- Consider and advise on any matters brought to the Committee by the Minister of Education.

Membership

The Committee has 11 members including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and a quorum of 5. The membership of the Committee is as follows:

Peter Weir (Chairperson) ^{2,6}

Sandra Overend (Deputy Chairperson) ⁷

Maeve McLaughlin

Jonathan Craig

Ross Hussey ^{1,8}

Nelson McCausland ³

Chris Hazzard

Trevor Lunn

Robin Newton

Pat Sheehan

Sean Rogers ^{4,5}

1 With effect from 04 July 2014 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson
 2 With effect from 23 September 2014 Ms Michelle McIlveen replaced Mr Mervyn Storey as Chairperson
 3 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr Nelson McCausland replaced Mr Stephen Moutray
 4 With effect from 17 November 2014 Mr Colum Eastwood replaced Mr Seán Rogers
 5 With effect from 08 December 2014 Mr Sean Rogers replaced Mr Colum Eastwood
 6 With effect from 11 May 2015 Mr Peter Weir replaced Miss Michelle McIlveen as Chairperson
 7 With effect from 15 June 2015 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mr Danny Kinahan as Deputy Chairperson
 8 With effect from 23 June 2015 Mr Ross Hussey replaced Mrs Sandra Overend

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Northern Ireland
Assembly

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20131022 - Ministerial Statement - Advancing Shared Education

Advancing Shared Education

Ministerial Statement

22 October 2013

Oral Statement on Advancing Shared Education

Introduction

With your permission Mr Speaker, I wish to make a statement on the report of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education, which was published in March.

In doing so I wish to set out my response to the recommendations, and indicate how I intend to move forward.

Advancing shared education is one of the most important and sensitive challenges facing civic society.

If we are to succeed, there must be a shared readiness to change.

Background

Members will recall that advancing shared education is at the heart of the Programme for Government, and establishing the independent advisory group was a key commitment.

I was very pleased when Professor Paul Connolly, from the School of Education at Queen's University, agreed to chair the group, and his fellow members, Dawn Purvis and PJ O'Grady also took up the challenge.

I would like to thank them for their work, and for producing a very comprehensive, thoughtful, and thought-provoking report.

I would also like to thank everyone who engaged with the group for their contributions.

Starting point

In debating the report, let's remind ourselves of why sharing is important, and what we are trying to achieve.

Educational case

My starting point is the educational case for sharing, to contribute to raising standards, tackling underachievement and creating a better society for all.

In planning for the future, we need to address a key question – what sorts of schools do we want?

We have many different types of school, each proud of their identity and ethos.

I know from my visits how much parents and communities value those schools, and how passionately they care about them.

So having that choice in our system is a strength, we need to now build on that with confidence that a shared education system is inclusive of all and marginalises no one.

But Mr Speaker, choice can't be at the expense of good education.

Our schools need to change and greater sharing is part of that change.

We have too many schools that cannot – by themselves - provide the rich, high-quality educational experience that children need and deserve.

To make that change we must actively plan for shared education.

That means we must also move away from planning by competition: school versus school and sector versus sector - in a battle for scarce resources.

As Minister I see far too many development proposals that are written as if the school up the road doesn't exist.

That has to change.

We know what parents and children want –quality, high performing schools in their local communities.

The parents and communities that I meet are up for sharing.

They want choice, but they aren't asking for separation.

I believe that the vast majority of parents put **quality** first.

They **will choose** shared local schools if they provide a quality education.

The evidence is there.

The Lisanelly complex has fired the imagination of the community in Omagh, and is a game-changer in terms of how we plan education.

I have seen other good examples of communities in the Moy, in Fermanagh; and Ballycastle, coming together to look for shared solutions; and finding new ways to ensure access to good local schools.

So, shared education is not a bolt-on or an optional extra.

It is fundamental to delivering good schools, and central to my vision that every learner should achieve his or her full potential.

Good relations and equality

Mr Speaker, good education comes first, but equality and good relations add to the case for change.

Choice can't be at the expense of good education.

Neither can it be at the cost of separation by religious belief, socio economic status or educational needs.

Such separation is bad for children, and bad for society.

Separation is damaging, unnecessary, and avoidable – Society has the power to change it if the will is there.

In higher and further education, sharing and integration is already the norm.

Why should schools be any different?

We have sharing in preschool education, and youth services.

We have integrated schools, naturally shared schools, and many other examples of good practice in schools working together.

But we can, and we must, do more.

Sharing must become the accepted reality at every stage of education, from early years to post-graduate study.

Equality

There is also a persuasive equality case.

We have good schools serving children of every religious faith, and none.

Today, no child is denied a good education because of their religion.

However, the same cannot be said for socio-economic status.

We know that children living in lower income brackets are at much higher risk of educational under achievement.

Members are familiar with the standard measure.

Our aim is that every child should leave school with at least five good GCSEs including English and maths.

Today, only 34% of children entitled to free school meals achieve that.

For other children, the figure is 68%.

So a child being from a lower income bracket is at double the risk of underachievement.

That is unacceptable, and we must change it.

We also know that academic selection is a barrier to children on Free School Meals and from lower income families.

Just over 7% of children in grammar schools are entitled to free school meals.

For other post primary schools the figure is 28%.

So poorer children are more likely to be rejected by grammar schools.

Is that what those schools want?

Only they can answer.

But segregation by parental income is a reality that we cannot ignore.

Members know my views on academic selection, and I will say more on that in a few moments when I turn to the recommendations in the report.

But whatever happens in relation to selection, we need greater sharing across the socio economic divide.

Mr Speaker, I'm sometimes accused of having an anti-grammar agenda.

Well let me put it on the record – I don't.

I have an anti-academic selection agenda.

But I offer this challenge to grammar schools.

Educate the whole community, not just a part of it.

Across the world, the best performing education systems combine excellence with equality of outcomes – in other words almost all of their pupils achieve high standards, not just a few.

That must surely be our goal too.

Summing up the case for sharing

Bringing all of that together, it is clear that:

- sharing brings educational benefits;
- sharing builds respect for diversity and good relations;
- sharing builds equality; and
- sharing builds a confident community.

So my vision is one of education without barriers; good schools where children learn, grow and develop together.

Schools where sharing is the accepted normality.

Shared education can - and should - involve every type of school.

It is about developing local solutions to local needs, not 'one size fits all'.

It is a challenge to all, but a threat to none.

Every school can share, and I challenge every school to ask itself, '**what more can we do**'.

Sharing and integration

Before turning to the recommendations, I want to talk about the relationship between shared education and integrated education.

Let me make it clear, they are different routes to the same objective.

The right model is the model that enjoys the support of the local community.

Integrated education will continue to play an important role, and my Department, in line with its statutory duty, will continue to encourage and facilitate it.

Shared education should also be encouraged and facilitated, and communities should be encouraged to choose the model that suits them best.

This is in line with the current approach to integrated education where the transformation process begins with consultation with the local community and a parental ballot before the submission of a development proposal to the department.

Every community should be on a journey to sharing.

Different routes will be chosen and some will get there sooner than others.

When a community takes a first step, however modest, we should encourage and support them, and yes perhaps challenge them to go further, but in a positive manner.

Recommendations

Let me turn now to the recommendations.

The report contains 20 recommendations in 5 groups. I welcome all of the recommendations.

There are some that I accept fully, and will aim to take forward as soon as possible.

There are others that I accept in principle, but there may be a better way forward than what the group recommended.

A third group needs further consideration and debate, here in this Assembly and across society.

Mainstreaming (recommendations 1 to 3)

The recommendations begin with mainstreaming, which is the right starting point.

We need to ensure that sharing is in the DNA of our education system: in legislation, policy and the structure of ESA.

I want to be in a position to bring the Education Bill back to the Executive and the Assembly in the coming weeks, however I cannot do that on my own.

In bringing the Bill back, I propose to include a statutory definition of shared education, and provisions for ESA to encourage and facilitate it.

These will complement the provisions on integrated and Irish-medium education, and will not reduce or dilute them in any way.

I will also require ESA to reflect sharing in its structure, in its corporate plans, and in its strategies, and I will hold it to account for doing so.

The report also recommended the inclusion of a shared education premium in the common funding scheme.

I accept this in principle, but further consideration is needed before we move to implementation.

However, I acknowledge that if shared education is to grow and develop, then we will need to mainstream financial support for any additional costs involved.

Shared education is very much at the heart of the Together Building a United Community programme.

In addition to those programmes my Department is working with Atlantic Philanthropies and OFMdFM with a view to put in place an additional funding programme to support shared education.

As we move ahead I will look carefully at the evidence, so as to ensure that whatever financial support we provide is targeted at what works best.

I also need to see what additional resources my Executive colleagues will make available for mainstreaming.

Supporting schools in shared education (recommendations 4 to 8)

The second group of recommendations deals with:

- supporting schools;
- ensuring that sharing delivers real educational benefit; and
- recognising and promoting the spread of good practice.

I welcome these recommendations.

I have asked the Chief Inspector to consider how best to take them forward in the inspection process and the inspection cycle, and to report back to me.

We ask a great deal of our teachers, and it is right that we equip and support them to deliver.

That is why ESA will have statutory duties to ensure support for teachers and schools governors.

I also welcome the recommendations on supporting and developing teachers.

These will be fed into a revised teacher professional development strategy, which is already under development.

I will ensure that it includes an examination of how best to equip and support teachers to deliver shared education.

Schools and other institutions (recommendations 9 to 14)

The third group of recommendations - numbers 9 to 14 – focus on what schools need to do in relation to engagement with parents; the delivery of the curriculum; and the rights of children and young people to participate in the decisions that affect them.

I welcome these recommendations.

As I said earlier, supporting schools will be a key part of ESA's role, and this will include supporting schools to communicate with parents.

Recommendation 10 calls for a review of the **delivery** of key aspects of the curriculum.

I accept this recommendation in principle, and welcome the emphasis on promoting equality.

However, taking this forward requires careful thought.

In any review of the curriculum or its delivery, our aim must be to support teachers to adopt best practice.

Therefore, as a first step, I have asked the Chief Inspector to carry out a survey of current practice, with a particular focus on what additional support and development teachers need.

The report draws attention to the right of young people to participate and be heard in relation to the decisions that affect their lives.

I support this, and it is my aim that every school will have an effective method of encouraging young people's participation in the life of the school.

My Department will continue to encourage schools to implement the Democra-school programme, and to take up the advice, support and a guidance pack available from the Commissioner for Children and Young people.

However, I believe that effective participation of young people is likely to be achieved more effectively if the approach is decided by the schools themselves, rather than being imposed from outside.

Therefore, I would prefer not to go down the compulsory route at this time.

However, I will keep this under review and, if sufficient progress is not being made, then I will consider the case for stronger action.

The report also recommended that schools should be subject to the statutory equality and good relations duties in section 75.

I strongly support the intention behind that recommendation.

Every school must play its part in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations.

Every school must tackle discrimination and bullying, whether it stems from religion, sexual orientation or any other aspect of a young person's identity.

Members will be aware that this is a cross cutting matter, as equality legislation is the responsibility of OFMdfM.

I want to discuss recommendations 12 and 13 of the report with my Executive colleagues, and consider how best to give effect to them.

Using section 75 which sets out minimum requirements may be one option.

However, there is nothing to stop us from enhancing our equality duties so as to ensure better policy making.

Another may be to adopt the approach used in England, where schools have to set clear objectives for promoting equality, and are held to account for delivery.

Whichever option we choose, I want the emphasis to be on action, not bureaucracy.

Recommendation 14 deals with special education.

It calls for the development of effective models for collaboration between mainstream, special schools and educational support centres.

One of my priorities as Minister has been the building of an inclusive educational culture both within and between our schools.

Therefore I strongly support this recommendation.

However it would be wrong not to acknowledge the work already being undertaken in this area.

The current special educational needs framework already promotes inclusion, ensuring, wherever possible, that children and young people are taught in mainstream schools.

This will remain a fundamental tenet of the work being taken forward as part of the SEN and Inclusion Review.

That being said, where a child's best interests are served by attendance at a special school, that option will remain open.

In terms of the collaboration across sectors, special schools are full and active members of the Area Learning Communities.

This is essential to provide opportunities for pupils to learn and grow alongside their peers in special and mainstream schools.

Going forward, I will ensure that shared education projects and shared education campuses will include special schools where that demand exists.

Arvalee Special School will be taken forward as part of the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus, with the construction of the new Arvalee School and Resource Centre commencing next year.

Area based planning and the schools estate (recommendations 15 to 17)

The fourth set of recommendations deal with area planning, which will be central to the delivery of shared education.

I will make it a priority for my Department to bring forward:

- guidance on a range of sharing options that schools and communities may wish to explore;
- clear, practical advice on how to bring forward a development proposal for sharing; and
- guidelines on the development of area plans to ensure that shared education is encouraged.

Recommendation 16 calls on my Department to meet parental demand for different types of schools.

I accept that recommendation in principle, with one important caveat.

Any proposal for a new school must be sustainable and capable of delivering high quality education for the pupils it serves.

Let me say clearly that I want to see:

- collaboration, not competition;
- sharing, not duplication.

Recommendation 17 calls for it to be made easier for a school to transform its ethos from one type to another.

I am pleased to say that the Education Bill already provides for this.

Every school will be able to decide its own ethos, and set it down in its scheme of management and employment scheme.

Any school will be able to change its ethos at any time simply by bringing forward new schemes.

There will be no need for any complex or bureaucratic legal procedure.

Academic selection (recommendations 18 to 20)

Finally, let me turn to the recommendations on academic selection.

It will surprise no-one when I say that I welcome, and strongly endorse them.

Some people have criticised the group for including those recommendations.

They claim that they are nothing to do with sharing.

They are missing a very important point.

Sharing means educating without barriers, and without segregation.

The group's advice is very clear.

Selection discriminates.

Selection divides.

Selection is a barrier to children from low income families.

Those who ignore the evidence should ask themselves:

"If segregation by religion is wrong, how can segregation by income be right?"

I look forward to the day when this Assembly decides to end academic selection for good.

Until that day, I will strive to make it irrelevant, and to limit the damage that it does.

I will continue to promote all ability schools where academic and vocational learning is the norm and these will be taken forward through area planning as recommended by the group.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the report asks us all to think differently about the delivery of education.

It reminds us that sharing begins with respect for diversity and the right to equality.

It asks us to put the needs of young people ahead of the interests of institutions.

It challenges long-held assumptions about what is possible.

Through sharing, we all benefit, and no-one loses.

Sharing means celebrating diversity, not undermining or hiding it.

Educational ethos, like language and culture, should be used to build bridges, not barriers.

Mr Speaker, our education system should be enriched by diversity; but not blighted by separation.

I commend the report to the Assembly.

20140519 - DE Response Integrated Shared Education Inquiry



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AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

19 May 2014

Dear Peter

Education Committee: Integrated / Shared Education Inquiry

Thank you for your enquiry dated 6 May 2014 in relation to the statement made by the Minister on 23 October 2014 in relation to advancing Shared Education, I have been asked to reply.

The Committee will wish to note that the Minister has previously indicated that discussions were ongoing with OFMdfM and the Atlantic Philanthropies to establish a shared education funding stream. This work is at an advanced stage and it is expected that an announcement will be made before the summer recess with the programme commencing in the 2014/15 academic year.

The programme is being designed to address a number of actions referenced by the Minister including support for teachers and Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) engagement.

ETI will progress the work of Shared Education within inspection and district work with a view of identifying how 'sharing' has the potential to enhance learners' educational and social learning.

In preparing for this work a team of ETI Inspectors will develop Shared Education indicators, protocols and materials for inspection and district work. The team will also provide ongoing staff development on writing, reporting and recording of effective Shared Education practice.

In the absence of progress with the Education Bill, the Minister is considering other alternatives for legislation that would define and help ensure progress in advancing Shared Education. The Committee will of course be briefed on these at the appropriate juncture.

As part of his statement on advancing shared education, the Minister made clear his aim that every school will have an effective method of encouraging young people's participation in the life of the school. The Department is already committed to encouraging all schools to find

meaningful ways of giving children and young people a voice and of listening and responding to their views and continues to encourage schools to adopt the Democra-schools programme.

The Minister has indicated his intention to bring forward guidance on sharing options for schools and communities that will assist in providing practical advice relevant for a development proposal. It is anticipated that this work will be progressed during the period of the inquiry.

The Committee will also wish to note that both the Area Planning Terms of Reference and subsequent guidance already encourages Shared Education options to be brought forward.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V Bintley (mun)'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

DE Shared Education Update

SHARED EDUCATION

Introduction

Advancing Shared Education is both a Programme for Government commitment and an action within the Together: Building a United Community strategy.

A Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) was established in July 2012 to advise the Minister on how best to advance shared education which is defined as:

- meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;
- involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Shared Education means the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.

Shared Education is expected to be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children from differing s75 groups (e.g. children from different racial backgrounds, children with and without disabilities, children who are carers or school age mothers) and from differing socio-economic backgrounds to learn together at school and in less formal education.

The MAG reported in March 2013. In accepting its report, the Education Minister encouraged a public debate on the report and its recommendations.

After a period of reflection in a statement of 22 October 2013 to the Assembly the Minister accepted the recommendations of the report, reserving judgement on how best to implement a number of the recommendations. Work to implement the recommendations has been taken forward.

Progress to date is outlined below. The relevant MAG recommendation has been included in each section for ease of reference.

MAG RECOMMENDATION	DEPARTMENTAL POSITION
<p><u>Recommendation 1:</u> The Education Bill should be amended to place a statutory duty on the new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) to encourage and facilitate shared education as defined in this report.</p>	<p>The Minister accepted this recommendation. The original intention had been to include, as an amendment to the Education Bill through which the Education and Skills Authority would be established, a power to encourage and facilitate shared education.</p> <p>As progress on the Education Bill has been halted, the Minister is considering bringing forward a stand-alone Bill designed to support shared education.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u> ESA should establish a central unit, or identify an existing unit, that should take lead responsibility for encouraging and facilitating shared education. This unit should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and drive forward a strategy for advancing shared education that includes setting targets and goals, monitoring shared education activities and producing an annual report on progress being made; • Review all existing and proposed policies within education, and provide advice as required, to ensure that all activities seek to encourage and facilitate shared education where appropriate; and • Commission research and evaluations into shared education and facilitate the sharing and dissemination of good practice. 	<p>The Minister accepted this recommendation. It had been intended that ESA would ensure a central focus on shared education. This recommendation will now be taken forward in progressing the one-board model of reform that is necessary to enable education administration to comply with the changes to local government that will take place from April 2015. In the meantime, the Minister will expect the ELBs to take a consistent, regional approach to encouraging and facilitating shared education. At the same time, the Department itself will ensure that a clear strategy is put in place for advancing shared education.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 3:</u> As part of the proposed revised common funding formula suggested by Sir Robert Salisbury in his independent review for the Department of Education, a 'shared education premium' should be incorporated into the funding formula for schools and other educational institutions. This premium would recognize the added value of shared education and should be weighted in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of pupils that are engaged in shared education activities, as defined in this report; and 	<p>While recognising the need for funding, the Minister reserved his position on this recommendation as it was not clear that the common funding formula was most appropriate delivery mechanism. Subsequently, it has been agreed that a Shared Education funding scheme will be established to provide financial support for schools engaged in shared education. Consideration is being given to establishing this as a potential Delivering Social Change Signature Programme. As part of this, work is ongoing to secure significant</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proportion of school time that pupils are engaged in such activities. 	<p>funding from Atlantic Philanthropies and OFMdfM as well as DE.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 4:</u> Where schools and other educational institutions are in receipt of a shared education premium, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) should explicitly review the use of that funding in its inspection reports particularly in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The added value of such shared education activities; The value for money of the funding provided; and The quality and effectiveness of the shared education activities. 	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation. In parallel with the Shared Education programme, ETI will progress the work of Shared Education within inspection and district work with a view of identifying how 'sharing' has the potential to enhance learners' educational and social learning.</p> <p>In preparing for this work a small team of ETI Inspectors will develop Shared Education indicators, protocols and materials for inspection and district work. The team will also provide ongoing staff development on writing, reporting and recording of effective Shared Education practice.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 5:</u> The ETI should produce an annual report that reviews the current range and extent of shared education activities across Northern Ireland, highlights good practice and makes recommendations regarding how these could be extended and improved.</p>	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation. The Chief Inspector's Report is published biennially and in future will make specific comment on Shared Education. The next report is due for publication in autumn 2014.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 6:</u> ESA should develop a framework for supporting the early and continuing professional development of teachers that encourages its delivery through shared education and thus via effective collaboration between schools and other educational institutions. It is recommended that such a framework should encourage collaborative networks of schools and other educational institutions identifying their own professional development needs and being devolved appropriate levels of funding through the common funding formula to commission the training, courses and/or other support that they require.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 7:</u> ESA should ensure that teachers and principals have access to a range of training courses and resource materials to</p>	<p>The Minister has accepted these recommendations.</p> <p>In the absence of progress on the legislation needed to establish ESA, the Department will, as part of its work to finalise a new teacher professional development strategy, ensure that this includes steps to provide teachers, from initial teacher education through to the most experienced teachers, with opportunities to learn together, including in relation to preparation for teaching through shared education.</p> <p>Specifically in relation to recommendation 8, DE awaits the outworkings of the independent review of teacher education infrastructure commissioned by DEL. DE will consider the outcomes in the context of</p>

<p>help them develop the knowledge and skills required to organise and manage effectively shared education activities and classes. These courses and materials should include a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and organizing collaborative activities, projects and classes between schools and other educational establishments; • Dealing with negative relationships and poor interactions between pupils; • Covering sensitive topics and issues; and • Exploring ways that existing school subjects might best emphasise commonality in history and between cultures but also actively involve students in contact with cultural activities with those from other sectors e.g., sport, dance, music and language (including Irish and Scottish Gaelic). <p><i>Recommendation 8:</i> The Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning, in conjunction with the higher education institutions responsible for delivering teacher training and professional development courses, should review existing provision to consider appropriate mechanisms for collaboration to ensure that student teachers and teachers returning for professional development can be provided with opportunities to learn together, including in relation to preparation for teaching through shared education.</p>	<p>future arrangements for initial teacher education and its proposed strategy for teacher professional development.</p> <p>Through its Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy, DE will continue to ensure provision for teacher education on sensitive and controversial issues and managing shared education classes. A training strategy implemented across all ELBs has been in place since 2012.</p> <p>Additionally, as part of the Executive's <i>Together: Building a United Community</i> strategy, a commitment has been made to develop an anti-sectarianism module and relevant teacher education. Discussions are underway on how best to implement this and to increase the pace of delivery.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 9:</i> Schools and other educational establishments should develop more meaningful relationships with parents and caregivers to ensure that their rights to be involved in the education of their children are fully respected and supported. To achieve this, it is recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESA establish an appropriate network that supports schools and other educational institutions in developing relationships with parents and care-givers and in creating and sharing best practice regionally; and 	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation. Consideration will be given as part of the Shared Education Programme as to how schools can develop more meaningful relationships with parents and caregivers to ensure that their rights to be involved in the education of their children are fully respected and supported.</p> <p>The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations require schools to outline their strategies for raising the standards of attainment among all pupils and for providing for the special, additional or other individual</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and other educational establishments include a specific section in their Development Plans that includes clear plans and goals, for how they intend to engage parents and caregivers and ensure their active and sustained support in the education of their children. 	<p>educational needs of pupils. Guidance highlights the importance of consulting with those involved in the life and work of the school; the regulations require that the school development plan outlines the arrangements that have been made to take account of the views of pupils, parents, staff and other persons or bodies.</p> <p>Schools engaging in the Shared Education programme will be required to include a specific reference in their School Development Plans that includes their plans and goals for advancing shared education and engaging with parents and caregivers.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10: An independent review should be undertaken of current practice in relation to the delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Pre-School Education); Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2); Local and Global Citizenship (Key Stages 3 and 4); and The Curriculum Framework for Youth Work (Youth Service). <p>The review should consider the effectiveness of the current Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy and also include consideration of the opportunities that are provided for children and young people to discuss and explore issues associated with divisions, conflict and inequalities in Northern Ireland. The review should make recommendations regarding the content of these areas of learning and also how teachers and other educationalists can best be supported to deliver these.</p>	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation. ETI will undertake the independent review of current practice commencing with a review of the effectiveness of the CRED policy in the autumn. Other areas will be explored on a rolling basis across 2015-2019.</p>
<p>Recommendation 11: In fulfilment of its duties under Article 12 of the UNCRC, the Department of Education should make it a requirement that all schools establish School Councils. Within this, School Councils</p>	<p>As part of his statement on advancing shared education, the Minister made clear his aim that every school will have an effective method of encouraging young people's participation in the life of the school.</p>

<p>need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fully representative of the school body and of all year groups; • Provide a mechanism for consulting children and young people on all school matters that affect them, including plans for shared education activities; • Support children and young people in forming and expressing their views; and • Include appropriate mechanisms for the views of children and young people to then be considered and given due weight by the school. 	<p>The Department is already committed to encouraging all schools to find meaningful ways of giving children and young people a voice and of listening and responding to their views and continues to encourage schools to adopt the Democra-schools programme.</p> <p>The DE website contains information on school councils, which are one mechanism by which effective pupil participation can be achieved, and links to the Democra-School programme. However DE does not wish to be prescriptive about the approach.</p> <p>DE is currently preparing a Circular that will provide further guidance for Principals and Boards of Governors on how to encourage pupil participation in decision making in schools. The circular will include information and guidelines on best practice to help schools identify the method and degree of participation that best suits the needs of their pupils.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 12:</u> The necessary legislation should be brought forward for schools and other educational institutions to be designated as ‘public authorities’ under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and thus to be required to comply with the statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. In doing this, consideration should be given to whether it is possible to reduce the demands that will be placed on schools and other educational institutions in terms of meeting their specific responsibilities under Section 75 whilst maintaining their core duties to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 13:</u> The Education and Skills Authority, in conjunction with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, should establish a unit to provide training, produce support materials and to advise schools and educational institutions in relation to</p>	<p>The Minister has accepted the principles behind these recommendations and agrees that schools have an important role in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations.</p> <p>The matter of legislation to designate schools as ‘public authorities’ is one for OFMdfM in the first instance and the Minister is writing to FM and dFM to communicate the detail of these recommendations and to seek their views on the practicalities of designating schools for Section 75 purposes.</p> <p>Turning to recommendation 13, the Department will consider the support arrangements that schools would need following a decision by OFMdfM on whether and how to designate schools as ‘public authorities’.</p>

<p>preparing, implementing and monitoring the equality schemes they would be required to produce under Section 75. It is expected that one aspect of meeting the duty to promote good relations will include engagement in shared education initiatives.</p>	
<p><u>Recommendation 14:</u> The Department of Education should undertake a review of how shared education, and the enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and educational support centres, can most effectively meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and those with special educational needs. The review should focus on the development of effective models for collaboration that can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure, wherever possible, that children and young people are taught in mainstream schools; and • For the small minority of children and young people where mainstream schooling is not suitable, that they have meaningful opportunities to learn with children and young people in mainstream school environments. 	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation. It is the Department's policy that, wherever possible, children and young people can be educated together in mainstream settings. A review of the existing legislative framework for SEN and inclusion has been completed and work is progressing on a new Special Educational Needs Bill, which the Minister expects to bring to the Executive shortly. This underpins the existing commitment to inclusion.</p> <p>An ETI 'Guide to Collaborative Practice' which is based on learning from twenty four special schools that worked collaboratively on a joint curriculum project of their choosing with a neighbouring mainstream school is in place. This guidance sets out the key elements arising from these projects which support and encourage collaborative working. It provides a template, alongside a synopsis of the case study projects, to all schools and Area Learning Communities to use to build their capacity to respond more effectively to a wider range of pupils needs through collaborative working.</p> <p>Additionally, the Department will continue work to develop the role of Area Learning Communities and to encourage the particular contribution within ALCs of special schools. All Special Schools and Learning Support Centres have received guidance advising them, as active members, to continue to optimise the opportunities available across ALCs (which will include shared education opportunities) to provide access to a broad and balanced offer of qualifications for learning programmes.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 15:</u> The Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and the CCMS should play an active role in promoting shared education through the area-based planning processes for post-primary and primary schools. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being proactive in identifying opportunities for shared education that may not have been considered and setting out options for schools and colleges to consider; and • Supporting and advising schools that wish to develop shared education arrangements, including providing advice on how two or more schools can transfer their status into a 'shared school' whereby they maintain their respective forms of ethos. 	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation and has indicated his intention to bring forward guidance on sharing options for schools and communities that will assist in providing practical advice relevant for a development proposal.</p> <p>Area Planning Terms of Reference and subsequent guidance already encourages Shared Education options to be brought forward.</p> <p>Processes are already in place for schools wishing to transform to integrated status and for schools wishing to expand.</p> <p>Together: Building a United Community Strategy commits to establishing 10 shared education campuses. The Shared Education Campuses Programme, which was launched in January 2014, will complement the work already underway within DE on shared education and Area Planning and will be targeted at infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating sharing initiatives within local schools.</p> <p>The programme will target schools that can demonstrate the following types of sharing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Facilities – where new facilities are built to allow for shared use by all schools within the model; • Enhanced Facilities – where current facilities are improved to allow for shared use by all schools within the model; and • Shared Campus – where schools are co-located and share infrastructure e.g. the Lisanelly model. <p>Sixteen expressions of interest were received. Projects to be advanced are to be announced in June 2014 with commencement of the first projects expected in 2016-17.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 16:</u> Where there is sufficient, viable and consistent parental demand, the Department of Education should actively</p>	<p>While accepting this recommendation in principle, the Minister has made it clear that this is with a caveat that any proposal must be</p>

support the establishment of schools and other educational institutions with a particular religious, philosophical or cultural ethos.	<p>sustainable and capable of delivering high quality education.</p> <p>Work is in progress with the Transferors Representative Council and Catholic Trustees regarding the potential for a jointly managed school model which would provide an alternative model for educating pupils together at the same school and that would have the support of the main churches.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 17:</u> In relation to all existing schools, the Department of Education should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a transformation process for schools where there is clear parental demand wishing to adopt a particular ethos – whether, for example, this be faith-based, integrated, secular or Irish Medium – and to ensure that it is user friendly and not bureaucratic and that parents are made aware of their powers under the processes established; Identify how, in the light of parental demand, the process can be made easier whereby a school can incorporate the badge of a particular school type or sector in its title; and While recognizing the responsibility of the Department to ensure the viability of schools in each local area, where there is clear evidence of over-subscription, it should allow existing schools to expand, in a phased and careful manner, in order to meet the demand that exists among parents. 	<p>The Minister has accepted this recommendation. Processes are already in place for schools wishing to transform to integrated status and for schools wishing to expand. Boards of Governors are responsible for setting the ethos of a school. This applies to schools of all management types.</p>

<p><u><i>Recommendation 18:</i></u> The Northern Ireland Executive should, without delay, introduce the necessary legislation to prevent schools from selecting children on the basis of academic ability and require schools to develop admissions criteria that are truly inclusive and egalitarian in nature.</p> <p><u><i>Recommendation 19:</i></u> The Department of Education, through the area-based planning process should consider how best to plan for sustainable post-primary schools with all-ability intakes. In doing this, the Department should have regard for parental demand in each local area for schools with a different religious, philosophical or cultural ethos and make every effort to ensure diversity of provision to meet this demand where it is feasible.</p> <p><u><i>Recommendation 20:</i></u> The Department of Education should initiate a fundamental review of the use of selection within schools with all-ability intakes to explore the benefits and limitations of different models of banding and streaming. The review should be tasked with making recommendations regarding how best to take forward selection within schools so that all children and young people reach their full potential.</p>	<p>The Minister has accepted these recommendations. The Department's policy position, supported by international evidence, on the limited educational value of academic selection at the age of 10 or 11 is clear. However, legislation can only be introduced with cross-party support which, to date, has not been forthcoming.</p>
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20141001 - DE re Shared Education Campuses Programme



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AN ROINN
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MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

1 October 2014

Dear Peter

Shared Education Campuses Programme

I advised in my letter of 18 September 2014 that the Department were anticipating the second call for applications to the Shared Education Campuses Programme would open at the end of September 2014.

I can now confirm that this call will open on 1 October 2014.

I attach a copy of the Protocol document for the second call which includes the revised criteria as agreed by the Minister.

The deadline for submissions of applications to the Department by School Planning Authorities is Friday 30 January 2015.

As mentioned previously, officials are happy to brief the Committee at this stage or when the call closes.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

The Shared Education Campuses Programme

Second Call for Expressions of Interest

Protocol Document

September 2014

Shared Education Campuses Programme 2014

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 On 9 May 2013, the First Minister and deputy First Minister made a statement to the Assembly on the **‘Together: Building a United Community’** strategy, which contains a range of proposals including details on **Shared Education Campuses**. Work on 10 shared education campuses will be commenced within the next 5 years, building on the project proposals for the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus. These campuses will be the pathfinder projects leading to a wider programme of shared education capital projects. The campuses will also integrate community activities and resources and other services, including statutory provision where appropriate.
- 1.2 The specific aim of the Executive’s **Together: Building a United Community** (T:BUC) strategy relating to education is *‘To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience’*.
- 1.3 Included in the strategy is a commitment *‘to create 10 Shared Education Campuses based on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus model’*. We believe that building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools. It is already an integral part of the curriculum. In addition to the current work in this area, the strategy proposes that the Programme for Government (PfG) commitment to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015, will reinforce opportunities to contribute to the shared vision of building a united community.
- 1.4 Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment and sectarianism; and improving good relations amongst and for our young people.
- 1.5 Lisanelly has been quoted as the template for these new ‘Shared Education Campuses’. It is a shared campus in the truest sense of the term, bringing together six schools of different management types and phases, on a site in excess of 130 acres, with a forecast combined long term enrolment of over 4,200 pupils.
- 1.6 While Lisanelly Shared Education Campus is an example or pathfinder for shared education facilities here, it must be recognised that it is also unique. The availability of an extremely large site close to the centre of Omagh will not be readily replicated in other towns across the north. Implementation of the FM/dFM announcement will require a flexible approach to the identification of potential ‘shared campuses’.
- 1.7 In progressing shared education, delivery of educational benefits to children and young people must be the overarching priority. It is important that any proposal for a shared campus be consistent with the work currently being undertaken on area planning. Any models of sharing must fit within the relevant Area Plan, taking into account the full needs of an area, including the implications for other schools and recognising the importance of parental preference, which is protected in legislation.

- 1.8 Enhancing shared education provision provides a range of benefits including: raising educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils; greater choice and greater opportunity; providing sustainable local provision; facilitating delivery of the Entitlement Framework; and providing wider choice for pupils in terms of leisure, cultural and sporting activities.
- 1.9 The purpose of this document is to set out the process and timetable to be used to identify and assess proposals submitted under this initiative. **Applicants should note that this document has been revised and updated in light of the experience of the first call for Expressions of Interest and includes revisions to the criteria.**

2. Definition and Scope

- 2.1 In July 2012, the Minister of Education announced the establishment of an independent Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education. The group published its findings on 22 April 2013. The issues arising from the findings on shared education cross many existing policy areas throughout education and the Department is already working on and will continue to develop shared education initiatives in schools.
- 2.2 It is important that there is a clear definition of what is meant by schools 'sharing' and the Department uses the definition of sharing provided to the Ministerial Advisory Group:
- “Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.”***
- 2.3 Specifically, **‘Shared Education’ means the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.**
- 2.4 The ‘Shared Education Campuses’ initiative under T:BUC is seen as complementing the work already underway in schools and will be targeted towards infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating educational sharing initiatives within local schools. It is intended therefore that the projects selected will build on a solid foundation of existing sharing.
- 2.5 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will provide capital funding for facilities at **schools which will be used on a shared educational basis.** The Programme will not provide for replication or duplication of existing or proposed facilities within the education sector, including that provided by the Further Education sector. As this Programme is specifically targeted at the provision of shared education in schools, applications from youth and sporting organisations/groups will not be considered for support under the Programme at this time.
- 2.6 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will have the potential to bring together a range of schools for the delivery of education to children on a shared basis. There may be additional ancillary benefits which can arise from the establishment of these new facilities, including increased opportunities for the wider community to use school facilities for a range of educational, sporting, recreational, arts or cultural activities in line with the Department’s *Community Use of School Premises: A Guidance Toolkit for Schools* which seeks to assist schools in opening their doors to the local community.
- 2.7 The programme will target schools that can demonstrate the following types of sharing:
- Shared educational facilities – where new facilities are built to allow for shared educational use by all schools within the model.
 - Enhanced educational facilities – where current facilities are improved to allow for shared educational use by all schools within the model.
 - Shared Educational Campuses – where schools are co-located and share infrastructure i.e. the Lisanelly model.

- 2.8 Shared facilities or Shared Campuses supported under this Programme must be located on a site that is, or will be, under the ownership or management of the Education sector.
- 2.9 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will not give consideration to the concept of a 'virtual campus' or to those schools that do not actually share facilities.

3. Programme Requirements

Gateway Checks

- 3.1 Each project proposal will have to demonstrate that they meet all four Gateway checks below in order to be appraised under the Programme:-

- a) **Number, Management Type and Phase of Schools**
The proposal must involve a minimum of two schools from different management sectors (ie controlled, Catholic maintained, Irish medium, integrated, voluntary grammar). If any proposal involves schools from more than one educational phase (eg primary/post-primary) at least two schools at each phase from different management sectors must be represented, so that there can be educational sharing across similar age groups.
- b) **Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities –**
The respective Managing Authorities of the schools involved in the application must provide written endorsement of their agreement to the proposal. This is important as any investment at or on behalf of schools through the Programme has the potential to create ongoing liabilities as well as recurrent resource implications that the relevant Managing Authorities should be aware of and be prepared to support. Proposals under the Programme also need to be consistent with the Managing Authorities' strategic plans for the schools under their control.
- c) **Planning Authority endorsement**
The Planning Authority (ie the relevant Education and Library Board) must provide assurance that the proposal meets the criteria in the Sustainable Schools policy for each school involved in the proposal or, where this is not the case, provide a rationale for their endorsement, including an explanation as to how the proposal will contribute to the delivery of sustainable provision in the area going forward.
- d) **Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support**
Community, parent and pupil support is required to ensure the success of these types of proposals. Evidence is therefore required to confirm support is in place.

Essential Criteria

- 3.2 If a project proposal clears the Gateway checks, it will then be assessed, scored and prioritised against the following essential criteria:-
- a) **Educational Benefits –** the proposal must demonstrate how it will benefit the education of all children involved. The overarching priority for any proposal brought forward under this Programme must be the delivery of educational benefits to children and young people through improving or facilitating sharing initiatives. Marks will be allocated on the basis that the proposal clearly demonstrates:
- The sharing of classes, subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities and how educational benefits can be delivered to the children and young people through the sharing of classes together;
 - How educational benefits to the children and young people will be delivered through the sharing of classes together by developing future plans to increase the level of sharing between the schools involved;
 - How the proposal can aid the sharing of teaching expertise amongst the schools;

- That the courses being delivered are not a duplication of existing provision (in particular Further Education courses);
 - That consideration of the Bain report recommendations of not more than 2 composite year groups in a class and a school of a minimum of 4 teachers will be met.
- b) **Evidence of Existing Sharing** – Schools applying to the Programme should already be working in collaboration on curricular and non-curricular issues and/or be sharing facilities on an ongoing basis. The move to a Shared Education Campus should therefore build on a solid foundation of existing sharing that is already well embedded. Evidence must be provided detailing the existing educational sharing arrangements.
- c) **Societal Benefits** – the proposal must demonstrate how it will enhance/develop a shared future for the local community.
- The specific aim of the T:BUC strategy relating to education is ‘To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience’.
 - Building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools and is already an integral part of the curriculum.
 - Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment, and sectarianism; and
 - improving good relations amongst and for our young people.

Proposals will be marked, based on the evidence provided, on how they will contribute to this overall objective.

- (d) **Religious Balance** - A **minimum** of 15%, and preferably 30%, of the minority community (Protestant or Roman Catholic) should be represented within the combined total of the school population involved.

Where the proposal involves schools from more than one phase of education (eg primary and post primary), there should be a religious balance across individual phases so that educational sharing can take place between similar age groups.

Desirable Criteria

- 3.3 In addition, priority will be given to project proposals that demonstrate they meet the following desirable criteria which will also be assessed and scored:

- a) **Location** – proposals should be for schools to be located within the same campus or in close proximity to each other. Any proposal that is for shared facilities rather than a shared campus should provide details on the distances between the schools involved and schools will have to demonstrate how they plan to minimise the impact on pupils’ education of travelling between the sites involved.
- b) **Disadvantaged Pupil Considerations** – proposals involving schools where pupils are more greatly impacted by social disadvantage, as indicated by the percentage of free school meal entitled (FSME) pupils enrolled in the schools. This is in line with the recognition given in the T:BUC strategy that one of the benefits of a more shared education system is to raise educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

- 3.4 Applications should demonstrate that all Gateway and essential criteria are met and that any evidence requested is provided. Proposals considered as having met all the Gateway and

essential criteria will then be assessed with priority given to those proposals that best meet both the essential and desirable criteria. Those proposals which best meet the criteria will be submitted to the Minister for a final decision on which projects will be approved to proceed to the Economic Appraisal stage.

4. Process

- 4.1 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will be delivered by means of separate discrete calls for proposals. The first call was launched in January 2014. This is the second call.

Indicative Timetable for Second Call for Expressions of Interest

- 4.2 The indicative timetable for the Second Call under the Shared Education Campuses Programme is as follows:

- End September 2014 – Second Call for Expressions of Interest – the Department notifies Managing and Planning Authorities and all schools of the process, copying the approved protocol document, programme application form and confirming the programme timetable.
- End of January 2015 – deadline for submission of proposals to the Department by School Planning Authorities.
- June 2015 – Announcement of second tranche of Shared Education Campuses. Selected proposals advised to proceed in planning, including securing professional team as required.

- 4.3. In order to reduce the administrative and financial burden on individual schools and Managing Authorities, a two staged approach will be operated with regard to the application process. An application template is included at Annex 1 to this document and a flow chart for the process is attached at Annex 2.

Stage 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest

- 4.4. The first stage will take the form of an Expression of Interest (EOI) supported by an application form (see Annex 1) completed by the project applicant. The completed form will be the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) setting out the case for the shared education campus proposal. It will introduce the basic project concept, backed up with information on the cost, benefit and timing of the project.
- 4.5. The EOI must be endorsed by the relevant school Managing Authorities i.e. the relevant Education and Library Board on behalf of controlled schools in its area; the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on behalf of Catholic maintained schools; or, in the case of Voluntary Grammar, Grant Maintained Integrated or Irish Medium Schools, the Board of Governors of the individual school(s) concerned.
- 4.6. All EOIs should be submitted through the relevant Education and Library Board (ie the Planning Authority) which will be responsible for submitting the EOIs to the Department of Education. **EOIs which are not submitted via the appropriate Education and Library Board will not be accepted by the Department.** Education and Library Boards will advise schools in their Board area of the date they require receipt of proposals in order to allow them time for consideration and endorsement by Board Members/Commissioners to meet the Department's deadline for responses of **30 January 2015**.
- 4.7. The Planning Authority will confirm in writing to the Department whether or not it endorses the EOIs it receives. If an application is not endorsed by the Planning Authority, the Planning Authority will inform the school(s) involved of the position but the proposal must still be submitted to the Department.

Assessment of Project Proposals

- 4.8. Following the closing date for applications, all project applications will be assessed under the relevant Gateway criteria as set out at 3.1 above. Those applications deemed to have met all the Gateway criteria will be further assessed, along with the supporting evidence provided, against the essential and desirable criteria as set out in 3.2 & 3.3 above. Projects will be sifted and selected on the basis of the information provided in the application forms.
- 4.9. A cross-Directorate panel has been established within the Department to consider proposed projects against the set criteria. This panel will report to the Director of Area Planning and will make recommendations to the Minister based on which projects best meet the criteria and, within the funding available, should be progressed to the Economic Appraisal stage.

Approval of Applications to the Programme

- 4.10. The Minister will make the final decisions on which projects should go forward to Stage 2, based on the recommendations of the assessment panel.
- 4.11. Planning Authorities will be informed of the projects approved by the Minister to proceed to the planning stage.
- 4.12. Projects not selected for advancement in the Second Call will be returned to the Planning Authority. The project may be submitted to any subsequent call for proposals.

5. Stage 2 – Economic Appraisal

- 5.1 The projects selected by the Minister to proceed to the planning stage will be required to work up an Economic Appraisal for consideration and approval by the Department. The Economic Appraisals will be considered within the normal business approval processes and in line with NI Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEA) guidelines, including value for money and affordability. Only after approval of the Economic Appraisal, and subject to available capital funds, will a project be permitted to proceed to tender and construction.
- 5.2 The Department will provide support to the Managing Authorities in the development of Economic Appraisals for the selected projects.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1 Programme governance and control structures will be established for the programme of shared education campuses emerging.
- 6.2 Project plans will be sought from the School Managing Authorities for all approved projects.

7. Procurement

- 7.1 All professional appointments arising on approved projects must be carried out in full compliance with procurement guidelines and regulations. Where a professional team has already been appointed, the relevant Managing Authorities must provide evidence that the team has been procured in compliance with procurement guidelines and regulations, otherwise the Department will not support the appointment.

Annex 1

Shared Education Campuses Programme Application Form Second Call

Shared Education Campuses Programme – Application Form for Second Call

The Shared Education Campuses Programme will be delivered through separate, discrete calls for proposals which must be endorsed by both the relevant school Managing Authorities and Planning Authorities.

All project proposals must be supported by a completed application form, to be completed by the project applicant, which will form the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the shared education campus proposal.

The application form will help the Department to assess whether it is worth committing resources to take the project forward to develop a more detailed design and Economic Appraisal.

The completed application form must be returned through your Education and Library Board to reach the Department by Friday 30 January 2015.

Applications which are not submitted via the appropriate Education and Library Board will not be accepted by the Department.

This form is designed to help applicants make an application using appropriate and proportionate effort. There is flexibility over the amount of information to be included under each heading below, but please note that the application form is intended to be a short document and should not exceed 10 pages.

Project Title:

Planning Authority:

Managing Authorities Involved:

Senior Responsible Officer:

Signed:

Date:

Section 1: Project Overview

Briefly describe the basic project concept. Confirmation must be given that the application relates to schools which are viable and core to emerging area plans.

Section 2: Rationale, Aims and Need

State the rationale for shared education.

Identify the type of educational sharing being proposed (Shared educational facilities, enhanced educational facilities or shared education campus).

Identify the relevant aims and objectives of the proposed project.

Outline how the project meets the following criteria:

- *Number, Management Type and Phase of Schools;*
- *Managing Authority Endorsement;*
- *Planning Authority Endorsement;*

- *Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support;*
- *Demonstration of the Educational Benefits that will be created;*
- *Evidence of Existing Sharing;*
- *Demonstration of the Societal Benefits that will be created;*
- *Evidence of Religious Balance;*
- *Location;*
- *Evidence of Disadvantaged Pupil consideration.*

Section 3: Constraints

Identify likely constraints e.g. land issues; legal constraints; planning approvals.

Section 4: Stakeholder Issues

Identify the key stakeholders and confirm their agreement to the project proceeding.

Indicate their level of commitment to the project as specifically as possible.

Describe any consultations held or still required.

Are there any outstanding stakeholder issues?

Section 5: Management and Implementation

Give a preliminary indication of the proposed project management arrangements.

Is any consultancy support likely to be required?

Describe any legal or contractual issues.

Are there any important outstanding management/implementation considerations?

Section 6: Costs, Benefits & Risks

Provide broad estimates of the capital and revenue costs of the project.

If savings are anticipated, for example of planned minor works or maintenance explain their nature and quantify them broadly.

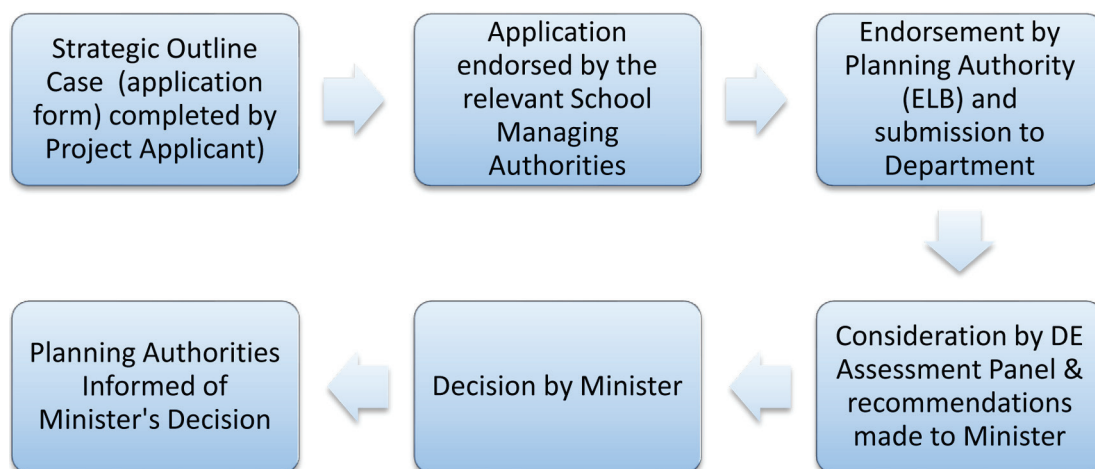
Describe the non-monetary costs and benefits that are expected to arise.

Explain the key risks that the project is likely to face and any potential mitigation measures.

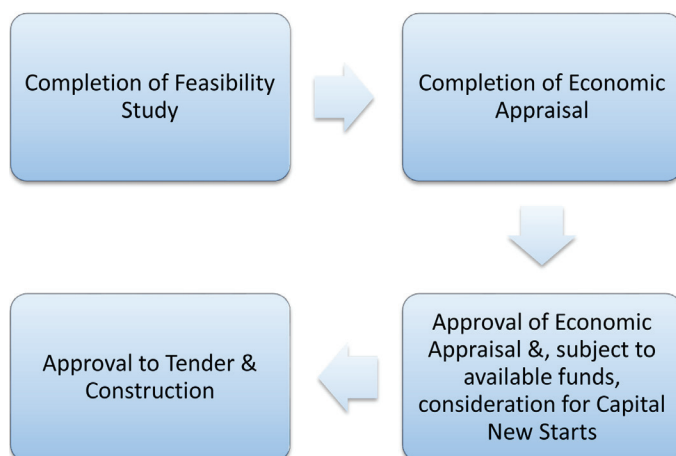
Annex 2

Shared Education Campuses Programme Flow Chart for Process

Stage 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest



Stage 2 – Economic Appraisal (approved projects only)



20141023 DE- Shared Education Campuses



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AN ROINN
Oideachais
MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100
Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/JW/1684

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

23 October 2014

Dear Peter

Shared Education Campuses

Thank you for your letter of 10 October 2014 regarding the Shared Education Campuses Programme.

Officials will be content to brief the Committee on the Shared Education Campuses Programme protocol on 14 January 2015 at Moy Regional Primary School. I would be grateful if you could contact Roisin Lilley, Head of the Shared Education Campuses Project Team, at roisin.lilley@deni.gov.uk closer to the date to confirm the detailed arrangements.

You had also asked for further information on the Department's use of facilitators to encourage Shared Education and assist in the development of Shared Campus proposals.

As the Committee is aware, the Department of Education, in conjunction with funding from the Delivering Social Change framework and Atlantic Philanthropies, is providing a funding stream to support Shared Education in schools over the next four years. The Shared Education Signature Project will provide funding of £25 million over the four year period. The project will be launched by the Minister and the first call for applications opened in the near future. This funding, which will focus on schools that have already engaged in this work, will increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education and promote reconciliation through schools increasingly working collaboratively. The project will fund a number of Development Officers to support the delivery of Shared Education programmes funded by the project.

In terms of the Shared Education Campuses Programme, the schools involved in projects chosen to go forward under the Programme will be working closely with their respective Managing Authorities, their local Planning Authority (ie the relevant Education & Library Board) and DE officials in the development of each project. Managing and Planning Authorities are also available to work with schools in bringing forward applications to the Programme.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Committee for Education

Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201

Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Our Ref: PMcC/JW/1684

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor BT19 7PR

veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

10 October 2014

Dear Veronica

Shared Education Campuses Programme

At its meeting on Wednesday 8 October 2014 the Committee noted your correspondence regarding the T:BUC Shared Campuses Programme.

Members agreed to write to the Department asking for a briefing on the Shared Campuses Programme protocol on 14 January 2015 at Moy Regional Primary school.

Members also agreed to seek further information on the Department's use of facilitators to encourage Shared Education and assist in the development of Shared Campus proposals.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk
Committee for Education

20141024 DE- Signature Programme



Department of
Education

www.deni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/JW/1706

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

24 October 2014

Dear Peter

Shared Education Signature Programme

Your correspondence of 15 October refers.

As the Committee is aware, on 17 September 2014 the First and Deputy First Minister announced a £58 million funding package provided by the Northern Ireland Executive and Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) for three Delivering Social Change signature programmes, including Shared Education.

The Shared Education Signature Project will run until 2018 with investment of £25 million over the four year period. The project will focus on supporting schools that have previously participated in Shared Education. The Department of Education (DE) is the lead Department and delivery of the project will be through the Education and Library Boards. The project will be launched by the Education Minister and the first call for applications opened in the near future.

The objectives for the project (as set out in the approved business case) are as follows:

- improve education outcomes through schools working collaboratively;
- increase the number of schools participating in Shared Education;
- improve reconciliation outcomes through schools working collaboratively;
- increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education;
- to work collaboratively to provide educators with professional development and develop their confidence and competence in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes;
- enable schools to implement a progressive approach to shared education; and
- to ensure shared education becomes a core element of strategic planning within the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and Schools.

To ensure Shared Education becomes a core element of strategic planning, project targets will be included in both the DE business plan and the ELB Resource Allocation Plans and monitored accordingly. Schools participating in the Shared Education Signature Project will be required to include specific plans and actions for Shared Education in their School Development Plan.

More broadly, the Department is currently developing a Shared Education Policy, which will set out the rationale, vision and objectives for Shared Education. The policy will also set out the actions and interventions that the Department will take to embed Shared Education across the system.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Committee for Education

Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201

Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Our Ref: PMcC/JW/1706

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor BT19 7PR

veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

17 October 2014

Dear Veronica

Shared Education Signature Programme

At its meeting on 15 October 2014, the Committee noted evidence from Professors Knox and Borooah in respect of the Shared Education Signature Programme announced in September 2014. The relevant extract in respect of the objectives of the Signature Programme is reproduced below:

- improve education outcomes through schools working collaboratively;
- increase the number of schools participating in Shared Education;
- improve reconciliation outcomes through schools working collaboratively;
- increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education;
- to work collaboratively to provide educators with professional development and develop their confidence and competence in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes;
- enable schools to implement a progressive approach to shared education; and
- to ensure shared education becomes a core element of strategic planning within the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and Schools.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking confirmation of the relevant objectives, funding levels and timings for the Shared Education Signature Programme. The Committee particularly sought clarity as to how the Shared Education Signature Programme will facilitate Shared Education becoming a core element of strategic planning within the Department, ELBs and schools.

A response by Friday 31 October 2014 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk

Committee for Education

20141104 DE- Comm CRED Sharing Categorization



Department of
Education

www.deni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/JW/1727

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

4 November 2014

Dear Peter

CRED / Sharing Categorisation

Your correspondence of 24 October refers.

Officials would be happy to provide the Committee with a briefing on the Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy.

As the Committee will be aware, the Department launched its CRED policy in March 2011. The policy is supported by the CRED Enhancement Scheme which provides funding support for the policy and is available to schools and youth organisations. The 2014/15 budget for the Scheme is £1.2 million.

Until 2010, DE provided annual funding of approximately £3.6m for a range of Community Relations schemes. At this time a total of twenty six external organisations were provided with funding. The new CRED policy was designed to move away from the dependency on external organisations in delivering community relations, equality and diversity by seeking to embed this work firmly within educational settings by providing a strong skills base for educators and the teaching resources required.

As the Committee is aware, there is currently no legal definition of Shared Education. It is the Minister's intention to bring forward a stand-alone Bill which will provide a legislative definition and define the role of the Department and its arm's length bodies. This will be supported by a Shared Education Policy, which will set out the rationale, vision and objectives for Shared Education.

The Committee will wish to note that the Terms of Reference for the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project explicitly state that Shared Education means the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together. Detailed Terms of Reference for the Shared Education Peace IV Programme have not yet been developed.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Committee for Education

Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201

Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Our Ref: PMcC/JW/1727

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor BT19 7PR

veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

24 October 2014

Dear Veronica

CRED / Sharing Categorisation

At its meeting on Wednesday 22 October 2014, the Committee noted correspondence (appended) from the Speedway Trust to the COFMDFM inquiry into T:BUC.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking a briefing on the Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy as part of the Committee's inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education. The Committee also agreed to request confirmation regarding reported reductions in funding for CRED and clarification in respect of the categorisation of Shared Education projects. In particular, clarity is sought regarding the question raised by the Speedwell Trust as to whether a Catholic Maintained school sharing with a Catholic Voluntary Grammar would be deemed an example of Shared Education which would attract support from the Peace IV or Signature Shared Education Programmes.

A response by 7 November 2014 would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk
Committee for Education



Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for the Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Submission from the Speedwell Trust October 2014

Executive Summary

We believe that schools have a central role to play in improving community relations and in building a united community in Northern Ireland. The need for all schools to facilitate cross-community contact for their pupils on a regular basis is clear. The evidence suggests that nearly a quarter (24%) of young people in Northern Ireland who consider themselves either 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' have no friends from the 'other' main religious community. Moreover, 45% of 16 year olds report having nowhere in their area where they could meet young people from a different religious background. There is also robust evidence that cross-community friendships and social activity are more likely among young people who have been given opportunities at school or in youth groups to mix with their counterparts on a cross-community basis.

The current level of participation by schools in cross-community shared education and community relations programmes is disappointing; of the 568 schools which responded to a recent survey on 'shared education' by the Department of Education, only 306 (54%) had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis.

In our view, there are three principal barriers to participation in cross-community collaboration by schools. The first and most important is undoubtedly that schools are not required to facilitate cross-community engagement for their pupils. Related to this is the lack of any statutory definition of shared education which defines it as cross-community activity. The third barrier is a lack of funding.

Our recommendations to the Committee are as follows:

- OFMdFM should produce an annual progress report, published in a timely fashion, with regard to the good relations indicators which it monitors.
- OFMdFM's 'Good Relations Indicators' reports should provide more analysis and should present recommendations for policy changes which might enhance progress towards improved community relations.
- OFMdFM should clarify the term 'community relations participation' by schools in its good relations indicators reports, and should introduce the following additional indicators:
 - The extent to which schools are providing opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils
 - The extent of cross-community friendships among children and young people
 - Whether children and young people have anywhere to meet their counterparts from the other main community

- The Committee should investigate the extent of and reasons for any delays by OFMdFM in making and communicating decisions on applications to its Central Good Relations Fund 2014/2015.
- The Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.
- Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.
- The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) programmes on a regular basis.
- The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.
- The Department should introduce an award scheme for schools which provide outstanding examples of good practice in shared education and CRED.

In addition, we believe that consideration should be given to synthesising the Department's shared education and CRED policies as there is clearly a considerable degree of overlap between them. However, if this is done, it is vital that the definition of shared education remains one which gives a central role to the importance of cross-community contact between Protestant and Catholic schoolchildren. Clearly, religious division is only one form of division in Northern Ireland, and we welcome the fact that CRED is also designed to address other divisions and stereotypes. At the same time, Northern Ireland will be unable to move forward into a truly harmonious and peaceful society if its most fundamental division is not addressed in schools.

Introduction

The Trust greatly welcomes the decision by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to hold an inquiry into an issue which is of fundamental importance to the future stability and prosperity of Northern Ireland, and to the quality of life of its people. The Trust's own experience lies in its work in assisting schools to collaborate together in shared education and other cross-community programmes. The Trust is dedicated, in particular, to bringing together children from the two main religious communities in Northern Ireland.

For this reason, our submission focuses on the role of schools in facilitating cross-community interaction. We also consider the role of parents in this regard. However, we have not looked at the many other elements and issues involved in building greater cross-community activity and understanding, as these lie outside our direct experience. Although we believe that there are many very important ways in which we can develop a more peaceful and united community, we do believe that schools have a central role to play in progressing such work.

The Speedwell Trust

The Speedwell Trust is a charity which has 23 years' experience of delivering educational programmes designed to facilitate constructive contact and greater understanding between children from different religious and cultural backgrounds. It is based near Dungannon, but works with schools and youth groups across Northern Ireland and, on occasion, in border

areas in the Republic of Ireland. To date, the Trust has provided services to more than 200 schools. Within the last financial year alone (2013/14), Speedwell delivered programmes in partnership with more than 100 schools.

Perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations

Theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services

The benefit of cross-community programmes for young people

One of the main reasons that cross-community contact between children and young people is so crucial is that the evidence suggests that a significant minority – just under a quarter – of young people in Northern Ireland who would consider themselves either ‘Protestant’ or ‘Catholic’ have no friends from the main religious community in which they did not grow up. In 2012, the annual Northern Ireland Young Life and Times (YLT) survey found that 24% of 16 year olds from the Protestant or Catholic religious community reported having no friends in the other main religious community.¹ Moreover, a previous YLT survey, carried out in 2011, found that such friendships were more likely among those who had previously participated in a cross-community scheme, or who had attended a planned integrated school.² Those who fall into these categories were also more likely to socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community.³

Furthermore, 45% of respondents to the 2012 YLT survey said that there were no facilities in their area where they could meet young people of a different religion, and 77% thought that cross-community relations would improve if there were more cross-community projects.⁴

Thus, there is a clear need for all children and young people who regard themselves as belonging to either the Protestant or Catholic community to be provided with opportunities to participate in cross-community programmes – both because these facilitate cross-community friendships and social activity, and because such a high proportion of young people cannot easily meet their counterparts from the ‘other’ community.

In addition, there is specific evidence that children and young people benefit from experiencing such contact on a sustained basis within an educational setting. A research team at Queens University, Belfast, found that children at schools which had participated in a shared education programme run by the University were less worried and more positive about the ‘other’ community than children at schools which did not participate in such a scheme.⁵ This finding applied even when the team confined its comparison to schools which were located in areas viewed as having greater divisions.

The importance of parental attitudes

However, the evidence also suggests that parents have a major influence on the attitudes and friendship patterns of their children. A study which was published in 2010, involving 1,700 children in Northern Ireland and 880 of their parents, found that parental social attitudes were the most powerful factor influencing the social and political attitudes of their children.⁶ This certainly suggests that, if we are to encourage children to have open and positive

1 Devine, Paula (2013) Research Update No. 83: Into the mix. ARK Northern Ireland.

2 Devine, Paula and Robinson, Gillian (2012) Research Update No. 79: No more ‘us and them’ for 16 year olds. ARK Northern Ireland.

3 Ibid.

4 Devine, Paula (2013), op. cit.

5 Hughes, Joanne et al. (2010) School Partnerships and Reconciliation: An Evaluation of School Collaboration in Northern Ireland. Queen’s University, Belfast, p. 40.

6 Stringer, Maurice et al., ‘Parental and school effects on children’s political attitudes in Northern Ireland’ in British Journal of Educational Psychology (2010), 80, 223–240.

attitudes towards those from different cultural and religious traditions, it is vital to engage with parents as well.

Schools' participation in shared education and community relations programmes

The current level of participation by schools in cross-community shared education and community relations programmes is disappointing; of the 568 schools which responded to a recent survey on 'shared education' by the Department of Education, only 306 (54%) had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis. In other words, nearly half (262 or 46%) had not participated in cross-community shared education.⁷

Moreover, the survey also found that only 15% of schools which had participated in shared education had done so in a way which involved the whole school.⁸ We believe it is essential that all children from either the Protestant or Catholic tradition in Northern Ireland are given the opportunity to engage in a sustained and meaningful way with children from the other main community on a regular basis. This can only happen if each class in every relevant school is provided with such an opportunity. It is also the only way in which the Programme for Government target, referred to previously, can be achieved.

Furthermore, the 2012 Northern Ireland Kids' Life and Times Survey, which surveyed children in P7, found that only 58% reported having taken part in an activity with a child from another school.⁹

Although the YLT survey in the same year found that a much larger proportion - 82% - of 16 year olds reported having taken part in such activity, only 72% of those who had participated in shared education (i.e. 59% of the whole sample) said that some of the pupils from other schools had been from a different religious background.¹⁰ It would seem, therefore, that substantial proportions of both primary and post-primary pupils are not being given any opportunity by their own school for cross-community engagement with children from another school.

In addition to shared education, a further route through which schools can facilitate cross-community engagement by their pupils is provided by the Department of Education. In 2011, the Department of Education published Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED), a new policy which was designed to encourage all schools to foster mutual understanding and good community relations.¹¹ The Department now provides some funding on an annual basis to schools and youth groups to help implement CRED.

The 2011 YLT survey found that 70% of their 16-year old respondents reported having engaged, at some stage, in activity which would fall under the umbrella of the CRED policy, either in school, in a youth group, or in both types of setting. Most of these respondents (60% of the whole sample) had taken part in such activity at school. Conversely, 30% of respondents said they had not participated in such activity.¹² However, this survey did not examine how many of these young people met members of the other main religious community as part of this activity.

7 Department of Education, Omnibus Survey: Shared Education, October 2013, Tables 5 and 10. Table 10 gives a percentage for involvement in cross-community shared education which excludes those schools which did not participate in any shared education. It is important, therefore, to read both these tables in conjunction with each other to discern the actual level of cross-community engagement.

8 Department of Education, op. cit., Table 8.

9 Kids' Life and Times 2012 Survey results. Available at: http://www.ark.ac.uk/klt/results/Shared_Education.html

10 Young Life and Times Survey 2012 Survey results. Available at: http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/2012/Shared_Education/

11 See Department of Education (2011) Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education. Available at: <http://www.credni.org/contents/what-is-cred/>

12 Devine, Paula (2013) Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED): Findings from the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey ARK Northern Ireland

We are also very concerned about the level of funding which is made available to schools and youth groups for the implementation of CRED. The Department of Education has significantly reduced the resources which it allocates for the support of community relations in schools. Up to March 2010, it allocated some £3.6m annually for such support in both formal and informal educational settings. It now allocates only £1.2m approx. annually.¹³

Only 15% of schools (181) took part in projects which were allocated funding by the Department through this programme in 2013/14.¹⁴

We further note, from data in OFMdfM's most recent 'Good Relations Indicators' report, that the proportion of schools engaging in community relations activity fell drastically between 2006/07, when it stood at 43%, to 2011/12, when it stood at 21%.¹⁵ It is not clear, from the report, how the OFMdfM data is compiled. It may refer only to schools which have been allocated funding for community relations programmes. Obviously, some schools may participate in community relations activities without recourse to external funding. However, the figures are undoubtedly a cause for concern. Moreover, they mirror informal feedback which we have received from schools which suggests that far fewer schools are now participating in such activity than was the case previously.

Barriers to cross-community collaboration by schools

In our view, there are three principal barriers to participation in cross-community collaboration by schools. The first and most important is undoubtedly that schools are not required to facilitate cross-community engagement for their pupils. Related to this is the lack of any statutory definition of shared education which defines it as cross-community activity. The third barrier is a lack of funding.

As the Committee will be aware, the Northern Ireland Executive's current *Programme for Government 2011–2015* contains a commitment to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015.¹⁶ In addition, the OFMdfM policy document, *Together: Building a United Community* (TBUC), contains a commitment to deliver ten 'shared education' campuses.¹⁷ The Education Minister subsequently made a pledge, in January 2014, to deliver on this promise.

However, if shared education is to form a central element of the Executive's approach to cross-community relations, as we believe it most certainly should, it is essential that all involved are using the same clear definition of 'shared education', and that any 'shared education' will facilitate sustained and meaningful contact between children from the two main religious traditions in Northern Ireland.

We have been disappointed, therefore, to discover that there is no clear statutory definition of 'shared education', and that the Executive seems to be using a definition which appears to allow collaboration between Catholic grammar and non-grammar schools, on the one hand, and between predominantly Protestant controlled or voluntary grammar and non-grammar schools, on the other, to be viewed as 'shared education'. It also appears to allow for collaboration between a Catholic primary and Catholic post-primary school, or a predominantly Protestant controlled primary school and a predominantly Protestant controlled or voluntary post-primary school.

13 The previous figure is cited in Department of Education, 2011, op. cit., p.8, para. 2.4. In Assembly Written Answer AQW29095/11-15, the Education Minister stated that his Department provided £1.163m in 2012/13 to fund the delivery of CRED.

14 The figures quoted are drawn from statistics supplied by the Education Minister in Assembly Written Answer AQW 29626/11-15.

15 OFMdfM (2012) Good Relations Indicators – 2012 Update, 4.11. Available at: <http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/pfg-economicsstatistics/equalityresearch/research-publications/gr-pubs.htm>

16 Northern Ireland Executive Programme for Government 2011 – 15, p. 51.

17 See: <http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community>

The definition in question was drawn up by the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education. This Group was tasked by the Executive with providing a set of recommendations on how best to take forward shared education. It reported in March 2013. It defined shared education as follows:

Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.¹⁸

Crucially, however, the report further clarifies that: “By ‘different sectors’, the definition refers to schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance.”¹⁹ Such a definition seems to allow the ‘single community’ interpretations referred to above.

Moreover, the impression that something close to the Group’s definition is being used by the Department of Education and by schools is reinforced by the fact that, in the “shared education” section of the schools’ survey carried out by the Department of Education, referred to earlier, the Department lists a number of types of ‘shared education’ collaboration in which each school might have participated and includes, as an option, collaboration with a school “from the same sector (e.g. controlled, maintained, integrated, Irish medium)”. Thus, although the Department has a different definition of the term ‘sector’ from the Ministerial Advisory Group, it appears to share the view that ‘shared education’ does not have to involve cross-community collaboration.²⁰

Any such ‘single community’ collaboration, while it may bring many other benefits, is not going to facilitate the type of cross-community contact which the evidence shows is so important in helping to increase cross-community understanding and foster good cross-community relationships in Northern Ireland.

We appreciate that the Education Minister has since committed to bringing forward a definition of shared education and appreciate that the final statutory definition may differ from the above.²¹ However, we are concerned that, in the absence of any official definition, the broad definition recommended by the Working Group will be used, in the meantime, by the Department of Education, education boards and schools in working towards the Executive’s current policy objectives concerning shared education. Moreover, until a firm statutory definition is produced, it will be impossible for either OFMdfM or the Department of Education to monitor robustly the degree and quality of shared education which is taking place, as it will not be clear what it is monitoring.

In addition, the Department of Education’s CRED policy document stipulates only that schools should provide opportunities for their pupils to interact with others from different backgrounds “within the resources available”; in other words, where a school feels it cannot afford to initiate such cross-community engagement, that engagement does not have to take place.²²

Moreover, at present, there is no dedicated funding stream to assist schools in collaborating on a shared education basis. As noted above, there has also been a significant reduction in the amount of funding which the Department of Education provides for schools’ community relations programmes. Perhaps not surprisingly, survey evidence suggests that lack of funding

18 Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education (2013) *Advancing Shared Education*, p. xiii. Available at: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/Filestore/Filetoupload,382123,en.pdf>

19 Ibid.

20 Department of Education, October 2013, op. cit., Table 10.

21 Education Minister. *Advancing Shared Education*. Ministerial Statement to Assembly, 22nd October, 2013. Available at: http://www.deni.gov.uk/advancing_shared_education_-_22_october_2013_docx.pdf

22 Department of Education, 2011, op. cit., para. 6.5.

is the major barrier which schools face when it comes to initiating shared education and cross-community schemes.

Lack of resources was the obstacle cited most commonly by the schools which took part in a survey on shared education carried out by a team from Queen's University; 83% of schools which responded selected this factor as a barrier to delivering shared education.²³ The issue was also identified by 53% of respondents to a survey which the Speedwell Trust carried out with schools with which it has worked (See Table 1). This survey asked schools to identify which factors they felt created potential obstacles for schools in participating in cross-community programmes.²⁴ Moreover, the barrier most commonly identified by the respondents to our survey was transport costs, cited by 85% of respondents.

Accessing Central Good Relations funding: the Trust's experience

In this regard, we wish to highlight our disappointing experience with regard to the fund established by OFMdFM to help achieve the Executive's good relations targets and to deliver its TBUC strategy. OFMdFM published an invitation to apply for the 2014-15 Central Good Relations fund in November 2013. The deadline for applications was 10th February 2014, and the Department's guidance note for applications specifically stated that projects which received funding must be delivered during the 2014-15 financial year.²⁵ However, the Department did not provide any information on the total amount of funding which would be available under this scheme.

The Trust duly applied for funding for a proposed project which would contribute towards the first of the four Ministerial priorities outlined in TBUC - 'our children and young people'. TBUC states that the shared aim of Ministers is "to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations"²⁶.

Our proposed project would also have assisted in delivering two of the key actions outlined in TBUC under this Ministerial priority, namely:

- Roll out a "buddy scheme" in publicly run nursery and primary schools
- Develop, in partnership with the relevant agencies and Departments, age-appropriate primary and post-primary anti-sectarianism resources, and ensure that teachers are trained, equipped and supported to deliver an effective anti-sectarianism module²⁷

To date, seven months on from submitting our application, we have not received a decision with regard to funding from OFMdFM, despite following up with the Department on a number of occasions. We have received just two emails during this time, one in March and one in May, both of which stated that staff were assessing the applications, that demand for funding had been very high, and that OFMdFM would let applicants know the outcome of their application as soon as possible. Our last contact with the Department was in August when we were given the same message verbally. We believe the delay in reaching and communicating to us a decision on our application is unacceptable.

It would now be impossible for us to deliver the whole of our proposed project within the 2014-15 financial year. We assume many other organisations which applied for funding are in the same position as ourselves. We would urge the Committee to investigate what proportion of applicants have received funding to date and how much of the funding originally

23 Hughes, Joanne et al. (2010) School Partnerships and Reconciliation: An Evaluation of School Collaboration in Northern Ireland. Queen's University, Belfast, p. 23.

24 The survey was carried out online in June 2014. An invitation to take part in the survey was issued by email to 130 schools. 65 (50%) responded.

25 OFMdFM, Guidance Notes. Central Good Relations Funding Programme 2014/2015, November 2013.

26 OFMdFM (2013) Together: Building a United Community, p.4.

27 op. cit., p.5.

allocated for the Central Good Relations Fund 2014-15 has been awarded and distributed. Where funding has not been allocated and where there have been lengthy delays in notifying applications of the outcome of their application, we would urge the Committee to examine the reasons for this to try to ensure that the situation is not repeated again in future years.

Parental concerns

It might well be assumed that one of the factors which might deter many schools from engaging in cross-community initiatives would be the possibility that parents might object. In general, however, we have not found parental attitudes to present any barrier to the work that we carry out. At the same time, we appreciate that some schools may be reticent about engaging in cross-community programmes because they fear the reaction which they may receive from some parents. Indeed, while most of the schools which responded to our survey did not see lack of support from parents as a barrier to shared education, 11% of respondents did feel it was an obstacle (see Table 1). Thus, the risk of upsetting some parents clearly is a deterrent factor for some schools.

Best practice in bringing together divided communities, and in developing shared space and shared services

We are not providing any comment on international best practice in the field of cross-community work in schools, as we have no direct experience of such work. However, we do have considerable relevant experience in Northern Ireland and, on occasion, in border areas of the Republic of Ireland. Below we highlight two of our most successful cross-community schools' programmes which we believe provide models of good practice which could be rolled out more widely.

Diversity and Drums

The success of our Diversity and Drums programme illustrates the value of facilitating children in directly addressing cultural difference and potentially contentious issues, and encouraging them to understand, respect and appreciate cultural diversity. For the children, the highlight of the programme is generally the opportunity which it provides them to have a go at playing a variety of different types of drum, including both the bodhran and the Lambeg drum. Participating in an activity which most children find hugely enjoyable is a great means of breaking down barriers and reducing any anxieties which the children may feel. However, the programme, through an educational thematic unit, also enables children to find out how drums have been used in different periods of history and in different parts of the world. As part of the programme, children also discuss sensitive issues such as bullying, sectarianism and racism, including the ways in which discriminatory and aggressive behaviour and attitudes impact on people, and on what can be done to address these issues.

The Diversity and Drums thematic unit, which is aimed at children in Key Stage 2, consists of 12 inter-related activities which are designed for use across one or two school terms by two schools whose pupils are each from predominantly different religious traditions. Schools are encouraged to deliver this module to joint groups of pupils from each of the partner schools. To date 30 schools have taken part in this programme and the feedback from them has been overwhelmingly positive.

Connecting Communities

The Connecting Communities programme is also aimed at children in Key Stage 2 and has been very successful. As with Diversity and Drums, Connecting Communities does not shy away from contentious issues, but rather encourages children to think about cultural difference. In this instance, the module explores how our concept of community is formed, the differences within a community, and how we come to think of some people as being 'inside' or 'outside' our community. Participants are also asked to imagine what it would be like to be a newcomer to their own community and how they might feel.

The Connecting Communities thematic unit consists of 14 inter-related activities which are designed for use across one or two school terms by two schools whose pupils are each from predominantly different religious traditions. To date, 15 schools have taken part in the practical workshops and, once more, feedback has been very positive.

What good relations means/how sectarianism and division can be addressed

Challenges at interface areas

We note that, in examining how sectarianism and division can be addressed, the Committee intends to investigate the specific challenges involved in tackling these issues in interface areas. However, we would caution against the assumption that the most entrenched divisions and negative attitudes exist only in interface areas. In our experience, profound distrust of the 'other' community can exist in areas which are not viewed as interface districts.

Nevertheless, the evidence clearly indicates that shared education can have a positive impact, even in sharply divided communities. We noted previously that the Queen's University research, to which we referred earlier, found that children at schools in more divided areas which had participated in a shared education programme were less worried and more positive about the 'other' community than children at schools in such areas which did not participate in such a scheme.²⁸

One potential challenge in bringing together children from different schools on a cross-community basis can be that parents and/or their children may view with apprehension the idea of travelling to a school located in an area associated with the 'other' community. In our own experience, there has only been one instance where a large number of parents objected to their children visiting such a school. This was almost certainly because the school was located in an area which they viewed as being associated with paramilitaries from the 'other' community. This particular instance is the only occasion in our 23 years of running such programmes in which a school has had to withdraw from the scheme, due to objections from a large number of parents.

Where such concerns do exist, however, it can be very helpful to deliver some or all of the programme activities at a neutral venue. Indeed, some rural schools don't have the space to accommodate large numbers of additional pupils, and so welcome the opportunity to use an external venue. Speedwell offers such a facility at our headquarters in Parkanaur Forest near Dungannon, where children have the opportunity to experience a range of outdoor activities in the forest setting, and to make use of indoor accommodation which is designed to accommodate large groups of children. The facility has proved very popular with schools.

Our own experience suggests that one of the most effective ways to engage with parents is to ensure that our cross-community programmes include a performance by the children involved to which parents are invited. Where this opportunity is offered, it is generally taken up by most parents who respond positively. Such opportunities enable parents to have a better understanding of our programmes and to engage with each other on a cross-community basis.

In addition, on those rare occasions where there is real opposition from parents, we have also found that it can be very helpful to engage directly with such parents in an open and constructive way prior to commencing a cross-community programme. Moreover, where there is any parental mistrust, it has never arisen from the cross-community contact per se, nor from the actual content of the programmes. Parental objections have only been raised on very infrequent occasions due to the location of a particular school, as mentioned above, or due to the involvement of an institution which has a negative symbolic significance for the parent(s) concerned e.g. a particular church or the PSNI.

28 Hughes, Joanne et al., op. cit., p. 40.

Role of communities

We note that the Inquiry's terms of reference include an examination of "the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers". We would urge the Committee not to ignore the vital role of schools in this regard. Indeed, for nearly all children and young people of school age, their school is the community in which they spend most of their time. The evidence which we have already cited on the impact of shared education and cross-community schools' programmes demonstrates the compelling need for schools to play a central role in helping to integrate our communities.

Moreover, many children are being taught in schools which have a pupil composition which is almost entirely Protestant or Catholic. In 2012, The Detail website obtained data from the Department of Education which, according to The Detail's website, showed that nearly half of all schoolchildren in Northern Ireland were being educated in schools which were 95% or more Protestant or Catholic in pupil composition.²⁹ Of the 1,070 schools in Northern Ireland in 2011-12:

- 46% of schools (493) had a pupil composition which was 95% or more Protestant or Catholic
- 27% of schools (291) had either no Protestant or no Catholic children on their rolls

While we acknowledge that there are now significantly fewer schools than hitherto which are very largely Catholic or Protestant in pupil composition, it still remains the case that a very large minority of schoolchildren are being educated in a school which is largely or entirely Protestant or Catholic in its make-up. It is especially vital that children in these schools should be provided with the opportunity for sustained interaction on a regular basis with pupils from the main religious tradition other than their own.

Effectiveness of Good Relations indicators in monitoring and measuring progress of government interventions

We welcome the fact that OFMdfM monitors, on a regular basis, a wide range of 'good relations' indicators. However, we are disappointed that the last progress report in this regard was published in 2012.³⁰ If progress is to be monitored effectively, it should be carried out and reported on in a timely fashion on an annual basis. Moreover, we are further disappointed that the most recent monitoring report is presented in a largely descriptive manner with little attempt at analysis and no recommendations for any policy changes which might enhance progress towards improved community relations. If the monitoring is to be of value, it is essential that it feeds into a regular process of policy analysis and review.

We have a specific concern regarding the report's lack of clarity as to how the 'community relations participation by schools' indicator was compiled. We believe that the quoted statistics may relate to schools which receive funding for such activity, but this is not clear. In addition, we believe there is an urgent need for indicators which help to measure the following:

- The extent to which schools are providing opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils
- The extent of cross-community friendships among children and young people
- Whether children and young people have anywhere to meet their counterparts from the other main community

The first of these proposed indicators is particularly important because, as already highlighted, neither shared education nor the Department of Education's current community

29 See: <http://www.thedetail.tv/issues/150/religioninschools/how-integrated-are-schools-where-you-live>

30 OFMdfM, 2012, op. cit.

relations policy, CRED, require schools to ensure that any such activity provides opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils. The other two proposed indicators have been selected because they are vital in helping to ascertain the degree to which children and young people develop friendships on a cross-community basis, and the extent to which children and young people are prevented from developing such friendships should they so wish.

Recommendations

In summary, our recommendations to the Committee are as follows:

- OFMdfM should produce an annual progress report, published in a timely fashion, with regard to the good relations indicators which it monitors.
- OFMdfM's 'Good Relations Indicators' reports should provide more analysis and should present recommendations for policy changes which might enhance progress towards improved community relations.
- OFMdfM should clarify the term 'community relations participation' by schools in its good relations indicators reports, and should introduce the following additional indicators:
 - The extent to which schools are providing opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils
 - The extent of cross-community friendships among children and young people
 - Whether children and young people have anywhere to meet their counterparts from the other main community
- The Committee should investigate the extent of and reasons for any delays by OFMdfM in making and communicating decisions on applications to its Central Good Relations Fund 2014/2015.
- The Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.
- Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.
- The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and CRED programmes on a regular basis.
- The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.
- The Department should introduce an award scheme for schools which provide outstanding examples of good practice in shared education and CRED.

In addition, we believe that consideration should be given to synthesising the Department's shared education and CRED policies as there is clearly a considerable degree of overlap between them. However, if this is done, it is vital that the definition of shared education remains one which gives a central role to the importance of cross-community contact between Protestant and Catholic schoolchildren. Clearly, religious division is only one form of division in Northern Ireland, and we welcome the fact that CRED is also designed to address other divisions and stereotypes. At the same time, Northern Ireland will be unable to move forward into a truly harmonious and peaceful society if its most fundamental division is not addressed in schools.

Table 1: Speedwell Trust survey responses to “What are the main obstacles to shared education activities with schools from a different education sector?” (N = 65. Respondents could tick more than one option.)

	Agree–	Don’t know–	Disagree–	Number of respondents responding to option
– cost of transport	85.25% 52	1.64% 1	13.11% 8	61
– lack of training for staff	38.60% 22	19.30% 11	42.11% 24	57
– lack of support from parents	10.91% 6	9.09% 5	80.00% 44	55
– local community tensions	17.54% 10	19.30% 11	63.16% 36	57
– no suitable facilities	22.22% 12	11.11% 6	66.67% 36	54
– lack of resources	53.45% 31	15.52% 9	31.03% 18	58
– curriculum pressures	63.16% 36	5.26% 3	31.58% 18	57
– lack of willingness from staff	5.36% 3	16.07% 9	78.57% 44	56
– poor relationship with partner school	5.45% 3	7.27% 4	87.27% 48	55
– lack of partner school	16.36% 9	10.91% 6	72.73% 40	55

20141217 - Shared Education Business Plan (2)

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX



Tel No: (028) 9127 9849
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/1869

17 December 2014

Dear Peter

SHARED EDUCATION BUSINESS PLAN

Your correspondence of 12 December refers.

The document referred to in a recent press article attributed to Professor Smith, University of Ulster is the Business Case for the Delivering Social Change shared Education Signature Project.

A copy of the Business Case is attached.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

VERONICA BINTLEY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

DE GENERAL BUSINESS CASE TEMPLATE FOR EXPENDITURES GREATER THAN £500k

This template is designed to facilitate documentation of an expenditure appraisal for **total expenditures (i.e. capital plus revenue) expressed in real terms including Optimism Bias where appropriate** greater than £500k. It identifies the main elements of a business case to be covered, followed by spaces or tables for inserting the relevant information. *The spaces and tables should be enlarged or modified as required to accommodate all the necessary information.*

Note that this is a general template covering basic requirements; it can be adapted and tailored to suit particular spending areas as desired (were significant changes to the template are planned, prior agreement should be sought from EAU). There are no precise rules about the length of the business case document for these expenditure decisions, however, it would be expected that a particularly large or significant project will have a greater degree of detail.

For detailed guidance on business cases and expenditure appraisal, consult the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE) at <http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/eag> or seek advice from DE's Economic Advisory Unit (EAU).

PROJECT TITLE: DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE SHARED
EDUCATION SIGNATURE PROJECT

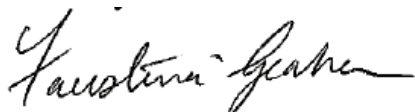
SPONSORING DEPARTMENT: Department of Education

Date of Business Case Initiation: 28 January 2014

Date of Business Case Completion: 7 April 2014

SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: FAUSTINA GRAHAM, COLLABORATIVE
EDUCATION & PRACTICE DIRECTOR

SIGNED: **DATE:** 8 April 2014



A DE pro forma must be completed and signed off by the Director (G5) prior to formal submission of the business case to Finance Directorate (EAU).

DE Finance Director approval is required for the proposed expenditure.

BUSINESS CASE

DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE SIGNATURE PROJECT

SHARED EDUCATION PROGRAMME



DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE

April 2014

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1. BACKGROUND, STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND NEED

1.1 Strategic Context & Policy Objectives

1.1.1 Legislative Requirements

The Education Reform Order 1989 (Article 6) places a duty on the Department to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils.

Section 75 and Schedule 9 to the NI Act 1998 places a statutory obligation on public authorities in carrying out their various functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity –

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, without prejudice to this obligation, Public Authorities are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, and racial group.

1.1.2 Programme for Government: 2011-15 (PfG)

One of the five Executive priorities contained within the Programme for Government (2011-15) is to build a strong and shared community. Within that priority there is a particular focus on building better relations between communities. Under this priority, the PfG sets out three specific objectives relating to Shared Education. They are:

- establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to advise on advancing shared education;
- ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; and
- substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

1.1.3 The Children and Young People Strategy

The Children and Young People Strategy (2006-2016) sets out Executive commitments to ensure that, by 2016, all children and young people are fulfilling their potential. Expected outcomes include:

- Living in safety and with stability;
- Contributing positively to community and society; and
- Living in a society which respects their rights.

One of the pledges, recognising that Northern Ireland is emerging from a prolonged period of conflict, commits to ensuring that our children and young people are supported to grow together in a shared, inclusive society where they respect diversity and difference.

By producing positive impacts for all parts of society, the strategy has particular importance for children and young people through the creation of sustainable relationships, built on trust between individuals and communities, to ensure a peaceful and prosperous future.

1.1.4 Together Building a United Community

The 'Together: Building a United Community' (T:BUC) Strategy, published on 23 May 2013, reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The strategy commits to *"enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience."* The strategy references the Programme for Government Commitments and the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education.

1.1.5 The Delivering Social Change (DSC)

The Delivering Social Change (DSC) framework was established by the Executive to tackle poverty and social exclusion. It represents a new level of joined-up working by Ministers and senior officials across Executive departments to drive through interventions which have a genuine impact on the ground.

The framework aims to deliver a sustained reduction in poverty and associated issues across all ages and to improve children and young people's health, well-being and life opportunities thereby breaking the long term cycle of multi-generational problems.

The DSC framework aims to deliver the following outcomes:

- (i) a sustained reduction in poverty and associated issues, across all ages; and
- (ii) an improvement in children's and young people's health, wellbeing and life opportunities thereby breaking the long-term cycle of multi-generational problems.

1.2 Definition of Shared Education

Shared education has been defined as the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;

- involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

By shared education we mean the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.

We expect shared education also to be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children from differing s75 groups (e.g. children from different racial backgrounds, children with and without disabilities, children who are carers or school age mothers) and from differing socio-economic backgrounds to learn together at school and in less formal education.

1.3 Educational Policy Context

The Department of Education's (the department) vision is - *"To ensure that every learner fulfils his or her full potential at each stage of development."*

Fulfilling this vision is underpinned by goals identified as priorities by the Department in its Corporate Plan. The department's two overarching goals are:

- raising standards for all – through high quality teaching and learning, ensuring that all young people enjoy and do well in their education and that their progress is assessed and their attainment recognised, including through qualifications.
- closing the performance gap, increasing access and equity – addressing the underachievement that exists in our education system; ensuring that young people who face barriers or are at risk of social exclusion are supported to achieve to their full potential.

The strategic drivers for the promotion of sharing in education are:

- the education case – improving access for learners to the full range of the curriculum, to high quality teaching, and to modern facilities;
- the economic case – making more effective and efficient use of limited resources to deliver more value for money; and
- the social case – improving societal well being by promoting a culture of tolerance, mutual understanding and inter-relationship through significant, purposeful and regular engagement and interaction in learning.

Shared Education provides a mechanism for peer learning whereby schools that are educationally stronger are incentivised to collaborate with schools that are marginally weaker.

Potentially, it also results in a wider curriculum choice for pupils, the promotion of the efficient and effective use of resources, good relations, equality of identity and community cohesion.

It follows that greater sharing will benefit all learners, from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status, the community, and the economy through more efficient and effective use of resources on a shared basis.

Better educational outcomes for young people, including life and work skills, capacity building and skill sharing between teachers and more accessible schools engaging with the wider community are expected.

1.4 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

1.4.1 OFMdfM

OFMdfM's Equality and Strategy Directorate is responsible for developing and monitoring the Programme for Government, for providing economic advice and for a range of cross-cutting issues and initiatives to address equality, good relations, deprivation and social exclusion.

It has oversight responsibility for the Delivering Social Change framework which was set up by the Executive to tackle poverty and social exclusion.

It also has oversight responsibility for the cross-cutting 'Together: Building a United Community' (T:BUC) Strategy.

1.4.2 The Atlantic Philanthropies

The Atlantic Philanthropies is a philanthropic organisation that works in conflict zones around the world. Atlantic grant making here dates back to the early 1990s. Initial efforts supported peacemaking and strengthening higher education. Since 2004, Atlantic has focused on three programme areas: Ageing; Children & Youth; and Reconciliation & Human Rights.

As a life limited foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies are due to conclude their grant making by 2016. They have identified shared education as an area where they wish to help make a lasting impact by collaborating with the Executives where programmes can overlap with the Programme for Government. These will be joint funded Executive/ Atlantic Philanthropies programmes.

Atlantic jointly funded Shared Education pilot programmes since 2007 involving over 165 schools and have developed models of sharing that has lead to economic, education and reconciliation benefits involving pupils, teachers, governors, parents and the wider community.

Their aspiration is that Protestant and Catholic children across Northern Ireland being educated together becomes the norm rather than the exception, and that government policy and practice fully incentivise shared education.

In discussions with OFMDFM, Atlantic Philanthropies propose to provide financial support of up to £10m towards the cost of the Shared Education Signature Project, given the alignment with their grant closure priorities providing match funding was made available from government sources.

1.4.3 Managing Authorities & Arms Length Bodies

Operational delivery of the Shared Education Signature Project will fall primarily to the Educational and Library Boards and CCMS (or Education & Skills Authority).

In seeking to meet the Programme for Government commitment to increase the number of school sharing facilities, Managing Authorities will also have a role through Area Planning to identify opportunities and encourage schools to share existing and any future new facilities.

It is anticipated that other arm's length bodies including CnaG, NICIE, Youth Council NI and CCEA will have a stakeholder interest.

1.4.4 Schools

School will have a direct role in delivering on the Programme for Government commitments to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; and to substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

The Shared Education Signature Programme will assist schools in meeting these commitments by providing funding for additional costs as well as assisting the Minister of Education in deciding the most appropriate way to mainstream shared education funding.

Schools will also be expected to co-operate with managing authorities in identifying and exploring opportunities to increase the level of sharing of facilities.

1.4.5 Pupils

Pupils will ultimately be the main beneficiaries of the opportunity to participate in a programme of shared education.

Based on the Education and Training Inspectorate's evaluation of a number of strategic shared education projects funded by the International Fund for Ireland, it is anticipated that pupils will benefit from an increase in self-confidence, self-awareness and self-reflection; being open to meeting others with differing perspectives; improved skills in problem solving, decision making, critical thinking and creative thinking.

Shared Education is also expected to lead to improvement in the delivery of minimum curricular requirements for Personal Development and Mutual

Understanding at Primary level and Learning for Life and Work (Local and Global Citizenship) and for the curricular requirement to “Developing Pupils as Contributors to Society” across the range of subject areas at Key Stage 3 and above.

Shared education will improve access for pupils to the full range of curriculum (i.e. wider curriculum choice), to high quality teaching, and to modern facilities. It can allow opportunities for peer learning whereby schools that are educationally stronger are incentivised to collaborate with schools that are marginally weaker.

It follows that greater sharing should ultimately result in better educational outcomes for young people.

1.4.6 Wider Community

As a society emerging from conflict, building a strong and shared community continues to be a key objective within the Programme for Government. Against the background of a diverse education system, shared education is seen as a way to break down barriers and improve community relations.

Improving attitudes amongst young people and building a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations is recognised as a key priority within T:BUC. Equipping young people for a future in which the cycle of sectarianism and intolerance is broken is a key objective.

In turn this will benefit the wider community.

1.5 IDENTIFICATION OF NEED

1.5.1 Background

As noted in Paragraph 1 above, the PfG commitment (2011-15) contains three specific objectives relating to Shared Education one of which is to establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to advise on advancing shared education;

In order to progress the Ministerial Advisory Group's recommendations on shared education, it is planned that a Shared Education Programme will be delivered under the DSC framework.

The four year programme (2014-15 to 2017-18) will be based on lessons learnt to date from existing shared education pilots that have been operating in schools and will provide an evidence base for mainstreaming shared education funding in the longer term in a way that is sustainable.

In addition, the Department has a complementary programme of work to further mainstream shared education addressing other recommendations by the Ministerial Advisory Group. This includes defining shared education within legislation; directing the Education & Library Boards/Education & Skills Authority to encourage and facilitate shared education; reflecting shared education within the schools inspection process; teacher training; reviewing existing education policy on a rolling basis to reflect shared education and continuing to encourage the establishment of school councils.

All of the above interventions will contribute to meeting the PfG Shared Education targets.

1.5.2 Shared Education - Baseline Statistics

1.5.2.1 School Omnibus Survey

The School Omnibus Survey (2013) is a multipurpose survey of all Principals in grant-aided schools. The 2013 survey had an overall response rate of 52%. The latest results from the 2013 school omnibus survey indicate:

- that 76% of respondent school were involved in some form of shared education in the 2011/12 academic year. Participation in shared education was higher in post primary (94%) than primary (71%).
- In the 2011/12 academic year, 83% of respondent schools partnered with another school in relation to curricular or extracurricular activities.
- In the same academic year, 51% of schools were involved in sharing facilities with another school, 38% in sharing resources; 30% in shared teachers and 26% in sharing equipment.
- Of those responding schools, 13% had partnered between one class; 72% with more than one class and 15% on a whole school basis.

- Of these, 65% partnered on a cross community basis, 51% with a school from the same sector; 35% between primary and post primary; 15% between secondary and grammar; and 8% between nursery and primary.

1.5.2.2 Young Life & Times Survey

According to the Young Life & Times Survey 2011 (which is an annual attitudinal survey targeting 16 year olds), 31% of young people said they rarely or never socialise with people from a different religious community, while 22% said they had no close friends from the other main religious community.

The 2011 survey indicated that 49% of young people agree that most people would like to have friends of a different religion but never have the opportunity.

The 2012 survey included a module commissioned by the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People on shared education. The results indicated that 55% of respondents had undertaken projects with pupils from other schools; 46% had classes with pupils from other schools and 25% had used shared facilities or equipment.

Respondents to the 2012 survey indicated that 71% had shared with children of a different religion (with 16% not knowing).

89% thought projects with pupils from other schools a good idea, 83% thought shared facilities and resources was a good idea, while 76% indicated that classes with pupils from other schools was a good idea.

1.5.2.3 Existing Shared Education Work

Shared education programmes have been taking place in a limited number of schools over the last few years, most notably with significant investment from the International Fund for Ireland and the Atlantic Philanthropies in relation to twenty two strategic projects delivered locally i.e. the Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP).

This work has been subject to evaluation by the Education & Training Inspectorate (see Appendix 3), IFI Evaluation Report: Sharing in Education Programme) as well as a series of evaluations by individual projects. This, together with other research (including a report by the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People), provides a strong evidence base for progressing shared education through existing educational policies as well as new approaches.

These programmes have ranged from teachers learning and planning together, through to coordinate timetabling with the curriculum being taught to mixed classes in different schools as well as extra-curricular activity and joint projects – whatever best meet the needs of local schools and the community.

1.5.3 Historical Context

Shared Education programmes, such as SiEP were set against the background of 92.6% of the school population was educated in either Catholic maintained schools or controlled or voluntary schools attended mainly by Protestant children or young people. The SiEP aimed to break down the barriers arising from the historic conflict in NI by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn together and to reach the highest possible standards of educational achievement. Shared education should not be seen as just another initiative nor is it a new concept.

The SiEP sought to build on the lessons learned across many years in the development of community relations in Northern Ireland.

1.5.4 The Policy Context

In line with the Programme for Government commitments, the Ministerial Advisory Group was appointed by the Minister of Education in July 2012, and published its findings on 22 April 2013 (report available at

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/shared_education/shared-education-ministerial-advisory-group.htm

'Shared education is not a bolt-on or an optional extra. It is fundamental to delivering good schools and central to my vision that every learner should achieve his or her full potential'. - Minister of Education - October 2013

The development of shared education aligns closely with the role of the Department to improve educational outcomes for young people and to promote personal well-being and social development, so that young people gain the knowledge, skills and experience to reach their full potential as valued individuals and active citizens, as envisaged in the department Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy. The Programme for Government (PfG) 2011-15 commitments for the department with respect to shared education include:

- to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; and
- to increase substantially the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

In addition, the work of shared education as evidenced by the SiEP links well to the four tenets of the department's policy of school improvement (Every School a Good School) through promoting child-centred provision, high-quality learning and teaching, effective leadership and a school connected to its local community.

Given these developments, the Minister of Education appointed a Ministerial Advisory Group whose independent report was issued in March 2013 detailing 20 recommendations to advance shared education which are based around five themes:

- Mainstreaming Shared Education;

- Supporting schools in Shared Education;
- Schools and other educational institutions;
- Area Based Planning and Schools Estate; and
- Academic Selection.

In a statement to the Assembly in October 2013, the Minister of Education accepted the recommendations of the Ministerial Advisory Group, reserving final decisions on a small number pending further work

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/shared_education.htm

1.5.5 The Curriculum Context

The statutory curriculum provides a core enabling framework to promote shared education. The Curriculum in the north of Ireland was revised in 2007 with the aim of empowering young people to develop their potential and make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives through three key objectives:

- the development of the young person as an individual;
- a contributor to society;
- a contributor to the economy and environment.

Key elements which focus on the real and relevant issues that young people need to assimilate in preparation for life and work in NI society are embedded in the individual areas of learning (subjects).

The learning areas of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU), Local and Global Citizenship and Learning for Life and Work (LLW) are key vehicles for embedding shared education through the NI Curriculum. They were developed specifically to enable young people across the key stages to learn about themselves and others, developing tolerance, respect and open-mindedness through understanding similarities and respecting differences between people in the local community and beyond in order to help them address the challenges and opportunities they may encounter in society.

In addition, all subject strands but in particular, religious education, history, geography, English, languages, drama and art and design provide opportunities for teachers to design learning programmes that explore identity, diversity and promote reconciliation, developing the attitudes and dispositions as shown in Appendix 5.

The evaluation of the SiEP found evidence to demonstrate that shared education activities have the potential to meet the aims of the NIC in a more holistic way through preparing young people better for life and work in an interdependent NI and a globalised world.

Shared education also provides practical experiences and contexts for young people to develop better their thinking skills and personal capabilities, skills needed for lifelong learning; for example, applying critical thinking in shared

classes helps young people to suspend judgement and become open-minded; to be willing to explore alternative viewpoints and imagine “otherwise”.

Independent thinking and personal awareness through engaging with different viewpoints develops the young people's confidence and self-esteem to safeguard them against dogmatism and peer pressure. The development of interpersonal skills through shared classes enables young people to listen carefully in order to adapt language and behaviour to take account of others' feelings, and to develop the ability to work together, manage disagreements and reach agreed outcomes.

1.6 THE CONCEPT OF SHARED EDUCATION

The SiEP Evaluation acknowledges that sharing will always require compromise. Compromise will not and cannot always be equal for both parties but the vision statement of *'Every School a Good School'* provides a clear guiding principle placing the interests of young people rather than institutions at the centre of efforts to improve educational improvement and tackle underachievement.

The professional view of ETI is that shared education is not an event or series of lessons but, rather a process in which to embed a whole-school approach to shared education to prepare young people better for life and work. The evidence from the SiEP Evaluation confirms that schools/organisations are at different starting points along a continuum.

1.6.1 IFI Evaluation Report: Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP)

A formal evaluation was carried out by the Education & Training Inspectorate on nineteen of twenty-two strategic Shared Education projects funded by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). The remaining three projects, which were jointly funded by IFI and Atlantic, were subject to a separate evaluation.

Details of the ETI findings are summarised at Appendix 3. A full copy of their report is available at: <http://etini.nics.gov.uk/investmentfundireland/>

In summary, in almost all of the projects the participants:

- developed good personal and social skills through their engagement with others in exploring controversial, sensitive, complex and relevant issues to their lives;
- increased their awareness of the impact of their attitudes and actions on other individuals and communities; and
- were able to evaluate their own learning through, for example, reflective journals/diaries, questionnaires and discussions.

The majority of the projects provided them with the opportunity to achieve an accredited qualification or an award designed with set criteria.

In going forward, the evaluation report identified a need:

- for schools/organisations to evaluate consistently the impact of the work of reconciliation on the young people's attitudes, behaviours, understanding and skills to be able to demonstrate clearly the progress of young people and to inform future planning;
- for schools/organisations to focus on the development of the young people's maturity and higher-level skills of negotiation, compromise, collaborative problem-solving, managing disagreement, conflict and confrontation through innovative, inspiring and experiential learning strategies;
- for all stakeholders to recognise, value and reward shared learning through accreditation and assessment arrangements across phases; and
- for support staff across all phases to develop further their confidence and competence in using a wide range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes, to provide progressively challenging experiences for young people in tackling controversial and sensitive issues.

1.6.2 The Challenge going forward

It is a commendable goal to provide all young people with a shared education opportunity throughout their school career. However, while the quantitative target is useful, much remains to be done to ensure the experience is effective, sustained and progressive, particularly in schools that have not yet begun the process.

Schools will need support to move along a continuum to embed high-quality shared education.

In helping to address these challenges DE officials need to work more collaboratively to ensure that school improvement policies signpost connections to, and opportunities for, shared education.

The longer-term aim for all schools is for shared education to be so integral to the ethos and fabric of each school community that it becomes 'the way we do things around here'. All of the requirements to achieve this aim are enshrined in the aims of the curriculum, but schools, like our society, are at different starting points.

Only by honest self-reflection will any school community be able to identify its starting point and only with a genuine commitment from all stakeholders can schools be supported to work through the complexities of achieving an aim for children and young people that has so far eluded our wider society. In the short to medium term that will only be achieved through ongoing collaborative practice which allows schools to reflect on how much progress they have made in meeting that longer-term aim.

They will continue to need to be supported by each other but also through initiatives such as the SiEP and project-led work gradually reintegrating what they learn into custom and practice.

2. AIM & OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The overall aims of the programme are to scale up the level of sharing drawing on existing evidence; mainstream financial support for any additional costs and improve the educational and reconciliation outcomes in school working collaboratively.

A baseline exercise has been completed to establish the current level of shared education through the 2013 Schools Omnibus Survey (a multi-purpose survey of all Principals in grant-aided schools designed to collect a range of information as determined by DE policy teams.

Research evidence from a number of reports and survey data and baseline information has been taken into account in developing measurable targets.

Project Objectives	Measurable Targets
Improve education outcomes through schools working collaboratively ^{Note 1}	<p>For participating schools:</p> <p><u>Primary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the percentage of pupils achieving KS2 Communication in English from 2013/14 level by 2017/18; • Increase the percentage of pupils achieving KS2 Using Maths from 2013/14 level by 2017/18; <p><u>Post-Primary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the percentage of pupils achieving KS3 Communication in English from 2013/14 level by 2017/18; • Increase the percentage of pupils achieving KS3 Using Maths from 2013/14 level by 2017/18; and • Increase the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE (or equivalent) A*-C including English & Maths from 2013/14 level by 2017/18. <p>As the level of increase will be dependent on the exact cohort of participating schools, it is proposed that schools will set their baseline and outcome target as part of the application process. Outcomes will be measured at the end of the project with progress being reported in monitoring reports during the project.</p>
Increase the number of schools participating in Shared Education ^{Note 1}	-Using the definition of shared education in the Ministerial Advisory Group Report, to increase the percentage of schools providing shared classes with pupils (other than Entitlement Framework) from 23% to tba% by end of 2017/18
Improve reconciliation outcomes through schools working collaboratively ^{Note 2}	-By 2017/18, to show increase in reconciliation outcomes between schools working cross-sectorally and those which are not, using the following measures: Cross Group Friendship (from 1.94 - 2.37) Positive Action Tendencies (from 2.71 – 3.14); and Intergroup Anxiety (from 1.66 - 1.57).

Increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education ^{Note 3}	<p>-Using the definition of shared education in the Ministerial Advisory Group Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the percentage of schools engaged in shared education on a whole school basis at 15% (114) in the 2014/15 academic year and increase to 20% (152) by 2017/18. • Maintain the percentage of schools involving <i>only</i> one class at 13% (99) in 2014/15 academic year and increase to 80% involving <i>more than</i> one class (610) by 2017/18. • Schools in receipt of shared education funding to jointly deliver LLW and PDMU on a shared basis by 2017/18.
To work collaboratively to provide educators with professional development and develop their confidence and competence in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes	<p>-By 2017/18, 95% of participating schools have provided teachers with professional development on a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes. ^{Note 4}</p> <p>For participating schools, provision of joint professional development training (to include tackling the challenges of providing and teaching shared classes).</p>
Enable schools to implement a progressive approach to shared education	<p>-Refine the QUB continuum of shared education by end of 2014/15.</p> <p>-Further develop the quality indicators for identification of effective practice by 2017/18.</p> <p>-All participating schools/partnerships to progress at least one step up the continuum of shared education model by 2017/18 (confirmed through ETI assessment)</p>
To ensure shared education becomes a core element of strategic planning within the Department of Education, Education and Library Boards/ Education & Skills Authority and schools	<p>Shared education targets to feature in DE's strategic and business plans;</p> <p>Education & Training Inspectorate to work towards integrating shared education into the normal inspection process.</p> <p>Shared Education targets to feature in ELBs/ESA Resource Allocation Plans</p> <p>Shared Education targets to feature in school development plans</p>

^{Note 1} Due to the variation across schools it is not possible to set a specific generic target increase at the business case stage. Instead, existing baselines, current projected increases, and revised projections resulting from involvement in this programme will be established as part of the application process. This will provide a target increase relevant to each participating school which will allow comparison against ELB and NI averages.

^{Note 2} Evidence shows that improved community relations are natural by-product of cross-community sharing (e.g.: Shared Education Initiatives in Northern Ireland: A Model for Effective Intergroup Contact in Divided Jurisdictions (Blaylock & Hughes Dec 2013). A QUB longitudinal survey, funded by Atlantic Philanthropies will provide the source data, including 2013/14 baselines and Atlantic will fund the continued survey work.

^{Note 3} Measured through School Omnibus Survey; 2014/15 targets represent baseline figures from 2013 Survey as £21m IFI/AP funding terminated in Dec 13, maintaining current levels represents a challenging target. The final outcome target is based on current experience of what is likely to be achievable, but will be re-assessed following the application stage and adjusted if necessary. As the programme will target 65% schools (762) the relevant percentages are calculated against the number targeted by the programme. Recording precise numbers of pupils would impose significant bureaucracy on schools and would be subject to risk of over/under recording as pupils may be involved in more than one programme; proposed measure has a direct correlation on number of pupils.

^{Note 5} Measured by comparing self assessment baselines at application stage with final outcome at end of programme

2.2 Quality Indicators

As a result of previous pilot programmes, a set of quality indicators were developed by ETI to provide a benchmark for this work which school can use to self assess; this will be further refined during the period of the programme. A copy of these indicators can be found at the attached link:

<http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme/quality-indictors-for-use-by-international-fund-for-irelands-sharing-in-education-programme-projects.doc>

2.3 Shared Education Continuum Model

One of the ETI recommendations from evaluation of pilot programmes was the development of a continuum of shared education model against which schools can self assess.

An example as to what this could look like is provided in Appendix 4. The model would be refined to enable it to be used for self-assessment purposes by schools.

3. CONSTRAINTS

3.1 Timing

This will be a four year project commencing from April 2014 (with implementation in schools expected to commence in the 2014/15 academic year) in line with availability of Atlantic Philanthropies' funding window.

3.2 Funding

Agreement was reached with Ministers to establish a fund of up to £25m over the four year period, with contributions of up to £10m from the Atlantic Philanthropies, £10m from OFMDFM through central funds and up to £5m from the Department of Education.

The availability of joint funding will be the incentive for schools to plan and have approved a shared education partnership at primary and post –primary level.

Atlantic funding in year 4 is subject to a commitment by DE (and/or Executive) to provide resources to mainstream shared education in the longer term.

Constraints	Measures to address constraints
Funding level over 4 year period to end 2017/18 FY	Funding is set and agreed over a 4 year period at up to £25m due to closure constraint of the Atlantic Philanthropies funding. Programme will operate over the period funding is available. It will inform decisions on mainstreaming funding in the longer term.
Excludes capital costs, including shared education campuses, which are structural approaches to implementing shared education	The programme excludes capital costs relating to structural building. Capital costs related to Shared Education Campuses are being taken forward through an alternative funding programme and therefore will be excluded from this programme.
Atlantic funding in year 4 is subject to a commitment by DE (NI Executive) to provide resources to mainstream shared education in the longer term	In his statement of 22 October 2013 to the Assembly, Education Minister acknowledged the need to mainstream financial support for any additional costs in relation to shared education. Regular reports on plans for mainstreaming will be made to Project Board and DSC Programme Board. Discussions are on-going to ensure the Memorandum of Understanding between Atlantic Philanthropies, OFMDFM and DE clearly outlines how this commitment will be met.
Only Schools already engaged in some form of Shared Education (i.e. those at level 2 and above on the continuum model (see Appendix 4) will be eligible to avail of the DSC SEP.	The application criteria will exclude schools currently working in isolation. A separate funding stream and programme will be established to address the needs of schools working in isolation.

4. IDENTIFICATION AND SHORTLIST OF OPTIONS

A number of options have been considered and assessed against the objectives of the programme. An overview of each option is provided below and assessment is provided for short listing purposes.

4.1 Option 1: Status Quo (Do Nothing)

Evidence shows that there are a number of current shared education programmes, which have been funded through a variety of existing policies and philanthropic funding. Evidence also indicates that there are a number of additional costs for schools to successfully implement shared education.

Philanthropic funding is set to reduce over the next few years as existing funding streams, such as the International Fund for Ireland and the Atlantic Philanthropies prepare for closure. Hence the opportunity for school to secure funding will be significantly reduced.

Research shows that schools have also financed shared education through existing earmarked funding such as Community Relations, Equality and Diversity, Extended Schools and Entitlement Framework, while others have drawn on their LMS budgets.

As this has been the position for some years, it would suggest that while the status quo does not preclude shared education taking place, it would be difficult to meet the Programme for Government commitments to advance shared education. It would also result in a piecemeal approach with varying degree of opportunity being provided to pupils.

In addition, the status quo would not facilitate actions agreed by the Minister of Education in response to the Ministerial Advisory Group report and would be a barrier to advancing shared education.

While the status quo would not sufficiently meet the Executive's commitment to advancing shared education, it remains a shortlisted option for comparative baseline purposes only.

4.2 Option 2: Shared Education Programme

The Shared Education Programme would provide earmarked funding to support collaborative activities through an open application process to all schools.

Applications would be assessed against specified criteria and scoring framework, which would include level of sharing to date; educational improvement; societal benefits and value for money considerations. As the programme is designed for schools that have already engaged in some form of shared education (i.e.: those at level 2 and above on the continuum model in appendix 4), the application criteria will exclude schools currently working in isolation. A separate funding stream and programme will be established to address the specific needs of schools that are working in isolation.

Consequently it is envisaged that around 65% of schools (equating to 762 schools) would be eligible to participate in the programme).

The programme would be administered and implemented through the ELBs.

A dedicated ELB support team would encourage and promote shared education to all schools and provide advice and support in self assessment of the current level of sharing (against a continuum model) and identification of appropriate actions. The ELB support team would continue to support and monitor implementation over the period of the programme. Experience already exists both within ELBs and in external organisations on implementing shared education

This would ensure experience is developed within managing authorities in advance of mainstreaming shared education in line with Minister's commitment to do so.

Two implementation options have been identified in respect of a dedicated ELB support team:

- 2(a) a central regional delivery team/unit located within one ELB but providing services to all ELBs (for which there is already precedent and which reflects the regionalisation envisaged through the creation of ESA); or
- 2(b) a dedicated team in each of the five ELBs.

Both options are viable and will be considered separately.

The Education and Training Inspectorate would undertake on-going evaluation of the programme.

Potential Displacement/Duplication of Funding

Consideration has been given to the implications of introducing a new funding programme for other funding streams currently used by schools to fund shared education. In practice, schools have used a mix of funding sources to deliver shared education programmes.

The closure of the International Fund for Ireland's *Sharing in Education Programme* of £17m over four years in December 2013 together with further Atlantic Philanthropies funding of almost £4m has immediately created a £21m funding gap for schools that wish to undertake additional shared education activities.

While some schools can continue to draw on other funding streams, the introduction of this programme will address the funding gap resulting from the reduction and closure of philanthropic and external funding. Hence there is no potential for displacement of existing funding.

The application process will seek information on what other funding streams schools are accessing to ensure that there is no duplication of funding.

4.3 Option 3: Continue IFI Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) Projects

Significant investment of £17m by the International Fund for Ireland established on twenty two strategic shared education projects over the period 2009-13. Funding for these projects terminated on 31 December 2013 with the closure of the IFI SiEP. Although the level of funding was significant, the scope of the Programme did not extend to all schools (around 450 schools were involved).

The projects covered a range of curricular and extracurricular activities, involved all sectors and range of school types and met the definition and objective of shared education (Appendix 5 provides further detail on the nature of these projects).

Projects were subject to independent evaluation, in the majority of cases by the Education & Training Inspectorate, but with three shared class projects subject to a separate evaluation. Evaluation reports indicated that these projects were effective and in a number of cases the projects were evaluated as outstanding.

Option 3 is based on continuing to maintain funding for these programme/projects.

The Education and Training Inspectorate would continue to undertake on-going evaluation of the programme/projects.

As in option 2, there is no potential for displacement or duplication of existing funding.

4.4 Option 4: Scale up existing Sharing in Education Programme projects for rollout to all schools

It would be feasible to scale up the scope of the projects identified in option 3 to provide all schools with the opportunity to participate in at least one shared education project. The range of projects which were undertaken provides a high level of assurance that a school could implement at least one which would be appropriate to the needs of the individual school/pupils.

As with previous options, the Education and Training Inspectorate would continue to undertake on-going evaluation of the programme/projects.

As in option 2, there is no potential for displacement or duplication of existing funding.

4.5 Option 5: Schools and Supported Organisations Programme

It would be feasible to provide funding to schools through a range of voluntary and community organisations to support delivery of shared education through separate funding streams.

In order to ensure sufficient capacity, this would require core funding to these organisations. However, departmental policy is to move away from core

funding of organisations and this option would result in a complex funding mechanism with the potential for overlaps and gaps in provision.

It would also be difficult to ensure consistency of provision.

Previous schemes, such as the Community Relations Funding Schemes which used a similar model were shown to have a number of distinct disadvantages.

Given the more discrete nature of the implementation methodology which this option would involve, it would not be feasible for the Education & Training Inspectorate to undertake a robust evaluation of what is likely to result in a myriad of smaller projects. Consequently for this option independent evaluations would be commissioned by the delivery organisations.

Given the dispersed nature of this option, there would be a higher risk of duplication (and potentially displacement) of other funding streams.

4.6 Assessment of Options

Assessment of the options is summarised in the table below:

<i>Option Number/ Description</i>	<i>Shortlisted (S) or Rejected (R)</i>	<i>Reason for Rejection</i>
1) Status Quo	S	
2) Shared Education Programme (a) Regional Delivery Team (b) Delivery by each of 5 ELBs	S	
3) Continue IFI Sharing in Education Programme projects	S	
4) Scale up existing Sharing in Education Programme projects for rollout to all schools	S	
5) Schools and Supported Organisations Programme	R	Not in line with departmental policy Inconsistent delivery Complex to administer Historical evidence indicates a number of distinct disadvantages

5. MONETARY COSTS AND BENEFITS OF OPTIONS

Monetary costs and benefits of each shortlisted option are considered below.

Option No. 1: Status Quo	Yr 0	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Totals
Capital Costs					
	0	0	0	0	0
(a) Total Capital Cost	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Costs					
(b) Total Revenue Cost	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Total Cost = (a) + (b)	0	0	0	0	0
(d) Discount Factor @ 3.5%pa	1.0000	.9662	.9335	.9019	
(e) Present Cost = (c) x (d)	0	0	0	0	0
(f) Total Net Present Cost (summation of Present Costs [e])	£0				

Option No. 2a Shared Education Programme (Regional Delivery Team)	Yr 0	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Totals
Capital Costs					
	0	0	0	0	0
(a) Total Capital Cost	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Costs					
Salary (Admin)	107,000	107,000	107,000	107,000	428,000
Salary (Support Staff)	234,000	540,000	540,000	360,000	1,674,000
Planning (Sub-cover)	135,000	685,800	685,800	685,800	2,192,400
Transport	162,000	1,066,800	2,074,800	2,198,700	5,502,300
Delivery (e.g.: sub-cover, training, facilitation, venue/ equipment hire)	526,350	3,688,080	4,905,756	4,905,756	14,025,942
Evaluation (ETI)	56,070	204,542	227,044	262,344	750,000
(b) Total Revenue Cost	1,220,420	6,292,222	8,540,400	8,519,600	24,572,642
(c) Total Cost = (a) + (b)	1,220,420	6,292,222	8,540,400	8,519,600	24,572,642
(d) Discount Factor @ 3.5%pa	1.0000	.9662	.9335	.9019	
(e) Present Cost = (c) x (d)	1,220,420	6,079,545	7,972,463	7,683,827	
(f) Total Net Present Cost (summation of Present Costs [e])	£22,956,256				

ASSUMPTIONS - Option 2a

All costs are at 2013/14 prices. Year 0 is 2014/15

Salaries and wages

Estimated salaries are based on previous experience of running the previous IFI programme. Gross Salaries are included.

Salaries are split between Administration and Support staff:

- Administration - staff including part-time support during application, sift and evaluation process.
- Support staff – recruitment and employment of 15 development Officers @ £36k p.a. There may be some variance in these costs due to recruitment in year 1 and a reduction of officers in the final year as staff move back to schools. It is anticipated that skills transfer is in place leaving schools requiring less support.

Admin Staff

Staff Role	Gross Figures £'000	Total Costs £'000
Programme Manager (Adviser Level)	60	60
Admin Officer(senior clerical Officer)	22	22
p/t Admin support in each of 5 ELBs	5	25
Total		107

Support Staff

Staff Role	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
15 Development officers @ £36k p.a.		540	540	–
5 full time and 3 part time posts (@50%)	234	–	–	–
30% reduction in staff				360
Total	234	540	540	360

The remaining costs based on the number of targeted schools as set out below:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year4
Number of schools	150	762*	762	762
percentage		65%	65%	65%
Partnerships	75	380	380	380

- 762 schools is 65% of 1,172 schools. BELB 154 schools, NEELB 277 schools, SEELB 209 schools, SELB 298 schools, WELB 234 schools. Total 1,172.

Planning Costs

Planning Substitute cover costs based upon 6 days per school for 1 teacher capped @ 150 per full day by the above number of schools per year.

Transport Costs

Based on previous experience of similar projects

Post Primary Schools @ £175 per day * 9 shared classes * 2 year groups

Primary Schools @ £175 * 12 shared classes per year for one key stage group

Note

- these are based on minimum numbers for shared classes and may increase depending on schools.
- The Business Case assumes 152 schools will attain level 5 in year 4, 610 schools will attain level 4 (i.e. total 762) and of these 99 (60% primary and 40% post primary) will move from level 2 through to Level 4.
- The levels of sharing in the 'shovel ready' schools participating in year 1 should increase in years 2, 3 and 4 but that new schools participating from year 2 through to year 4 may be at level 2 in the continuum model in the first year and therefore have lower levels of shared classes depending on the requirements of these schools.
- Funding for transport will be provided to schools and flexibility applied to meet the needs of schools as they move upwards on the continuum.

Delivery Costs

This includes employment costs of shared teachers, training, sharing co-ordinator, sub-cover to attend training and shared classes, visits, travel and subsistence costs, venue hire, materials and equipment @ £2,509 in year 1, £3,840 in year 2 and £5,438 in years 3 and 4 per school where maximum sharing level will take place..

Training sub cover is calculated at 3 days @£150 sub cover per school attending
Training for 3 day course @ £550 1 teacher per school attending.

Same calculation used for each teacher in the following years.

Note: Flexibility to transfer funding across the three budget lines relating to front line delivery – Planning; Transport and Delivery – will be applied as necessary. For example, where cost savings can be made in relation to planning or transport costs, flexibility will be afforded to schools to use in relation to delivery costs to ensure maximum impact on pupils.

Evaluation Costs

Evaluation costs estimated based on 3% of the overall costs of the project from start of 2014/15.

The profile for the evaluation costs over the 4 year programme was agreed with ETI to coincide with their recruitment timetable - 1 backfill Inspector in year 1, with further backfill in other years and culminating with peak for final evaluation in last year.

Option No. 2b Shared Education Programme. Delivery by each of 5 ELBs	Yr 0	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Totals
Capital Costs					
	0	0	0	0	0
(a) Total Capital Cost	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Costs					
Salary (Admin)	210,000	210,000	210,000	210,000	840,000
Salary (Support Staff)	234,000	540,000	540,000	360,000	1,674,000
Planning (Sub-cover)	135,000	685,800	685,800	685,800	2,192,400
Transport	162,000	1,066,800	2,074,800	2,198,700	5,502,300
Delivery (e.g.: sub-cover, training, facilitation, venue/ equipment hire)	526,350	3,688,080	4,905,756	4,905,756	14,025,942
Evaluation (ETI)	59,760	208,232	230,734	251,274	750,000
(b) Total Revenue Cost	1,323,420	6,395,222	8,643,400	8,622,600	24,984,642
(c) Total Cost = (a) + (b)	1,323,420	6,395,222	8,643,400	8,622,600	24,984,642
(d) Discount Factor @ 3.5%pa	1.0000	.9662	.9335	.9019	
(e) Present Cost = (c) x (d)	1,323,420	6,179,063	8,068,614	7,776,723	
(f) Total Net Present Cost (summation of Present Costs [e])		23,347,820			

ASSUMPTIONS – Option 2(b)

As above for Option 2a with the exception of the following:

Administration Staff

Staff Role	Gross Figures £'000	Total Costs £'000
Programme Manager p/t	40	40
Assistant Advisory Officer p/t in 5 ELBs	20	100
Admin support in each of the 5 ELBs	12	60
Other p/t Admin support in each of 5 ELBs	2	10

Total	210				
Option No. 3 Continue IFI Sharing in Education Programme projects	Yr 0	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Totals
Capital Costs					
	0	0	0	0	0
(a) Total Capital Cost	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Costs					
Salary (Admin)	1,507,320	1,507,320	1,507,320	1,507,320	6,029,280
Running Costs	357,120	357,120	357,120	357,120	1,428,480
Delivery (e.g.: sub-cover, training, facilitation, venue/ equipment hire)	4,345,920	4,345,920	4,345,920	4,345,920	17,383,680
Evaluation (ETI)	186,310	186,310	186,310	186,310	745,240
(b) Total Revenue Cost	6,396,670	6,396,670	6,396,670	6,396,670	25,586,680
(c) Total Cost = (a) + (b)	6,396,670	6,396,670	6,396,670	6,396,670	25,586,680
(d) Discount Factor @ 3.5%pa	1.0000	.9662	.9335	.9019	
(e) Net Present Cost = (c) x (d)	6,396,670	6,180,462	5,971,291	5,769,157	
(f) Total Net Present Cost (summation of Present Costs [e])	£24,317,579				

ASSUMPTIONS - Option 3

All costs are at 2013/14 prices. Year 0 is 2014/15

The total number of schools assumed to be engaged on this programme was approximately 360 individually but in reality some of these organisations worked with the same schools giving a total number of schools recorded as 533 meaning that 173 schools were engaged in more than one of these projects.

The existing group without additional funding and resources do not have the capacity to deliver across all 5 ELB areas and engage with all schools.

The costs here are based upon 22 organisations working at full capacity at the end of SiEP period i.e. 360 individual schools each year. All costs are based on the experience of the existing programme costs.

Salary Costs

Salary costs are for Administration and Delivery staff and include part-time and staff paid through sub-cover figures based on costs across all 22 projects for staffing against school. Estimated salaries are based on previous experience of running IFI programme. Gross Salaries included (pensions and NIC).

Running Costs

Running costs here are those associated with the overall costs of the organisation such as rent, rates, heat, light, telephone, broadband etc and based against the number of schools involved.

Delivery Costs

Delivery Costs includes facilitation/consultant, OCN accreditation, materials, transport, purchase of equipment or hire, set up costs for offices etc based on the number of schools involved.

Evaluation Costs

Evaluation is based on 3% of annual spend.

Option No. 4 Scale up existing Sharing in Education Programme projects for rollout to all schools	Yr 0	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Totals
Capital Costs					
	0	0	0	0	0
(a) Total Capital Cost	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Costs					
Salary (Admin)	837,400	1,256,100	1,884,150	1,884,150	5,861,800
Running Costs	198,400	347,200	607,600	607,600	1,760,800
Delivery (e.g.: sub-cover, training, facilitation, venue/ equipment)	2,414,400	10,937,232	12,228,936	12,228,936	37,809,504
Evaluation (ETI)	103,506	376,216	441,621	441,621	1,362,964
(b) Total Revenue Cost	3,553,706	12,916,748	15,162,307	15,162,307	46,795,068
(c) Total Cost = (a) + (b)					
(d) Discount Factor @ 3.5%pa	1.0000	.9662	.9335	.9019	
(e) Net Present Cost = (c) x (d)	3,553,706	12,480,162	14,154,014	13,674,885	
(f) Total Net Present Cost (summation of Present Costs [e])	£43,862,767				

ASSUMPTIONS - Option 4

All costs are at 2013/14 prices

This option is a scaled up version of Option 3. All costs are based on the number of schools against the costs from each budget heading to meet the school profile to be engaged each year.

First year calculations will show a decrease from Option 3 given that only 200 schools will be engaged as opposed to the 360 as in Option 3 above. The schools profile will be as with Options 2(a) and 2(b).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Number of schools	150	762	762	762
percentage		655	65%	65%

Salary Costs

Salary costs are for Administration and Delivery staff and include part-time and staff paid through sub-cover. It is anticipated that staff numbers should only increase by 1.5 times the original number after the first year as once staff are in place they should have the skills and capacity to increase delivery to the number of schools in the project. This was calculated on the number of staff providing support to 533 schools and then calculating the number of additional staff required to deliver to all schools.

Running Costs

Running costs here are those associated with the overall costs of the organisation such as rent, rates, heat, light, telephone, broadband etc. It is anticipated that these will increase with the number of staff at 0.75 times and then also remain the same.

Delivery Costs

There should not be an increase in actual delivery costs as delivery costs include facilitation/consultant, OCN accreditation, materials, transport, purchase of equipment or hire, set up costs for offices etc based on the number of schools involved. Delivery will increase proportionately with the number of schools engaged as above (Option 3 figures being based on 360 schools).

Evaluation Costs

Evaluation is based on 3% of annual spend.

The total number of schools assumed to be engaged on this programme was approximately 360 individually but in reality some of these organisations worked with the same schools giving a total number of schools recorded as 533 meaning that 173 schools were engaged in more than one of these projects.

6. NON-MONETARY COSTS AND BENEFITS

A number of non-monetary costs and benefits have been identified in relation to the programme drawn from evaluations of shared education pilot projects. Key non-monetary criteria have been weighted and each option assessed against these as outlined in the tables below.

Non-Monetary Criteria	Weighting of Criteria	Rationale for Weighting
1) Exchange of ideas and good practice between schools	10	Evidence shows that shared education provides more opportunity for schools/teachers to share best practice across a wide range of educational areas. Such shared learning facilitates improved quality.
2) Improved confidence and competence for teaching staff in using a range of learning strategies necessary for quality shared education and tackling controversial & sensitive issues	25	Skills and confidence of teaching staff has been highlighted by both Ministerial Advisory Group and ETI as a key enabler in delivering quality shared education. Hence has a higher weighting,
3) Meaningful interaction for pupils	20	Relates to the quality of the educational experience for the pupils and has been identified by ETI as a key enabler to achieving quality shared education. Hence has a higher weighting,
4) Normalised cross-sectoral relationships built through regular contact within mainstream education	5	Research evidence indicates that normalising cross sectoral relationships provides a number of benefits for pupils, teachers, schools and the wider community.
5) Improved cross-community understanding and relationships leading to reduction in community tension	20	Increase in shared education, particularly on a cross community basis, is expected to contribute to a reduction in community tensions by challenging and removing pre-conceived ideas. It is a primary driver for shared education, second only to educational outcomes & reflects Executive commitment.
6) Increase in the level of interdependence in the school system	10	This relates to schools collaborating to provide a larger range of curricular/extracurricular offerings and/or other additional educational benefits for pupils. It is expected that this will increase the pace of sharing by building relationships, reducing competition and benefit pupils.
7) More co-ordinated approach	5	This relates to consistency and quality of delivery and support to all schools. A more co-ordinated approach will ensure equality of opportunity and ease of quality control.
8) Disruption of teaching time	5	This relates to lost teaching time and disruption in transporting pupils/teachers between partner schools. Survey evidence indicates that this is a key concern for schools, parents and pupil. Options with less disruption are more favoured.

Each option has been assessed against the delivery of the primary non-monetary costs and benefits identified above.

Non-Monetary Criteria	Option 1		Option 2				Option 3		Option 4	
	S (out of 10)	WS	2(a)		2(b)		S (out of 10)	WS	S (out of 10)	WS
			S (out of 10)	WS	S (out of 10)	WS				
1. Exchange of ideas and good practice between schools 10	1	10	10	100	9	90	6	60	8	80
2. Improved confidence and competence for teaching staff in using a range of learning strategies necessary for quality shared education and tackling controversial and sensitive issues25	0	0	9	225	9	225	6	150	8	200
3. Meaningful interaction for pupils in shared activity20	2	40	8	160	8	160	6	120	8	160
4. Normalised cross sectoral relationships built through regular contact within mainstream education5	0	0	10	50	10	50	7	35	9	45
5. Improved cross-community understanding and relationships leading to reduction in community tension20	1	20	8	160	8	160	6	120	8	160
6. Increase in the level of interdependence in the school system10	0	0	8	80	8	80	5	50	6	60
7. More co-ordinated approach 5	0	0	10	50	7	35	4	20	5	25
8. Least disruption to teaching time5	9	45	3	15	3	15	6	30	3	15
Total Weighted Score	115		840		815		585		745	

Non-monetary costs and benefits have been identified by scoring each option against identified benefits using a scale system based on the relative importance of each benefit in accordance with DFP guidance with 0 indicating no benefits and 10 indicates likely to deliver maximum benefits

Scoring Rationale

1. Option 1 does not provide opportunity for structured exchange of ideas and good practice (although informal exchange is possible) and is the lowest. Options 2(a) and 2(b) provide the highest level of ideas exchange/good practice through the ELB Support Team and ETI involvement in a structured and managed way; with option 2(a) providing an increased opportunity for sharing ideas and practice through the regional delivery team. Option 3 provides good opportunity for ideas exchange/good practice amongst schools although less structured, but due to only around 1/3 of schools being involved scope is limited. Option 4 is similar to Option 3 but rated higher due to its more extended scale across all schools.
2. There is no provision for improving confidence and competence for teachers in option 1. Training, together with support to reinforce knowledge, is a key feature of Options 2(a) and 2(b) and therefore has the highest score; while both options 3 and 4 include a level of teacher training, but with more limited scale of delivery.
3. Actions within option 1 are largely at the discretion of individual schools and there is no mechanism to assess quality, and limited opportunity to learn from others, hence its low score. The provision of a continuum model and quality indicators, combined with ELB support and ongoing ETI evaluation means that option 2(a) and 2(b) provides for good quality meaningful interaction between pupils. Shared practice with a degree of support provide some element of quality of meaningful engagement in Option 3 and 4 but with Option 4 offering wider scale of delivery.
4. Option 1 provides very limited opportunity to address educational outcomes which are reliant on skills and experience within schools who participate in shared education. Options 2(a) and 2(b) are likely to achieve the high level of educational benefit/outcome as a result of the availability of funding, ELB support, quality indicators and ETI involvement – all of which will raise standards as well as likely to provide the best scope to enhance curricular and extra-curricular provision. ETI evaluation evidence from pilot projects on which option 3 is based shows this was successful in improving educational outcomes, but on a reduced scale, with option 4 likely to offer a similar level of benefit to Option 2.
5. Option 1 does not provide any structured approach to normalising relationships on a cross-sectoral basis, while options 2(a) and 2(b) provide for the highest level of cross sectoral partnership and regular contact across schools enabled by criteria based funding. Options 3 and 4 also provide for a more normalising of cross sectoral partnership, but on differing scale of delivery.
6. Option 1 offers limited cross-community understanding, while by the definition of shared education being 'between more than one sector' other options provide for this, but on a range of scale, with Options 2(a) ,2(b) and 4 offering the highest potential (short of a single integrated system).
7. Option 1 does not impact on interdependence of school system as collaboration is at the discretion of individual schools and not in a structured manner. Other options offer more interdependence through collaborative working between partner schools, with options 2(a) and 2(b) likely to offer the highest benefit due to its scale and ELB support, with options 3 and 4 differing in scale and lack of support.
8. Option 1 does not offer any co-ordinated approach, while option 2(a) offers the highest level of co-ordination and consistency through its centralised model offering regional support. Option 2(b) has the risk of less co-ordination and consistency due to its more devolved management across 5 ELBs; while option 3 and 4 offer some scope for co-ordination through the individual project structures.
9. Option 1 offers the least disruption to teaching time as involves only very limited collaboration and requirement to transport pupils to other schools, while options 2(a), 2(b) and 4 are likely to impact most on disruption due to likelihood for transporting pupils; with option 3 involving less disruption across all schools due to its reduced scale.

7. ASSESSMENT OF RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

7.1 The following table outlines identified risks and uncertainties.

Risk Description	OPTIONS					State how the options compare and identify relevant risk management / mitigation measures
	1	2		3	4	
		2(a)	2(b)			
1. Lack of participation by all schools	H	M/L	M/L	H	M	Requirement on ELBs to promote/encourage shared education through RAP target. Incentives for schools, including in option 2 a support mechanism. Monitoring of involvement at ELB and DE level; targeted intervention for non-participating school Education & Training Inspection Reports
2. Lack of participation by pupils <i>Note 1</i>	H	L	L	L	M	Increased educational benefits
3. Lack of skills/confidence to deal with sensitive & controversial issues amongst teaching staff	H	M	M	M	M	Teacher training needs will be addressed through the Shared Education Programme. School need to release teachers for appropriate training.
4. Objections by parents/wider community	M	M/L	M/L	L	M/L	Schools engaging with parents/wider community to explain shared education & outline benefits.
5. Insufficient capacity to deliver to all schools	n/a	L	L	H	H	Option 2 includes provision of a dedicated support team. Evidence indicates that there is existing capacity to deliver on option 3. Sufficient capacity within statutory and voluntary organisations to scaling up existing provision is judged to be of higher risk.
6. Underspend/ Overspend by schools	n/a	M/L	M/L	H	H	Historical evidence indicates a high level of risk of schools achieving spending profile. In particular, evidence shows that transport costs are liable to variation. Support staff included in option 2 would have a monitoring role in spending; where savings in transport are identified, flexibility will be afforded to direct to frontline delivery to ensure maximum impact on pupils.
7. Schools fail to identify their starting point and set realistic aims & objectives within broader education plan/school development plan/ wider area learning community plans impacting on expected outcomes.	H	M/L	M/L	M/L	M/L	Access to facilitation to identify realistic aims and objectives Governance structures will ensure several layers of monitoring to track achievement of benefits
9. ELBs unable to agree on regional delivery	n/a	M	n/a	n/a	n/a	In this circumstance option 2(b) would deliver the same benefits at a slightly increased cost, but within 10% limit against overall cost.
Overall Risk (H/M/L):	H	M/L	M/L	H/M	M	

KEY: H = high M = medium L = low N/A = Not Applicable

Note 1

Programme for Government target is for all children to have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; it is recognised that in some communities children may withdraw from taking up the opportunity

7.2 Risks and Uncertainties – Sensitivity Analysis

All projects have a range of possible outcomes, although the range will be wider, and variability more important, for some cases than for others. The analysis of risks and uncertainties is a key element in appraisal.

The treatment of any potential uncertainty is generally best dealt with using sensitivity analysis which involves varying the value/number of key project indicators which are likely to be subject to the greatest degree of uncertainty.

In order to determine the impact of potential increases in total cost of the project as a result of uncertainties, NPC calculations have been performed using costs calculated below and subject to the following sensitivities (see also attached Appendix 8):

- Sensitivity 1 - a 10% increase in overall staffing costs
- Sensitivity 2 - a 25% increase in transport/delivery costs

The results of the above sensitivity on the calculated NPV's are shown below.

Options	Original NPC	Ranking	Sensitivity 1 NPC	Ranking	Sensitivity 2 NPC	Ranking
Option 2(a)	£22,956,256	1	£23,155,385	1	£24,234,399	1
Option 2(b)	£23,347,820	2	£23,586,106	2	£24,625,964	2
Option 3	£24,317,581	3	£24,890,603	3	£28,447,943	3
Option 4	£43,862,766	4	44,413,687	4	£52,719,502	4

It can be clearly seen from the above Table that increasing salaries by 10% does not affect the ranking of the options. Option 2a remains the preferred option in this case.

Evidence from previous shared education programmes shows that transport costs are liable to variation in relation to the distance between schools, number of classes involved and whether transport is via ELB buses or private hire coaches.

Support staff included in option 2 would have a monitoring role in spending; where savings in transport are identified flexibility will be afforded to direct to frontline delivery to ensure maximum impact on pupils.

However, it has been considered necessary to sensitise the transport costs across the options. Given the level of uncertainty here an increase of around 25% in transport costs is considered reasonable. The results are set out in the Table above. Clearly a variation in transport costs does not affect the ranking of the options.

As this is a revenue project an Optimism bias adjustment is not considered necessary.

A sensitivity analysis around the Non Monetary Score (NMS) is not considered necessary as there would have to be a significant reduction in Option 2a's NMS to affect its ranking against Options 3 and 4. At the same time Option 2a scores similar to Option 2b, with the exception of Option 2a having a higher score on 'a more co-ordinated approach' which is unlikely to change in the life of this programme.

8. CALCULATION OF NET PRESENT VALUES

Net present values have been calculated for each option (Appendix 8 refers). A detailed breakdown of costs is included in Appendix 9.

9. SUMMARY OF OPTION COMPARISONS & IDENTIFICATION OF PREFERRED OPTION

9.1 The 4 shortlisted options have been appraised with reference to both monetary and non-monetary indicators, the results are summarised below:

Options	Total Cost (Resource)	Net Present Cost (NPC)	Non Monetary Score	NPC per Benefit Point	Ranking
Option 1	£0	£0	115	NA	-
Option 2(a)	£24,572,642	£22,956,256	840	£27,329	1
Option 2(b)	£24,984,642	£23,347,820	815	£28,648	2
Option 3	£25,586,680	£24,317,581	585	£41,568	3
Option 4	£46,795,068	£43,862,766	745	£58,876	4

9.2 In terms of choice of the preferred option, Option 2(a) has the lowest total costs, as well as the lowest Net Present Cost (NPC). Option 2(b), however, ranks a close second in terms of total cost and NPC.

9.3 The choice of preferred option should be based upon the consideration of both the monetary costs and non-monetary benefits of each option. Option 2(a), however, also scores highest in terms of its non-monetary impact (840 compared to 815 for Option 2(b)) giving Option 2(a) the overall lowest NPC per benefit point of £27,329.

9.4 Considering the above, Option 2a The Shared Education Programme via a regional delivery mechanism is clearly the preferred option in terms of both costs and benefits.

9.5 In terms of Risks Options 2(a) and 2(b) both have the lowest overall risk rating of M/L.

9.6 Options 2(a) also fully meets with the objectives of the Programme and is within budget. Option 2a is therefore our preferred option.

10. ASSESSMENT OF AFFORDABILITY AND FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

	Yr 0 £000's	Yr 1 £000's	Yr 2 £000's	Yr 3 £000's	Totals £000's
Current DEL Provision:					
(a) Capital	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Revenue	0	0	0	0	0
(c) Depreciation Allowance (if required)					
Additional DEL Required:					
(a) Capital	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Revenue ^{Note 1}	1,247,269	6,392,898	8,702,668	8,681,472	25,024,307
(c) Depreciation Allowance (if required)					
Total DEL Requirement:					
(a) Capital	0	0	0	0	0
(b) Revenue	1,247,269	6,392,898	8,702,668	8,681,472	25,024,307
(c) Depreciation Allowance (if required)					

^{Note 1} Adjusted for inflation March 2014 GDP Deflators

Budget from which funding to be allocated	Sum funded & % of total	Funding secured? Yes/No	If not secured, indicate status of negotiations
The Atlantic Philanthropies	£10m (40% of total)	Yes	Atlantic Philanthropies Board approved a matched funding contribution of up to £10m in December 2013.
OFMdfM (DSC Funds)	£10m (40% of total)	No	Bid required to central funds; pending business case approval.
Department of Education	£5m (20% of total)	No	Bid logged with DE finance; pending business case approval.

The total resource costs of £24,572,642 (in constant prices) or £25,024,307 (including inflation) should fall within the anticipated funding profile available.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
Atlantic Philanthropies	£1,600,000	£3,500,000	£3,640,000	£1,260,000	£10,000,000
OFMdfM (DSC Funds)	£400,000	£3,680,000	£3,740,000	£2,180,000	£10,000,000
Department of Education	£500,000	£1,820,000	£1,620,000	£1,060,000	£ 5,000,000
Total	£2,500,000	£9,000,000	£9,000,000	£4,500,000	£25,000,000

11. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

11.1 Executive Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People

Governance arrangements for the programme will be consistent with those in place for Delivering Social Change Signature programmes. The DSC Framework is led by Ministers through the Executive Ministerial Sub-Committee (MSC) on Children and Young People.

11.2 DSC Programme Board

The MSC will be supported by the Delivering Social Change Programme Board which meets every 8 weeks and oversees the delivery of the DSC delivery framework. They will oversee all of the projects. The responsible DE Deputy Secretary is a member of the DSC Programme Board.

11.3 Atlantic Philanthropies/DSC Programme Board

A joint Atlantic Philanthropies/DSC Programme Board will oversee three projects, including the Shared Education Project, where part funding is provided by the Atlantic Philanthropies. The AP/DSC Programme Board will be chaired by OFMDFM and will comprise of reps from AP, DHSSPS, DE and if required, OFMDFM Special Advisers. The Programme Board will provide the Projects with the necessary authorisation to proceed and to overcome any problems.

11.4 Shared Education Project Board

A Shared Education Project Board, chaired by the DE Senior Responsible Owner and comprising representatives from OFMDFM, the Atlantic Philanthropies and ELB representatives. The direct management of each of the projects will be through individual Project Boards (PB).

A Memorandum of Understanding between OFMDFM, The Atlantic Philanthropies and DE will provide the necessary authority and set out roles and responsibilities for the overall governance arrangements. A draft copy is provided in Appendix 6.

Detailed project initiation documents and project plans will be prepared for the project based on PRINCE 2 methodology.

A high level project plan is provided at Appendix 7. This will be further refined by the Project Implementation Team within the Project Initiation document.

11.5 Expert Advisory Committee

An independent Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) will be established to provide advice to each project on service design and implementation including guidance on evaluation and performance measurements. Members will be nominated by OFMDFM, DHSSPS, DE and Atlantic Philanthropies. EAC will report through the SEP Project Board to the AP/DSC Programme Board.

Appendix 6 (Annex A (1)) provides an overview of the governance structure through which the project will be managed.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

12.1 Monitoring

The SEP Project Board will be responsible for monitoring the projects, with oversight from the AP/DSC Programme Board. The SEP Project Board will receive regular update and exception reports on progress at scheduled meetings.

The manager of the ELB support team will be responsible for providing regular progress reports (to include outcome and expenditure against profiled budget) to the SEP Project Board.

In the event of slippage against outcomes or expenditure, the project board will agree remedial action.

12.2 Programme Evaluation

Though a formal agreement, the Education and Training Inspectorate will be engaged to evaluate the schools partnerships against the aims and objectives over the period of the project and give support and guidance when necessary.

ETI has experience in evaluating shared education programme given their involvement for several years with the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme.

ETI will have a future role in inspecting shared education in schools when it is mainstreamed as part of advancing shared education process. Their involvement will ensure building of existing capacity and knowledge.

In addition, external researched may be commissioned by the Atlantic Philanthropies to complement the work of ETI (however this is outside the scope of this business case).

A monitoring and evaluation process will be developed to assess the impact of AP/DSC Shared Education project over a three year period.

The overarching evaluation framework will be agreed by the SEP Project Board with support and guidance from the SEP/Expert Advisory Committee.

Additional information will be collated from a number of surveys. A series of questions have been developed and are included in the schools omnibus survey. This is completed by the head of the school annually and the available

information used to setup baseline data. It will continue to be run on a yearly basis to access the numbers etc involved in sharing in education.

DE contributes questions to the Young Life and Times Annual Survey. At present shared education questions will be included every 2 years to measure the increase in sharing in education partnerships over the next few years. These questions focus on the experiences of 16 year old young people.

12.3 Post Project Evaluation

A post project evaluation, which will incorporate a project evaluation review (to determine the effectiveness of project management procedures, will be undertaken within 6 months of the end of the programme. The PPE will be led by an individual not involved in the programme; the SRO will be responsible for appointing the relevant person.

The review will draw on the finding of the ETI report; any additional reports commissioned by the Atlantic Philanthropies and any related research/surveys.

The PPE evaluation will take into account out-turn against anticipated monetary costs & benefits; non-monetary costs & benefits, any identified unexpected benefits and disbenefits. The review will also provide an outline of lessons learned and recommendations for future projects.

Risk Log for the Preferred Option Appendix 1

Risk Description	Category (e.g. funding, operational, etc.)	Impact (L/M/H)	Probability (L/M/H)	Proximity (short, medium, long-term)	Countermeasures	Owner	Author	Date Identified	Date Last Updated	Current Status
1. Lack of participation by all schools	Operation	M	M	Medium term	Requirement on ELBs to promote/ encourage shared education through RAP target. Incentives for schools including support mechanism. Monitoring of involvement at ELB and DE level; targeted intervention for non-participating school Education & Training Inspection Reports	DE SRO DE SRO ELB Support staff/SEP Project Board ETI				
2. Lack of participation by pupils ^{Note 3}	Operation	M	L	Short term	Increased educational benefits Access to larger range of opportunities	ELB Support staff				
3. Lack of skills/ confidence to deal with sensitive/controversial issues by teaching staff	Operation	M	M/L	Long-term	Funding application to include baseline audit by schools of current skill levels. Provision for teacher training	ELB Support staff				
4. Objections by parents/ wider community	Operation	M	L	Short-term	Schools engaging with parents/wider community to explain shared education & outline benefits.	Schools				

Risk Description	Category (e.g. funding, operational, etc.)	Impact (L/M/H)	Probability (L/M/H)	Proximity (short, medium, long-term)	Countermeasures	Owner	Author	Date Identified	Date Last Updated	Current Status
5. Insufficient support staff in ELBs	Funding	M	L	Long-term	Provision of a dedicated support team	SEP Project Board				
6. Underspend/ Overspend by schools	Funding	M/L	M/L	Long-term	Support staff to have monitoring role against spending profile.	ELB support staff/SEP Project Board				
7. Schools fail to identify their starting point and set realistic aims and objectives within broader education plan/school development plan and plans for wider area learning community	Operation	M/L	M/L		Self assessment by schools against shared education continuum model. Facilitation is eligible cost to assist schools to identify their starting point realistic aims and objectives	ELB Support staff				
8. Failure to Deliver expected benefits	Operation				Regular monitoring by support staff; Governance structures ensure several layers of monitoring to track achievement of benefit.	DE SRO				

Benefits Realisation Plan

Appendix 2

Benefit Owner	Benefit Description	Benefit Ranking	Baseline Value	Target Value	How will it be measured?	Responsible Officer <i>Note 1</i>	Dates/ Timing
DE SRO	A: Improve education outcomes through schools working collaboratively	1	77.1% of pupils achieving KS2 Communication in English; 78.5% of pupils achieving KS2 Using Maths; 72.2% pupils achieving KS3 Communication in English; 73.9% of pupils achieving KS3 Using Maths; and 62.0% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE (or equivalent) A*-C including English & Maths. <i>Note: Baseline & target value to be revisited in light of application data.</i>	88.2% of pupils achieving KS2 Communication in English; 88.4% of pupils achieving KS2 Using Maths; 83.6% pupils achieving KS3 Communication in English; 83.1% of pupils achieving KS3 Using Maths; and 68.0% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE (or equivalent) A*-C including English & Maths.	DE Educational Improvement Stats		By March 2018

Benefit Owner	Benefit Description	Benefit Ranking	Baseline Value	Target Value	How will it be measured?	Responsible Officer ^{Note 1}	Dates/ Timing
DE SRO	B: Increase the number of schools participating in Shared Education	4 (enabler of primary objective)	76% (2012/13)	85% (2017/18)	School Omnibus Survey		By March 2018
DE SRO	C: Increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education	3 (primary objective)	15% (whole school basis) 13% (only than one class)	20% (whole school basis) 80% (more than one class)	School Omnibus Survey		By March 2018
ELB CE(s)	D: To provide educators with professional development in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes	5 (enabler of quality outcomes for primary objective)	-	95% of participating schools to have provided teachers with professional development on range of learning strategies	Baseline at application stage Outturn at end of programme		By March 2018
ELB CE(s)	E: Enable schools to implement a progressive approach to shared education	6 (increasing degree of engagement within schools will achieve increase in pupil participation)	-	50% of participating schools to have moved at least one point against the continuum of shared education model	Baseline at application stage through self assessment by schools Outturn at end of programme		By March 2018
ELB CE(s)	F: Improve reconciliation outcomes through schools working collaboratively	2 (Primary objective)	Cross Group Friendship: 1.94 Positive Action Tendencies: 2.71 Intergroup Anxiety: 1.66	Cross Group Friendship: 2.37 Positive Action Tendencies: 3.14 Intergroup Anxiety: 1.57	QUB Research Data		By March 2018

Note 1: Individual officers names will be added once appointed.

No. A	Benefit Improve education outcomes through schools working collaboratively	Senior Benefit Owner		Operational Benefit Owner		
		ELB CE(s)		ELB Delivery Manager		
Benefit to be Measured	Method of Measurement	Baseline Value	Target Value	Measurement Dates	Measurement to be done by	Actual Value at date measured
88.2% of pupils achieving KS2 Communication in English;	Departmental Statistics	77.1%	88.2%	Baseline	31 January 2014	77.1% (2012/13)
88.4% of pupils achieving KS2 Using Maths;		78.5%	88.4%	Actual(s)	(Revisited in light of application data by 31 December 2014)	78.5% (")
83.6% pupils achieving KS3 Communication in English;		72.2%	83.6%			72.2% (")
83.1% of pupils achieving KS3 Using Maths; and		73.9%	83.1%			73.9% (")
68% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE (or equivalent) A*-C including English & Maths.		62.0%	68.0%			62.0% (2011/12)
		Note: Baseline & target value to be revisited in light of application data.				-
Overall Benefit Ranking	Benefit Category	Dependency on Other Benefits	Benefit Priority (1 very low to 5 very high)	Likelihood of Failure (1 very low to 5 very high)	Overall Risk Rating (Priority x Likelihood of Failure)	
1	Satisfaction		5	2	10	

Relevant PFG Commitments		How does the benefit meet the target?		
Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; Building a strong and shared community		Encouraging schools to participate on a cross sectoral basis with other schools in the catchment area increase the number of opportunities which pupils can avail of. It also contributes to the PFG priority to build a strong and shared community by allowing pupils to engage with other communities		
Actions Required	Responsibility for actions	Expected Outcomes	Start Date	End Date
Proactive action by ELB Advisory & Support Team; On-going monitoring by ELB Support Team	ELB Delivery Manager	More schools collaborating on a cross community basis	1 April 2014	31 March 2018
Potential Risks	Likelihood 1 Low – 5 High	Impact on Benefit 1 Low – 5 High	Responsibility for Countermeasures	
Schools fail to achieve anticipated improvements in educational outcomes due to other factors outside the programme.	2	5	Countermeasures Targets to be revisited to re-assess being realistic/achievable in light of applications. On-going monitoring by ELB Support Team	ELB Support Team

No. A	Benefit Increase the number of schools participating in Shared Education	Senior Benefit Owner			Operational Benefit Owner		
		DE SRO		Target Value	ELB CE(s)		
Benefit to be Measured	Method of Measurement	Baseline Value	Target Value	Measurement Dates	Measurement to be done by	Actual Value at date measured	
What % of schools participates in Shared Education?	School Omnibus Survey	76% (2013)	85%	Baseline	31 January 2014	76%	
Overall Benefit Ranking	Benefit Category	Dependency on Other Benefits	Benefit Priority (1 very low to 5 very high)	Actual(s) Likelihood of Failure (1 very low to 5 very high)	31 March 2018	-	Overall Risk Rating (Priority x Likelihood of Failure)
4	Satisfaction		4	1	5		
Relevant PFG Commitments							
Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015							
Actions Required							
Launch Shared Education funding programme; Establish & recruit ELB Advisory & Support Team; Process applications & allocate funding; On-going monitoring by ELB Support Team		Responsibility for actions		Expected Outcomes		Start Date	End Date
		Minister ELB CE(s)		Uptake in applications		April 2014	31 March 2018
Potential Risks		Likelihood 1 Low – 5 High		Countermeasures		Responsibility for Countermeasures	
Schools fail to engage with the programme		Impact on Benefit 1 Low – 5 High		Communication with schools to raise awareness of programme & need to comply with PFG commitments Proactive engagement by ELB Support Staff Ongoing monitoring by Project Board		ELB Delivery Manager Project Board	

No. B	Benefit Increase the number of young people participating in Shared Education	Senior Benefit Owner		Operational Benefit Owner		
		DE SRO	Target Value	Measurement Dates	Measurement to be done by	Actual Value at date measured
Benefit to be Measured	Method of Measurement	Baseline Value	20% (whole school basis)	Baseline	31 January 2014	15%
		15% (whole school basis) 13% (only than one class)	80% (more than one class)	Actual(s)	31 March 2018	-
Overall Benefit Ranking	Benefit Category	Dependency on Other Benefits	Benefit Priority (1 very low to 5 very high)	Likelihood of Failure (1 very low to 5 very high)	Overall Risk Rating (Priority x Likelihood of Failure)	
3	Satisfaction	A	5	1	5	
Relevant PFG Commitments						
Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015						
Actions Required		Responsibility for actions		Expected Outcomes		Start Date
Allocate funding to schools; Proactive action by ELB Advisory & Support Team; On-going monitoring by ELB Support Team		ELB Delivery Manager		Increase in degree of sharing taking place in schools		1 September 2014
Potential Risks		Likelihood 1 Low – 5 High		Countermeasures		End Date
Lack of participation by schools		2		Impact on Benefit 1 Low – 5 High 5 Increase educational benefits Proactive engagement by ELB Support Staff		31 March 2018
				Responsibility for Countermeasures		ELB Delivery Manager Project Board

No. C	Benefit To provide educators with professional development in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes	Senior Benefit Owner		Operational Benefit Owner		
		ELB CE(s)	Target Value	Measurement Dates	Measurement to be done by	Actual Value at date measured
Benefit to be Measured What % of schools to provide teachers with relevant professional development?	Method of Measurement School Omnibus Survey	-	95%	Baseline	31 March 2015	-
Overall Benefit Ranking	Benefit Category	Dependency on Other Benefits	Benefit Priority (1 very low to 5 very high)	Likelihood of Failure (1 very low to 5 very high)	Overall Risk Rating (Priority x Likelihood of Failure)	
5	Satisfaction		4	1	4	
Relevant PfG Commitments Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015	How does the benefit meet the target? By providing teachers with the enabling skills and confidence to engage in shared education programmes					
Actions Required	Responsibility for actions	Expected Outcomes	Start Date	End Date		
	ELB CE(s)	Skilled & confident teachers	1 September 2014	31 March 2018		
Potential Risks	Likelihood 1 Low – 5 High	Countermeasures	Impact on Benefit 1 Low – 5 High	Responsibility for Countermeasures		
Schools fail to release teachers for training	1	Letter of offer requirement Proactive engagement & monitoring by ELB Support Team	3	ELB Support Team		

No. D	Benefit Enable schools to implement a progressive approach to shared education	Senior Benefit Owner		Operational Benefit Owner		
		Baseline Value	Target Value	Measurement Dates	Measurement to be done by	Actual Value at date measured
		ELB CE(s)			ELB Delivery Manager	
	Benefit to be Measured What % of participating schools that move at least one point against the continuum of shared education model?	Method of Measurement Baseline self assessment at application stage compared to outturn position		Baseline Actual(s)	Application closure date 31 March 2018	0% -
	Overall Benefit Ranking	Benefit Category	Benefit Priority (1 very low to 5 very high)	Likelihood of Failure (1 very low to 5 very high)	Overall Risk Rating (Priority x Likelihood of Failure)	
6		Satisfaction	4	2	4	
	Relevant PfG Commitments Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015	How does the benefit meet the target? By moving schools upwards against a continuum of shared education leads to more children having the opportunity to participate in a shared education programme.				
	Actions Required Launch application process & pilot continuum model; Refine continuum model & refine quality indicators	Responsibility for actions	Expected Outcomes	Start Date	End Date	
		ELB CE(s) ETI	Shared Education continuum model	1 April 2014	31 December 2014	
	Potential Risks Insufficient support staff in ELBs; Schools fail to accurately self assess	Likelihood 1 Low – 5 High	Countermeasures	Responsibility for Countermeasures		
		Impact on Benefit 1 Low – 5 High				
		3	Funding provided for support staff Use of Interchange Programme to recruit expertise ELB Support Team to assist schools in self-assessment (monitored by ETI)		ELB CEOs ELB Support Team	

No. E	Benefit Improve reconciliation outcomes through schools working collaboratively	Senior Benefit Owner ELB CE(s)		Operational Benefit Owner ELB Delivery Manager		
		Baseline Value	Target Value	Measurement Dates	Measurement to be done by	Actual Value at date measured
Cross Group Friendship Positive Action Tendencies Intergroup Anxieties	QUB Research data	1.94	2.37	Baseline	2010/11	1.94 (2010/11)
		2.71	3.14	Actual(s)	31 March 2018	2.71 (2010/11)
		1.66	1.57			1.66 (2010/11)
Overall Benefit Ranking	Benefit Category	Dependency on Other Benefits	Benefit Priority (1 very low to 5 very high)	Likelihood of Failure (1 very low to 5 very high)	Overall Risk Rating (Priority x Likelihood of Failure)	
2	Satisfaction		5	2	4	
Relevant PfG Commitments						
Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; Building a strong and shared community						
Actions Required		Responsibility for actions		Expected Outcomes		End Date
Proactive action by ELB Advisory & Support Team; On-going monitoring by QUB Research team		ELB Delivery Manager		More schools collaborating on a cross community basis		31 March 2018
Potential Risks		Likelihood 1 Low – 5 High	Countermeasures		Responsibility for Countermeasures	
QUB Research Data not available		1	3		Atlantic Philanthropies have committed to fund this research and make results available for on-going monitoring	
					DE SRO/Atlantic Country Director	

Appendix 3

EDUCATION & TRAINING INSPECTORATE EVALUATION REPORT: SHARING IN EDUCATION PROGRAMME

This report is based on a broad and in-depth evidence base across the participating schools/organisations visited by the ETI over the period 2010-2013 and which included over 374 meetings and discussions with project and school staff, children and young people, and at least 142 direct observations of learning sessions.

The projects were implemented across the formal and non-formal sectors including early years, primary, post-primary, special education, youth and community work, and teacher education, exploring the development of shared education in different contexts. The projects contributed to the four interrelated strategic aims of the SiEP. Often the work of each project contributed to more than one of the strategic aims. For ease of reference, however, the details of each individual project and key outcomes are provided in Appendix 5 linked to the aim that they most fulfilled.

The reality of making the projects practical and effective in demonstrating measurable outcomes for young people was complex given the multiple views and definitions of what constitutes shared education in NI, and the lack of a substantive body of research to guide evaluative processes. Developing the work of the projects required vision, energy, courage and resilience in taking risks, to discover how to educate young people better and tackle difficult issues.

Over the period 2010-13 the projects report that over 46,500 children, young people, staff, parents/carers, grandparents, governors, youth and community workers and others involved in education across NI, including 428 schools, were involved directly or indirectly in the SiEP. Their experiences have enabled the ETI to identify how shared education can be instrumental in promoting better learning as we work collaboratively towards a better future. The significant funding by IFI for the SiEP has enabled those involved to engage with issues of reconciliation, diversity, community relations, respect and trust through moving shared education experiences from an aspiration to a reality.

The report identifies what lessons can be learnt from the experience of the projects in piloting how best to help young people from the two main communities and other backgrounds to explore their uniqueness, to recognise and value diversity in order to be able to engage better in life and work with increased confidence, self-esteem and respect for others. The report concludes with a series

of recommendations for consideration at policy and school/organisation level. It presents a work in progress and a challenge to all through shared responsibility and action to become better at shared education.

The SiEP Evaluation was carried out over the period 2010-2013. The ETI's approach to the evaluation centred on building capacity within the projects to reflect and evaluate progress alongside providing external and objective evaluations.

The inspectors evaluated the quality of the provision against a customised set of quality indicators which were shared with the project leaders to ensure transparency and openness. Inspectors encouraged the individual projects to use these indicators to help schools/organisations involved in reconciliation work evaluate the quality of the provision beyond the life of the programme.

Throughout the work, particular emphasis was given to developing a common language and understanding between projects and schools/organisations with regard to the potential impact of the work on curriculum and school/organisation development planning.

Project Outcomes and Achievements

In almost all of the projects the participants:

- developed good personal and social skills through their engagement with others in exploring controversial, sensitive, complex and relevant issues to their lives.
- increased their awareness of the impact of their attitudes and actions on other individuals and communities.
- were able to evaluate their own learning through, for example, reflective journals/diaries, questionnaires and discussions.

The majority of the projects provided them with the opportunity to achieve an accredited qualification or an award designed with set criteria.

The Evaluation report identified in going forward, there is a need:

- for schools/organisations to evaluate consistently the impact of the work of reconciliation on the young people's attitudes, behaviours, understanding and skills to be able to demonstrate clearly the progress of young people and to inform future planning;

- for schools/organisations to focus on the development of the young people's maturity and higher-level skills of negotiation, compromise, collaborative problem-solving, managing disagreement, conflict and confrontation through innovative, inspiring and experiential learning strategies; and
- for all stakeholders to recognise, value and reward shared learning through accreditation and assessment arrangements across phases.

Quality of provision for learning

The SIEP brought a fresh impetus to collaborative learning to motivate and engage young people. It complemented curriculum planning and stimulated a variety of innovative learning and teaching strategies focused on consolidating the participants' understanding of diversity and of the part each can play in the process of reconciliation.

Almost all of the projects planned and developed the shared education work, crucially, through the NIC including PDMU, World Around Us, Local and Global Citizenship, history, language and sport. These projects provided continuing professional development to support teachers, youth workers and other educational providers in being confident in the use of a range of skills and methodologies to facilitate shared learning, including addressing controversial issues.

Participating staff responded willingly to the challenges of facilitating shared education. In the best practice, the staff planned effectively to meet the needs and interests of the participants in a safe and respectful environment.

The Evaluation report identified in going forward, there is a need to:

- support staff across all phases in developing further their confidence and competence in using a wide range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes to provide progressively challenging experiences for young people in tackling controversial and sensitive issues.

Leadership and Management of the Projects

The IFI Liaison Team within DE managed effectively the selection of the projects and monitored and reviewed rigorously the projects' work to ensure that progress was assured and focused entirely on the impact on shared learning and associated skills. As

the SIEP progressed there were obvious links between projects which the team encouraged and facilitated. In particular, the team linked the work to the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy of DE.

Through regular monitoring reports and accountability meetings, the IFI Liaison Team within DE worked flexibly and open-mindedly with the leaders of the projects to achieve an acceptable balance between being creative and taking risks to maximise the learning about shared education with appropriate systems for accountability.

Project leaders and participants across the projects were creative in piloting a range of shared education models to promote reconciliation across religious, cultural, economic and social divides.

The leaders of the projects were effective in supporting participating schools/organisations to develop shared education. Their clear vision for, and commitment to, shared education impacted positively on schools/organisations and helped to develop enhanced self-evaluation and improvement.

There were examples of the excellent use of the voice of the learner to improve the quality of the provision and to inform further planning. This process brought a sense of realism about what worked and what remains to be done in order to plan better for going forward.

An important element of success was the recruitment, deployment, support and development of staff to promote the SIEP. This ensured that most of the project staff brought high levels of expertise and experience in community relations, reconciliation and diversity, including the skilful facilitation of learning to handle controversial and sensitive issues.

The project staff recognised the importance of working in partnership to build effectively the capacity and expertise across the projects the SIEP provided participating teachers and staff with opportunities to develop their pedagogical skills at a time of restricted access to continuing professional development. This included access to appropriate resources which supported better partnership working.

Almost all of the projects addressed effectively the areas for improvement identified in the interim report in June 2012.

Building on the lessons learned and going forward
IFI, DE and other funders need to continue streamlining the planning and accountability processes for project-driven work of this nature aiming for clarity in planning and effective reporting on quality and finance, while not distracting teams unnecessarily from the practical delivery of the projects.

Schools/organisations need to work with external facilitators as appropriate to identify where they currently are in respect of shared education to enable them to set realistic aims and objectives and ensure planning links with, and builds upon, other initiatives within the schools/organisations.

Schools/organisations need to use their improvement process to develop shared education through staff development, the appointment of key people to lead and co-ordinate the work, a system to evaluate the quality of the provision and outcomes and engage with parents/carers and the community.

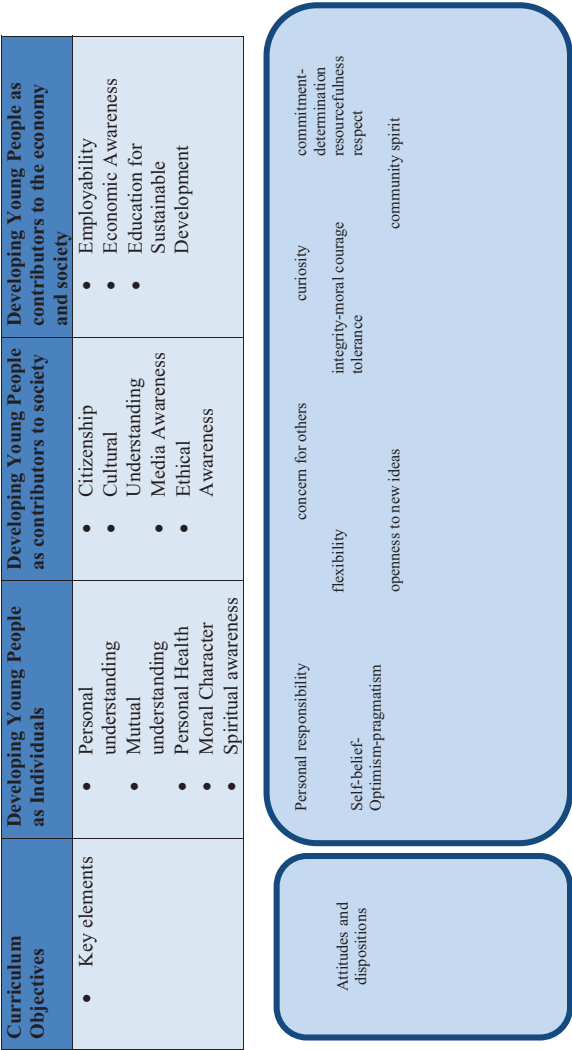
Sustainability
In terms of sustainability, at the time of the final evaluation, almost all of the projects had plans to sustain the learning.

The following nine recommendations are ETI's professional view of how schools can be supported in practical ways: for some; to begin their journey on a continuum which builds true understanding rather than compliance, and for others; to keep pushing the boundaries moving ever closer towards the longer term aim.

For DE	1. To ensure that school improvement policies signpost connections to, and opportunities for, shared education;
For DE in conjunction with other stakeholders including the Education Skills Authority/ Education and Library Boards; General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland;	2. To build on the effective collaborative work of DE and IFI in future education programmes, through strategic planning which focuses on maximising the number of young people involved and the quality of the practical work, through for example, providing professional support to refine good ideas within bids, identifying specific target groups across schools, and streamlining and combining reporting mechanisms to fulfil the requirements of a range of funders; 3. To commission the development of a continuum of shared education which outlines the key milestones in moving from shared education as additional to the work of a school to being embedded in its ethos, thereby realising the aims of the NIC in a more holistic way;

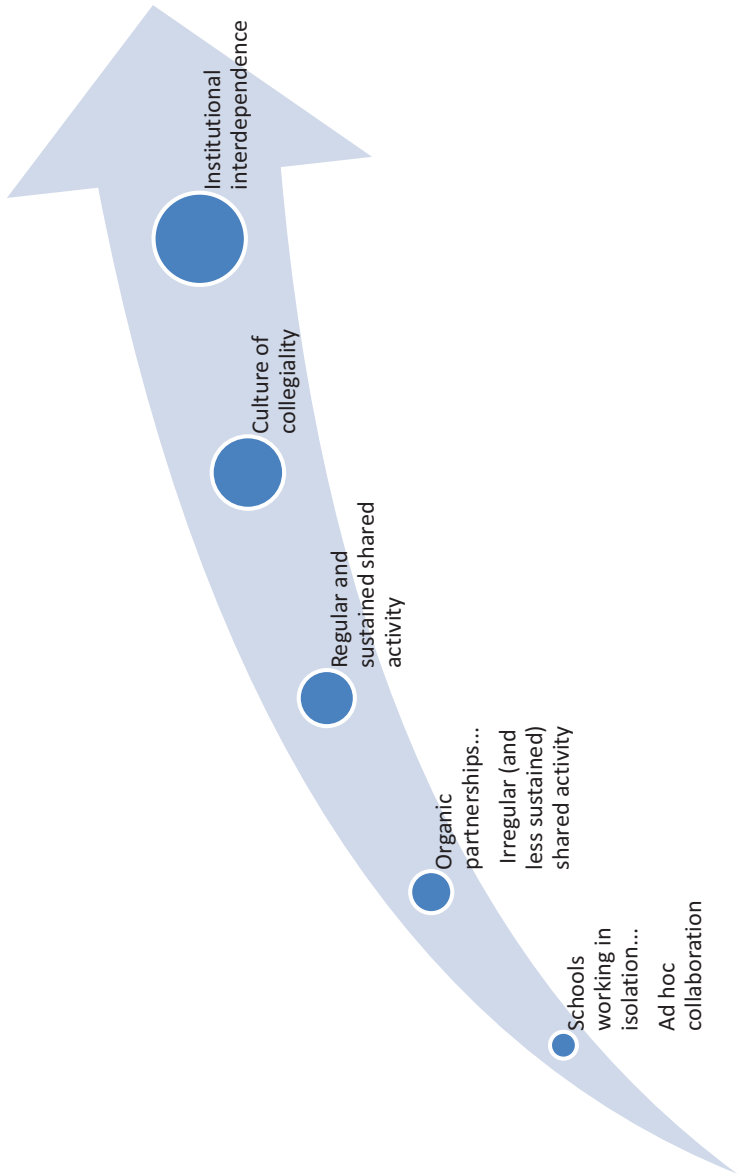
Youth Service; Institutes of Higher Education; IFI and other funding bodies.	<p>4. To reflect the importance of shared education in policy and planning for teacher education, in particular to draw on the emerging shared education continuum in how teachers and youth workers are educated;</p> <p>5 To work collaboratively to provide those who work in the formal and non-formal sectors with high quality resources and professional development, and to develop their confidence and competence in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes to provide progressively challenging experiences for young people in tackling controversial and sensitive issues;</p> <p>6. To recognise, value and reward shared learning through accreditation and assessment arrangements which promote the development of young people's higher-level skills of negotiation, compromise, collaborative problem-solving, and managing disagreement, conflict and confrontation with maturity;</p>
For schools/ organisations	<p>7. To identify with external facilitation as appropriate, their starting point and set realistic aims and objectives within the broader education plan/school development plan and in the plans for the wider area learning community;</p> <p>8. To use the improvement process of the school/organisation to develop shared education through staff development; the appointment of key people to lead and co-ordinate the work; the evaluation of the impact of the quality of the provision on the young people's attitudes, behaviours, understanding and skills; and engage with parents, carers and the wider community; and</p>
For ETI	<p>9. To develop further, the quality indicators for the identification of effective practice in shared education and identify and disseminate effective practice.</p>

Figure 1



Appendix 4

CONTINUUM OF SHARED EDUCATION



The shared education (collaboration) spectrum¹	
Schools in isolation	This end of the spectrum represents those schools who are in isolation of one another, where there is little to no collaboration with other schools. This may apply in a number of contexts particularly in rural settings but not exclusively, it may also apply in urban settings where schools choose not to work with other schools. It may also apply in contexts where schools are part of network schools such as an Area Learning Community but their actual levels of engagement with other schools in the learning community is minimal or non-existent.
Ad hoc collaboration	Involves schools where there is limited contact or collaboration with another school. This type of engagement is ad hoc, with infrequent contact between schools. An example of such activity could be an annual joint sports day.
Organic partnerships	Organic arrangements may be more significant in terms of the extent of the collaboration, compared to ad hoc arrangements and crucially are motivated by a school's desire to connect with another school for a myriad of reasons. However, collaborative arrangements are not as a consequence of enactment and are independent of any formal structures or the remit of external funders. This type of collaborative arrangement which is, in effect, a grass roots model may actually amount to a significant model of collaboration given that the schools may be motivated by common needs as opposed to enacting a model of collaboration imposed by external funder requirements.
Irregular (and less sustained) shared activity	Models such as these are characterised by collaboration between schools, which may be meaningful and impactful but which are limited in terms of sustainable practice and the frequency of contact between schools. Models such as these are often funded externally or centrally funded from DE e.g. EMU- type programmes or CRED projects. Models may range from shared pupil learning initiatives through to teacher initiatives or located at senior management level. Often activity between pupils may complement the curriculum or address specific curricular elements but are unlikely to be entire curricular subjects.
Regular and sustained shared activity	Models where the collaboration between schools is more regular – where contact between pupils and staff is more frequent and, crucially, where the collaborative activity occurs over a sustained period of time. In some cases this may mean over a period of years and contact/shared learning between pupils is regular, timetabled and embedded within the curriculum. Such models are likely to encourage schools to develop mature and effective partnerships. In such cases the relationship between schools is more likely to develop whereby collaboration between institutions is not limited to shared pupils' activity but involves collaboration between teachers, leaders and in some cases

¹ This framework has been developed by the QUB Shared Education Team: Dr Gavin Duffy, Alistair Stewart and Mark Baker.

	Governors. Regular and sustained models of collaboration are most likely to be funded by external agencies or Government initiatives.
Culture of Collegiality	Schools that have been involved in sustained collaborative activities then develop strong institutional relationships. Schools will continue to be involved in shared, regular and sustained learning between pupils but collaboration has become unbound in that the remit of the relationship between the schools is not restricted to shared learning between pupils. Instead, while shared learning opportunities increase, the extent of the relationships between teachers, managers and leaders is much more pronounced and, crucially, links between Governors develop. Collegiality is often characterised by collaboration where practice, including shared learning, becomes normalised in each school. Schools come to value the institutional relationships that have developed and explore where else they could collaborate. In much the same way as organic partnerships, schools recognise that collaboration allows them to address common needs. Collegial partners come to value partnership and seek ways to sustain partnership activities that need not rely on funds from external agencies. Schools begin to generate shared knowledge and shared resources.
Institutional Interdependence	Schools that have reached this point in terms of their relationship have developed an organisational symbiosis in that collaboration has normalised, is based on common need, involves significant shared learning and where staff, leaders and governorship recognise the value of collaboration. At this level, partnerships will have developed a high degree of collaborative infra-structures, including: governance, curriculum and planning, teaching and learning, management and pupils.

For the purpose of this programme, the following definitions will apply:

Primary

Minimum of:

- Class(es) from one key stage group for one session per week over a 6 week period at level 2 (*typically at KS1 this might involve the entire P3 cohort from School A being taken over to School B and then the entire P4 cohort from School B being taken back to School A*).
- Class(es) from one key stage group for one session per week over a 12 week period at level 3;
- Classes from two key stage groups for one session per week over twelve weeks at level 4;
- Classes from two key stage groups for one session per week over 24 weeks at level 5.

Post Primary Level

Minimum of:

- One subject in one year group involving the same cohorts of pupils coming together at least 6 times during the year at level 2
- Two subjects across two year groups with half of the classes being physically shared at level 3 (or equivalent to 18 shared classes across the year). *It is accepted that there may be a skewing effect here, where for example the 2014/15 5th year pupils are already halfway through their GCSE studies, so it may only be possible to bring 4th year pupils onto the shared subjects in Yr1. Then in Yr2 that cohort would move through and the second year group would follow on. That skewing may then have to be reversed in the final year of the programme (depending on whether the partnership in question intends to continue delivery of that shared subject beyond the programme).*
- Four subjects across two year groups involving all classes being physically shared (*skewing comment above applies*) at level 4; and
- Six subjects across two year groups involving all classes being physically shared (*skewing comment above applies*) at level 5.

Appendix 5

Groups and Projects Involved in IFI Sharing in Education Programme

Group Name	Project Name
Belfast Community Sports Development Network	Belfast Old firm Alliance
Cinemagic	Reel Frontiers
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta	Together Through Culture
Corrymeela Community	Facing Our History
DE - Youth Council for NI	Youth Works
Fermanagh Trust	Fermanagh Shared Education Programme
Headliners	Distinctive Voices Collective Choices
Junior Achievement Ireland	Hand of Friendship
NICE/ Belfast YMCA/ CRIS	Change Makers
North Eastern Education and Library Board	Primary Integrating Enriching Education(PIEE)
North Eastern Education and Library Board	Partnership Inclusion Reconciliation Citizenship and History (PIRCH)
Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education	Sharing Classrooms Deepening Learning
Queens University Belfast	Sharing Education Programme 2 (SEP 2)
REACH Across	Cultural Learning and Social Skills (CLASS)
South Eastern Education and Library Board	Learning to Live Together
South Eastern Education and Library Board	Building New Communities through Positive Parenting and Reconciliation
Southern Education and Library Board	Welcoming Schools
Southern Education and Library Board	Primary Curriculum Partnership Programme
Spirit of Enniskillen Trust	Sharing Education Together
Stranmillis & St Mary's University College's	Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers (CREDIT)
University of Ulster	Creative Change
Western Education and Library Board	Promoting Reconciliation Through a Shared Curriculum Experience

The aims of the SIEP were to:	What did the work of the 19 projects do?*	Key outcome of the project
promote shared education by linking schools representative of the two communities;	The Change Makers Project worked with 10 schools in partnership in the Lisburn and greater Belfast area to equip young people to be agents of positive change within and between school communities.	Young people benefited from learning how to tackle controversial and difficult topics in shared classes through the high-quality facilitation of learning. Quantitative and qualitative research was used well to inform ongoing planning of sessions in order to meet better the needs of the young people.
	The Creative Change Project worked with 10 schools in 5 shared education partnerships in the North Coast area with children, teachers, classroom assistants and parents/carers on the creative delivery of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).	Effective partnership between an institute of higher education, schools and parents resulted in young children from different traditions learning together through the creative delivery of PDMU. The partnership arrangements resulted in high-quality learning experiences for teachers, classroom assistants, parents, carers and children to help them understand the complex nature of the reconciliation process and how to be at ease with difference.
	The Learning to Live Together Project worked with 12 schools in 6 partnerships across South-Eastern Education and Library Board to promote positive community relations through using methodologies from the formal and non-formal sectors.	Staff contributed positively to shared education through working across the formal and non-formal sectors. These links brought freshness to teaching and learning approaches which engaged and motivated young people, particularly the more reluctant young people. The project showed that shared education can facilitate, and support, an understanding of difference in a respectful, cooperative and interdependent way for the benefit of all pupils.
	The Partnership, Inclusion, Reconciliation, Citizenship and History Project worked with 12 schools in 6 shared education partnerships in the North-Eastern Education and Library Board area to promote inclusion and reconciliation through Local and Global Citizenship and history.	By developing meaningful shared curricular learning opportunities, pupils engaged well together in a common purpose, promoting a greater acceptance of one another's views and opinions.
	The Primary Curriculum Partnership Project targeted 20 schools with experience in community relations to form 10 partnerships across the Southern Education and Library Board to develop the mutual understanding strand of PDMU through shared classes.	By children learning in shared classes and teachers working in shared partnerships using the PDMU curriculum with considered expertise, the children and staff handled controversial and sensitive issues more effectively. This resulted in raising the standards of learning in PDMU for the children and participating schools.
build on community relations within and between schools;	The Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers Project provided 134 teachers with training in and through shared education to deal with issues of diversity, inclusion and community cohesion within the classroom and on a whole-school basis.	Shared teacher education at all phases is crucial to bring about change through: effective support, challenge and extending perceptions within the school setting in the community. Key to these programmes was the opportunity for teachers to work alongside others from different phases to become more aware of the continuum of education which all young people experience.
	The Facing Our History: Shaping the Future Project worked with 178 teachers, 101 student teachers and 855 pupils to explore the shared history of the two main communities in Northern Ireland in dealing with sensitive and contentious issues through transformative learning experiences in order to contribute to reconciliation.	Effective history education can be a transformative experience and can make a significant contribution to the process of reconciliation; it is crucial that all history teachers are equipped with the skills for handling sensitive and controversial issues in the classroom and that all young people have shared experiences to consolidate their learning.
	The Promoting Reconciliation through a Shared Curriculum: worked with 24 primary and 16 post-primary schools across the Western Education and Library Board to develop shared learning classes through PDMU and Local and Global Citizenship.	A key strength was the professional development of teachers and the provision of resources to support the statutory aspects of the curriculum for PDMU and Local and Global Citizenship. The training of teachers was crucial to develop their confidence and skills in handling sensitive and contentious issues, especially with young people in shared classrooms.
	The Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project trained 414 teachers working in shared classrooms across the 29 ALCs.	Most young people adapt positively to learning within shared classrooms; where concerns arise they relate to issues of integration regarding gender, socio-economic background and school type. In establishing a genuinely inclusive ethos of shared education, school leaders, teachers and staff need to be supported in developing appropriate strategies to address these challenges.

* Much of the work of each project met more than one of the key aims of the SIEP. For the ease of reference the projects are sorted according to the aim they most fulfilled.

support cultural outreach amongst young people representative of the differing communities/ traditions; and	The Welcoming Schools Project worked with 18 schools across the Southern Education and Library Board to take proactive steps to make them a more welcoming place for all young people regardless of religion, race or creed and for schools to engage more effectively with the community.	By children learning in schools that developed innovatively a welcoming ethos for all, the children and staff showed greater respect for themselves and others. This resulted in a much greater understanding of a truly welcoming ethos and how to engage more effectively with the community through a climate of reassurance and acceptance fostered within and beyond the school gates.
	The Belfast Old Firm Alliance Project worked with 2,167 children and young people to develop good relations through sport in interface and divided communities across the greater Belfast area.	The medium of soccer was an accessible way to engage children, young people, parents, teachers and community workers in promoting reconciliation. It offered an opportunity for those involved, in a neutral and safe environment, to begin to understand diversity and how to promote tolerance.
	The Cultural Learning and Social Skills Project worked with 671 young people from diverse backgrounds, isolated locations and vulnerable social situations to engage in community relations programmes to develop their social skills and to provide positive alternatives to the various anti-social circumstances and self-harm influences in the North-West region.	When community relations activities are under-pinned with meticulous planning and preparation, pupils of all ages can benefit from a rewarding and enjoyable experience through engaging with others from diverse backgrounds.
	The Distinctive Voices: Collective Choices Project worked with 530 young people across 22 schools to explore their own story and the stories of others from differing backgrounds in shared learning experiences.	By giving young people the opportunity to explore their own story and the stories of others from differing backgrounds in shared learning experiences, they can make a difference in their current communities and for the future.
	The Reel Frontiers Project worked with 533 pupils across 20 schools to explore themes of division and conflict through the medium of film and through engagement with associated workshop activities to creating their own original films about contentious issues that affect the people of Northern Ireland.	By exploring themes of division and conflict through the medium of film and through engagement with associated workshop activities and creating their own original films, pupils can gain a deeper understanding of a range of contentious issues that affect the people of Northern Ireland.
address strategic gaps in achieving reconciliation through a cross-community, cross-border approach through education and the related services sector.	The Sharing Education Together Project facilitated the learning of over 7,348 young people in reconciliation programmes through training by 336 young volunteers.	Young people in post-primary schools responded well to the approaches modelled by the young volunteers and facilitators when discussing contentious and sensitive issues. The local area learning communities were a useful starting point from which to promote shared education.
	The Together through Culture Project worked in 38 schools with pupils from both traditions to promote a greater understanding of the Irish language and culture through linking primary schools with post-primary schools.	Through a study of interests in names, place names, song, dance and traditions and the Irish language in shared classes, the young people gained a greater understanding of language and culture. Through shared classes between primary and post-primary schools, the children and young people were given better opportunities to be prepared for transition.
	The Building New Communities through Positive Parenting and Reconciliation Project worked with 484 parents and staff to use a parenting programme as a vehicle for reconciliation.	The pre-school stage of education provided a key window of opportunity to influence parental attitudes and behaviours in promoting reconciliation and having a positive effect on their children in their formative years. The commonality of being a parent helped the parents involved to dialogue and overcome barriers to engagement across traditional community divisions.
	The Hand of Friendship Project: 22 schools worked in cross-border, cross-community clusters to explore issues of identity and friendship, diversity, sectarianism and peace and reconciliation.	By adults modelling good relations and leading by example, at whole-school level, children got to know, empathise with, and respect one another in neighbouring schools, and from schools across the border. This helped to create a culture of respect and tolerance among primary school children by facilitating contact and opportunities for discussion of sensitive issues such as identity, friendship, diversity, sectarianism and peace and reconciliation.
	The Youth Works Project worked with 288 young people who were not currently engaged in education, employment or training, to gain recognised qualifications, and to develop the skills and self-esteem necessary to improve their future training and employability choices.	The youth work approach used to support and progress the young people was highly successful in raising their aspirations, and preparing them to engage in education, training or employment.

Appendix 6

Memorandum of Understanding

**Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
(OFMDFM), Department of Education (DE),
and The Atlantic Philanthropies (AP)
Operation of the co-funded Delivering Social Change Shared Education
Signature Programme (SESP)**

1. Introduction

The purpose of this Memorandum, which complements the AP commitment letter of XXX (see Annex xx) is to set out, in terms of accountability, operations and reporting, the roles responsibilities and relationship between OFMDFM, DE, and AP on the operation of the co-funded Shared Education Signature Programme (SESP). All parties reserve the right to review the general outline of this understanding and to propose amendments.

2. Purpose of the Programme

The overall co-funded Atlantic Philanthropies / Delivering Social Change programme is a signature project within the Delivering Social Change framework which is led by Ministers through the **Executive Ministerial Sub-Committee (MSC)** on Children and Young People and the Sub-Committee on Poverty and Social Inclusion. It aims at achieving transformative change in the commissioning, design and delivery of services for the most vulnerable members of society and encompasses:

- a. A Dementia Services Programme
- b. A Prevention and Early Intervention Programme
- c. A Shared Education Signature Programme.

The specific outcomes sought by the SESP are outlined in the Business Plan (See Annex xx). The SESP aims to incentivise Shared Education partnerships

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(statutory early years, primary and post primary level) with the aim of improving educational and reconciliation outcomes through schools working together. The joint fund will promote peer learning amongst schools, and will include teacher exchanges, joint development and delivery of shared classes.

3. Governance Arrangements for the Programme

- a) AP, OFMDFM and DE will work together to support the implementation of the SESP. They are agreed that generally, communication about the SESP should be coordinated and shared between the parties to ensure full co-ordination of guidance, advice and direction to the programme, notwithstanding the individual requirements of either party from time to time.
- b) The governance arrangements for the SESP will be consistent with the Governance arrangements in place for the Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes. Governance arrangements are summarised in the diagram and sub-paragraphs below.

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Executive Ministerial Sub Committee for Children and Young People

Delivering Social Change Programme Board

OFMDFM Junior Ministers [Chair]
 OFMDFM Denis McMahon [Programme Director]
 OFMDFM Special Advisers
 DE Deputy Secretary
 DE Deputy Secretary
 DSD Deputy Secretary
 DEL Deputy Secretary
 DOJ Deputy Secretary
 DARD Deputy Secretary
 DOE Deputy Secretary
 OFMDFM: Henry Johnston (Programme Support)

Joint AP/DSC Programme Board

OFMDFM (Chair)
 The Atlantic Philanthropies
 DHSSPS
 DE
 OFMDFM Special Advisers

SESP Board

DE (SRO) (Chair)
 The Atlantic Philanthropies
 OFMDFM

 --
 ELBs

SEP EAC

Membership nominated
 by:
 DE
 OFMDFM
 The Atlantic Philanthropies

4. Ministerial Sub Committee

The MSC is supported by the **Delivering Social Change Programme Board** which meets every 8 weeks. The role of the DSC Programme Board is to oversee the delivery of the DSC delivery framework, and to ensure that key milestones and targets are achieved. The Board oversees a family of initiatives (including the Atlantic Philanthropies/Delivering Social Change programme), monitoring in particular project formation and delivery. Each initiative has its own Board which includes representatives from key Departments and organisations. OFMDFM Special Advisers are invited on to the DSC Programme Board and all of the individual initiative Boards.

5. DSC/AP Programme Board

- (a) The DSC/AP Programme Board will oversee the joint AP/DSC initiative. The Joint DSC/AP Programme Board will be chaired by OFMDFM and will be comprised of representatives from The Atlantic Philanthropies, DHSSPS, DE and OFMDFM, including OFMDFM Special Advisers.
- (b) The role of the DSC/AP Programme Board will be to provide the SESP Programme Board with the necessary authorisation for the project to proceed and to overcome any problems. The DSC/AP Programme Board will approve the overall Budget parameters for the Project, conditional on achievement of objectives and will report progress to the Executive Ministerial Sub-Committee (MSC).

6. SESP Programme Board

- (a) The direct management and oversight of the SESP will be provided by the SESP Programme Board, established by DE in consultation with AP, which will report to the DSC/ AP Programme Board.
- (b) The SESP Programme Board will be chaired by DE and comprise representatives from The Atlantic Philanthropies, OFMDFM, and ELBs.
- (c) The SESP Programme Board Chair will develop detailed proposals for membership of the Programme Board within these parameters for agreement by the Joint DSC/AP Programme Board.
- (d) The role of the SESP Programme Board will be to

Shared Education Programme April 8, 2014

- Develop plans to deliver the overall vision, objectives and outcomes for the Programme including overarching evaluation framework
 - Oversee the development of the Project Brief and Business Case
 - Authorise expenditure levels, set stage tolerances (agreed by DSC/AP Programme Board) and ensure funding for agreed expenditure is available within delegated limits.
 - Authorise or reject proposed changes to cost or timescale beyond tolerance levels and all proposed changes to scope, checking for possible effects on the Business Case
 - Report to DSC/AP Programme Board (through the SRO) where variances are beyond the authority of the SESP Programme Board
 - Ensure Risks and Issues are being tracked and mitigated/resolved
 - Ensure outcomes are met
- (e) The SESP Programme Board, with the agreement of the DSC/AP Programme Board, may invite input from other key stakeholders at key decision points, including from the Expert Advisory Committee.
- (f) Day to administration for the programme will be managed by the SESP Programme Management Team.
- (g) The SESP Programme Management Team will prepare all the appropriate documentation (based on PRINCE2 methodology) including a Project Initiation Document (PID) setting out its plan for implementation of the Project, for agreement by the SESP Programme Board. The PID will set out key activities, timelines, decision points and spending profiles and will be updated throughout the project as detailed plans for each stage are developed. Review points will be established at key points in the project to oversee implementation and progress.
- (h) On agreement of the PID by the SESP Programme Board, the Programme Management Team will have authority to deliver the Project within the terms of the PID, including such decision points and tolerances as are agreed by the SESP Programme Board.

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7. Expert Advisory Committee

An independent **Expert Advisory Committee** will be established to provide advice on service design and implementation to the SESP Programme Board. The EAC will also provide advice on evaluation and performance measurement. OFMDFM, DE and Atlantic Philanthropies will nominate members to this Committee. The EAC will report to the DSC/AP Programme Board, through the SESP Programme Board.

8. Schedule of Governance meetings

Period	Board	Meeting date
Q1 2014/15	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC May 2014
	DSC Programme Board	4 June 2014
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	25 June 2014
Q2 2014/15	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC SEPtember 2014
	DSC Programme Board	TBC SEPtember 2014
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	24 SEPtember 2014
Q3 2014/15	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC November 2014
	DSC Programme Board	19 November 2014
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	10 December 2014
Q4 2014/15	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC February 2015
	DSC Programme Board	TBC February 2015
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	TBC March 2015
Q1 2015/16	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC May 2015
	DSC Programme Board	TBC May 2015
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	TBC June 2015
Q2 2015/16	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC August 2015
	DSC Programme Board	TBC August 2015

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	Ministerial Sub-Committee	TBC SEPtember 2015
Q3 2015/16	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC November 2015
	DSC Programme Board	TBC November 2015
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	TBC December 2015
Q4 2015/16	SESP Programme Board	
	AP/DSC Programme Board	TBC February 2015
	DSC Programme Board	TBC February 2015
	Ministerial Sub-Committee	TBC March 2015

9. Roles and Responsibilities**a) Senior Responsible Officer**

Mrs Faustina Graham in the Department of Education is the Senior Responsible Officer for the project.

b) Department of Education

DE has been appointed as the lead NICS department in relation to this programme and will:

- Participate in the Joint DSC/AP Programme board.
- Be formally accountable for all project expenditure and project reporting
- Establish (and chair) the SESP Programme Board comprising representatives from OFMDFM, DE and AP and ELBs. The SESP Programme Board will receive regular reports on progress and will be responsible for management and oversight of the governance arrangements.
- Establish a programme management office, appoint a programme manager and change managers and support implementation of the programme
- Engage with and participate in the agreed monitoring and evaluation processes.

c) Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

OFMDFM will;

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- Nominate an official as a point of contact for the project and establish and chair the Joint AP/DSC Programme Board
- collate reports on progress against project plans, monitor budget profiles and as necessary, report to DFP
- Participate in the SESP Programme Board as appropriate
- Facilitate the operation of and participate in the Joint DSC/AP Programme board and report as appropriate to the Executive Ministerial Sub-Committee (MSC).
- Engage with and participate in the agreed monitoring and evaluation processes.

d) **Atlantic Philanthropies**

AP will;

- Participate in the Joint DSC/AP Programme board
- Account to AP board's for delivering against commitment letter and agreed outcomes
- Monitor compliance with AP reporting requirements
- Participate in the SESP Programme Board
- Engage with and participate in the agreed monitoring and evaluation processes
- Fund Queens University longitudinal research study and provide relevant data for the measurement of reconciliation outcomes, including 2012/13 baselines and annual updates as requested.

10. Committed Investment

Funding for the SESP will be committed as follows, over a three year period beginning in 2014.

SESP	
Delivering Social Change Central Funds	£10m
Atlantic Philanthropies	£10m
DE	£5m
Total	£25m

11. Conditions of Investment

For Atlantic conditions of investment, see commitment letter (annex xx)

a) Any other conditions agreed by the SESP Programme Board

TBC

12. Funding

- (a) The SESP Programme Board will prepare a detailed Budget Profile for the duration of the SESP for approval by the DSC/AP Programme Board.
- (b) In advance of each financial year, the SESP Programme Board will agree the annual requirement and budget profile to be submitted to the DSC/AP Programme Board for approval.
- (c) The DSC/AP Programme Board will determine the respective contributions from Departmental, DSC and AP funds.
- (d) In advance of each financial year and following DSC/AP Programme Board consideration, OFMDFM will advise DFP in relation to funding arrangements.
- (e) The SESP Programme Board, as part of its monitoring process, will provide the DSC/AP Programme Board with regular reports on budget profiles.
- (f) The DSC/AP Programme Board will manage additional pressures/reduced requirements and as part of the monitoring round process in June, SEPtember and November, OFMDFM will advise DFP of any in-year adjustments agreed by the DSC/AP Programme Board

13. Systemic Change and Mainstreaming

OFMDFM and DE in endorsing the SESP signal their commitment that that this new approach to Shared Education will be embedded in future provision.

14. Disputes Resolution

Where consensus cannot be reached on an issue by the SESP Programme Board the issue should be referred to the AP/DSC Programme Board for consideration. The Programme Board may invite the Permanent Secretary of

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OFMDFM, the Permanent Secretary from DE and the Country Director of AP to make a determination. If at this stage no resolution is found, the Ministers in OFMDFM (and/or their nominees) will seek to achieve finality with the President and CEO of AP (and/or their nominees).

15. Public Communication

- a) All press releases or similar announcements issued by any of the parties to this Memorandum will be circulated for consideration and advice before publication. All documentation in relation to the SESP will state that it is funded by the participating Departments, Delivering Social Change and AP. This may include incorporation of the official logos of the relevant Departments and AP.
- b) All of the participating Departments and AP reserve a right to use any information, data, research or materials supplied to it as a result of work supported by the Fund.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The SESP Programme Board will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate baseline, monitoring and formative evaluation data is collected throughout the lifespan of the project to allow all NIGEA requirements and standards to be met. A specific budget line has been included within the project to ensure that all necessary operational data is being collected. The SESP Programme Board will also determine how on-going outcome and impact-level assessments will be made. In addition to these strands of monitoring and evaluation, AP intends to independently fund a range of complementary studies which will apply thematic analytical lenses to the overall project (and indeed the overall programme). A detailed project monitoring and evaluation framework will be drawn up over the course of Year 1 to detail how all these strands will be rolled out, and all participating Departments and AP will agree to participate fully in the implementation of that framework.

Appendix 7

High Level Project Plan – Key Milestones

Key Milestones	May 14	Jun 14	Jul 14	Aug 14	Sep 14	Oct 14	Nov 14	Dec 14	Jan 15	Feb 15	Mar 15	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18		
												Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Q 1
												1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1
Programme Launch (OFMDFM/DE/AP)																				
Establish Regional Support Team (ELBs)																				
Process Development (ELBs)																				
Application Launch: First Call (DE/ELBs)																				
Assess Applications & award funding (ELBs)																				
First Phase Rollout																				
Evaluation of First Phase Projects																				
Application – 2 nd Call (DE/ELBs)																				
Assess Applications & award funding (ELBs)																				
Second Phase Rollout																				
Evaluation of Second Phase Projects																				
ETI Evaluation																				
ETI Mid-term & final Evaluation Reports																				

Note: PPE will be undertaken within 3-6 months of programme completion in line with Departmental guidance



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor
BT19 7PR
veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

12 December 2014

Our Ref: PMcC/KM/1869

Dear Veronica

Shared Education Business Plan

At its meeting on Wednesday 10 December 2014, the Chairperson referred Members to a recent press article attributed to Professor Smith, University of Ulster referring to a Department of Education Shared Education Business Plan.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking sight of the Shared Education Business Plan in question.

A response by 12 January 2015 would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk
Committee for Education

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

20150107 DE- Comm Shared Education Campuses protocol document



Department of
Education

www.deni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: michele.matchett@deni.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

7 January 2015

Dear Peter

Together: Building a United Community - Shared Education Campuses Protocol

In advance of officials' evidence session on Wednesday 14 January, I attach for the Committee's information, the protocol and application document issued on 1 October 2014, for the Second Call for Expressions of Interest in the Shared Education Campuses Programme. This was previously copied to the Committee on the morning of 1 October 2014.

Yours sincerely

Michele

Michele Matchett

Acting Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

The Shared Education Campuses Programme
Second Call for Expressions of Interest Protocol Document
September 2014

Shared Education Campuses Programme 2014

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 On 9 May 2013, the First Minister and deputy First Minister made a statement to the Assembly on the '**Together: Building a United Community**' strategy, which contains a range of proposals including details on **Shared Education Campuses**. Work on 10 shared education campuses will be commenced within the next 5 years, building on the project proposals for the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus. These campuses will be the pathfinder projects leading to a wider programme of shared education capital projects. The campuses will also integrate community activities and resources and other services, including statutory provision where appropriate.
- 1.2 The specific aim of the Executive's **Together: Building a United Community** (T:BUC) strategy relating to education is '*To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience*'.
- 1.3 Included in the strategy is a commitment '*to create 10 Shared Education Campuses based on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus model*'. We believe that building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools. It is already an integral part of the curriculum. In addition to the current work in this area, the strategy proposes that the Programme for Government (PfG) commitment to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015, will reinforce opportunities to contribute to the shared vision of building a united community.
- 1.4 Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment and sectarianism; and improving good relations amongst and for our young people.
- 1.5 Lisanelly has been quoted as the template for these new 'Shared Education Campuses'. It is a shared campus in the truest sense of the term, bringing together six schools of different management types and phases, on a site in excess of 130 acres, with a forecast combined long term enrolment of over 4,200 pupils.
- 1.6 While Lisanelly Shared Education Campus is an example or pathfinder for shared education facilities here, it must be recognised that it is also unique. The availability of an extremely large site close to the centre of Omagh will not be readily replicated in other towns across the north. Implementation of the FM/dFM announcement will require a flexible approach to the identification of potential 'shared campuses'.
- 1.7 In progressing shared education, delivery of educational benefits to children and young people must be the overarching priority. It is important that any proposal for a shared campus be consistent with the work currently being undertaken on area planning. Any models of sharing must fit within the relevant Area Plan, taking into account the full needs of an area, including the implications for other schools and recognising the importance of parental preference, which is protected in legislation.
- 1.8 Enhancing shared education provision provides a range of benefits including: raising educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils; greater choice and greater opportunity; providing sustainable local provision; facilitating delivery of the Entitlement Framework; and providing wider choice for pupils in terms of leisure, cultural and sporting activities.

- 1.9 The purpose of this document is to set out the process and timetable to be used to identify and assess proposals submitted under this initiative. **Applicants should note that this document has been revised and updated in light of the experience of the first call for Expressions of Interest and includes revisions to the criteria.**
- 2. Definition and Scope**
- 2.1 In July 2012, the Minister of Education announced the establishment of an independent Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education. The group published its findings on 22 April 2013. The issues arising from the findings on shared education cross many existing policy areas throughout education and the Department is already working on and will continue to develop shared education initiatives in schools.
- 2.2 It is important that there is a clear definition of what is meant by schools ‘sharing’ and the Department uses the definition of sharing provided to the Ministerial Advisory Group:
- “Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.”***
- 2.3 Specifically, **‘Shared Education’ means the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.**
- 2.4 The ‘Shared Education Campuses’ initiative under T:BUC is seen as complementing the work already underway in schools and will be targeted towards infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating educational sharing initiatives within local schools. It is intended therefore that the projects selected will build on a solid foundation of existing sharing.
- 2.5 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will provide capital funding for facilities at **schools which will be used on a shared educational basis.** The Programme will not provide for replication or duplication of existing or proposed facilities within the education sector, including that provided by the Further Education sector. As this Programme is specifically targeted at the provision of shared education in schools, applications from youth and sporting organisations/groups will not be considered for support under the Programme at this time.
- 2.6 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will have the potential to bring together a range of schools for the delivery of education to children on a shared basis. There may be additional ancillary benefits which can arise from the establishment of these new facilities, including increased opportunities for the wider community to use school facilities for a range of educational, sporting, recreational, arts or cultural activities in line with the Department’s *Community Use of School Premises: A Guidance Toolkit for Schools* which seeks to assist schools in opening their doors to the local community.
- 2.7 The programme will target schools that can demonstrate the following types of sharing:
- Shared educational facilities – where new facilities are built to allow for shared educational use by all schools within the model.
 - Enhanced educational facilities – where current facilities are improved to allow for shared educational use by all schools within the model.
 - Shared Educational Campuses – where schools are co-located and share infrastructure i.e. the Lisanelly model.
- 2.8 Shared facilities or Shared Campuses supported under this Programme must be located on a site that is, or will be, under the ownership or management of the Education sector.
- 2.9 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will not give consideration to the concept of a ‘virtual campus’ or to those schools that do not actually share facilities.

3. Programme Requirements

Gateway Checks

- 3.1 Each project proposal will have to demonstrate that they meet all four Gateway checks below in order to be appraised under the Programme:

Number, Management Type and Phase of Schools

The proposal must involve a minimum of two schools from different management sectors (ie controlled, Catholic maintained, Irish medium, integrated, voluntary grammar). If any proposal involves schools from more than one educational phase (eg primary/post-primary) at least two schools at each phase from different management sectors must be represented, so that there can be educational sharing across similar age groups.

a) **Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities**

The respective Managing Authorities of the schools involved in the application must provide written endorsement of their agreement to the proposal. This is important as any investment at or on behalf of schools through the Programme has the potential to create ongoing liabilities as well as recurrent resource implications that the relevant Managing Authorities should be aware of and be prepared to support. Proposals under the Programme also need to be consistent with the Managing Authorities' strategic plans for the schools under their control.

b) **Planning Authority endorsement**

The Planning Authority (ie the relevant Education and Library Board) must provide assurance that the proposal meets the criteria in the Sustainable Schools policy for each school involved in the proposal or, where this is not the case, provide a rationale for their endorsement, including an explanation as to how the proposal will contribute to the delivery of sustainable provision in the area going forward.

c) **Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support**

Community, parent and pupil support is required to ensure the success of these types of proposals. Evidence is therefore required to confirm support is in place.

Essential Criteria

- 3.2 If a project proposal clears the Gateway checks, it will then be assessed, scored and prioritised against the following essential criteria:

- a) **Educational Benefits** – the proposal must demonstrate how it will benefit the education of all children involved. The overarching priority for any proposal brought forward under this Programme must be the delivery of educational benefits to children and young people through improving or facilitating sharing initiatives. Marks will be allocated on the basis that the proposal clearly demonstrates:
- The sharing of classes, subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities and how educational benefits can be delivered to the children and young people through the sharing of classes together;
 - How educational benefits to the children and young people will be delivered through the sharing of classes together by developing future plans to increase the level of sharing between the schools involved;
 - How the proposal can aid the sharing of teaching expertise amongst the schools;
 - That the courses being delivered are not a duplication of existing provision (in particular Further Education courses);

- That consideration of the Bain report recommendations of not more than 2 composite year groups in a class and a school of a minimum of 4 teachers will be met.
- b) **Evidence of Existing Sharing** – Schools applying to the Programme should already be working in collaboration on curricular and non-curricular issues and/or be sharing facilities on an ongoing basis. The move to a Shared Education Campus should therefore build on a solid foundation of existing sharing that is already well embedded. Evidence must be provided detailing the existing educational sharing arrangements.
- c) **Societal Benefits** – the proposal must demonstrate how it will enhance/develop a shared future for the local community.
- The specific aim of the T:BUC strategy relating to education is *‘To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience’*.
 - Building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools and is already an integral part of the curriculum.
 - Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment, and sectarianism; and
 - improving good relations amongst and for our young people.

Proposals will be marked, based on the evidence provided, on how they will contribute to this overall objective.

- (d) **Religious Balance** - A minimum of 15%, and preferably 30%, of the minority community (Protestant or Roman Catholic) should be represented within the combined total of the school population involved.

Where the proposal involves schools from more than one phase of education (eg primary and post primary), there should be a religious balance across individual phases so that educational sharing can take place between similar age groups.

Desirable Criteria

- 3.3 In addition, priority will be given to project proposals that demonstrate they meet the following desirable criteria which will also be assessed and scored:

- a) **Location** – proposals should be for schools to be located within the same campus or in close proximity to each other. Any proposal that is for shared facilities rather than a shared campus should provide details on the distances between the schools involved and schools will have to demonstrate how they plan to minimise the impact on pupils’ education of travelling between the sites involved.
- b) **Disadvantaged Pupil Considerations** – proposals involving schools where pupils are more greatly impacted by social disadvantage, as indicated by the percentage of free school meal entitled (FSME) pupils enrolled in the schools. This is in line with the recognition given in the T:BUC strategy that one of the benefits of a more shared education system is to raise educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

- 3.4 Applications should demonstrate that all Gateway and essential criteria are met and that any evidence requested is provided. Proposals considered as having met all the Gateway and essential criteria will then be assessed with priority given to those proposals that best meet both the essential and desirable criteria. Those proposals which best meet the criteria will be

submitted to the Minister for a final decision on which projects will be approved to proceed to the Economic Appraisal stage.

4. Process

- 4.1 The Shared Education Campuses Programme will be delivered by means of separate discrete calls for proposals. The first call was launched in January 2014. This is the second call.

Indicative Timetable for Second Call for Expressions of Interest

- 4.2 The indicative timetable for the Second Call under the Shared Education Campuses Programme is as follows:

- End September 2014 – Second Call for Expressions of Interest – the Department notifies Managing and Planning Authorities and all schools of the process, copying the approved protocol document, programme application form and confirming the programme timetable.
- End of January 2015 – deadline for submission of proposals to the Department by School Planning Authorities.
- June 2015 – Announcement of second tranche of Shared Education Campuses. Selected proposals advised to proceed in planning, including securing professional team as required.

- 4.3. In order to reduce the administrative and financial burden on individual schools and Managing Authorities, a two staged approach will be operated with regard to the application process. An application template is included at Annex 1 to this document and a flow chart for the process is attached at Annex 2.

Stage 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest

- 4.4. The first stage will take the form of an Expression of Interest (EOI) supported by an application form (see Annex 1) completed by the project applicant. The completed form will be the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) setting out the case for the shared education campus proposal. It will introduce the basic project concept, backed up with information on the cost, benefit and timing of the project.
- 4.5. The EOI must be endorsed by the relevant school Managing Authorities i.e. the relevant Education and Library Board on behalf of controlled schools in its area; the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on behalf of Catholic maintained schools; or, in the case of Voluntary Grammar, Grant Maintained Integrated or Irish Medium Schools, the Board of Governors of the individual school(s) concerned.
- 4.6. All EOIs should be submitted through the relevant Education and Library Board (ie the Planning Authority) which will be responsible for submitting the EOIs to the Department of Education. EOIs which are not submitted via the appropriate Education and Library Board will not be accepted by the Department. Education and Library Boards will advise schools in their Board area of the date they require receipt of proposals in order to allow them time for consideration and endorsement by Board Members/Commissioners to meet the Department's deadline for responses of **30 January 2015**.
- 4.7. The Planning Authority will confirm in writing to the Department whether or not it endorses the EOIs it receives. If an application is not endorsed by the Planning Authority, the Planning Authority will inform the school(s) involved of the position but the proposal must still be submitted to the Department.

Assessment of Project Proposals

- 4.8. Following the closing date for applications, all project applications will be assessed under the relevant Gateway criteria as set out at 3.1 above. Those applications deemed to have met all the Gateway criteria will be further assessed, along with the supporting evidence provided,

against the essential and desirable criteria as set out in 3.2 & 3.3 above. Projects will be sifted and selected on the basis of the information provided in the application forms.

- 4.9. A cross-Directorate panel has been established within the Department to consider proposed projects against the set criteria. This panel will report to the Director of Area Planning and will make recommendations to the Minister based on which projects best meet the criteria and, within the funding available, should be progressed to the Economic Appraisal stage.

Approval of Applications to the Programme

- 4.10. The Minister will make the final decisions on which projects should go forward to Stage 2, based on the recommendations of the assessment panel.
- 4.11. Planning Authorities will be informed of the projects approved by the Minister to proceed to the planning stage.
- 4.12. Projects not selected for advancement in the Second Call will be returned to the Planning Authority. The project may be submitted to any subsequent call for proposals.

5. Stage 2 – Economic Appraisal

- 5.1 The projects selected by the Minister to proceed to the planning stage will be required to work up an Economic Appraisal for consideration and approval by the Department. The Economic Appraisals will be considered within the normal business approval processes and in line with NI Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEA) guidelines, including value for money and affordability. Only after approval of the Economic Appraisal, and subject to available capital funds, will a project be permitted to proceed to tender and construction.
- 5.2 The Department will provide support to the Managing Authorities in the development of Economic Appraisals for the selected projects.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1 Programme governance and control structures will be established for the programme of shared education campuses emerging.
- 6.2 Project plans will be sought from the School Managing Authorities for all approved projects.

7. Procurement

- 7.1 All professional appointments arising on approved projects must be carried out in full compliance with procurement guidelines and regulations. Where a professional team has already been appointed, the relevant Managing Authorities must provide evidence that the team has been procured in compliance with procurement guidelines and regulations, otherwise the Department will not support the appointment.

Annex 1

Shared Education Campuses Programme Application Form Second Call

Shared Education Campuses Programme – Application Form for Second Call

The Shared Education Campuses Programme will be delivered through separate, discrete calls for proposals which must be endorsed by both the relevant school Managing Authorities and Planning Authorities.

All project proposals must be supported by a completed application form, to be completed by the project applicant, which will form the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the shared education campus proposal.

The application form will help the Department to assess whether it is worth committing resources to take the project forward to develop a more detailed design and Economic Appraisal.

The completed application form must be returned through your Education and Library Board to reach the Department by Friday 30 January 2015.

Applications which are not submitted via the appropriate Education and Library Board will not be accepted by the Department.

This form is designed to help applicants make an application using appropriate and proportionate effort. There is flexibility over the amount of information to be included under each heading below, but please note that the application form is intended to be a short document and should not exceed 10 pages.

Project Title:

Planning Authority:

Managing Authorities Involved:

Senior Responsible Officer:

Signed:

Date:

Section 1: Project Overview

Briefly describe the basic project concept.

Confirmation must be given that the application relates to schools which are viable and core to emerging area plans.

Section 2: Rationale, Aims and Need

State the rationale for shared education.

Identify the type of educational sharing being proposed (Shared educational facilities, enhanced educational facilities or shared education campus).

Identify the relevant aims and objectives of the proposed project.

Outline how the project meets the following criteria:

- Number, Management Type and Phase of Schools;
- Managing Authority Endorsement;

- *Planning Authority Endorsement;*
- *Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support;*
- *Demonstration of the Educational Benefits that will be created;*
- *Evidence of Existing Sharing;*
- *Demonstration of the Societal Benefits that will be created;*
- *Evidence of Religious Balance;*
- *Location;*
- *Evidence of Disadvantaged Pupil consideration.*

Section 3: Constraints

Identify likely constraints e.g. land issues; legal constraints; planning approvals.

Section 4: Stakeholder Issues

Identify the key stakeholders and confirm their agreement to the project proceeding.

Indicate their level of commitment to the project as specifically as possible.

Describe any consultations held or still required.

Are there any outstanding stakeholder issues?

Section 5: Management and Implementation

Give a preliminary indication of the proposed project management arrangements.

Is any consultancy support likely to be required?

Describe any legal or contractual issues.

Are there any important outstanding management/implementation considerations?

Section 6: Costs, Benefits & Risks

Provide broad estimates of the capital and revenue costs of the project.

If savings are anticipated, for example of planned minor works or maintenance explain their nature and quantify them broadly.

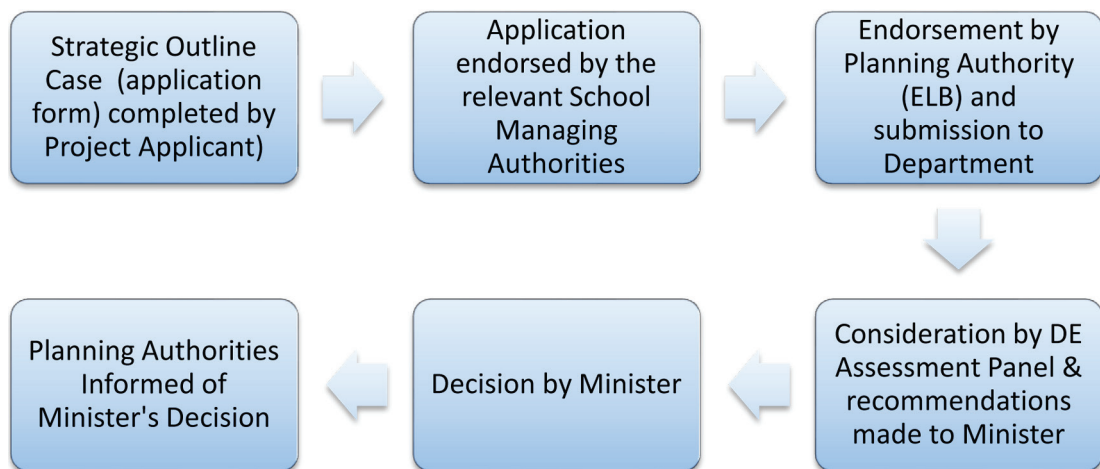
Describe the non-monetary costs and benefits that are expected to arise.

Explain the key risks that the project is likely to face and any potential mitigation measures.

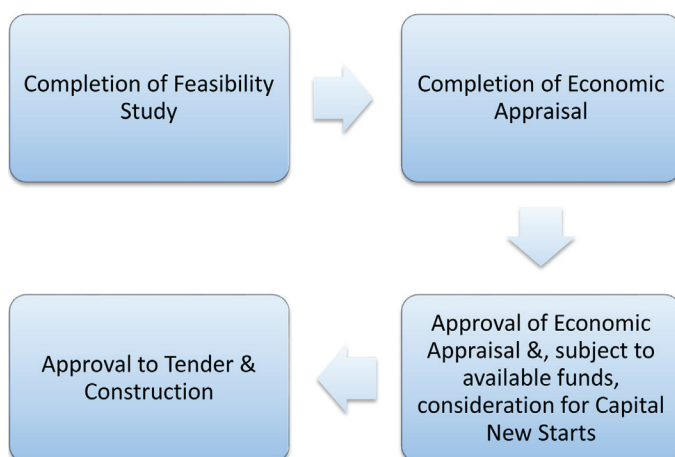
Annex 2

Shared Education Campuses Programme Flow Chart for Process

Stage 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest



Stage 2 – Economic Appraisal (approved projects only)



20150128 DE-Dissolving Boundaries and the Centre for Shared Education



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Education

www.deni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/1752

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

28 January 2014

Dear Peter

Dissolving Boundaries Programme / Centre for Shared Education

Thank you for your letter of 28 November 2014 seeking clarification on the reasons for the discontinuation of funding for Dissolving Boundaries Programme; you have also sought details of the interaction between the Department and the University of Ulster and the Centre for Shared Education in developing the new Shared Education policy.

Dissolving Boundaries

The Department of Education had funded the Dissolving Boundaries programme since 1999. A jointly funded programme by this Department and DES in the south, both Departments agreed that funding should cease at the end of October 2014 as the benefits of the programme had been largely realised and good principles and learning have been embedded over the duration of the programme.

Interaction between DE / University of Ulster and the Centre for Shared Education

In the development of the Shared Education policy, the Department has drawn on a wide range of research evidence and pilot projects, including those undertaken by the University of Ulster and Queens University's Centre for Shared Education.

Professor Paul Connolly, Head of the School of Education Queen's University, was chair of the Ministerial Advisory Group on advancing Shared Education. The MAG undertook a wide ranging consultation and research programme including experience from the Centre for Shared Education and the University of Ulster.

The recommendation of the Ministerial Advisory Group has heavily influenced the development of the Department's Shared Education policy.

As managing agent for the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme, the Department had regular and on-going contact with both Universities in relation to shared education projects they were delivering.

The University of Ulster's Creative Change Project was subject to a review by the Education and Training Inspectorate, while QUB's Sharing In Education project was subject to an independent evaluation.

Departmental officials responsible for developing the Shared Education Policy had a close working knowledge of both projects, together with a further twenty other shared education projects that received IFI funding. The Department has drawn on both evaluation reports and a series of related research reports in developing the Shared Education policy.

In developing the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project, representative from QUB's Centre for Shared Education and the University of Ulster (together with the Fermanagh Trust) were involved in a design workshop to draw on their experience.

An Expert Advisory Group is being established as part of the DSC Shared Education Signature Project and this includes representatives with experience in shared education from QUB and the University of Ulster. The input of the Expert Advisory Group will assist in further refining implementation of the policy.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Committee for Education

Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201

Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Our Ref: PMcC/KM/1752

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor BT19 7PR

veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

28 November 2014

Dear Veronica

Dissolving Boundaries Programme / Centre for Shared Education

At its meeting on Wednesday 26 November 2014, the Committee received briefings from the University of Ulster on the Dissolving Boundaries programme and from the Centre for Shared Education at Queen's University of Belfast.

Following these briefings, the Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek clarification on the reasons for the discontinuation of funding for the Dissolving Boundaries programme.

The Committee also agreed to write to the Department to seek details of the interaction between the Department and the University of Ulster and the Centre for Shared Education in the development of the Department's new Shared Education policy.

A response by 12 December 2014 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk
Committee for Education

20150130 – T:BUC – Shared Education Campuses Programme



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Education

www.deni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

Your reference: PMcC/KM/1889

Mr Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

30 January 2015

Dear Peter

Together: Building a United Community - Shared Campuses Programme

Thank you for your letter of 16 January 2015 in which you requested the revised scoring criteria for the Second Call for the Shared Education Campuses Programme as well as a timeline and further information on the successful projects in the First Call.

A copy of the marking framework which was revised for the Second Call and which will be used in the assessment process for applications is attached.

The following information confirms the update on the progress of the first three projects from officials on 14 January. In summary:

St Mary's High School, Limavady and Limavady High School

The project will provide two new shared facilities – a shared sixth form centre on the St Mary's school site and a shared Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) centre on the Limavady High School site.

Work has commenced on the feasibility study/economic appraisal and is due for completion by the end of March. The first meeting of the Project Board, which includes representatives from both schools, the two Managing Authorities (CCMS and the WELB) and the Department, was held on 15 January.

Moy Regional Controlled Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy

The Moy Project shared campus initiative - it is proposed to build a single 11 classbase school on a new site to accommodate both Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School. Whilst each school will retain its own distinct ethos and identity, it is envisaged that the two schools will share facilities such as the multipurpose hall, play areas, library and ancillary accommodation.

The Project Board, comprising of representatives of both schools as well as both Managing Authorities (CCMS and the SELB) and the Department, has met twice. Work on the feasibility study/economic appraisal is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of March.

Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle

The proposal was for two new core schools and two shared centres, one for STEM and one for Performance and Creative Arts at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5.

This is a significant project and may be more ambitious than was originally anticipated. Discussions have been held with both Managing Authorities (CCMS and the NEELB) and their schools. The first meeting of the Project Board has been arranged for 3 February.

The Economic Appraisals for each of the projects, once submitted, will be considered within required business approval processes and in line with the NI Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation guidelines, including value for money and affordability. Access to the funding announcement following the Stormont House Agreement is being discussed with relevant officials. Only after approval of the Economic Appraisal, and subject to available capital funds, will a project proceed to tender and construction.

As all three projects are starting from initial concept stage, members will appreciate that there will be a significant time lag before buildings will physically be on the ground incurring capital expenditure.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

Veronica Bintley

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

T:BUC Shared Education Campuses 2014/15

Second Call for Expressions Of Interest Evaluation Framework

This evaluation framework has been drawn up to assist in the determination of those suitable projects, submitted to the second call for the Shared Education Campuses Programme (the Programme), to be advanced to the next stage of development to include the production of a detailed business case.

The evaluation framework should be considered alongside the documentation provided in relation to the second call for Expressions of Interest.

All proposals received will be processed against the Gateway criteria. This initial Gateway Check will determine if a proposal meets all four Gateway criteria outlined in the protocol document. Only those proposals that pass all four Gateway Checks will be scored. Any proposal failing to pass the Gateway Checks will not be scored or ranked in the final list. However in order to provide feedback, any proposal failing to pass the Gateway Checks will have comments provided against all essential and desirable criteria.

Under the marking system a maximum number of points are allocated against criterion with the maximum possible total score being 180.

Each Assessment Panel (the Panel) member will read each application in advance of the Panel meeting. The Panel will discuss each of the applications and seek to establish an agreed "Panel Score" for each criterion. The minutes of the Panel meeting(s) will record the key points raised in reaching the final marking for each criterion.

The scored projects will be ranked in descending score order. The list, together with the recommendations of the Assessment Panel, will be provided to the Minister. The Minister will take the final decision on which projects will be advanced.

Name of Applicant

Type of application: (delete as appropriate)
Shared facilities / Enhanced facilities / Shared campus

GATEWAY CHECK - This will require a yes/no answer

Each project proposal will have to demonstrate that they meet all four Gateway checks below in order to be appraised under the Programme:-

Gateway Criteria	Y/N
a) Number, Management type and Phase of schools	
b) Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities	
c) Planning Authority Endorsement	
d) Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support	
Gateway Passed Y/N	

Notes to help assessment against each Gateway criteria can be found below:

- a) **Number, Management Type and Phase of Schools**
The proposal must involve a minimum of two schools from different management sectors (eg controlled, Catholic maintained, Irish medium, integrated, voluntary grammar). If any proposal involves schools from more than one educational phase (eg primary/post-primary) at least two schools at each phase from different management sectors must be represented so that there can be educational sharing across similar age groups.
- b) **Endorsement from respective Managing Authorities**
The respective Managing Authorities of the schools involved in the application must provide written endorsement of their agreement to the proposal. This is important as any investment at or on behalf of schools through the Programme has the potential to create ongoing liabilities as well as recurrent resource implications that the relevant Managing Authorities should be aware of and be prepared to support. Proposals under the Programme also need to be consistent with the Managing Authorities' strategic plans for the schools under their control.
- c) **Planning Authority endorsement**
The Planning Authority (ie the relevant Education and Library Board and CCMS) must provide assurance that the proposal meets the criteria in the Sustainable Schools Policy for each school involved in the proposal or, where this is not the case, provide a rationale for their endorsement, including an explanation as to how the proposal will contribute to the delivery of sustainable provision in the area going forward.
- d) **Evidence of Community, Parent and Pupil Support**
Community, parent and pupil support is required to ensure the success of these proposals. Evidence is therefore required to confirm support is in place.

The following essential criteria will be assessed for all proposals, with only those that have passed the four Gateway Checks being allocated a score.

Essential Criteria 1: Educational Benefits – maximum score 50 marks.

The overarching priority for any proposal brought forward under this Programme must be the delivery of educational benefits to children and young people through improving or facilitating sharing initiatives. The proposal must demonstrate how it will benefit the education of all children involved. Marks will be allocated on the basis that the proposal clearly demonstrates:

- The sharing of classes, subjects, sports and extra-curricular activities and how educational benefits can be delivered to the children and young people through the sharing of classes together;
- How educational benefits to the children and young people will be delivered through the sharing of classes together by developing future plans to increase the level of sharing between the schools involved;
- How the proposal can aid the sharing of teaching expertise amongst the schools;
- That the courses being delivered are not a duplication of existing provision (in particular Further Education courses);
- That consideration of the Bain report recommendations of not more than 2 composite year groups in a class and a school of a minimum of 4 teachers will be met.

Educational Benefits	Score	Comments
No evidence of educational benefits provided. 0 marks		
Some evidence of educational benefits provided. 1 - 25 marks		
Strong evidence on how the proposal will deliver educational benefits. 26 – 50 marks		

Essential Criteria 2: Evidence of Existing Sharing – maximum score 40 marks

Schools applying to the Programme should already be working in collaboration on curricular and non-curricular issues and/or be sharing facilities on an ongoing basis. The move to a Shared Education Campus should therefore build on a solid foundation of existing sharing that is already well embedded. Evidence must be provided detailing the existing educational sharing arrangements. Therefore proposals will be marked on:

- the evidence provided of existing levels of collaboration between schools involved in the proposal on curricular and non-curricular issues;
- the evidence provided of existing levels of current sharing of facilities/classes on a regular basis; and
- the evidence provided of existing levels of current sharing of facilities/classes on a regular basis in the curriculum area in relation to the proposal.

Evidence of Existing Sharing	Score	Comments
No evidence of existing sharing. 0 marks		
Schools have demonstrated some existing sharing. 1 - 20 marks		
Schools have demonstrated strong evidence of effective ongoing sharing. 21 - 40 marks		

Essential Criteria 3: Societal Benefits – maximum score 10 marks

The proposal must demonstrate how it will enhance/develop a shared future for the local community.

- The specific aim of the T:BUC strategy relating to education is *‘To enhance the quality and extent of shared education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience’*.
- Building good relations, tackling intolerance and challenging prejudice can be embedded through the ethos of schools and is already an integral part of the curriculum.
- Creating more opportunities for socially-mixed, shared education, with a view to achieving a full shared education system in Northern Ireland, is a crucial part of breaking the cycle of inter-generational educational underachievement, unemployment, and sectarianism; and

- improving good relations amongst and for our young people.

Proposals will be marked, based on the evidence provided, on how they will contribute to this overall objective.

Societal Benefits Score Comments	Score	Comments
No evidence provided of societal benefits. 0 marks		
Some evidence provided. 1 - 5 marks		
Strong evidence of how proposal will provide societal benefits. 6 - 10 marks		

Essential Criteria 4: Religious Balance – maximum score 40 marks

A **minimum** of 15%, and preferably 30%, of the minority community (Protestant or Roman Catholic) should be represented within the combined total of the school population involved.

Where the proposal involves schools from more than one phase of education (eg primary and post primary), there should be a religious balance across individual phases so that educational sharing can take place between similar age groups.

It has been recognised that in some rural areas the balance of the population may be such that it would be impossible for the level of participation of the minority community to reach the 30% level. This is why the minimum % has been reduced from the first call to 15% with the preference still remaining for 30%. The difficulty lies in producing a single coherent definition as to what constitutes a community area. To take account of this, marks will be awarded based on the level of participation by the minority community as follows:

Religious Balance	Score	Comments
Minority Community is less than 14%. 0 marks		
Minority Community is 15% or more but less than 30%. 20 marks		
Minority Community is 31% - 49%. 40 marks		

Desirable Criteria

The following desirable criteria will be assessed for all proposals, with only those that have passed the four Gateway Checks being allocated a score.

Desirable Criteria 1: Location - maximum score 20 marks

Effective and ongoing sharing will involve children attending facilities outside their core school. To facilitate maximum use and to ensure significant time is not lost from the teaching timetable through moving children between locations, proposals supported under the programme will be for facilities/schools located within the same campus or in close proximity to each other. Any proposal that is for shared facilities rather than a shared campus should

provide details on the distances between the schools involved and schools will have to demonstrate how they plan to minimise the impact on pupils' education of travelling between the sites involved.

Marking will be based on the proximity of the facilities to the schools involved. The shorter the distance a pupil must travel to access facilities will receive a higher score. For those proposals that involve a number of new facilities and schools, the largest distance that a pupil from one school will have to travel to access a proposed facility will be the distance used to determine the score for that proposal.

Location	Score	Comments
Schools more than 10 miles apart. 0 marks		
Schools between 5 and 10 miles apart. 4 marks		
Schools between 1 and 5 miles apart. 10 marks		
Schools less than 1 mile apart. 16 marks		
Schools to be co-located or within a shared space. 20 marks		

Desirable Criteria 2: Disadvantaged Pupil Considerations – maximum score 20 Marks

Statistics show year on year that pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as indicated by FSME, are only half as likely to gain five good GCSEs including English and maths as their peers from more affluent backgrounds. FSME is a statistically valid method of identifying and measuring social disadvantage in our schools. Pupils from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have greater obstacles to overcome and schools need to do more to assist them in breaking the link between social deprivation and educational outcome.

Priority will be therefore be given to proposals involving schools where pupils are more greatly impacted by social disadvantage, as indicated by the percentage of free school meal entitled (FSME) pupils enrolled in the schools . This is in line with the recognition given in the T:BUC strategy that one of the benefits of a more shared education system is to raise educational standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

Schools are 'banded' for social deprivation (TSN) funding under the Common Funding Formula, based on the numbers of pupils entitled to FSM within each school. The vast majority of schools are placed in bands 1, 2 or 3. Marks will be awarded to proposals on the basis of the bandings of the schools involved in each proposal with the maximum marks awarded to schools in TSN Band 3. Where schools involved in the proposal are in different TSN bandings, the marks will be awarded on the basis of the highest TSN banding school. This is to encourage social as well as religious mixing. This is in line with the T:BUC recognition that greater social mixing can contribute to greater tolerance, and through raised expectations, improve educational performance for our most deprived pupils. [para 4.52 T:BUC Strategy Document]

Disadvantaged Pupil Consideration	Score	Comments
Schools have no FSME pupils. 0 marks		
All schools are in TSN Band 1; or <i>At least one school is in TSN band 1.</i> 5 marks		
All Schools are in TSN Band 2, or <i>At least one school is in TSN Band 2.</i> 10 marks		
All Schools are in TSN band 3; or <i>At least one school is in TSN Band 3.</i> 20 marks		

Summary of Scoring

Only those proposals that have passed the four Gateway Checks are allocated a score.

Criteria	Maximum Score	Score
Essential Criteria		
Educational Benefits	50	
Evidence of Existing Sharing	40	
Societal Benefits	10	
Religious Balance	40	
<i>Essential Criteria Sub Total</i>	140	
Desirable Criteria		
Location	20	
Disadvantaged Pupil Consideration	20	
<i>Desirable Criteria Sub Total</i>	40	
TOTAL	180	

Any additional comments in respect of proposal:



Committee for Education

Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201

Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Our Ref: PMcC/KM/1889

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor BT19 7PR

veronica.bintley@deni.gov.uk

16 January 2015

Dear Veronica

Together: Building a United Community – Shared Campuses Programme

At its meeting on Wednesday 14 January 2015, the Committee received a briefing from Departmental officials on the Shared Campuses Programme – Together: Building a United Community (TBUC).

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek the revised scoring criteria for the second call for Shared Campus projects as well as a timeline and further information on the successful projects in the first call.

A response by 30 January 2015 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk
Committee for Education

20150209 - DSC Shared Education Signature Project



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Education

www.deni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O
Lear

Tel No: (028) 9127 9849

Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/1953

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

9 February 2015

Dear Peter

Inquiry Into Shared Integrated Education – Follow Up Information – DSC Shared Education Signature Project

Your correspondence of 6 February refers.

The DSC Shared Education Signature Project is open to schools that currently are engaged in a collaborative partnership on a cross-sectoral and cross-community basis providing they demonstrate clear plans to show progress in advancing the level of sharing as defined in the 'Self Evaluation framework for Shared Education' (available at www.sepni.org). It is not primarily targeting schools that are pursuing amalgamation, although each application will be considered on the basis of its merits.

There are already processes in place for schools that are seeking a voluntary amalgamation and the draft Shared Education policy which is currently issued for public consultation commits to working to develop guidance for a jointly managed school, which will be a further option for schools seeking a voluntary amalgamation.

Yours sincerely

Russell

Russell Welsh

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Committee for Education

Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201

Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Our Ref: PMcC/KM/1953

Russell Welsh
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor BT19 7PR

6 February 2015

Dear Russell

Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project

At its meeting on Wednesday 4 February 2015, the Committee received a briefing from Professors Smith and Hamber and the Integrated Education Fund, as part of the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking clarification as to whether the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project (or any other Shared Education programmes) would provide support or guidance to schools wishing to undertake voluntary cross-sectoral amalgamations.

A response by 20 February 2015 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Peter McCallion

Clerk
Committee for Education

ETI Review CRED policy



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



An Evaluation of the Impact of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy in Schools and Youth Organisations

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i. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to:

- i. summarise the Education and Training Inspectorate's (ETI) findings of the effectiveness of the outworking of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity CRED policy in a sample of schools and youth organisations;
- ii. identify aspects going well and identify areas for development in going forward, in relation to current practice; and
- ii. make a set of recommendations in relation to the key findings.

Quantitative terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

ii. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary outlines the main findings and key recommendations of an evaluation of the impact of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy in schools and youth organisations. The evidence base compiled over the period September 2014 to December 2014, comprised:

- thirty-two visits to schools and youth organisations¹ of various management types and sizes, across all Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and a meeting with 13 voluntary youth organisations;
- discussions with children, young people, co-ordinators, teachers, youth workers, principals, representatives of the five ELBs, the Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNl), the Department of Education (DE) and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA);
- seventy-three questionnaire returns and associated extended written responses to a web-based survey²; and
- inspection findings 2012-14 for personal social and emotional (PSE) learning in pre-school settings, personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) in primary schools and personal development (PD) and citizenship education in post-primary schools.

Main findings

Going well

- Most of the schools and youth organisations demonstrate effective CRED practice in helping children and young people to build relationships with others from different back-grounds and traditions; the sustainability of these relationships is variable.
- The majority of the lessons/sessions observed in the schools and youth organisations were very good or better.
- The Shared Education and Community Relations team within DE is proactive in working with a wide range of stakeholders to promote effective CRED practice.
- The ELB steering group and CRED Referencing Group provide a wide range of support to schools and youth organisations within the available resources.
- The YCNl provides appropriate support, guidance and challenge for voluntary organisations in the development of CRED practice.

¹ Schools and youth organisations visited contained in Appendix 1.

² An analysis of the questionnaire returns is contained in Appendix 2.

- In the most effective practice:
 - 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;
 - children and young people apply their learning in real and relevant contexts and the learning is experiential;
 - staff create safe places for children and young people with physical, emotional, social and learning needs and respond appropriately to community tensions;
 - school and youth councils enable participation of children and young people in school and centre improvement, modelling effective democratic processes in their working practices; and
 - schools and youth organisations embed CRED practice through whole-school/organisation improvement.

Going Forward

- Schools report that DE needs to embed the policy more clearly within a strategic overview of all policies. Youth organisations identified the need for even more explicit development of CRED within Priorities for Youth (PFY).
- The rights of the child, as defined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)³, should be more central to the outworking of CRED in policy and practice.
- Given the challenges that remain in promoting community relations, eliminating poverty through reducing discrimination and fostering a respect for diversity, the school and youth sectors need assistance in developing further their sustained community connections through multi-agency support.
- The extent to which schools and youth organisations embed CRED at all levels varies given the context, legacy of the conflict, staff, governance, resources and levels of understanding of the principles and values of CRED. There remains the need to address inconsistency in the access to, and impact of, support provided across the ELBs to embed CRED.
- The voluntary youth organisations need support to expand and embed CRED through dissemination of good practice events, training, mentor support and increased access for young people to programmes.
- There remains insufficient ways to recognize and reward the children's and young people's learning through accreditation.

³ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. It came into force in January 1992.

- The overall quality of the taught provision needs to improve so that children and young people are prepared better for life and work. There is insufficient mapping of the statutory key elements related to CRED across the curriculum.
- There is variation in the evaluation of CRED practice against quality indicators in order to demonstrate outcomes for children and young people.
- There is insufficient focus on transition arrangements to enable progression in the knowledge, skills and attitudes of children and young people through CRED.
- There are too many missed opportunities for schools and youth organisations to work together to promote better learning for young people.
- The meaningful participation of children and young people in school and centre improvement processes remains variable.

	Recommendations
For DE	<p>R1 - to review the CRED policy to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rights of the child underpin practice; • there is clarity in terminology and expectations of schools/organisations; • it is embedded in a strategic overview of all policies and developed further through "Priorities for Youth"; and • it references the development of shared education in light of emerging research and practice. <p>R2 - to support the personal and professional development of staff and governors in schools and youth organisations to promote and embed CRED, particularly given the legacy of the conflict.</p> <p>R3 - to foster more effective links with other departments and agencies to support better schools and youth organisations in their local communities.</p>
For ELBs/support bodies / CCEA/ YCNI	<p>R4 - to enable, at regional level, greater consistency in the access to, and impact of, targeted support provided by the support bodies. In building on the effective work to date, further support is needed for staff to embed CRED, including through effective governance, community connections, within and beyond the classroom.</p> <p>R5 - to collaborate to develop appropriate accreditation of effective learning through CRED.</p>

For schools and/ or statutory youth organisations	<p>R6 - to review the quality of personal development and mutual understanding, personal development, and citizenship lessons in schools to ensure consistently high quality participatory learning experiences for all children and young people.</p> <p>R7 - to collaborate further to monitor and evaluate the impact of CRED through tracking the acquisition and development of the children's and young people's knowledge, skills and attitudes to inform better strategic planning.</p>
For voluntary youth organisations	<p>R8 - to expand and embed CRED practice more widely across voluntary youth organisations through increasing dissemination of good practice events, training and mentor support; and access by a greater number of young people to CRED programmes.</p>
For ETI	<p>R9 - to ensure that inspection activities evaluate more fully the holistic education of children and young people and the added value for them of their CRED-related learning; and include more explicit evaluation of community connections.</p> <p>R10 - to identify and report on examples of effective and innovative practice in CRED and embed the CRED quality indicators within Together Towards Improvement.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 In June 2008, the Education Minister initiated a review of the DE's (DE) Community Relations (CR) policy. In 2009, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) published *An Evaluation of Quality Assurance of Community Relations (CR) Funding in a range of Formal and Non-formal Education settings*⁴. This publication highlighted the need for an agreed policy with more robust structures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of CR work; a more collaborative and consistent approach to CR work across the different sectors with clear success criteria and to meet more effectively locally identified CR needs in line with area-based planning.

1.2 In response to the review and to developments in the wider political, societal and educational context, the CRED policy was launched in March 2011, with accompanying guidance in January 2012. The CRED policy aims to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and a respect for others, promote equality and to work to eliminate discrimination; and by providing opportunities for children and young people to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions, through formal and non-formal education, within the resources available.

1.3 The CR team within DE worked collaboratively with the ELBs, YCNI and other agencies to address the issues raised in the ETI report. The restrictive nature of the funding and the complexity of five different funding streams were removed. Importantly, the collaborative working of the Interboard CRED panel and the CRED Referencing Group enabled a more consistent approach to CR; in particular, drawing up quality indicators for both the school and youth sectors. A regional programme of training was planned for collaboratively, implemented jointly and evaluated to demonstrate outcomes for participants and to inform next steps.

1.4 With an annual budget of £1.1m each year the CRED Enhancement Scheme is administered by the five ELBS within schools and youth organisations. The YCNI receives £152,000 from this budget to support and coordinate the delivery and implementation of the CRED policy across Regional Voluntary Headquarter Youth Organisations.

1.5 Schools and youth organisations use a variety of guidance materials, resources and training opportunities, provided by ELBs, YCNI, non-formal organisations and external partners, to embed the CRED policy, alongside many other competing priorities. In particular, the Community Relations Equality and Diversity Northern Ireland (CREDNI) website was developed to identify examples of good practice and to signpost helpful resources for schools/organisations. Furthermore, a voluntary body of over 22,000 youth workers contribute to registered youth services annually to support the personal and social development of young people.

1.6 The concept of Shared Education is developing to provide opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together in regular and sustained ways, in order to improve educational and reconciliation outcomes. With funding from the Northern Ireland Executive, the DE and Atlantic Philanthropies, the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project intends to support Shared Education through increasing the level of sharing in schools over the next four years. In November 2014, the Northern Ireland Executive announced proposed budget cuts to the CRED Enhancement scheme.

⁴ This report can be accessed from the ETI website.

1.7 As part of the inspection programme for 2014-15, DE requested that ETI carry out an evaluation survey of the CRED policy in a sample of schools and youth organisations. The evaluation focused on the extent to which:

- learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination;
- children and young people 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;
- children and young people are equipped with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference;
- the needs of children and young people are paramount;
- the self-esteem of the children and young people and their knowledge of diversity are promoted progressively;
- children and young people are involved in planning and evaluating the effectiveness of CRED programmes;
- the curriculum is relevant and connected to improving outcomes for children and young people, and links to other education and wider Government policies, including strengthening the economy;
- active learning is encouraged through the formal and non-formal curricula;
- the CRED policy complements educational improvement and is not perceived to be burdensome or 'another initiative';
- schools and youth organisations collaborate and partner with others to better meet the needs of children and young people;
- there are opportunities for meaningful interaction between different groups with a view to impacting positively on relationships in the community; and
- there is an understanding of effective practice.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 The ETI received 73 questionnaires, visited 32 schools and youth organisations and met with 13 voluntary youth organisations. Inspectors held discussions with principals, senior leaders, staff, pupils, parents/carers, observed lessons/sessions, interventions and scrutinised planning and school/organisation improvement documentation. The ETI also used the inspection findings 2012-14 from schools and youth organisations which evaluated aspects of CRED related work in the curriculum, including PDMU and PD and citizenship education.

2.2 The CRED evaluation focused on the effectiveness of the following key areas of provision:

- achievements and standards;
- quality of provision;
- effectiveness of leadership and management of CRED; and
- community connections.

2.3 The CRED officers within the ELBs and YCNI completed a self-evaluation of the quality of provision within their organisations.

3. THE FINDINGS

3a. Achievements and standards

Going well

- When given the opportunity through sustained contact, children and young people work well collaboratively and develop meaningful relationships with others from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.
- The good examples of accredited learning linked to CRED and which contributed to the development of thinking skills and personal capabilities.
- Young people in voluntary youth organisations respond well to the safe place provided within the community to develop their confidence in discussing issues around diversity and inclusion and to engage with others different from them.

Characteristics of most effective practice

- Children in early years use positive behaviour strategies to self-regulate, resolve conflicts, develop empathy and self-awareness of similarity and difference, inclusion and exclusion through play, stories, visual and media-based resources.
- Children and young people demonstrate self-respect and respect for others; understand their uniqueness, express their identities, and understand diversity in their local community. They reflect on their feelings and emotions and those of others and demonstrate empathy for their peers; they challenge one another's behaviour when appropriate. They have a strong sense of fairness and are developing empathy with regard to global contexts.
- Children and young people respond well to strategies which welcome and celebrate their uniqueness and diversity within the school and youth organisation, which may contrast with messages they receive about themselves from elsewhere.

- Young people have political and social awareness, maturity, understanding and empathy in accepting and celebrating difference, often leading the way for adults. They articulate their frustration at current political processes which hinder developments in health and education and which fail to address economic and social inequality. They have a good understanding of, and strategies for, managing difference and conflict appropriately, for example, restorative justice practices.
- School and youth councils enable participation of children and young people in school and centre improvement, modelling effective democratic processes in their working practices.
- Children and young people take forward their learning to effect change and demonstrate leadership skills within and beyond the schools and youth organisations. They demonstrate resilience, personal, social and emotional development.

Going Forward

- Schools and youth organisations need to ensure children and young people participate meaningfully in school and centre improvement processes and have their views listened to, and acted upon, rather than tokenistic representation and limited decision-making.
- Children and young people report they would like to know more about the reasons for division and inequality in their locality, including understanding better our more recent past and having more opportunities to engage in supporting people in their local community.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people report the need for greater opportunities to extend their voice beyond their peer group, into the wider community.
- There remains insufficient ways to recognize and reward the learning of children and young people through accreditation. Awarding bodies and other support bodies need to collaborate to enable schools and youth organisations to recognize and accredit learning through CRED.

3b Quality of provision

Going well

- The majority of the lessons/sessions observed in the schools and youth organisations visited were very good or better.

Characteristics of the most effective practice:

- The welcoming and inclusive ethos and positive learning environments, within and beyond the classroom/centre, reflect clearly CRED principles and values. Displays around the schools and youth organisations celebrate diversity, promote inclusion and reference the rights and responsibilities of children and young people.

- Staff create safe places for children and young people with physical, emotional, social and learning needs and respond appropriately to community tensions.
- Effective planning for CRED across the curriculum takes account of the interests and needs of the children and young people and builds progressively on their personal, social and emotional development.
- High quality learning and teaching enables children and young people to apply their learning experientially in real and relevant contexts within and beyond the classroom.
- Staff interact skilfully with children and young people when exploring sensitive and controversial issues through appropriate learning strategies.
- Staff use external agencies judiciously to enhance the quality of the provision and extend their expertise, to include dealing with sensitive and controversial issues such as expressions of sexuality.
- Staff ensure that there is equality of opportunity for children and young people to access sustained CRED programmes and they model appropriate behaviours and language.
- Staff engage regularly with parents/carers to gain a greater understanding of the diverse needs of children and young people.
- The schools make effective use of extended schools and the area learning communities (ALCs) to facilitate shared learning with children and pupils of differing backgrounds and to promote better equality of access to resources and targeted support.

Going forward

- The overall quality of the taught provision needs to improve so that children and young people are prepared well for life and work. In the inspection period 2012-2014, one-quarter of the PDMU lessons in primary schools and one-third of citizenship and PD lessons in post-primary schools were not effective. There is insufficient mapping of the statutory key elements related to CRED across the school curriculum.
- There is variation in the extent to which children and young people are equipped to deal with sensitive and controversial issues, such as racism, sectarianism, sexual orientation and social and economic inequalities in the locality.
- Schools need to track the children's progress in the development of skills, attitudes and behaviours necessary for life and work across areas of learning and beyond the classroom. Better transition arrangements are needed to enable each phase to build upon prior learning, experiences and skills development.
- There remain too many missed opportunities for young people to learn between schools and youth organisations. Schools and youth organisations need support to learn from each other about their roles, curricula, pedagogy and effective practice in engaging with the community to meet better the needs of young people.

- Schools in isolated geographical contexts report difficulty in accessing sustained contact for their children and young people with others from diverse backgrounds. One-off events limit the depth of relationships between children and young people of different backgrounds.

3c Effectiveness of Leadership and management of CRED

Going well

- The Shared Education and Community Relations team within DE is proactive in working with a wide range of stakeholders in promoting effective CRED practice. Key strengths are the engagement with stakeholders, most notably young people, and the flexibility in directing resources to meet the needs of schools and youth organisations through the business-planning process. The team supports innovative practice in challenging circumstances, with appropriate levels of monitoring to ensure value for money.
- The ELB Steering Group and CRED Referencing Group provide a wide range of support to schools and youth organisations. This includes targeted training for leadership and governance in order to enhance or embed CRED. The ELB and youth officers collaborate well to collate a wide range of useful materials to support CRED practice in schools and youth organisations, including the CREDNI website. A key strength is the work of the ELBs in promoting CRED practice through whole-school improvement rather than stand-alone policies and the recent training on embedding CRED through history education. ELBs offer training in CRED for governors, but uptake is low.
- The YCNI provides appropriate support, guidance and challenge for voluntary organisations in the development of CRED practice. This includes clear strategic development of CRED, through well-planned information days, to share practice and build capacity amongst staff, high quality resources and effective links with external partners. Uniformed organisations evaluate well the outcomes for young people to inform next steps.

Characteristics of most effective practice

- Schools have a clear understanding of and support for CRED, embedded in their strategic planning, through the School Development Plan, to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- In youth organisations, CRED is embedded well into the area plans, service level agreements and centre action plans.
- Leaders at all levels model the values of CRED principles and practice. Schools and youth organisations align the principles and values of CRED with their staff code of conduct and monitor the outworking of the code of conduct in practice, addressing issues when they arise through staff development.
- Schools support the holistic development of their children and young people by ensuring high quality provision for those children and young people with special needs, and those from newcomer or traveller backgrounds.

Going forward

- Schools report that DE needs to embed the policy more clearly within a strategic overview of all policies. Youth organisations identified the need for even more explicit development of CRED within Priorities for Youth (PFY).
- The rights of the child as defined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)⁵ should be more central to the outworking of CRED in policy and practice.
- The extent to which schools and youth organisations embed CRED at all levels varies given the context, legacy of the conflict, staff, governance, resources and levels of understanding of the principles and values of CRED. In building on the effective work to date, there remains the need to address inconsistency in the access to, and impact of, support provided across the ELBs to embed CRED.
- The voluntary youth organisations need support to expand and embed CRED through dissemination of good practice events, training, mentor support and increased access for young people to programmes.
- There is variation in the rigorous evaluation of CRED practice against quality indicators; monitoring and evaluation processes need to focus more on the impact of the programmes and the outworking of CRED on outcomes for children and young people.
- There is insufficient focus on transition arrangements to enable progression in the development of children's knowledge, skills and attitudes through CRED work.

3d Community connections

Going well

Characteristics of most effective practice

- Schools, youth organisations and communities work in partnership to support one another in understanding changing demographics, challenges to family cohesion, poverty and social issues.
- Schools and youth organisations research and consult widely with parents/carers to understand more fully the backgrounds of individual children and young people to recognise potential barriers to learning, raise expectations and build on prior experiences.
- Schools are proactive in consulting with different community groups in order to support children and young people when there are significant tensions within the community.

⁵ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a comprehensive set of rights. It came into force in January 1992.

- The ALCs promote community confidence in schools working together and enable the development of shared classrooms.

Going Forward

- The school and youth sectors would benefit from greater levels of sustained community contact, given the challenges that remain in promoting community relations, reducing discrimination and fostering a respect for diversity through multi-agency support.
- Schools and youth organisations need to further their understanding of the impact of their CRED practice on children, young people, parents/carers and the community, through robust monitoring and evaluation.
- Schools and youth organisations need support in developing local partnerships to enable children and young people to access differing perspectives.
- Schools and youth organisations need multi-agency support to challenge negative influences so that children and young people are helped to realise their full potential and that their rights, as defined in the UNCRC, are upheld.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

	Recommendations
For DE	<p>R1 - to review the CRED policy to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rights of the child underpin practice; • there is clarity in terminology and expectations of schools/organisations; • it is embedded in a strategic overview of all policies and developed further through "Priorities for Youth"; and • it references the development of shared education in light of emerging research and practice. <p>R2 - to support the personal and professional development of staff and governors in schools and youth organisations to promote and embed CRED, particularly given the legacy of the conflict.</p> <p>R3 - to foster more effective links with other departments and agencies to support better schools and youth organisations in their local communities.</p>
For ELBs/support bodies / CCEA/ YCNI	<p>R4 - to enable, at regional level, greater consistency in the access to, and impact of, targeted support provided by the support bodies. In building on the effective work to date, further support is needed for staff to embed CRED, including through effective governance, community connections, within and beyond the classroom.</p> <p>R5 - to collaborate to develop appropriate accreditation of effective learning through CRED.</p>

For schools and/ or statutory youth organisations	<p>R6 - to review the quality of personal development and mutual understanding, personal development, and citizenship lessons in schools to ensure consistently high quality participatory learning experiences for all children and young people.</p> <p>R7 - to collaborate further to monitor and evaluate the impact of CRED through tracking the acquisition and development of the children's and young people's knowledge, skills and attitudes to inform better strategic planning.</p>
For voluntary youth organisations	<p>R8 - to expand and embed CRED practice more widely across voluntary youth organisations through increasing dissemination of good practice events, training and mentor support; and access by a greater number of young people to CRED programmes.</p>
For ETI	<p>R9 - to ensure that inspection activities evaluate more fully the holistic education of children and young people and the added value for them of their CRED-related learning; and include more explicit evaluation of community connections.</p> <p>R10 - to identify and report on examples of effective and innovative practice in CRED and embed the CRED quality indicators within Together Towards Improvement.</p>

5. CONCLUSION

Most of the schools and youth organisations demonstrate effective CRED practice in helping children and young people develop self-respect and a respect for others from different backgrounds, and understand how to include others within the constraints of available resources and current structures. While there is clear evidence of the building of relationships through formal and non-formal education, the sustainability of them is variable.

Given the continued segregated system of education and the widening equality issues across society, there are examples of sector-leading CRED practice in schools and youth organisations which are ahead of some of the views expressed within society. More remains to be done collaboratively, however, to enable schools and youth organisations to prepare young people better for the diverse world of life and work.

APPENDIX 1

Schools and youth organisations involved in the CRED survey

All Children's Integrated Primary School
 Banbridge High School
 Banbridge Youth Resource Centre
 Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College
 Beechlawn Special School
 Belfast Royal Academy
 Belvoir Park Primary School
 Boys' Brigade
 Catholic Girl Guides
 Ceara School
 Clubs for Young People
 Cookstown Youth Resource Centre
 Denamona Nursery
 Donegall Rd Primary School
 Enniskillen Integrated Primary School
 Erne Integrated College
 Girls' Brigade, NI
 Girl-guiding Ulster
 Glengormley Integrated Primary School
 Gortin Primary School
 Hammer Youth Centre
 Hart Primary School
 Headliners
 Include Youth
 Limavady Youth Resource Centre
 Malone Integrated College
 Mencap
 Moneynick Primary School
 Mountnorris Primary School
 NI Young Farmers
 NI Youth Forum
 Patrician Youth Centre
 Portrush Youth Centre
 Presentation Primary School
 Ravenscroft Nursery
 Scouting Ireland
 Seaview Primary School
 St Bernard's Nursery
 St Bronagh's Primary School
 St Colman's High School
 St Columba's College
 St Paul's High School, Bessbrook
 Woodburn Primary School
 Youth Action NI
 Youth Link

APPENDIX 2

Summary of responses to the CRED Survey questionnaires from schools and youth organisations

There were over 200 questionnaires issued to schools and youth organisations as part of the survey with 73 returns and associated written responses to a web-based survey.

Main findings

The majority of governors or management/advisory committees had not participated in CRED training or initiatives but most of their staff, including volunteers had.

- 54% indicated that their governors/management committees had not received CRED training.
- 88% of staff/volunteers had participated in CRED training.

The majority (60%) of respondents who had participated in CRED training/initiatives felt that it had a significantly positive impact on their provision.

In relation to the significance placed on addressing and resourcing CRED in schools/organisations, only half of the participants who prioritised CRED in their development plan prioritised staff training. Competing priorities was cited as a reason for this in a number of schools, with others stating that staff development days would be planned for the future.

- 81% have addressed CRED as a priority in their School Development Plan.
- 41% have not made staff training and development in CRED a priority.

Most schools /organisations have active links with external agencies to promote CRED. Staff comments reflect the high value placed on these links.

- 84% indicated that they linked with external agencies to provide support in the delivery of CRED.
- 45% of respondents cited at least 4 agencies with whom they link.
- 81% link with other schools and youth organisations.

The number of children and young people involved in CRED-related programmes is rising with most schools/organisations now involving them in both planning and evaluating the programmes delivered. The extent of this involvement ranges from evaluative discussions at the end of each session, to joint planning, delivery and review of all activities with staff.

- 70% indicated that children and young people are involved in the planning for and evaluating the effectiveness of their CRED programmes.

The majority (52%) of participants have not used the quality indicators in the CRED guidance to evaluate their provision, some indicating that they need a clearer understanding of some areas and that it is a lengthy document. Some of the significant minority who have used the indicators felt that they provided clarity in planning, ensuring that staff have a rationale for CRED.

As a result of being involved with CRED interventions, the majority of participants (learners and/or staff) indicated that they knew more about the cultures and traditions of, and respected and felt comfortable being friends with:

- Those from other Christian-based religions.
- Those from different races, community and ethnic backgrounds.
- Those with disabilities.
- 80% felt that they had opportunities to give their views and to listen to others views about issues that affect them.

In answering the same question, the majority of participants were either partly sure or unsure if they knew more about the cultures and traditions of, or respected and felt comfortable being friends with:

- Those with religions other than Christianity.
- Those who speak a different language to English.
- Those who are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transsexual.

The majority of participants found the CRED policy and guidance materials useful, with references made to it being clearly written with good practical advice and having useful link to Every School a Good School and other curricular areas. Suggestions for how it could be improved included making a shorter more pupil-friendly document and using more examples of successful projects from other schools.

- 19% found it very helpful.
- 63% found it helpful.

90% of respondents indicated that the support they received from their ELB in developing CRED was either helpful or very helpful. Board officers were cited as being enthusiastic, very knowledgeable and available. References to the significance of funding were made throughout the comments, with difficulties in completing the funding applications also being highlighted.

- 40% found it very helpful.
- 50% found it helpful.

Most of the respondents felt that CRED had clear links with other education and wider government policies such as Child Protection, Every School a Good School, Pastoral Care.

- 75% felt there were clear links.
- 25% felt that links were unclear.

The majority of respondents (61%) indicated that the implementation of CRED raised challenges for their school/organisation. These challenges included:

- funding costs;
- transport costs;
- competing priorities;
- enabling staff to teach about challenging issues and
- enabling parents to deal with challenging issues.

Written comments

Going well:

- “Programmes provide opportunities for parents of both schools to come together not just staff and children.”
- “The duration of CRED work has enabled high level relationships to be built between staff, management and young people.”
- “Working with children who have varying disabilities, who are different cultures and creeds is so good for everyone involved.”
- “The officers of the Curriculum Advisory and Support Service of the Education and Library Boards provide good support and are very helpful if asked.”

Going Forward:

- “Funding is required to embed the policy. A major barrier to implementation is the cost of travel between schools.”
- “It does not recognise the progress and good practice already established in integrated schools.”
- “CRED is on our 3 year plan although other competing priorities can take precedence.”
- “More governor training needs to be offered by ELBs.”
- “Being able to develop the links that have already been established. Level of funding to support projects is not enough. Only able to “touch” on things that could be done.”
- “More work engaging with schools from different communities is needed.”

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20150401 - DE - Jointly managed schools circular

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX



Tel No: (028) 9127 9746
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

1 April 2015

Dear Peter

JOINTLY MANAGED SCHOOLS CIRCULAR

For the information of the Education Committee, please find attached, 'in confidence' a copy of the Jointly Managed Schools Circular. It is anticipated this Circular will be launched, via a press statement, week commencing 13 April 2015.

Yours sincerely

Russell

RUSSELL WELSH
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Subject:

Circular Number:

Date of Issue:

JOINTLY-MANAGED SCHOOLS

1 April 2015

Target Audience:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools;
- Education Authority
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education;
- Transferors' Representative Council;
- Teachers' Unions;
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment;
- General Teaching Council.

Summary of Contents:

This circular is an information guide for those stakeholders interested in establishing jointly managed schools.

Governor Awareness:

Essential

Status of Contents:

Information for schools

Superseded Documents:

Not applicable

Expiry Date:

Not applicable

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:

Shared Education and Community Relations Team
Department of Education
Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Rathgill
BANGOR BT19 7PR

DE Website:
<http://www.deni.gov.uk>

Tel: 028 91279508
Fax: 028 91279100

Additional copies:
Tel: 028 91279508

1. Purpose of the Circular

1.1 Concurrent with the growth of a variety of Shared Education programmes, some controlled and maintained schools have expressed an interest in establishing what has been termed by stakeholders a 'jointly managed church school', where both the representatives of the Transferor churches and the Catholic Church working together have a joint role in the management of the school.

1.2 In response, the Department (DE) has worked closely with the Transferor Representatives' Council which represents the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, and representatives of the Catholic Trustees to consider how the concept may be implemented within the current legislative framework.

1.3 The purpose of this circular is to provide guidance on key issues which stakeholders must consider and agree upon when planning to bring forward any proposal to establish a school of this type.

1.4 All those bringing forward a proposal to establish a school of this type must have regard to the content of this circular.

1.5 This is a new concept and while DE has endeavoured to cover all pertinent issues in this circular, it is recognised that as these schools are established through the Development Proposal process, there may be a need to further supplement, or amend this circular.

2. Policy Context: Shared Education

2.1 The wider context for the development of the concept of jointly managed schools has been the emergence and development of the concept of Shared Education.

2.2 Shared Education is the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;
- involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

2.3 Specifically, by Shared Education we mean the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.

2.4 Shared Education pilot programmes have been taking place in a number of schools in recent years, most notably with significant investment from the International Fund for Ireland and the Atlantic Philanthropies. The Programmes aimed to break down the barriers arising from the conflict here by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn together.

2.5 Going forward DE is, in conjunction with Delivering Social Change funding and the Atlantic Philanthropies, providing a funding stream to support Shared Education in schools over the next four years. The Education Minister has committed to mainstreaming Shared Education funding in the longer term.

2.6 DE is also working with the Special EU Programmes body to advise on how best Peace IV funding can be used to support further the development of

Shared Education in schools that have not yet engaged in this form of delivery, as well as across pre-school and youth work settings in a way that will complement the Delivering Social Change Shared Education funding.

2.7 DE has developed a Shared Education Policy which provides a framework for the future of development of Shared Education. The policy will ensure that schools and other education environments receive the resources, acknowledgement, support and encouragement to start or continue to develop high quality Shared Education opportunities for their pupils. A Shared Education Bill to define and provide the power to encourage and facilitate Shared Education has also been brought forward.

2.8 There are various forms of association that can provide the opportunity for schools to collaborate on a range of curricular and other issues. These can range from voluntary coalitions and partnerships to a relationship involving formal management and governance structures.

2.9 It is for schools, parents and communities in conjunction with the relevant school Planning Authorities¹ to determine which model they think best meet local needs. In order to support stakeholders who have expressed an interest in the jointly managed model, DE has published this circular.

¹ The Planning Authorities are the Education Authority, which has responsibility for ensuring that efficient primary education and post-primary education are available to meet the needs of its area and that the area has sufficient schools of the right size and of the right type; and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, which has a statutory duty to promote and co-ordinate the planning of the effective provision of Catholic maintained schools.

3. Definition

3.1 Whilst there is potential for other forms of jointly managed school, this circular provides guidance only in regard to what has been termed by stakeholders a 'jointly managed church school'.

3.2A jointly managed church school is a grant-aided school, providing shared education with a Christian ethos, with Trustee representation agreed by the Transferor churches and the Catholic Church and managed by a Board of Governors with balanced representation from both the main communities here.

3.3 It should be noted that a 'jointly managed church school' is not a particular school management type set out in legislation but reflects the practical operation and ethos of these schools. The management type of these schools is outlined in Paragraph 4.17 and arrangements for Home to School Transport in Section 6.

3.3 A jointly managed church school may be and will most likely be established as a result of the amalgamation of former controlled and Catholic maintained schools. However, this does not preclude the establishment of an entirely new school of this type where no provision currently exists.

4. Key Issues for Stakeholders to Consider

4.1 A Development Proposal (DP) is required under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 before any significant change can be made to the character or size of a school, or to establish a new grant-aided school.

4.2 In order to establish a new school as a result of the amalgamation of former controlled and Catholic maintained schools, DPs will be required to:

- close the existing grant-aided schools; and
- establish a new school.

If an entirely new school is to be established where no provision currently exists, a single DP to establish a new school will be required.

4.3 DE would expect the relevant Board (or the Education Authority when established) and CCMS on behalf of the Catholic Trustees to bring forward proposals to close existing schools and together bring forward a proposal to establish the new grant-aided school.

I. Sustainability

4.4 In approving an amalgamation or the establishment of an entirely new school, an essential consideration for DE is that it will be viable for the long term. All proposals are assessed in line with the framework of 'Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools' - <http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/sustainable-schools.htm>.

4.5 Those intending to bring forward a DP should familiarise themselves with the content of the Sustainable Schools Policy. The policy sets out six criteria for helping to assess existing and future provision. They cover the educational experience of children, enrolment trends, financial position, school leadership and management, accessibility, and strength of links to the community.

4.6 Stakeholders should consider and develop proposals within this overarching framework.

4.7 In a case of an amalgamation between a former controlled and maintained school(s), the new school will not be subject to a minimum enrolment criteria for receipt of recurrent funding.

II. The Area Planning Context

4.8 Area Planning is the process through which a network of viable and sustainable schools will be developed. It aims to have schools of the right size and type in the right place through assessing the current and projected level of demand in an area and shaping provision to meet that demand.

4.9 It is extremely important that proposals are developed in consultation with the relevant Planning Authorities. Any proposal must consider the wider context of the network of schools and must be in line with the overall proposed pattern of provision outlined in the area plan. It is particularly important to consider the implications for other schools in the area.

III. Educational Trust and Ownership

4.10 It is preferable for those intending to bring forward a proposal to establish a school of this type to plan to establish a formal body such as a Trust following the approval of any DP (more details on the DP process are provided from Paragraph 5.1 onwards).

4.11 Trustees would be appointed through a deed of appointment. The Trustees are the legal representatives of the school as an organisation.

4.12 In this case, DE would require the school Trustees to be representative of both the Catholic Church and the Transferor churches.

4.13 The Trustees:

- are the person or persons in whom the premises and site of the school or college of education are, or are to be, vested .(This may involve lease or assignment from either the Education Authority or the relevant Catholic Maintained Trust, if the use of a former school site is proposed);
- will nominate governors in line with the provisions of Schedule 5 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 Order; and
- will be the named party to legal contracts on behalf of the school (for example for minor or major capital works).

4.14 The Planning Authorities will provide stakeholders with advice on the establishment of a Trust. It should be noted that it is not envisaged that the legal ownership of any school site will change.

IV. Management Type

4.15 Current legislation stipulates a number of school management types for grant-aided schools: controlled, Catholic maintained, maintained, voluntary (non-maintained) and grant-maintained integrated. It does not provide for any other “hybrid” management type.

4.16 A controlled school must under Article 21 (2) of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 provide undenominational religious education and collective worship.

4.17 A voluntary maintained management type is likely to be the most practicable management type for this type of school. It is distinct from a Catholic maintained school which is a maintained school designated in a scheme agreed between the DE and CCMS (Article 141(3) of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989).

4.18 In a significant number of key practical matters, the same management arrangements are in place for maintained schools, as for controlled and Catholic

maintained schools. The Education Authority is the funding authority for these schools and is responsible for the payment of rates, landlord maintenance, purchasing and invoicing and carrying out the internal audit function. The Education Authority is also responsible for employing non-teaching staff and for non-teaching payroll. Like both controlled and Catholic maintained schools, DE is responsible for teacher payroll in maintained schools. As in the case of controlled and Catholic maintained schools, maintained schools would be expected to self-insure with the Education Authority.

V. Board of Governors

4.19 In a maintained school, the Board of Governors comprises nine, eighteen or twenty-seven members. Of the voting members of the Board of Governors:

- a) four-ninths shall be nominated by the nominating trustees in such manner as the scheme of management of the school may provide, and at least one of the persons so nominated shall, at the time of his nomination, be a parent of a registered pupil at the school;
- b) two-ninths shall be nominated by the Board;
- c) one-ninth shall be nominated by the Head of the Department;
- d) one-ninth shall be elected by parents of registered pupils at the school from amongst the parents of such pupils; and
- e) one-ninth shall be elected by assistant teachers at the school from amongst such assistant teachers.²

4.20 In this case, DE would expect a formal local agreement that the governors appointed by the Trustees will be representative of both the Catholic and Transferor Churches. It is also expected that the representatives of the Education Authority will reflect both religious traditions.

³ The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986; Schedule 5

- 4.21 Agreements will be detailed in the school's Scheme of Management, which provides for the membership and procedures of the Board of Governors of grant-aided schools.

VI. School Ethos

- 4.22 The proposed ethos of the school, arrangements for worship and approach to religious education must be agreed prior to any proposal being brought forward. Agreement will also be required in respect of any specific requirements for the development and maintenance of the religious ethos of the school that are to be reflected in the Scheme of Management for the school. A formal Memorandum of Agreement between the school trustees of the main Protestant Churches and the Catholic Church should be drawn up and signed by both parties to reflect these arrangements.
- 4.23 Subsequently when a school is established, the Board of Governors will implement the agreed ethos for the school and reflect this ethos within the school's Scheme of Management. In these schools, the Department would expect that the ethos would be within a Christian framework which respects both the religious ethos of the Catholic Church and Transferor Churches and where neither ethos would predominate.
- 4.24 In all grant-aided schools it is expected that the governors and the Principal should maintain an ethos for the school that promotes the moral, spiritual, intellectual, social and personal development of all its pupils. The school's ethos should contribute to the wider goals of the school and be clearly defined and understood by parents, pupils, staff, governors and the local community. It should also be consistent with a commitment to promote equality, good relations and diversity within the school and its community.
- 4.25 Decisions on teaching of RE within the school are also the responsibility of the Board of Governors within the context of the statutory curriculum for religious education.

VII. Employing Authority

4.26 Boards of Governors will be the employer of teachers for schools of this type.³

These schools will adhere to the agreed remuneration and terms and conditions of service of teachers in grant aided schools in Northern Ireland established through the agreed negotiating machinery (currently the Teachers' Negotiating Committee).

4.27 The Department would expect Boards of Governors in this type of school to have a formal agreement in place to seek, obtain and follow professional advice on Human Resources issues from the Education Authority in the first instance.

4.28 The terms of TNC 2013-2 School Reorganisation Agreement will be applicable to all newly established schools.

4.29 The Education Authority is the employer for all non-teaching staff in controlled, Catholic maintained and maintained schools. There will, therefore, be no change in the employer for non-teaching staff in the event of the establishment of the new school.

VIII. Size

4.30 Articles 11 and 12 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 require DE to determine an enrolment number and an admissions number respectively for each grant-aided primary and post primary school.

4.31 All Development Proposals will need to state clearly the proposed enrolment for the new school. This should be determined in discussions with the relevant Planning Authorities within the context of the Area Plan. When two schools are amalgamating, only in exceptional cases would DE expect this to exceed the combined approved enrolment of the former schools. Reducing the number of

³ Teachers are employed by the Board of Governors in Catholic maintained schools and by the Education Authority in controlled schools. CCMS is the Employing Authority for Catholic maintained schools.

unfilled places in the schools' estate is an objective of area planning. Consequently, where the former schools had unfilled places, consideration should be given to reducing the approved enrolment of the new school accordingly and clearly outlined in the Development Proposal.

IX. Accommodation

- 4.32 There is a need to consider short and longer-term accommodation needs for the proposed school and whether additional temporary accommodation may be required. Detailed and realistic costings for any proposed accommodation should be developed. Due regard should be given to maximising the potential of existing school premises.
- 4.33 In a case where a school is formed as the result of an amalgamation of former controlled and maintained school(s), which were already vested in the schools' estate, the school will not be subject to meeting enrolment thresholds for capital viability, as in the case of newly established grant-aided schools.
- 4.34 Jointly managed schools formed by the amalgamation of existing grant-aided schools will attract the additional points associated with rationalisation when applications for new school builds are being assessed. Details are set out in DE's *Protocol for the Selection of Major Capital Works* <http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/june-protocol-major-works.htm>

5. The Development Proposal Process

5.1 As noted above, a Development Proposal (DP) is required under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 before any significant change can be made to the character or size of a school, or to establish a new grant-aided school (para 4.1 refers)

5.2 In advance of initiation of the formal development process, it is essential that the key issues outlined in this guidance have been considered and agreed. A proposal to establish a new school requires Planning Authorities to be engaged at an early stage.

5.3 Information regarding the DP process can be found at http://www.deni.gov.uk/de1_14_202314_development_proposal_guidance_-_english_version_issued_26_09_14.pdf (Circular 2014/21). Those bringing forward a proposal should familiarise themselves with this guidance.

5.4 A decision on any DP is made by the Minister of Education. All DPs are considered on a case by case basis within DE's policy framework.

5.5 The body which brings forward a DP is "the proposer". In this case DE would expect that the Education Authority and CCMS would each bring forward in a timely manner proposals to close existing schools and together bring forward a proposal to establish the new grant-aided school.

5.6 It is a matter for the proposer to make the case for change for any development proposal being presented to the Minister for consideration. The proposer should provide sufficient evidence to support the case for change to enable those affected by the proposal to understand the educational and other merits of the change proposed. DE should be fully furnished with all pertinent background and supporting information relating to the DP. Such information must be robust and verifiable. A detailed implementation plan must also be included. This should outline the key activities and milestones for successful implementation of the proposal should it be approved.

5.6A key purpose of the DP procedure is to ensure that all interested parties are informed about proposed changes to schools and have an opportunity to comment on any proposed development that may affect them before decisions are taken. All objections and comments received are considered in reaching a final decision on a DP. It is vitally important that the proposal is clear and unambiguous and this should include clarity around the management type and size of the proposed school.

6. Operation of Jointly Managed Schools

Home to School Transport

6.1 The current arrangements for the provision of home to school transport came into operation in September 1997 (Circular 1996/41) and were last updated in September 2009.

6.2 A child is only eligible for transport assistance in circumstances where he or she enrolls at a school which is beyond qualifying distance from their home (two miles for primary pupils or three miles for post-primary pupils) and has been unsuccessful in gaining a place at all suitable schools within statutory walking distance.

6.3 Where there is no suitable school within statutory walking distance from a child's home, the Education Authority may provide transport to any suitable school, provided a suitable Education Authority or public transport service to or in the vicinity of that school is already available.

6.4 A suitable school is a grant-aided school in any of the following categories: -

Primary/Secondary Sector

Categories of School

Catholic maintained
Controlled or other voluntary
Integrated
Irish-medium

Grammar Sector

Categories of School

Denominational
Non-Denominational

6.5 For the purposes of transport provisions under current arrangements, jointly managed primary and post-primary schools will be classified as within both 'controlled and other voluntary' and 'Catholic maintained' categories.

6.6 It should be noted that arrangements for Home to School Transport are current under review and may change. The Department intends consulting

upon the review of Home to School Transport chaired by Sian Thornthwaite, which was published in December 2014.

Temporary Variation (TV)

6.7 There are four categories for the purposes of considering TVs:

- (i) **denominational** (i.e. maintained primary schools, maintained post-primary schools, denominational grammar schools);
- (ii) **non-denominational** (i.e. controlled primary schools, controlled post-primary schools, non-denominational grammar schools);
- (iii) **Integrated** (i.e. controlled or maintained integrated primary or post-primary schools and;
- (iv) **Irish Medium** (i.e. Irish Medium primary or post primary schools or Irish Medium primary or post primary units within maintained primary or post primary schools).

6.8A small number of 'other maintained' schools (ie Voluntary maintained schools that are not Irish-medium) are treated 'by exception' and outside of these four categories.

6.9 For the purposes of dealing with TV requests, jointly managed primary and post-primary schools will be classified alongside **both** denominational **and** non-denominational categories. This means that when a TV request for a child is received from a jointly managed school, it is likely to be approved unless there are alternative places available in both the controlled and maintained sectors within a reasonable travelling distance of the child's home. Conversely, a jointly managed school would not be considered as an alternative setting for a child who requests a place in any other sector.

7. Contacts regarding this Circular

7.1 A copy of this circular has been placed on the DE website. Any enquiries about this circular should be addressed to Shared Education and Community Relations Team, telephone number 028 9127 9245.

Andrew Bell

Shared Education and Community Relations Team

20150330 - DE - Comm Peace IV - Shared Education



Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Tel No: (028) 9127 9746
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

Your Ref: PMcC/KM/2017

30 March 2015

Dear Peter

Peace IV – Shared Education

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 March 2015 which sought further information regarding Peace IV Shared Education funding.

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is still awaiting approval from the European Commission on proposals for the Peace IV Programme. SEUPB has advised that it does not expect to receive approval until the summer. Discussions are still on-going in relation to final allocations across the thematic areas and the final decision will be subject to agreement by the Executive. Current proposals are that the Peace IV programme will target those schools not eligible for the Delivering Social Change - Shared Education Signature Project (ie: those schools which have not engaged in shared education to date, estimated at 24% of schools), youth to school partnerships and early years partnerships.

I hope you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely

Russell Welsh
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Russell Welsh
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor
BT19 7PR

13 March 2015

Our Ref: PMcC/KM/2017

Dear Russell

Peace IV – Shared Education

At its meeting on 11 March 2015, the Chairperson advised Members of commentary in recent written questions which indicated that the Peace IV Shared Education funding is to be targeted at the 24% of schools not currently involved in sharing.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking further information on Peace IV Shared Education funding.

A response by 27 March 2015 would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Signed Peter McCallion

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

Peter McCallion
Clerk
Committee for Education

Committee for Education

Room 375, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX

Tel: (028) 9052 1201 Fax: (028) 9052 21974

E-mail: peter.mccallion@niassembly.gov.uk

20150501 DE- Comm CRED Findings from the 2012 YLT

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX



Tel No: (028) 9127 9746
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/2118

1 May 2015

Dear Peter

**SHARED AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION INQUIRY: COMMUNITY RELATIONS,
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (CRED) POLICY**

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 2015 seeking sight of the Department's CRED policy update and details of the Young Life and Time survey results in respect of relevant pupils attitudes.

Planning work has commenced in relation to revising the CRED policy and this is expected to be completed within the current year. The Department will keep the Committee informed at key stages during the review process.

I have attached a copy of the 2012 Young Life and Times survey and would advise you that the 2014 Survey is due to be launched on Wednesday 13 May at Queen's University, Belfast. As soon as this 2014 Survey is launched I will have a copy sent to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Russell

RUSSELL WELSH
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

ARK Occasional Paper



**Community Relations, Equality and
Diversity in Education (CRED):
Findings from the 2012
Young Life and Times Survey**

**Paula Devine
March 2013**



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Key findings

1208 16 year olds took part in the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey. The survey included a suite of questions to record the experiences of young people in relation to Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED).

70% of respondents had taken part in CRED activities, either at school or in a youth project or club. Of those who had taken part, 57 per cent had done so only in school, 14 per cent had done so in a youth setting only, and 29 per cent had done so in both.

Most respondents had undertaken activities focusing on people of different religious beliefs. However, other topics such as having dependents, marital status or caring responsibilities were covered by less than one third of respondents. School-based CRED activities covered more of the Section 75 groups that youth settings did.

For each of the identified groups, at least two thirds of respondents felt that CRED activities resulted in more positive feelings among participants. This applied to activities within school and within youth settings. However, the perceived level of changing attitudes among participants in youth settings was generally higher than participants in school.

For each of the identified groups, at least two thirds of respondents felt that CRED activities resulted in them feeling more positive about these groups. There was little difference depending on whether respondents undertook these activities at school or in youth settings.

Overall, the data indicate that the majority of young people are experiencing CRED activities in some shape or form, and these seem effective in changing attitudes. The fact that the breadth and range, as well as perceive effectiveness, may vary across settings is evident. However, this may be expected, given the different roles that schools and youth projects/clubs play within young people's lives.

Introduction

This project feeds into a wider programme of the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) to measure the success of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy. The aim of this policy is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.

As part of this programme, DENI wished to assess effectiveness of schools and other youth settings in encouraging understanding of groups covered in Section 75 of the 1998 Northern Ireland Act. By developing a suite of indicators, the baseline level of success and effectiveness can be measured, and repeated over time. Whilst existing surveys provide some useful indicators (for example the Young Persons Behaviour and Attitude Survey, and previous Young Life and Times surveys), these do not adequately capture the extent of the policy. In particular, there is a need to develop indicators that reflect the wider scope of the CRED policy, and do not focus solely on community relations.

In order to achieve this, DENI commissioned a suite of questions within the 2012 Young Life and Times (YLT) Survey, which recorded the experiences of young people in relation to Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education.

YLT is one of three annual public attitudes surveys undertaken by ARK (Access, Research, Knowledge), which record the views of people living in Northern Ireland to key social policy issues that affect their lives. In particular, the opinions of young people are often ignored when decisions are made about many of the issues involving them. Thus, the aim of the Young Life and Times survey is to record the views of 16 year olds in Northern Ireland on a range of issues such as community relations, health, politics, sectarianism and education.

Aims and objectives of the research

The aim of this research is to assess the effectiveness of the CRED policy amongst young people living in Northern Ireland.

The objectives are:

- to develop a suite of survey questions that will act as indicators of the effectiveness of the CRED policy;
- to include these questions within the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey.

Methodology

Sample

The survey sample was taken from the Child Benefit Register. Child Benefit is a benefit for people bringing up children and is paid for each child. Therefore, the Register contains information on all children for whom Child Benefit is claimed. This Register had previously been the responsibility of the Social Security Agency (SSA) of the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland (DSD). However, while DSD still maintained the database, the responsibility for the payment of Child Benefit transferred to Inland Revenue. Thus, it was necessary to negotiate access to this Register from Inland Revenue, which involved an explanatory memorandum being prepared relating to the Tax Credits (Provision of Information (Evaluation and Statistical Studies) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004).

Due to revised data security procedures in 2007, ARK had to re-apply to access the Child Benefit dataset for further YLT surveys, and permission was granted by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in 2008. The sample for the 2012 survey was provided to ARK directly by HMRC. In October 2012 a Service Level Agreement was signed between ARK and HMRC about the sample provision. Within this agreement ARK had to lay out arrangements for the safety and security of the personal data of respondents. This included arrangements for a safe transport and storage of the files as well as destruction of the address file after completion of the data collection.

The sample drawn from the Child Benefit Register contained the names and addresses of all young people resident in Northern Ireland who celebrated their 16th birthday during February and March 2011.

Advance letter

Fieldwork was conducted in November and December 2012. All administration of the mailout for the survey was undertaken by an independent mailing company. An initial letter was sent out in October 2012 to all eligible 16-year olds and provided an introduction to the survey, after the wording of this letter had been agreed with HMRC. Recipients of the letter were given the opportunity to say that they did not want to participate in the survey.

A second letter was then posted out to all those 16-year olds who had not opted out of the survey. This consisted of a letter from the project team, a paper questionnaire and a return envelope with a FREEPOST address. This letter contained a unique identifier (with a check letter) under the address, which was highlighted as "Your identification number". The provided more information about the survey, the three possible methods of completing the questionnaire, and details of a draw for five prizes of £100 for which all respondents completing the questionnaire were eligible.

In total, 34 young people opted out of completing the survey at different stages.

Survey content

The 2012 survey entailed the questions on the following subject areas:

- Community relations - funded by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM);
- Shared Education- funded by the Office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY);
- Experiences of Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Education (CRED) – funded by the Department of Education (DENI);
- Attitudes to sexual orientation;
- Family;
- Background information.

At the end of the 2011 survey, respondents were given the opportunity to identify questions they felt should be included in the next Young Life and Times survey. Some of these suggested topics were incorporated in the 2012 survey, namely the questions on attitudes to sexual orientation.

In conjunction with DENI staff, the YLT team developed a suite of questions that asked respondents about their experiences of the CRED activities – see Appendix 1.

Completing the questionnaire

The fieldwork period lasted from 15 November – 31 December 2012.

Respondents were able to choose one of three methods for completing the questionnaire.

1. They could take part by phone, having quoted their identification number and check letter.
2. They could complete the questionnaire online, quoting their personal identifier to enter that part of the YLT website.
3. They could complete the paper questionnaire that was sent to them and post it back in the pre-stamped envelope.

After approximately ten days, a reminder letter with a second questionnaire was sent out to addressees who had not made contact of any kind.

Multiple responses from respondents (for example, one online and one postal response) were prevented by daily recording of the receipt of completed questionnaires. Once a respondent had submitted an online questionnaire, his or her unique identifier was automatically disabled.

Response rate

3,749 names of eligible respondents were on the database of Child Benefit recipients received from HMRC/DSDNI. 31 questionnaires were returned because the addressee had moved or was unknown at the address. This leaves a sample of 3,718 eligible respondents.

1,208 completed questionnaires were received by the end of the fieldwork period. The overall response rate of the 2012 YLT survey is therefore 32 per cent. Table 1 shows that the most popular mode of completing the survey was paper (1,036 questionnaires or 86 per cent). The rest of respondents completed the survey online. To encourage online completion, the first 100 online respondents received a £10 shopping voucher.

Table 1: Mode of survey completion

	n	%
Paper	1,036	86
Online	172	14
Telephone	0	0
Total	1,208	100

Characteristics of the respondents

The following tables show some key characteristics of the respondents to the 2012 survey. These tables exclude missing responses (that is, where the respondent does not answer). Column totals do not always sum to 100 per cent, due to rounding.

Table 2: Sex of respondents

	n	%
Male	506	42
Female	704	58

Table 3: Where respondents live

	n	%	
a big city	81	7	58
the suburbs or outskirts of a big city	152	13	
a small city or town	460	38	
a country village	216	18	41
or a farm or home in the country	280	23	
Don't know	12	1	-

Table 4: Physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more

	n	%
Yes	121	10
No	1077	90

Table 5: Membership of a minority ethnic community

	n	%
Yes	111	10
No	1023	90

Table 6: Ethnic group (recoded open responses)

	n	%
White/Caucasian	672	64
White European/European/Continental European	15	1
White Catholic	8	1
White Protestant	8	1
White Irish	44	4
White British	58	6
Northern Irish/White Northern Irish	11	1
Protestant	31	3
Catholic/Irish Catholic/Roman Catholic	61	6
Christian	16	2
British/English	39	4
Irish	46	4
Don't know/none	11	1
Mixed origin/other	25	2

Table 7: Religious affiliation

	n	%
Does not belong to a religion	266	22
Church of Ireland (Anglican)	119	10
Catholic	480	40
Presbyterian	205	17
Methodist	29	2
Baptist	22	2
Free Presbyterian	10	1
Brethren	13	1
Other (Please write in)	57	5

Table 8: Community affiliation

	n	%
Part of the Protestant community	470	39
Part of the Catholic community	487	41
Neither	245	20

Table 9: National identity

	n	%
British	360	31
Irish	404	34
Ulster	16	1
Northern Irish	326	28
Other (Please write in)	51	4
Don't know	19	2

Table 10: Sexual orientation

	%		
	Males	Females	All
only to females and never to males	91	1	38
more often to females and at least once to a male	3	<0.5	1
about equally often to females and males	1	2	2
more often to males and at least once to a female	1	4	3
only to males and never to females	1	88	52
I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone	4	5	4

Table 11: Activity since October 2012

	n	%
At school or college full time	985	82
Working full time	4	<0.5
Working part time	3	<0.5
At school or college and working part time	156	13
On a training scheme	43	4
Unemployed	7	1
Other (Please write in)	2	<0.5

Table 12: Type of school most recently attended

	n	%
Planned integrated	81	7
Grammar	577	48
Secondary	457	38
Irish language	6	1
Special school	13	1
Other (Please write in)	56	5

Table 13: Description of school most recently attended

	n	%
all or nearly all Protestant	243	20
all or nearly all Catholic	413	34
mostly Protestant	210	17
mostly Catholic	87	7
about half Protestant and half Catholic	185	15
Don't know	66	6

Main findings

Experience of CRED

The questionnaire provided an introduction to the topic, using the following text:

'Education and youth work are supposed to encourage understanding of particular groups in society and promote the equal treatment of different groups. This can be done through exchange programmes, discussions, workshops, lessons or videos.'

When asked if they had ever done any of this, seven out of ten of respondents indicated that they had done so. Most of these respondents had done so in school (86 per cent), with half this proportion (43 per cent) doing so within a youth project. Three out of ten had done so both in school and within a youth setting (a youth project or youth club).

Table 14: Participation in CRED activities

	%	
	All respondents	Of those who had undertaken activity
School only	40	57
Youth project/club only	10	14
School and youth project/club	20	29
Not at all	30	-

Tables 15 and 16 focus on those undertaking these activities in school. YLT respondents were asked two questions relating to the type of school that they had most recently attended: type of school, and its religious makeup. This allows us to break down figures relating to school-based CRED activities by these school characteristics. Table 15 shows that respondents attending planned integrated schools were more likely to undertake these activities than those in grammar or secondary schools. (Other school types were omitted from this table due to small numbers). Table 16 indicates that those in mostly Catholic schools, or in schools that are mixed were most likely to undertake CRED activities, whilst those attending mostly Protestant schools were least likely to do so.

Table 15: CRED activities by type of school

	% of respondents undertaking CRED
Planned integrated	68
Grammar	61
Secondary	57

Table 16: Description of school most recently attended

	% of respondents undertaking CRED
all or nearly all Protestant	56
all or nearly all Catholic	61
mostly Protestant	55
mostly Catholic	66
about half Protestant and half Catholic	65
Don't know	52

CRED topics

The 70 per cent of young people who had experienced CRED activities were then asked if these activities had covered a range of 10 groups, reflecting the Section 75 categories. This was explored separately for school and for youth project/youth club – see Table 17. The findings in relation to school represent only those respondents who indicated that they had undertaken CRED activities in school, and a similar approach is taken in relation to a youth project or youth club.

Overall, schools appear to have covered issues relating to all groups more than youth projects or youth clubs. For example, 74 per cent of respondents who had experienced school-based activities said that this covered different ethnic groups, compared with 58 per cent of those responding in relation to youth projects or youth clubs, and there are three other groups where the differential is at least 14 percentage points (religious beliefs, sexual orientation and disability). Age is the only topic where coverage in youth settings is higher than in schools, although the difference is very slight (2 percentage points).

In general, the pattern of which groups for youth settings is similar to that in schools. Thus, the most frequently covered topic in either setting relates to different religious beliefs, followed by different ethnic groups, whilst the least covered groups related to caring responsibilities, dependents and marital status.

Table 17: Coverage of CRED groups, by setting

	%	
	School	Youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	59	48
People with different religious beliefs	84	70
People from different ethnic groups	74	58
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	53	55
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	30	30
People with different sexual orientations	45	31
Men and women	55	46
People with a disability and those without a disability	63	46
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	31	26
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	34	29

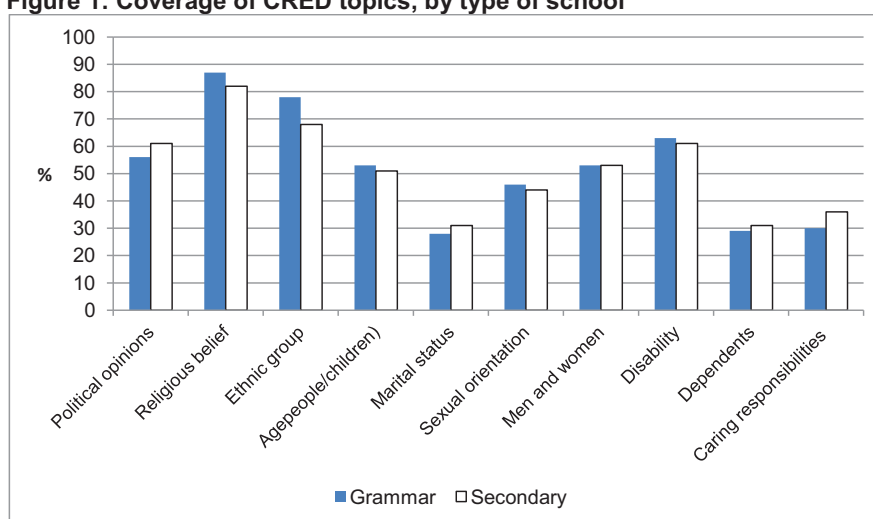
School-based CRED activities appear to be covering a broader range of topics: only 3 per cent of respondents undertaking CRED at school did not identify any of the topics, whilst the relevant figure for young settings was 11 per cent. In contrast, the proportion covering at least eight topics is 25 per cent for schools, and 19 per cent for youth settings – see Table 18. The mean number of topics identified by respondents undertaking CRED activities in school is 5.3, whilst for youth settings, it is 4.4.

Table 18: Number of topics covered, by setting

	%	
	School	Youth project or youth club
0	3	11
1	7	6
2	9	10
3	11	15
4	16	17
5	11	9
6	11	7
7	8	7
8	7	7
9	6	5
10	12	7

Due to the small number of particular types of schools, figures can only be broken down for grammar and secondary schools. Figure 1 indicates that for six topics, a higher proportion of respondents attending grammar schools had covered these, compared with those attending secondary schools. However, these differentials were generally small. The exceptions are political opinion and ethnic groups, where there was at least a 10 percentage point difference. The number of topics does not vary significantly between grammar schools and secondary schools.

Figure 1: Coverage of CRED topics, by type of school



Changing attitudes among participants

Having identified which groups were covered within the CRED activities, the next step was to explore if this resulted in changing attitudes. Thus, respondents were asked if they thought that members of their class or youth project or youth club felt more positive towards any of the groups as a result of what was taught or discussed. (Figures are only presented for those respondents who identified that particular group in q34. YLT is primarily a paper questionnaire, and so respondents sometimes do not follow the appropriate routing of questions).

Two patterns are evident from Table 19. Firstly, for each of the ten groups, at least two thirds of respondents felt that CRED activities resulted in more positive feelings among participants, and this applied for both school and youth settings. Secondly, undertaking these activities within youth settings is more likely to result in more positive attitudes than those undergoing these activities in school. This was the case for eight out of the ten groups, and for the remaining two groups, there was no differential between the two settings.

Table 19: More positive attitudes of participants about CRED groups

	%	
	School	Youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	74	81
People with different religious beliefs	78	78
People from different ethnic groups	78	78
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	69	77
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	71	74
People with different sexual orientations	71	81
Men and women	72	75
People with a disability and those without a disability	80	82
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	75	83
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	67	77

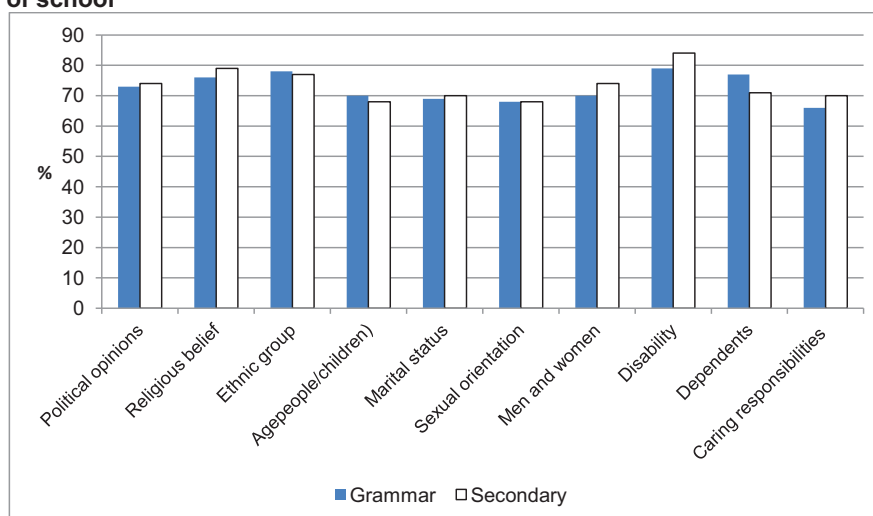
Table 20 suggests that one quarter of respondents attending CRED activities within a youth project or youth club thought that there was no group for which they perceived that CRED activities resulted in more positive feelings among participants. The respective figure for schools was 14 per cent, suggesting that CRED activities are more effective among schools than youth settings. On the other hand, it could be argued that those attending a youth project or youth club had positive feelings to begin with.

Table 20: Number of topics participants more positive about, by setting

	%	
	School	Youth project or youth club
0	14	24
1	10	9
2	13	12
3	15	13
4	12	11
5	9	6
6	6	6
7	7	5
8	3	6
9	5	4
10	7	5

In general, the perceived level of changing attitudes among grammar and secondary school respondents are fairly similar, with the largest differential (five percentage points) being in relation to disability – see Figure 2.

Figure 2: More positive attitudes of participants about CRED groups, by type of school



Changing attitudes of respondents

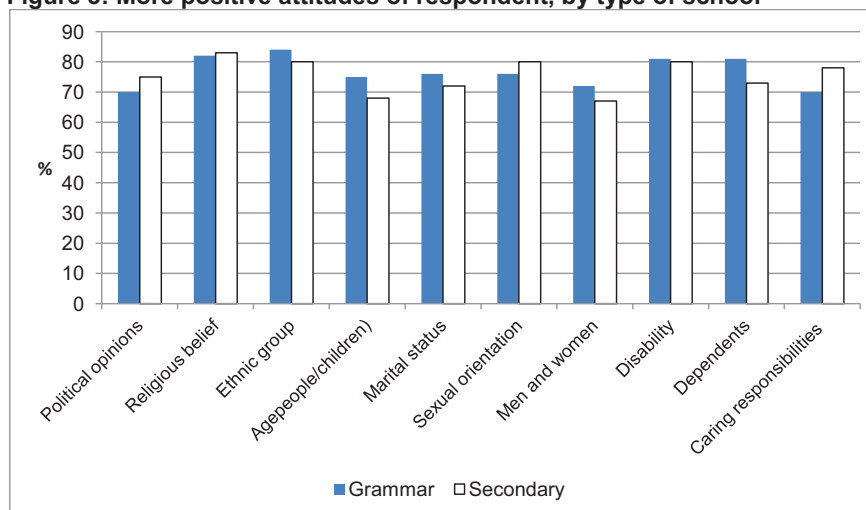
The final question in this section asked YLT respondents if they themselves felt more positive towards any of the groups as a result of what was taught or discussed during CRED activities.

For each of the ten groups, at least seven out of ten respondents felt that their attitudes were more positive as a result of the CRED activities – see Table 21. The results for school were fairly similar to those for a youth project or youth club. Where there was a difference, these were small – the largest differential is seven percentage points, and relates to sex. Comparing Tables 19 and 21, the data suggest that a slightly higher level of respondents felt that their own attitudes had become more positive, than their perception for participants as a whole.

Table 21: More positive attitudes of respondent about CRED groups, by setting

	%	
	School	Youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	77	75
People with different religious beliefs	83	83
People from different ethnic groups	82	82
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	71	74
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	75	74
People with different sexual orientations	77	80
Men and women	71	78
People with a disability and those without a disability	80	81
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	79	79
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	73	72

Figure 3 shows that the figures for grammar and secondary school pupils are similar for most of the CRED topics. Where differentials do exist, these are fairly low (maximum of eight percentage points); for age and sex, a higher proportion of grammar school pupils feel their attitudes have become more positive, whilst in relation to caring responsibilities, this pattern is reversed.

Figure 3: More positive attitudes of respondent, by type of school

Of all respondents who undertook CRED activities at school, around one in six (14 per cent) said that they did not have more positive feelings about any groups – see Table 22. At the same time, half that proportion (8 per cent) said they felt more positive about all ten groups. However, respondents who had undertaken CRED activities within a youth project or youth club were less likely to say that these activities made them feel more positive – one quarter did not feel more positive about any group. The pattern evident in Table 22 is very similar to that in Table 20, which focuses on the perceived change in attitudes among all respondents.

Of course, Table 22 does not take into account the number of topics that the respondent covered within their CRED activities. When this is considered, just over one half (53 per cent) of respondents felt more positive about all the groups that they discussed.

Table 22: Number of topics participants more positive about, by setting

	%	
	School	Youth project or youth club
0	14	24
1	9	9
2	11	11
3	14	14
4	14	10
5	9	7
6	7	7
7	6	5
8	5	6
9	5	4
10	8	4

Discussion

This suite of questions provides an insight into the experiences of 16 year olds to Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) activities, and their perception of its effectiveness. Just over two thirds of young people (70 per cent) said that they had participated in these activities, the vast majority of whom had done so at school (84 per cent), with half that proportion undertaking these within a youth setting (43 per cent). Around three in ten of those participating in CRED had done so in both arenas.

The range and breadth of topic coverage varies both within, and across, settings. Thus, most respondents had undertaken activities focusing on people of different religious beliefs, although this varied from 84 per cent for school-based activities to 70 per cent among youth settings. For ethnic groups, a similar pattern is evident: 74 per cent in schools and 58 per cent in youth projects/clubs. Other topics, such as having dependents, marital status and caring responsibilities were covered by less than one third of respondents, regardless of the setting. These patterns will obviously have implications for the effectiveness of the programmes, and so may require further investigation as to why some topics are being poorly covered. It may be that facilitators feel that they are less important generally, or that other issues take priority within their particular location.

The survey results suggest that perceived effectiveness of the CRED programme is high: for each of the identified groups, at least two thirds of respondents felt that CRED activities resulted in more positive feelings among participants. This applied to activities within school and within youth settings. However, the perceived level of changing attitudes among participants in youth settings was generally higher than for those in school. This was especially evident in relation to sexual orientation and caring responsibilities, where there was a ten percentage point difference. However, these topics were among those least frequently covered by facilitators. The issue of better perceived effectiveness of CRED activities among youth settings is strategically important. It may be that facilitators and/or participants within youth settings feel more comfortable discussing topics such as sexual orientation than those involved within a school setting are. In addition, the type of activities that participants engage in may also vary across settings, which may affect perceived effectiveness.

Respondents were also asked if their own feelings become more positive after these activities. In attitudinal research, respondents quite often attribute themselves with more positive attitudes than they do for wider society, and this pattern is reflected here: the data suggest that effectiveness was higher for individuals than for general participants. For each of the identified groups, at least two thirds of respondents felt that CRED activities resulted in them feeling more positive about these groups. There was little difference depending on whether respondents undertook these activities at school or in youth settings.

One caveat relates to the wording of these questions, which ask about feeling more positive about particular groups. There are several scenarios where the respondent would not have ticked to say that they had become more positive, but this does not mean that their feelings had become more negative. A respondent may perceive that they had very positive feelings to start with, and this did not change.

Alternatively, they have may have very negative feelings, and this did not change. However, to disentangle these responses is beyond a self-completion questionnaire such as YLT.

In conclusion, the majority of young people are experiencing CRED activities in some shape or form, and these seem effective in changing attitudes. The fact that the breadth and range, as well as perceive effectiveness, may vary across settings is evident. However, this may be expected, and indeed, welcomed, given the different roles that schools and youth projects/clubs play within young people's lives.

Appendix 1: CRED questions within 2012 Young Life and Times Survey

33. Education and youth work are supposed to encourage understanding of particular groups in society and promote the equal treatment of different groups. This can be done through exchange programmes, discussions, workshops, lessons or videos. Have you ever done any of this...?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply in each column) ✓

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ... in your school | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | (Please go to the next question) |
| ... in a youth project or youth club | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | (Please go to the next question) |
| ... Neither | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | (Please go to question 37) |

34. And do you think that your school or your youth project or youth club has done this for the following groups?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply) ✓

	Your school	Your youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
I have never attended a youth project		<input type="checkbox"/> 1

35. Looking at the same list again, do you think that members of your class or your youth project or youthclub felt more positive towards any of these groups as a result of what was taught or discussed?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply) ✓

	Yes, in my school	Yes, in my youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People did not feel more positive towards any these groups		<input type="checkbox"/> 1

36. And how about you personally? Did you feel more positive towards any of these groups as a result of what was taught or discussed in school or in your youth project or youth club?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply in each column) ✓

	In my school	In my youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
I did not feel more positive towards any these groups		<input type="checkbox"/> 1

20150514 DE- Comm Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry CRED Policy

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX



Tel No: (028) 9127 9746
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/2118

14 May 2015

Dear Peter

**SHARED AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION INQUIRY: COMMUNITY RELATIONS,
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (CRED) POLICY**

Further to my letter of 1 May 2015, please find attached copy of the Young Life and Times Community Relations, Equality and Diversity survey 2014 results in respect of relevant pupils attitudes for the information of the Education Committee.

Yours sincerely

Russell

RUSSELL WELSH
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



**Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in
Education (CRED):
Findings from the 2014 Young Life and Times Survey
and Comparisons with the 2012 Survey Findings**

Dirk Schubotz
March 2015



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Introduction

This project feeds into a wider programme of the Department of Education (DE) for Northern Ireland to:

1. Measure the success of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy. The aim of this policy is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available;

DE regularly assesses the effectiveness of schools and other youth settings in encouraging understanding of groups covered in Section 75 of the 1998 Northern Ireland Act. In 2012 DE commissioned ARK to develop a suite of questions to be included in the 2012 Young Life and Times (YLT) survey, which recorded the experiences of young people in relation to CRED. This module in the 2012 YLT survey provided a baseline level of success and effectiveness of CRED (Devine, 2013). In 2014 the same questions were again placed in the YLT survey, and this publication reports the findings, where appropriate comparing these with the findings of the 2012 YLT survey.

The aims of this research are:

1. To assess the effectiveness of the CRED policy amongst young people living in Northern Ireland and compare this with the previous results from the 2012 YLT survey.

Methodology

What is the Young Life and Times Survey?

The Young Life and Times (YLT) survey is a constituent part of ARK (Access, Research, Knowledge), a joint resource by Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University providing access to social and political information on Northern Ireland (www.ark.ac.uk). The aim of the YLT survey is to record the views of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland on a range of issues such as community relations, health, politics, sectarianism and education. In its current format the YLT survey has been undertaken since 2003, making it the longest running annual large-scale cross-sectional survey of young people in the British Isles.

Sample

The survey sample was taken from the Child Benefit Register. Since 2004, a statutory instrument and explanatory memorandum (Tax Credits (Provision of Information) (Evaluation and Statistical Studies) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004) is in place which allows ARK to access the Child Benefit Register for the YLT survey.

Child Benefit is a benefit for people bringing up children and is paid for each child. Therefore, the Child Benefit Register contains information on all children for whom Child Benefit is claimed. Until March 2013 this was a universal benefit, but in April 2013 legislation came into place which introduced means testing with regard to Child Benefit payments. Higher earners are now no longer entitled to receive Child Benefit. This resulted in a potential significant change to the YLT sampling strategy. Alternative universal or random sample frames for YLT (such as the GP register) were considered prior to the 2013 survey but found unsuitable or unworkable. However, consultations with HMRC, who administer Child Benefit payments across the UK, revealed that the names and addresses of those 16-year olds affected by the Child Benefit Payment changes and those whose parents opted out of receiving Child Benefit are still held at HMRC, for example, in order to issue National Insurance Cards. Thus, the sample of 16-year olds available to ARK for the YLT survey remained potentially universal and unaffected by the legislative changes. According to HMRC, in 2014 only 185 eligible families from Northern Ireland had opted out of receiving Child Benefit payments, which makes the Child Benefit Register an almost 100 percent accurate random sample of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland.

The sample for the 2014 survey was provided to ARK directly by HMRC. Due to an increase in the number of funders, and subsequently a higher number of questions, for the first time we needed to run a split survey (i.e. not everybody would be asked all questions). To account for this and to fulfil our obligations to our funders, we

increased our sample size. Thus, for the first time one quarter of all eligible 16-year olds, namely all respondents with birthdays from January-March, were invited to take part in YLT.

Table 1: 2015 YLT survey content by funder and questionnaire version

Module	Funder	Purple version	Orange version
Background questions	Split among all funders	✓	✓
Community relations	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFMNI)	✓	✓
Relationships and Sexuality Education and attitudes to LGBT people	Department of Education (DE)	✓	✓
Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Education (CRED)	Department of Education (DE)		✓
Children's rights in education*	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)		✓
Autism*	Centre for Behaviour Analysis (Queen's University Belfast)	✓	
Attitudes to integrated education*	Integrated Education Fund (IEF)	✓	

* **Note:** The modules on autism, Rights in Education and attitudes to integrated education were also included in the 2014 Kids Life and Times (KLT) survey. For more details, visit www.ark.ac.uk/klt.

Fieldwork methods

Fieldwork was conducted from October to December 2014. An initial letter was sent in September 2014 to all eligible 16-year olds and provided an introduction to the survey. Recipients of the letter were given the opportunity to say if they did not want to participate in the survey. In October 2014, a second letter with a paper questionnaire and FREEPOST return envelope was then posted out to all 16-year olds who had not opted out of the survey. A reminder letter containing another paper

questionnaire and FREEPOST envelope was sent to all who had not responded by the start of November 2014.

Respondents could choose one of three methods for completing the questionnaire:

- They could complete the paper questionnaire and post it back in the pre-stamped envelope;
- They could complete the questionnaire online – inputting their personal identifier to enter that part of the YLT website;
- They could take part by phone, having quoted their identification number and check letter.

Survey Content

Given that the 2014 survey was a split survey, two questionnaires were produced; in the paper versions these were orange and purple. While the majority of questions were the same in both questionnaires, some modules were only included in one survey version (see Table 1). Respondents randomly received either the orange or purple survey questionnaire.

Response rate

5,692 names of eligible respondents were on the database of Child Benefit recipients received from HMRC. Forty-six initial letters or questionnaires were returned because the addressee had moved or was unknown at the address we were given. This leaves an overall sample of 5,642 eligible respondents in total.

Thirteen young people or their parents opted out of completing the 2014 YLT survey at different stages. Commonly this was because the young person suffered from a moderate or severe learning disability or mental illness which did not allow him or her to comprehend or answer the questions.

Overall 1,939 completed questionnaires were received by the end of the fieldwork period. This represents a response rate of 34.4 percent. This total number of responses excludes nine duplicate completions (either online and paper, or two paper completions), which were removed when the datasets were cleaned.

Table 2 shows that the most popular mode of completing the survey remains postal/paper completion. The Table also shows that the response rate among those who received a purple questionnaire version was higher. Telephone responses were offered as in every year, but no phone completions at all were recorded in 2014.

Table 2: Mode of survey completion by survey version

	Orange	Purple	All
Surveys sent out	2,846	2,846	5,692
Addressee unknown	12	34	46
Paper	777	867	1,644
Online	128	167	295
Total	905	1,034	1,939
Response rate	31.9%	36.8%	34.4%

Characteristics of the respondents

Before we report the main findings of the two DE modules, in this section of the report we summarise some key background characteristics of the respondents to the 2014 YLT survey. Due to rounding, column totals in the tables below do not always sum to 100 percent.

Missing responses, that is, where the respondent did not answer a question, were removed for the analysis. In closed questions missing responses typically make up no more than two percentage points of the total YLT population, depending on the type of question asked. In open questions, this figure can be significantly higher, however, YLT survey respondents tend to respond to open questions very well and often write quite extensive comments.

Gender

For the first time the YLT survey included 'other' categories in addition to 'male and 'female' when respondents were asked what sex/gender they were. Namely we asked whether they were male to female or female to male transgender or whether they identified as something else. Overall ten respondents chose one of these other categories (Table 3). This figure is too small to undertake any meaningful statistical analysis, however, the fact that 16-year olds said they were something other than male or female justifies the inclusion of these categories.

Table 3: Sex of respondents

	%
Males	41
Females	59
Transgender/Other	<1

Disability

Ten percent of respondents said they had a physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more with 68 percent of these respondents saying that this condition affected their ability to carry day-to day activities a little or a lot.

Area of living and number of years lived in Northern Ireland

Just slightly over one in five respondents (22%) lived in a large city or in a city's outskirts. Over one third of respondents (37%) lived either in a village or in a home in the countryside, confirming the fact that Northern Ireland remains a region with a significant rural population (Table 4).

Table 4: Where respondents live

	%
A big city	8
The suburbs or outskirts of a big city	13
A small city or town	42
A country village	17
A farm or home in the county	20
Don't know	<1

Respondents had lived for an average of 15.4 years in Northern Ireland, so in fact the large majority of respondents (91%) had lived in Northern Ireland for all their life.

Ethnicity

Table 5: Ethnic group (recoded open responses)

	%
White/Caucasian	65
Catholic/Irish Catholic/Roman Catholic	6
White Irish	4
White British	4
British/English	4
Irish	4
White European/European/Continental European	2
Protestant	3
Northern Irish/White Northern Irish	2
Christian	2
White Catholic	1
White Protestant	1
Mixed origin/other	3
Don't know/none	1

Thirteen percent of respondents self-identified as members of a minority ethnic group. Almost six in ten (58%) of those who said they had a 'mixed' or other ethnic background said this, but it is note-worthy that also one in five of those identifying as 'Catholic' or 'Protestant' also said this. In fact, among all respondents who identified as members of a minority ethnic group, almost half (47%) identified as 'White' or 'Caucasian', 15 percent as 'Catholic' and only 12 percent said they had mixed or other (e.g. Chinese, Pakistani etc.) origin.

Religious affiliation

Seventy-two percent of respondents said they had a religious affiliation. Table 6 shows the proportion of respondents affiliating with specific religions. Other religions included for example other branches of Protestant religions (e.g. Elim), Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Orthodox Christianity and Sikhism.

Table 6: Religious affiliation

	%
Catholic	54
Presbyterian	20
Church of Ireland	13
Methodist	3
Baptist	2
Free Presbyterian	1
Brethren	<1
Other	5

National identity

Table 7 shows that Irish, Northern Irish and British national identities continue to be the main national identities YLT respondents affiliate with. Nearly three quarters of Catholics (74%) identify as 'Irish', whilst over half (54%) of Protestants identify as 'British'. The proportion of Protestants identifying as 'Northern Irish' (38%) is twice that of Catholics saying they feel 'Northern Irish' (19%). However, respondents with no religious affiliation are most likely to say they feel 'Northern Irish' (40%).

Table 7: National identity

	%
Irish	36
Northern Irish	30
British	27
Ulster	2
Other	4
Don't know	2

Sexuality

YLT has been recording sexual preferences for many years. Table 8 shows that 88 percent of males and 81 percent of females were opposite-sex attracted, that is only ever sexually attracted to someone of the opposite sex whilst 11 percent of males and 12 percent of females were at least once sexually attracted to someone of the same sex.

Table 8: Sexual attracted to...*

	%	
	Males	Females
only to females and never to males	88	1
more often to females and at least once to a male	4	1
about equally often to females and males	2	3
more often to males and at least once to a female	2	8
only to males and never to females	3	81
I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone	2	6

*Figures for those saying they are neither female nor male are too small to report

Education

Ninety-five percent of YLT respondents were still in full-time education with the majority (81%) being in school. Table 9 shows the type of school respondents said they attended or, if they had left school, had recently attended. Table 10 shows that perceived religious mix of the schools respondents attended with just 14 percent saying that the proportion of Catholics and Protestants was about half and half.

Table 9: Type of school most recently attended

	%
Grammar	52
Non-Grammar, incorporating...	47
...Secondary (35)	
...Planned Integrated (7)	
...Irish Language (<1)	
...Other (4)*	
Special Schools	1

* 'Other' schools include: Colleges of Further and Higher Education – e.g. Belfast Metropolitan College, Dixon system – comprehensive schools, schools outside Northern Ireland, alternative education providers etc.

Table 10: Description of school most recently attended

	%
All or nearly all Protestant	18
All or nearly all Catholic	35
Mostly Protestant	20
Mostly Catholic	6
About half Protestant and half Catholic	14
Don't know	7

Family-financial background

YLT records the socio-economic background of respondents via a self-reporting mechanism which has produced a reliable measure over the years. In 2014, just over half of respondents said their families were average well-off. Fourteen percent said they came from not well-off families, whilst 29 percent thought their families were well-off.

Representativeness and weighting

The sample frame for the YLT survey is representative of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland, as described above in the Methodology section. However, as in most other surveys, due to non-response bias, the achieved sample is not representative of the

target population. This may or may not have any implications for the results reported here. Table 3 shows for example that 59 percent of respondents were females, so due to females being much more likely to respond to the survey than males. This is typical pattern for most for social research studies.

Also, as can be seen in Table 9, 52 percent of YLT respondents said they had previously attended grammar schools, whilst the most recent DE enrolment statistics show that the proportion of pupils in grammar schools in Northern Ireland was 42 percent in 2014/15 (Source: www.deni.gov.uk/enrolment_time_series_1415.xlsx; Accessed March 2015). Indirectly, the higher proportion of respondents from grammar schools may also affect the YLT socio-economic background variable (self-perceived family-financial wellbeing), as a much higher proportion of secondary school pupils is entitled to free school meals (37%) than in grammar school attendees (12%) (Source: www.deni.gov.uk/per_cent_fsme_time_series_updated_1415.xlsx; Accessed March 2015). Free school meal entitlement can be seen as a proxy for the socio-economic status of young people and their families. All this is only relevant in so far, as frequency tables of results may over-represent slightly the views and experiences of females and those of grammar school attendees and, thus, indirectly the financially better-off respondents.

Should the data be weighted?

Partially, the non-response bias can be addressed by introducing weight factors. This can be done for variables for which we know the actual proportion people in the target population. Gender and school type attended are such examples. This is much harder where reliable statistics are not available, or where certain issues are very complex, for example disability. We know that people with certain sensory disabilities or with complex needs are more likely to opt out of the survey, however, people with physical disabilities may be over-represented – we cannot be sure. Generally several weight factors would need to be applied to address various variables, and even then non-response bias is a complex issue, which cannot be easily fixed. The academic view is that caution needs to be applied when weighting datasets (see point 5.4. in this document produced by the National Centre for Research Methods: <http://www.restore.ac.uk/PEAS/nonresponse.php>), as the weighting procedure whilst increasing representativeness in some areas can, at the same time, decrease sample accuracy in others. The YLT approach is not to weight data. However, gender, family financial background and school background are routinely used to cross-examine findings, and if differences are found, these are reported, as can be seen below.

Main findings

CRED

In this section we report the experiences of YLT responses in relation to CRED. When possible, the results from the 2012 YLT survey are shown for comparison in the Tables and Figures.

Experience of CRED

The CRED module was repeated exactly, thus - as in 2012 - the questionnaire provided an introduction to the topic for the respondents, using the following text:

‘Education and youth work are supposed to encourage understanding of particular groups in society and promote the equal treatment of different groups. This can be done through exchange programmes, discussions, workshops, lessons or videos.’

When asked if they had ever done any of this, 73 percent compared to 70 percent of respondents in 2012 indicated that they had done so. This shows a very slight increase of young people receiving CRED. The increase is largely due to a higher coverage of CRED topics in school. The coverage in youth projects remained the same as in 2012, however the proportion of young people receiving CRED in both school and youth settings actually decreased a little, as Table 11 shows.

Table 11: Participation in CRED activities

	%	
	2014	2012
School only	46	40
Youth project only	10	10
Both school and youth project	16	20
Neither	27	30

Tables 12 and 13 focus on those receiving CRED in school by school type and by the religious composition of the school they currently or last attended.

Table 12 shows that respondents attending planned integrated schools were more likely to receive CRED than those in grammar or secondary schools, which was also the case in 2012. (Other school types were omitted from this table due to small

numbers attending these). The difference between these two surveys is statistically insignificant.

Table 12: CRED received in school by type of school

	%	
	2014	2012
Planned Integrated	70	68
Grammar	59	61
Secondary	59	57

Table 13 indicates that those in all or nearly all Protestant schools were least likely to receive CRED. The findings show a reversal compared to 2012 with regard to schools with 'mostly Catholic' and 'mostly Protestant' intakes, with pupils in 'mostly Protestant' schools being more likely to receive CRED now than those in 'mostly Catholic' schools. This finding should not be overestimated as some respondents in particular in schools with an intake of pupils from mixed religious backgrounds may simply not know whether their schools have a majority Catholic or Protestant background.

Table 13: CRED activities by religious composition of school last or currently attended

	%	
	2014	2012
All or nearly all Protestant	54	56
All or nearly all Catholic	63	61
Mostly Protestant	61	55
Mostly Catholic	57	66
About half Protestant and half Catholic	64	65
Don't know	39	52

CRED topics

Those who had experienced CRED activities were asked if these activities had covered a range of ten groups, reflecting the Section 75 categories. This was explored separately for school and for youth settings (Table 14).

Table 14 clearly shows two trends. Firstly, as in 2012, schools have covered issues relating to all groups more than youth projects or youth clubs. Secondly, with few exceptions, those who said they had received CRED reported a higher coverage of topics compared to 2012, and this was the case for both school-based and youth project-based CRED. The increase in the level of coverage was not necessarily consistent between schools and youth projects. For example, there was a seven percentage point increase in coverage of relationships (ie whether people are married, cohabiting, single or divorced) in schools, but a two percentage point drop in coverage in youth projects, even though this is statistically insignificant. On the other hand, it appears that different political opinions were more discussed in both schools and youth projects in 2014 compared to 2012. Religious beliefs remains the topic most likely to be discussed both in schools and youth settings.

Table 14: Coverage of CRED groups, by setting

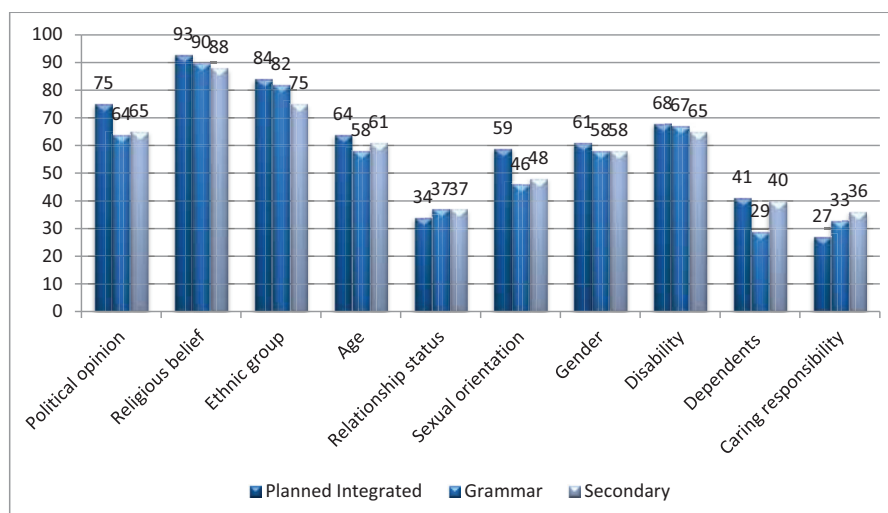
	%			
	Your School		Your youth project or youth club	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
People with different political opinions	65	59	53	48
People with different religious beliefs	88	84	79	70
People from different ethnic groups	79	74	65	58
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	59	53	55	55
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	37	30	28	30
People with different sexual orientations	48	45	41	31
Men and women	58	55	54	46
People with a disability and those without a disability	66	63	54	46
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	35	31	34	26
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	34	34	31	29

Table 15 shows that there was an increase in CRED topics covered both in school and youth work settings. This means that 2014 YLT respondents who received CRED education were more likely than their counterparts in 2012 to have covered a greater variety of topics. This is particularly noticeable in the increase in proportions of respondents saying that all respective ten CRED topics were covered. Almost one in five respondents who received CRED in school (19%) and 13 percent of respondents who received CRED in youth settings said they covered all CRED topics.

Table 15: Number of CRED topics covered, by setting

	%			
	In school		In a youth setting	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
1	7	7	11	6
2	8	9	14	10
3	12	11	8	15
4	10	16	11	17
5	12	11	13	9
6	12	11	6	7
7	7	8	8	7
8	7	7	6	7
9	7	6	12	5
10	19	12	13	7

In line with the Tables above, Figure 1 shows that most subjects were most likely to be discussed in planned integrated schools. The difference in coverage compared to grammar and secondary schools was greatest with regard to the topics of political opinion and sexual orientation. Religious beliefs, ethnic belonging and political opinions were also more likely to be covered by CRED programmes in schools with an exclusively or predominantly Protestant intake, whereas issues such as caring and dependencies were more likely to be discussed in schools with an all or predominantly Catholic intake.

Figure 1: Coverage of CRED topics, by type of school (%)

Changing attitudes among participants

In this section we report respondents' perceptions with regard to changing attitudes as a result of the CRED education received – both at group level and at a individual level. Again, we make comparisons with the 2012 data when and where this is appropriate. As in the previous report (Devine, 2013), figures are only presented for those respondents who identified that particular group for which they received CRED education¹.

Group level

Respondents were asked if they thought that members of their class or youth project or youth club felt more positive towards any of the groups as a result of what was taught or discussed in CRED.

Table 16 illustrates that at least seven in ten - in some topics almost nine in ten - respondents who had received CRED education felt that this had had positive effects on the feelings among those receiving the respective education. Similar to the previous survey this applied again to both school and youth settings. The Table also shows that the changes compared to the YLT survey two years ago were generally

¹ For example, if someone said s/he did not receive CRED on the topic of 'people with different political opinions', this respondent's answer is automatically excluded and set as 'skip' or 'missing' when asked whether s/he felt that his or her views are now more positive towards people with different political opinions as a result of CRED, although, arguably, CRED on another topic, for example on 'people with different religious views' could have a more general positive effect, including an effect on the views on political opinions.

only marginal, with some notable exceptions. For example, there was a six percentage point increase in school settings and a seven percentage point increase in youth settings among those who said that CRED with a focus on different religious beliefs resulted in more positive attitudes among participants. Compared to two years ago, there was also a five percentage point increase amongst those who said participants had more positive feelings towards people with different sexual orientations after CRED on this topic in school settings. On the other hand, there was a six percentage point drop in perceived positive feelings among those who had received CRED in youth settings covering the topic of people with and without dependents.

Table 16: More positive attitudes of participants about CRED groups, by setting and year.

	%			
	Your School		Your youth project or youth club	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
People with different political opinions	72	74	81	81
People with different religious beliefs	84	78	85	78
People from different ethnic groups	81	78	80	78
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	71	69	73	77
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	73	71	75	74
People with different sexual orientations	76	71	82	81
Men and women	74	72	74	75
People with a disability and those without a disability	80	80	82	82
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	75	75	77	83
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	74	67	78	77

Table 17 shows how many groups respondents thought their classmates or other attendants in youth projects felt more positive about following CRED. This is again

presented in a way that it makes comparisons with the 2012 YLT survey easy. The Table shows a seven percent decrease in the proportion of respondents who felt that CRED in youth settings had no impact on more positive views towards any of the groups covered in CRED. The results for CRED in school settings were almost identical to 2012, however, there was a five percent increase in respondents saying that CRED in school had a positive impact on their classmates' views about *all* ten groups covered in CRED. Overall, Table 17 suggests the closing of the effectiveness gap between CRED in school settings and CRED in youth settings compared to two years ago, although school remains the venue which appears to retain the greater positive effects so far.

Table 17: Number of groups respondents thought their classmates or other attendants at youth projects felt more positive about after CRED, by setting and year

	%			
	CRED in school		CRED in youth settings	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
0	14	14	17	24
1	9	10	13	9
2	10	13	11	12
3	13	15	13	13
4	12	12	10	11
5	9	9	8	6
6	6	6	5	6
7	6	7	2	5
8	4	3	4	6
9	6	5	8	4
10	12	7	9	5

Individual level

Table 18 shows the proportion of respondents who felt they personally had more positive views towards any of the groups as a result of what was taught or discussed during CRED activities. The same principle applied as in Table 16, namely, anyone who had either indicated that s/he had not received CRED at all, or had not received CRED on the specific topic in the respective school or youth setting, was excluded in

the analysis of whether or not they held more positive views now. This means, again, that only the very direct effect of CRED education is covered in Table 18 and any possible indirect and cross-cutting positive effects are excluded.

For each of the ten groups, at least seven in ten respondents felt that their attitudes were more positive as a result of the CRED activities in school, and at least two thirds of respondents felt this after CRED in youth settings. Most changes compared to the YLT data from the 2012 survey were again only marginal, with CRED in school settings generally seeing more positive changes. There was an eight percent increase in more positive feelings as a result of CRED in school settings on gender and a six percent increase with regard to positive attitudes towards people of different ages. Around one in ten respondents said that their views had not changed on any of these issues as a result of CRED.

Table 18: More positive attitudes of respondent about CRED groups, by setting and survey year

	%			
	Your School		Your youth project or youth club	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
People with different political opinions	78	77	76	75
People with different religious beliefs	88	83	81	83
People from different ethnic groups	86	82	77	82
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	77	71	73	74
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	80	75	80	74
People with different sexual orientations	79	77	82	80
Men and women	79	71	76	78
People with a disability and those without a disability	84	80	84	81
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	80	79	78	79
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	75	73	67	72

Keeping in mind the overwhelmingly positive response to CRED, if anything, there was slight decrease in positive attitudes as a result of CRED activities in youth settings compared to two years ago. However, statistically this decrease is insignificant. Notable is perhaps the five percentage point lower proportion of respondents, compared to two years ago, who received CRED in youth settings and who said they felt more positive as a result of talking about people from different ethnic groups and people with and without caring responsibility. This can be interpreted in different ways. One possible hypothesis is that CRED in youth settings has become slightly less effective with regard to attitude change. However, it is also possible that an increasing proportion of young people in youth settings already hold more positive views towards people from various other ethnic backgrounds so that CRED does not as such lead to even *more* positive views.

To support the latter hypothesis, we can refer to other YLT data. Attitudes towards minority ethnic groups have been recorded by YLT since 2004. Whilst the proportion of respondents expressing negative attitudes decreased slowly from seven percent in 2004 to three percent in 2014, the proportion of YLT respondents who expressed positive views towards minority ethnic groups increased from 39 percent in 2004 to 48 percent in 2014. This could be an effect of CRED and similar education activities, but it could also be a result of the changed demographic landscape and a higher degree of mixing, as is also evident from the YLT survey. In 2008 13 percent of respondents said they mixed and socialised very often with people from a different ethnic background. In 2014 this figure was 20 percent.

Figure 2: More positive attitudes of participants about CRED groups, by type of school (%)

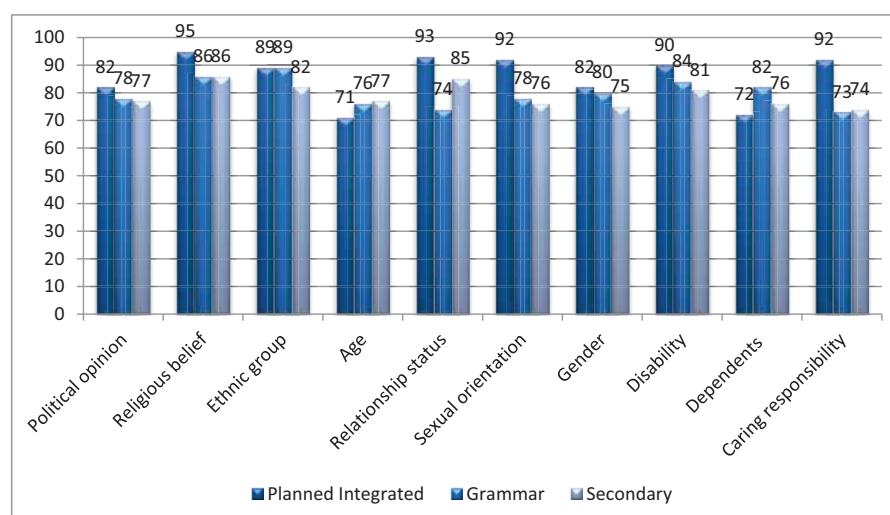


Figure 2 shows the extent to which respondents attending different school types said their own views had become more positive as a result of CRED education in their schools. In general, the perceived level of changing attitudes was similar in all school types although those attending planned integrated schools were slightly more likely to report positive attitude changes in relation to most topics. The differences between schools were largest on the topics of sexual orientation, caring responsibility and relationship status.

Table 19 shows the number of CRED groups that respondents felt *personally* more positive about. Again, the changes compared to two years ago are very modest. The most notable change is the decrease in the proportion of respondents who received in CRED in youth settings and said they did not feel more positive towards any of the groups discussed (24% in 2012 compared to just 18% in 2014). At the other end of the scale, 12 percent in 2014 compared to just seven percent in 2012 of those who took part in CRED in school said they felt more positive towards all ten groups covered by CRED.

Table 19: Number of groups respondents felt personally more positive about after CRED by setting and year

	%			
	CRED in school		CRED in youth settings	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
0	12	14	18	24
1	9	9	15	9
2	10	11	12	11
3	11	14	11	14
4	10	14	10	10
5	9	9	7	7
6	8	7	2	7
7	5	6	4	5
8	6	5	5	6
9	7	5	9	4
10	12	8	7	4

Discussion

This suite of questions discussed in this section provides an insight into the experiences of 16-year olds to Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) activities, and their perception of its effectiveness. It is interesting to compare the results of the 2014 YLT survey with those the baseline data collected by the 2102 YLT survey.

There was a very small increase of 16-year olds taking part in CRED activities compared to 2012 (73% and 70% respectively). This increase was entirely due to a higher proportion of young people receiving CRED in schools (46% compared to 40% in 2012). This means that 62 percent of 16-year olds have received CRED in school settings

The most likely topics covered both in school and youth settings remain ethnicity and religious beliefs, with disability and political opinions being the next most likely topics covered. Thus, our data suggest that even 20 years after the first Northern Ireland ceasefire, 16-year olds in Northern Ireland are still more than twice as likely - both in school and youth settings - to discuss religious and political division than to debate caring responsibility or family dependencies, which emphasises the currency that Northern Ireland conflict-related topics retain.

However, there is very little difference in the perceived effectiveness of CRED on any of the covered topics – Northern Ireland Conflict-related or not - with at least seven in ten respondents saying that discussions led generally to more positive views both among their classmates in school and friends in youth settings, as well as for them personally. This confirms the findings from two years ago that the perceived effectiveness of the CRED programme among 16-year olds is high for both youth and school settings.

The data suggest that planned integrated schools appear to have a slightly higher coverage of CRED topics and also boast a modestly higher effectiveness rate in CRED compared to secondary and grammar schools. Perhaps one of the explanations could be that planned integrated schools are *per se* organised in a way that they have a more diverse pupil population both academically and with regard to the ethnic and religious background of their pupil population, whilst due to the nature of pupil selection grammar schools - and as a consequence many secondary schools tend to have more homogeneous pupil cohorts. Addressing community relations, diversity and equality may be a more 'natural' and prudent activity in more diverse schools.

As pointed out in our previous report (Devine, 2013) and reiterated above, the CRED survey questions are asked in a way that they capture *change* in attitudes. The question module does not capture opinions and attitudes more generally. As Devine (2013) stated in the concluding comments to her report: *'Respondents may perceive that they had very positive feelings to start with, and this did not change.'*

Alternatively, they have may have very negative feelings, and this did not change.'

We currently do not record responses like that. Above we made an attempt to relate the CRED findings to other findings, to potentially address this. We showed that an apparently lower effectiveness of youth setting-based CRED addressing ethnic belonging may well be related to an improving attitude and greater degree of contact overall with people from minority ethnic groups.

We also do not capture or report on 'collateral effects' of CRED, for example more positive attitudes towards people with different political opinions as a result of CRED on religious views. This would be quite a reasonable effect to expect in the Northern Ireland context. Nor do we currently provide an opportunity for respondents to say that their views have become more *negative* as a result of CRED, even though this the current evidence would suggest that this would be an unlikely scenario. The proportion of respondents saying that CRED had no impact on their views was about ten percent as reported above, but 'no effect' is not the same as a 'negative effect'. At the moment, there is very little evidence for a negative effect of CRED, quite the opposite – the evidence for the positive effect that CRED has in both youth and school settings is overwhelming. However, a more complex review of CRED in a few years' time could include a more in-depth and qualitative assessment of CRED or alternatively an extended CRED survey module which would allow respondents to share more detailed experiences – both negative and positive.

References

Devine, P. (2013) *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED): Findings from the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey*. Belfast: ARK.
[Available online at: <http://www.ark.ac.uk/publications/occasional/CREDYLT12.pdf>]

Appendices

- YLT CRED survey questions

CRED SURVEY QUESTIONS

22. Education and youth work are supposed to encourage understanding of particular groups in society and promote the equal treatment of different groups. This can be done through exchange programmes, discussions, workshops, lessons or videos. Have you ever done any of this...?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply)

✓

... in your school

☐ 1

... in a youth project or youth club

☐ 1

... Neither

☐ 1

(Please go to question 26)

23. And do you think that your school or your youth project or youth club has done this for the following groups?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply in **EACH** column)

✓

	Your School	Your youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
I have never attended a youth project		<input type="checkbox"/> 1

24. Looking at the same list again, do you think that members of your class or your youth project or youth club felt more positive towards any of these groups as a result of what was taught or discussed?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply in **EACH** column)

✓

	Yes, in my School	Yes, in my youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People did not feel more positive towards any these groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

25. And how about you personally? Did you feel more positive towards any of these groups as a result of what was taught or discussed in school or in your youth project or youth club?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply in **EACH** column) ✓

	In my School	In my youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
I did not feel more positive towards any these groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

20150602 DE- Comm Inquiry into Shared Education and Integrated Education

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX



Tel No: (028) 9127 9746
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/2132

2 June 2015

Dear Peter

INQUIRY INTO SHARED AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION

Thank you for your letter of 15 May 2015 seeking further clarification and information following DE officials briefing to the Committee on 13 May, as part of the Committee's Inquiry into Shared and integrated education. I will respond to your requests in the order of your letter.

Levels of Progression

The aims of the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project are to improve educational, including reconciliation, outcomes through schools working collaboratively on a cross-community basis. Key Stage data is the only consistent means of reporting attainment against the cross-curricular skills as defined in our curriculum. Key Stage data is, therefore, necessary in order to evaluate the success of the programme at school and system level. Consequently, schools will be required to comply with the statutory assessment process, as a condition of funding.

Equality of Identity

The use of the phrase 'Equality of Identity' within the Shared Education policy refers to equality in respect of the set of characteristics that somebody recognises as belonging uniquely to himself or herself and constituting his or her individual personality for life.

Religious Balance Pupils and Boards of Governors

Existing schools wishing to transform to integrated status must demonstrate reasonable prospects of achieving, over the longer term, a minimum of 30% of their enrolment drawn from the relevant minority tradition. No pre-existing level of integration is

necessary, but to ensure that transformation is well grounded from the outset, schools must attract at least 10% of their first year intake from whichever is the minority community within the school before final approval is granted.

A new grant-maintained integrated school should aim to attract 30% of its pupils from the minority community in the area where the school is situated.

I enclose, therefore, at **Appendix A** details relating to non-integrated schools that have a minimum of 10% of pupil enrolment from the minority community at the school. I also enclose at **Appendix B** details of relating to current integrated schools that have less than 10% of pupil enrolment from the minority community at the school.

The Department does hold information relating to the overall religious background of the Boards of Governors of individual schools.

Information is requested on the community background of the governors the Department appoints to voluntary grammar and grant maintained integrated schools, although appointees are not obliged to provide this. However, this represents a maximum of one third or two ninths of the governors of a voluntary grammar school and a maximum of one quarter of the governors of a grant maintained integrated school. It does not, therefore, provide an indication of the overall religious balance of a school's Board of Governors.

Shared Education Consultation Events

Four public consultation events were held on the Shared Education Policy and Bill during February 2015, including an event for young people. In total, approximately 63 people attended these events.

Special Schools

Under Articles 68 and 90 of the 1989 Order, Special Schools (and schools established in hospitals) are not eligible to obtain grant maintained and controlled integrated status.

The current intake criteria to Special Schools are based on the special educational needs of each individual child. Integrated schools can include community background as an intake criterion in order to have a reasonable mix of children from each community background. If applied in a Special School, this could mean that children could be admitted, or not, based on their religion rather than to a school that was the most appropriate place for their educational needs to be met.

The prohibition within the legislation recognises the complex needs of children within the special education sector. Special Schools provide a pupil-centred service to a religious mix of children. That approach places children and their individual needs, regardless of their community background, ahead of the needs of institutions.

Early Years and Youth Shared Education Continuum

I enclose a copy of "Developing Shared Education in Early Years Settings: A Framework for Collaborative Partnerships", the continuum developed by ETI specifically

for the early years sector. The continuum model for the Youth Sector is not yet finalised. I will provide a copy when available.

Yours sincerely

Russell

RUSSELL WELSH
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Appendix A

Figures relating to all non-integrated schools with a minimum of 10% pupil enrolment from the minority community in 2014/15

Category	Total Number of Schools
<i>Primary</i>	
All Non-integrated Primary Schools	794
Non-integrated Primary Schools with a minimum of 10% pupil enrolment from minority community	46
<i>Post-Primary</i>	
Non-integrated Post-Primary Schools	188
Non-integrated Primary Schools with a minimum of 10% pupil enrolment from minority community.	19

Source: NI school census

Primary School figures includes pupils in nursery, reception and Years 1 – 7 where applicable.

Appendix B**Figures relating to all Integrated schools with less than 10% of pupil enrolment from the minority community at the school**

Category	Total Number of Schools
<i>Primary</i>	
All Integrated Primary Schools	42
Integrated Primary Schools with less than 10% pupil enrolment from minority community	2
<i>Post-Primary</i>	
All Integrated Post-Primary Schools	20
Integrated Post Primary Schools with less than 10% pupil enrolment from minority community	1

Source: NI school census

Primary School figures includes pupils in nursery, reception and Years 1 – 7 where applicable.

20150623 – DE - Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education: Equality of Identity

Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Education
Room 375a
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX



Tel No: (028) 9127 9849
Fax No: (028) 9127 9100

Email: russell.welsh@deni.gov.uk

Your ref: PMcC/KM/2184

23 June 2015

Dear Peter

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education: Equality of Identity

The Shared Education Bill sets out the legislative definition of Shared Education. This references the minimum essential requirements for shared education - that is the education together of those of different religious belief and those experiencing socio-economic deprivation.

The legislative definition is underpinned by the policy description which describes the practical implementation of shared education. The policy description aims to ensure delivery is as inclusive as possible and lists a number of descriptors to ensure this aim, including 'equality of identity'.

In using this term, the Department recognises that individuals have a set of differing characteristics that they regard as their identity – those which make them unique and distinctive. These can include characteristics as diverse as gender, race, marital

status, cultural, disability, national or social origin, association with a minority, sexual orientation, belief, and language.

Inclusion of this phrase recognises that individuals can face discrimination due to their perceived identity. It is included in the policy description to ensure application of the policy is as inclusive as possible and recognises these differing aspects of identity.

Identity is a specific characteristic recognised in the UNCRC. In their General Comments on Article 29 on the goals of education (CRC/GC/2001/1), the UN sets out that the aims of education are the holistic development of the full potential of the child, including an enhanced sense of identity (paragraph 1 of the General Comments). The Convention argues the need for a balanced approach to education and one which succeeds in reconciling diverse values through dialogue and respect for difference.

The Convention's General Comments on Article 29, makes explicit reference to the "*indispensible interconnected nature of the Convention's provisions*", including the link to Article 2 which requires state parties to respect and ensure the rights set forth in the Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind. In using the term 'equality of identity' the Department is reflecting the broad aims of the UNCRC.

The UN Commission for Human Rights also uses the term 'identity' when referring to the discrimination, for example in relation to sexual orientation and gender. Additionally 'identity characteristics' is a term which has been used by the European Court of Human Rights.

The British Irish Council used the term 'identity' in their commitment to the mutual respect, civil rights and the religious liberties of everyone in the community, specifically "*.. the principles of mutual respect for the identity and ethos of both communities and parity of esteem*" in the north of Ireland."

(www.britishirishcouncil.org/agreement-reached-multi-party-negotiations/rights-safeguards-and-equality-opportunity)

The Equality and Human Right Commission, which covers England, Scotland and Wales also recognises the term. Their triennial review, 'How fair is Britain?' focused attention on the need to tackle the "*high incidence of identity-based bullying of young people, both within schools and the wider community*". Their report states that ***'Identity-based' (or 'prejudice-based') bullying is widespread and continues to blight the lives of many young people, affecting educational attainment and having a long term impact on their life chances.'*** Their report identified the **common** cause as children's, and sometimes teachers' poor understanding of diversity.

In the public consultation, there were no responses relating to the use of the phrase, 'equality of identity'.

Consequently, the Department is of the view that inclusion of the term "equality of identity" within the practical description of Shared Education as set out in the Sharing Works policy is entirely reasonable in ensuring the inclusive nature of the policy.

Yours sincerely

RUSSELL WELSH

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 5

List of Witnesses

List of Witnesses

Date	Name	Organisation
18 June 2014	Adrian Johnston	IFI
	Colin Knox	University of Ulster
	John Hunter	ETI
	Lauri McCusker	Fermanagh Trust
	Catherine Ward	Fermanagh Trust
2 July 2014	Faustina Graham	Department of Education
	Andrew Bell	Department of Education
	Eve Stewart	Department of Education
15 October 2014	Barbara Ward	Cross and Passion College
	Ian Williamson	Ballycastle High School
	Colin Knox	University of Ulster
	Vani Borooh	University of Ulster
5 November 2014	Patricia Lewsley-Mooney	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
	Alison Montgomery	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
	Clare-Anne Magee	Parenting NI
	Nicola McKeown	Parenting NI
19 November 2014	Noreen Campbell	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
	Helen McLaughlin	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
	Frances Donnelly	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
26 November 2014	Roger Austin,	University of Ulster
	Antoin Moran	Ballyhack Primary School
	Alison McConnell	Carr's Glen Primary School
	Joanne Hughes,	Queens University
	Tony Gallagher	Queens University
	Gavin Duffy	Queens University
	Miles Hewstone	University of Oxford
10 December 2014	Scott Naismith	Methodist College
	Neill Jackson	Methodist College
	Janet Unsworth	Methodist College
	Michael Humphreys	Methodist College
	Desmond Rea	Methodist College

Date	Name	Organisation
14 January 2015	Jacqui Durkin	Department of Education
	Roisin Lilley	Department of Education
21 January 2015	Faustina Graham	Department of Education
	Andrew Bell	Department of Education
	Suzanne Kingon	Department of Education
	John Hunter	Department of Education
4 February 2015	Peter Osborne	Community Relations Council
	Dympna McGlade	Community Relations Council
	Michael Wardlow	Equality Commission NI
	Darren McKinstry	Equality Commission NI
	Tina Merron	Integrated Education Fund
	Sam Fitzsimmons	Integrated Education Fund
	Brandon Hamber	University of Ulster
	Alan Smith	University of Ulster
11 February 2015	Paul Lawther	Belfast Education and Library Board
	Ray Gilbert	North Eastern Education and Library Board
	John Unsworth	Southern Education and Library Board
	June Neill	Western Education and Library Board
	Nicky McBride	South Eastern Education and Library Board
	Dr Peter Cunningham	Ceara Special School
	Colum Davis	Tor Bank Special School
18 February 2015	Reverend Trevor Gribben	Transferors' Representative Council
	Reverend Donald Ker	Transferors' Representative Council
	Reverend Ian Ellis	Transferors' Representative Council
25 February 2015	Eamon McClean	Speedwell Trust
	Eric Reaney	Speedwell Trust
	Libby Robinson	Edwards Primary School, Castlederg
	Brian McGurk	St Patrick's Primary School, Castlederg
	Nigel Frith	Drumragh Integrated College
	Caen Fahy	Drumragh Integrated College
	Cara Monaghan	Drumragh Integrated College
	Zara Hemphill	Drumragh Integrated College
3 March 2015	Teresa Graham,	NASUWT
	Justin McCamphill	NASUWT
	Diane Nugent	UTU
	Gillian Dunlop	UTU

Date	Name	Organisation
4 March 2015	Siobhán Fitzpatrick	Early Years Organisation
	Pauline Walmsley	Early Years Organsiation
	David Guilfoyle	Youth Council Northern Ireland
	Joanne Stainsby	Youth Council Northern Ireland
	Norma Rea	Youth Council Northern Ireland
11 March 2015	Robert Salisbury	Educationalist
18 March 2015	Jim Clarke	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
	Malachy Crudden	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
	Father Tim Bartlett	Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education
	Hazel Gardiner	Brookeborough Primary School
	Dermot Finlay	St Mary's Primary School, Brookeborough
	Mary Hampsey	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
	Iris Barker	Western Education and Library Board
29 April 2015	Faustina Graham	Department of Education
	Andrew Bell	Department of Education
	Suzanne Kingon	Department of Education
	Paul McAlister	Education and Training Inspectorate
13 May 2015	Faustina Graham	Department of Education
	Andrew Bell	Department of Education
	Suzanne Kingon	Department of Education



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 7

Research Papers

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- 20150129 Young people's views on sharing and integration in education
- 20141010 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry Focus Groups



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Research Paper

Paper 000/00

29th January 2015

NIAR 887-14

Caroline Perry and Barbara Love

Young people's views on sharing and integration in education

This research paper presents the findings of a series of focus groups and two surveys conducted with children and young people, exploring their views on shared and integrated education

Research and Information Service briefings are compiled for the benefit of MLAs and their support staff. Authors are available to discuss the contents of these papers with Members and their staff but cannot advise members of the general public. We do, however, welcome written evidence that relates to our papers and this should be sent to the Research and Information Service, Northern Ireland Assembly, Room 139, Parliament Buildings, Belfast BT4 3XX or e-mailed to RLS@niassembly.gov.uk

Key Points

- This paper considers the views of children and young people gathered through focus groups and through additional analysis of existing survey data;
- More primary pupils have participated in shared education (88% compared to 55% at post-primary);
- A majority of respondents to the survey thought that shared education was a 'good idea', with greater support evident at post-primary;
- Catholic students were more likely to state that shared education was a good idea and less likely to say that they had not enjoyed the projects they had participated in than their Protestant counterparts;
- Students tended to be less willing to share projects with schools of a different management type;
- A number of students questioned the value of shared education and suggested that it could emphasise differences;
- Potential advantages highlighted by young people included increased educational opportunities, making new friends and greater tolerance;
- Perceived disadvantages included having to mix with people perceived as being very different to them or disruptive, challenges around integrating during shared education and having to travel to another school;
- There was support for integrated education among most participants in the focus groups, although some stated that they preferred to attend school alongside others of a similar background;
- This paper has highlighted a number of areas that could be given further consideration, including:
 - The reasons why more primary pupils have participated in shared education;
 - The different levels of support for and enjoyment of shared education between Protestants and Catholics;
 - The reluctance of some students to take part in shared education with schools of a different management type;
 - The perception of some participants that shared education may accentuate differences between pupils;
 - The extent to which pupils from different schools integrate when they take part in shared education.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Committee for Education is carrying out an inquiry into shared and integrated education. This research paper explores the views of children and young people gathered through a series of focus groups and an analysis of the 2012 Kids' Life and Times and Young Life and Times survey data.

Experience of shared education

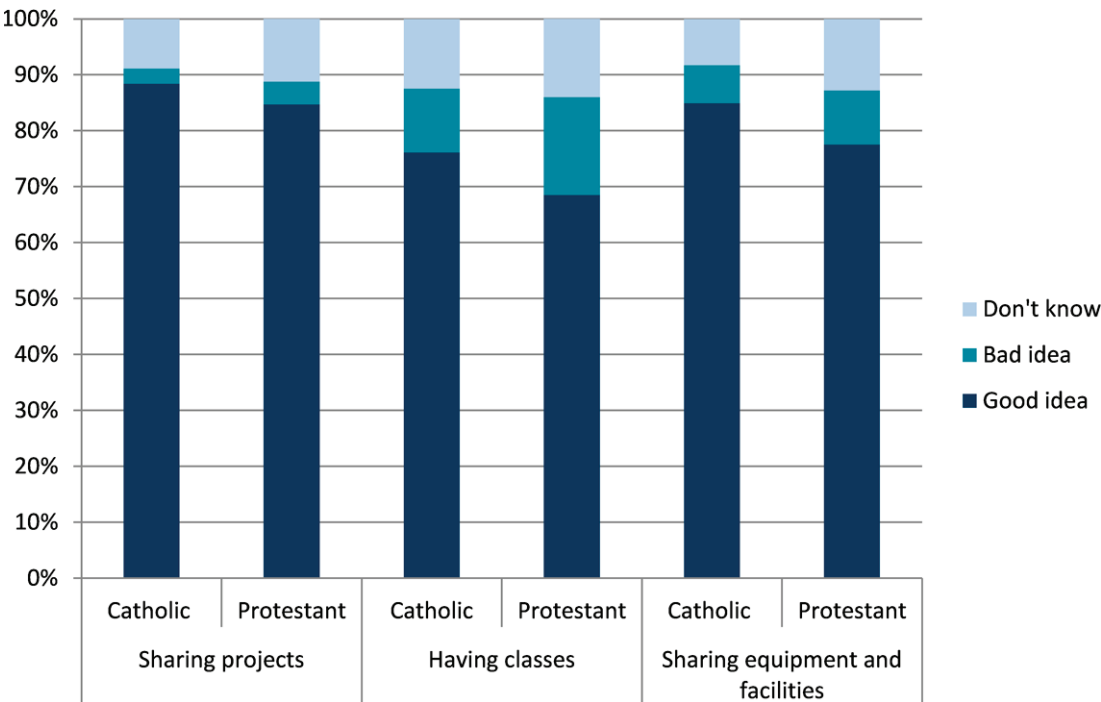
Data from the surveys shows that more primary school pupils have participated in shared education - 88% of primary survey respondents had shared projects with pupils from other schools, compared to 55% at post-primary. Most of those who had participated stated that they enjoyed it 'sometimes' or 'mostly'.

Views on shared education

A majority of survey respondents thought that sharing classes with children from other schools was a 'good idea', with greater support at post-primary (72% compared to 59% at primary). There was more support for sharing projects than classes with other pupils.

With regard to religious background, Catholics were more likely to believe that sharing in education was a good idea, and less likely to note that they did not enjoy the shared education projects they had participated in (4% compared to 13% of Protestants).

Figure 1: Do you think that the following activities are a good idea?



The evidence also suggests that students tend to be less willing to share projects with schools of a different management type. For example, while 98% of grammar respondents would be happy to share projects with another grammar, a lower proportion stated that they would not mind sharing with a non-grammar (85%) or special school (74%). Students from integrated schools were the most willing to share with schools of a different management type.

A majority of participants in the focus groups were in favour of shared education, although some were reluctant to share with schools of a different religious denomination. A number

of students questioned the value of shared education, suggesting that it could actually emphasise differences between people of different backgrounds.

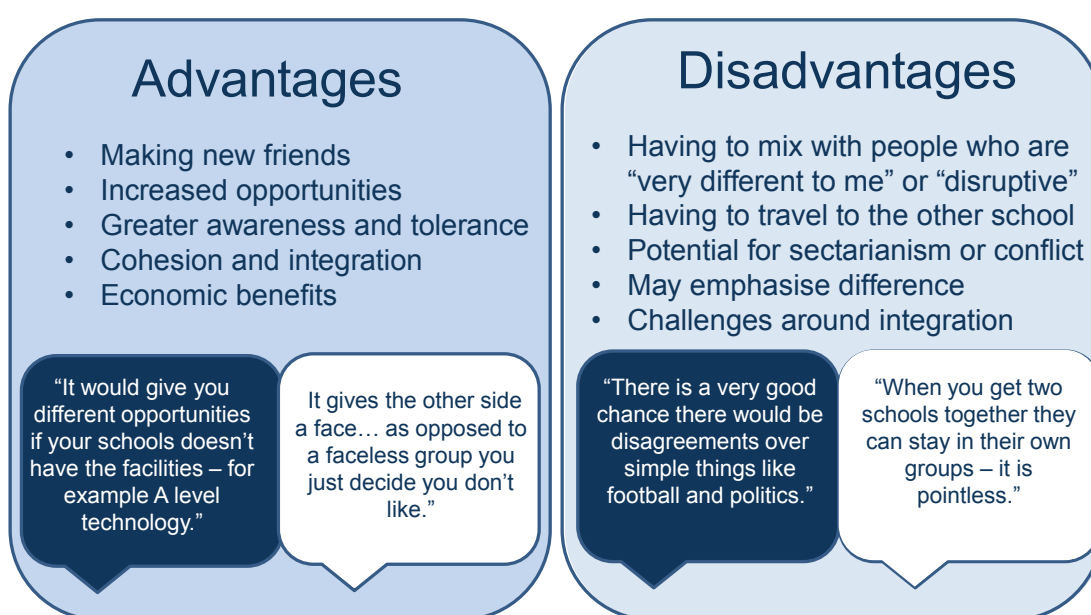
“Shared education is getting Protestants and Catholics, putting them on the same campus and that is it. It is almost promoting their differences.”

(Focus group participant)

Advantages and disadvantages of shared education

Participants in the focus groups and survey respondents highlighted a range of potential benefits and disadvantages that could arise from sharing with other schools; these are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Perceived advantages and disadvantages of shared education



With regard to the perceived benefits, post-primary survey respondents were more likely to highlight making new friends and doing different classes as a benefit; while a higher proportion of primary pupils thought that doing interesting projects would be an advantage.

In terms of disadvantages, Protestant respondents were more likely to be concerned about mixing with children of a different religion (8% compared to 4% of Catholic respondents).

There were also differences by school management type, with just under a quarter (23%) of non-grammar respondents stating that mixing with people very different to themselves would be a disadvantage, compared to 16% of grammar students and 10% of respondents from integrated schools.

Integrated education

A majority of participants in the focus groups supported integrated education. However, some students stated that they would prefer to attend a school alongside others from a similar background, and highlighted the importance of school choice. Students from Irish-medium and integrated education were also supportive of the integrated model. The perceived advantages include:

- Greater cohesion and integration;
- More inclusive for pupils from a range of backgrounds;

- Greater choice.

"No one is rejected; they are accepted for who they are."

"People need to be specific to one community, or they don't know who they are."

Conclusion

This paper has highlighted a number of areas that could be given further consideration, including:

- The reasons why more primary pupils have participated in shared education;
- The different levels of support for and enjoyment of shared education between Protestants and Catholics;
- The reluctance of some students to take part in shared education with schools of a different management type;
- The perception of some participants that shared education may accentuate differences between pupils;
- The extent to which pupils from different schools integrate when they take part in shared education.

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Key Points

Executive Summary

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- 1 Introduction
- 2 Methodology
- 3 Experience of shared education
- 4 Views on shared education
- 5 Advantages of shared education
- 6 Disadvantages of shared education
- 7 Views on integrated education
- 8 Conclusion

1 Introduction

The Committee for Education is currently undertaking an inquiry into shared and integrated education. In order to consider the views of children and young people, this research paper highlights the findings of a series of focus groups conducted with children and young people. It includes a data analysis conducted by the Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service (RalSe) of the 2012 Kids' Life and Times Survey¹ and Young Life and Times Survey.²

2 Methodology

A series of ten focus groups was held with primary, post-primary and special schools, comprising controlled, Catholic maintained, integrated, Irish-medium and voluntary grammar schools. The Assembly's Education Officers facilitated the groups.

The Kids' Life and Times Survey is an annual online survey of Primary 7 (P7) children carried out in school. In 2012, a total of 4,200 P7 children participated in the survey, mostly aged between 10 and 11 years old. The Young Life and Times Survey is an annual postal survey of 16 year olds; 1,210 young people participated in 2012. These surveys included modules on shared education.

The datasets were downloaded from the ARK (Access Research Knowledge) website, a resource aimed at making social and political information on Northern Ireland available to a wide audience, and analysed by RalSe using SPSS. This allowed for further analysis of the Young Life and Times Survey by school type and pupils' religious background. Questions on school management type or religion were not asked in the Kids' Life and Times Survey.³

3 Experience of shared education

Data from the Kids' Life and Times and the Young Life and Times Survey shows that more pupils from primary schools have participated in shared education than their counterparts at post-primary.

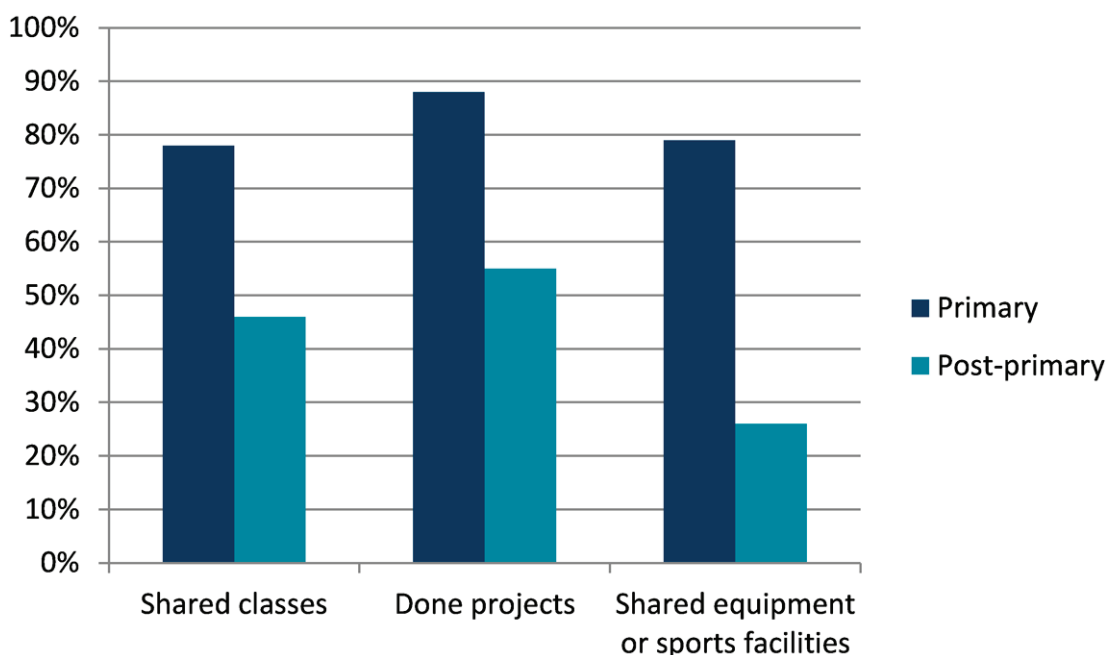
Under three quarters (71%) of post-primary and 61% of primary respondents reported that some of the pupils they participated in shared education had a different religious background.

1 ARK Kids' Life and Times [online] Available at: <http://www.ark.ac.uk/klt/>

2 ARK Young Life and Times Survey [online] Available at: <http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/>

3 Please note, cells containing three or less respondents have been suppressed (*).

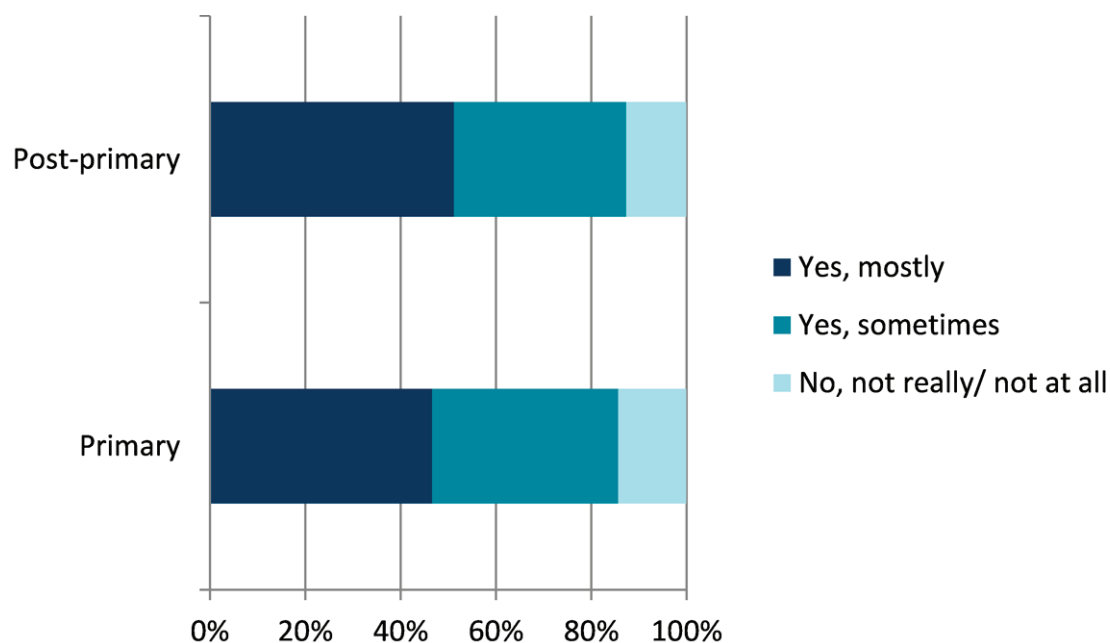
Figure 3: Have you ever participated in the following activities with children from other schools? By school phase



Pupils from non-grammar post-primaries were least likely to have participated in shared education (20% stated that they had not), followed by pupils from grammar schools (18%). Students from integrated schools were most likely to have participated in shared education, with 11% stating that they had not previously done so.

The surveys indicate that most children and young people who participated in shared education enjoyed the experience either 'sometimes' or 'mostly'. For example, 88% of primary respondents and 91% of post-primary respondents enjoyed doing projects with other children.

Figure 4: Did you enjoy having classes with the other children? By school phase



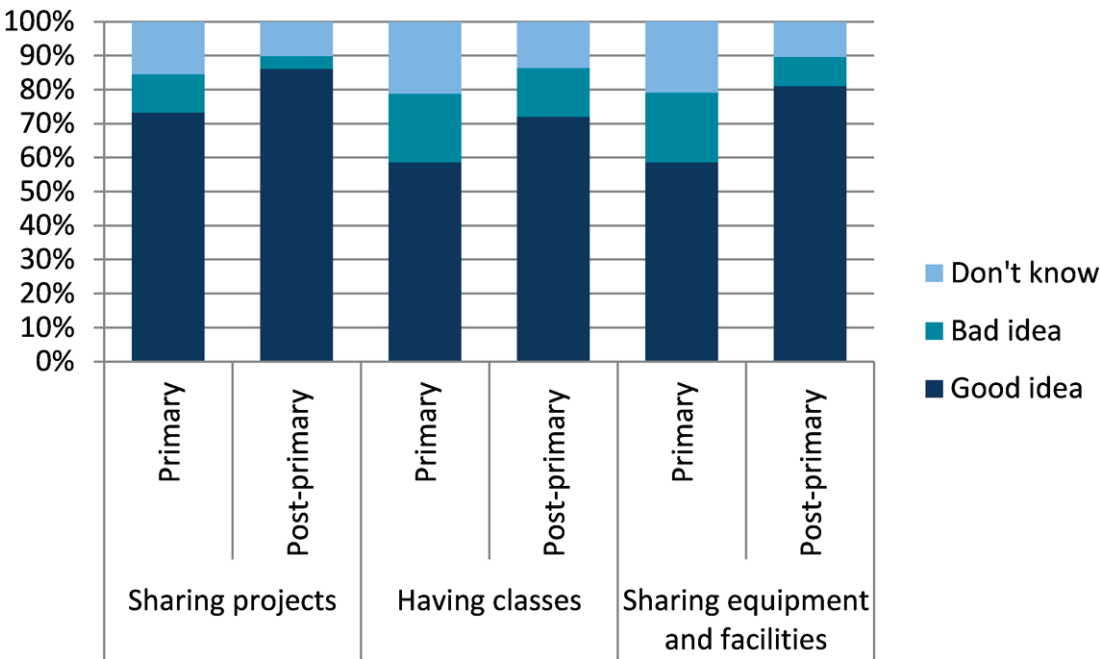
However, there were marked differences by religious background, with 13% of Protestant respondents stating that they did not enjoy the shared education projects they participated in, compared to 4% of their Catholic counterparts.

4 Views on shared education

The survey evidence suggests that a majority of young people believe that sharing classes with children from other schools was a ‘good idea’. There was generally more support at post-primary, with 72% of respondents believing that sharing classes is a good idea compared to 59% of primary pupils. There was also greater support for sharing projects compared to having classes or sharing equipment.

In the survey pupils from integrated schools were more likely to feel that sharing projects, classes and equipment with other schools was a good idea - 88% stated that sharing classes was a good idea, compared to 70% of grammar and 73% of non-grammar respondents.

Figure 5: Do you think that the following shared education activities are a good idea? By school phase



In the focus groups the majority of primary school pupils supported shared education and stated that they would be willing to take part in classes with pupils from schools of a different religion. Pupils from an integrated primary highlighted a preference for fully integrated education rather than shared education.

“I think it [shared education] would be good, because we learn from a young age that we are all the same and we shouldn’t fight with them.”

(Primary participant)

At post-primary many students were very supportive of the concept, highlighting benefits such as increased access to resources and integrating with people from a different background.

“It gives you the opportunity to make more friends. You would meet more people and meet people of different religious beliefs; it would give you a flavour of different religions.”

(Post-primary participant)

However, some post-primary students were reluctant to share classes or resources with students from other schools. They highlighted concerns around logistical and financial issues, as well as concerns around mixing with pupils from other schools, the potential for sectarianism and having to share resources with others.

"It could be complicated, like if someone walked in in a Rangers top and one in a Celtic top and that starts something."

(Post-primary participant)

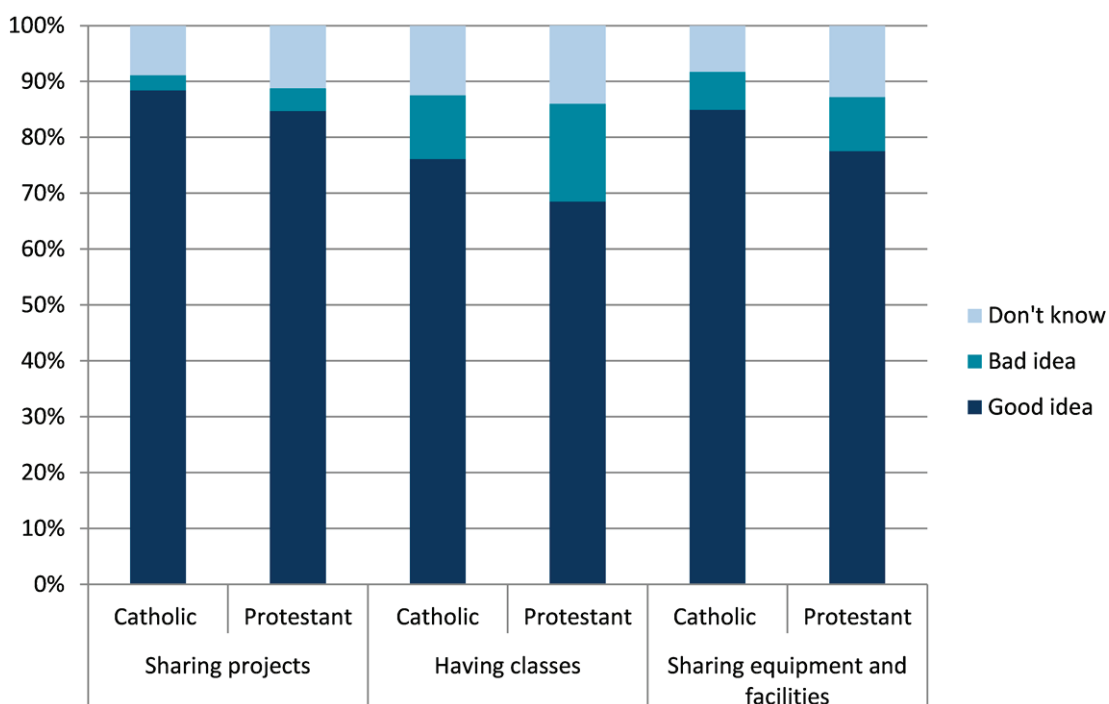
"There are already issues with facilities – if another school comes in it would cause more problems." (Post-primary participant) "It could be complicated, like if someone walked in in a Rangers top and one in a Celtic top and that starts something."

(Post-primary participant)

Some focus group participants agreed in principle to the idea of shared education, but voiced fears around having to study particular subjects, for example Irish, or play particular sports.

With regard to religious background, Catholic survey respondents were more likely to state that shared education with pupils of a different religion was a good idea. When asked whether they would mind doing a project with children of a different religious background, 83% of Catholic students stated that they "would not mind at all", compared to 79% of Protestant respondents.

Figure 6: Do you think that the following shared education activities are a good idea? By religious background

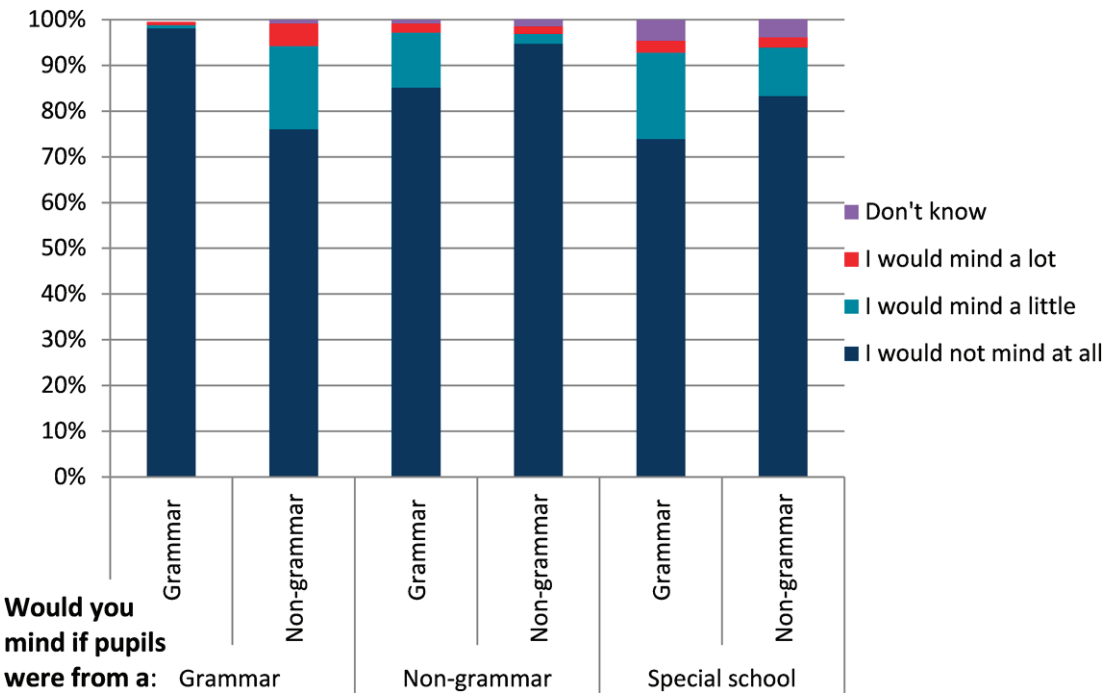


Our analysis of the survey data also found that students tend to be more willing to share projects with other schools of a similar management type. For example, 98% of grammar school respondents stated that they "would not mind at all" sharing projects with pupils of another grammar school, while 85% would not mind sharing with a non-grammar and 74% would not mind sharing with pupils from a special school.

Similarly, 95% of non-grammar students would not mind sharing with another non-grammar, while 76% would not mind sharing with a grammar and 83% would not mind sharing with a special school.

Students from integrated schools were the most willing to share with schools of a different management type, with 95% stating that they would not mind sharing with a non-grammar, 79% noting that they would not mind sharing with a grammar, and 85% saying that they would not mind sharing with a special school.

Figure 7: Would you mind if young people from the following types of schools came to do a project with your class? By school management type



In the focus groups some pupils questioned the extent to which shared education promotes integration in practice, suggesting that it may instead highlight differences between people of different community backgrounds.

“Shared education is getting Protestants and Catholics, putting them on the same campus and that is it. It is almost promoting their differences, which in turn causes sectarian behaviour – we all know how that turns out.”

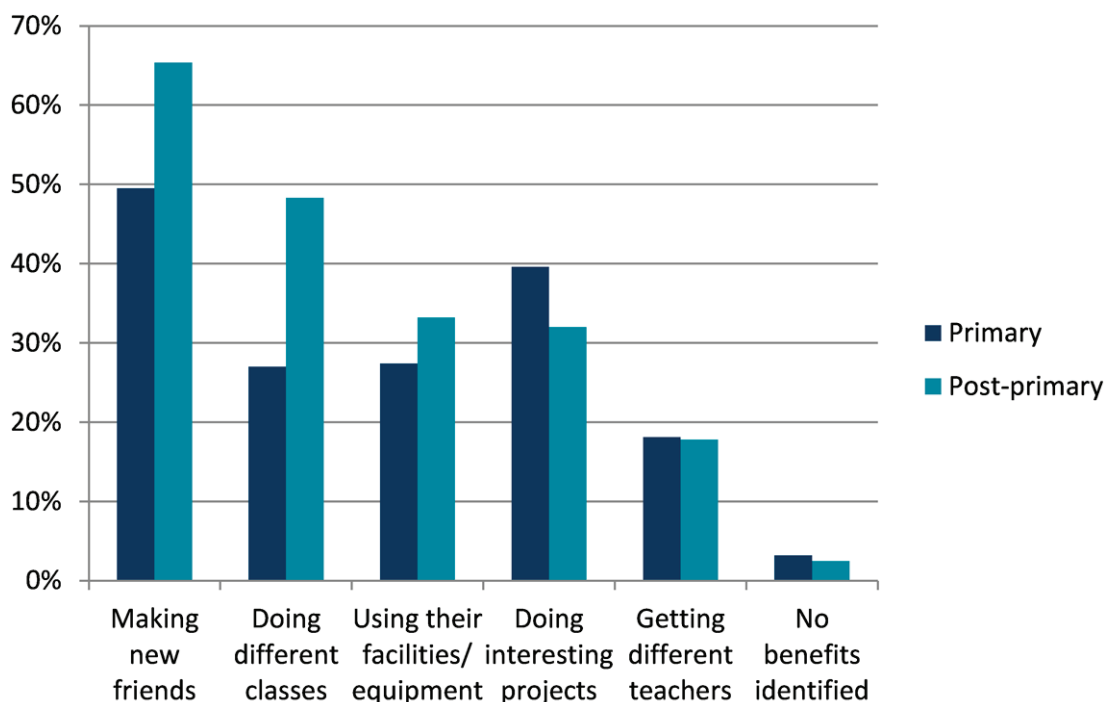
(Post-primary participant)

“It would raise awareness of differences. You are saying ‘you two are different – work together’, whereas you might not even have realised.”

(Post-primary participant)

5 Advantages of shared education

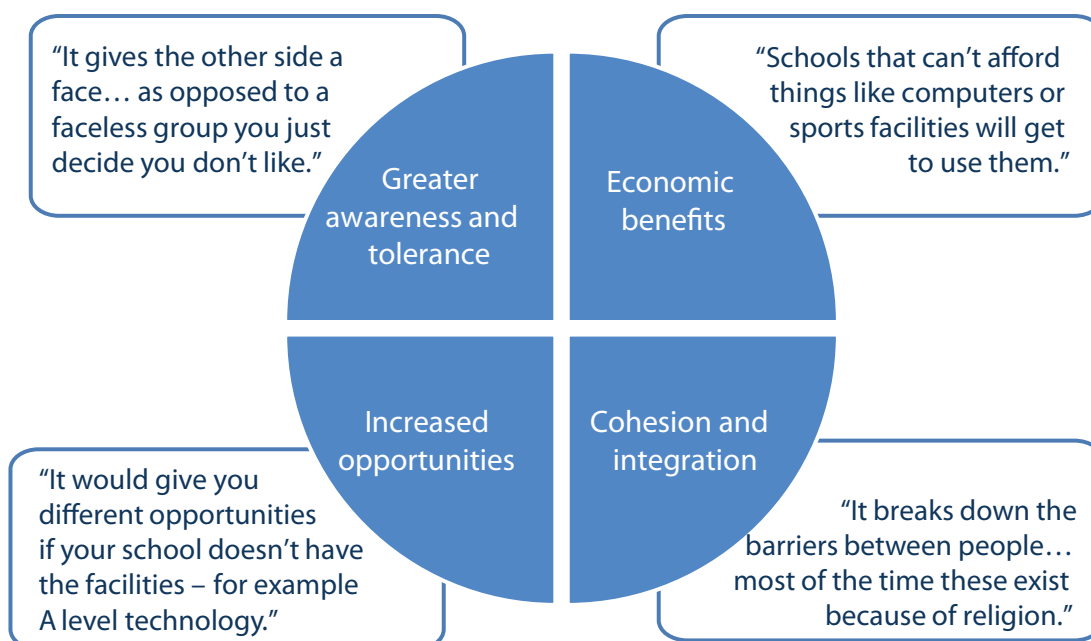
Answering a multiple-choice question in the survey, students identified a number of potential benefits of shared education. These are illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Potential benefits of shared education (survey results)

The survey highlighted few differences in opinion by religious background for this question, although Catholic survey respondents were more likely to note having the opportunity to be taught by different teachers as a potential advantage (20% compared to 16% of Protestants).

Participants in the focus groups highlighted a number of potential benefits they felt could arise from sharing classes, projects or sports with pupils of a different religious background; these are illustrated in Figure 9 overleaf.

Many of these centre on mixing with people from a different background, and as a result promoting tolerance across communities. Some students also alluded to the potential economic benefits and the greater opportunities that could be afforded by schools sharing resources and facilities.

Figure 9: Perceived benefits of shared education identified by focus group participants

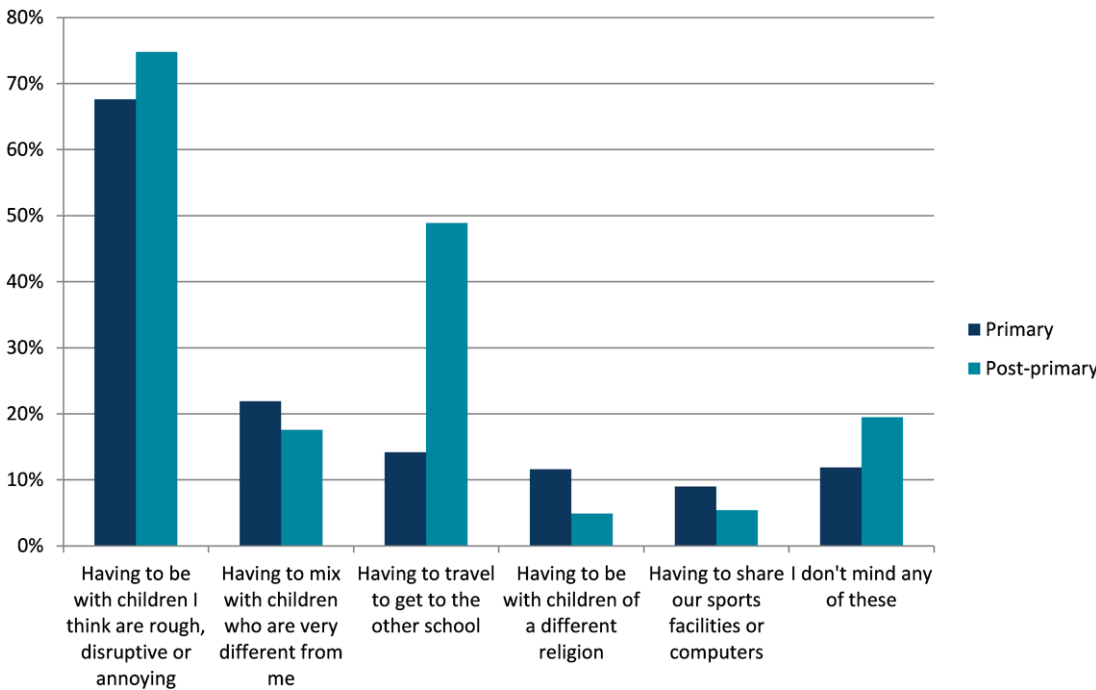
6 Disadvantages of shared education

Again answering a multiple-choice question in the survey, respondents highlighted a number disadvantages they thought could arise from shared education (Figure 10 overleaf). The most common concern of both primary and post-primary respondents to the survey was having to mix with children they thought were ‘rough, disruptive or annoying’.

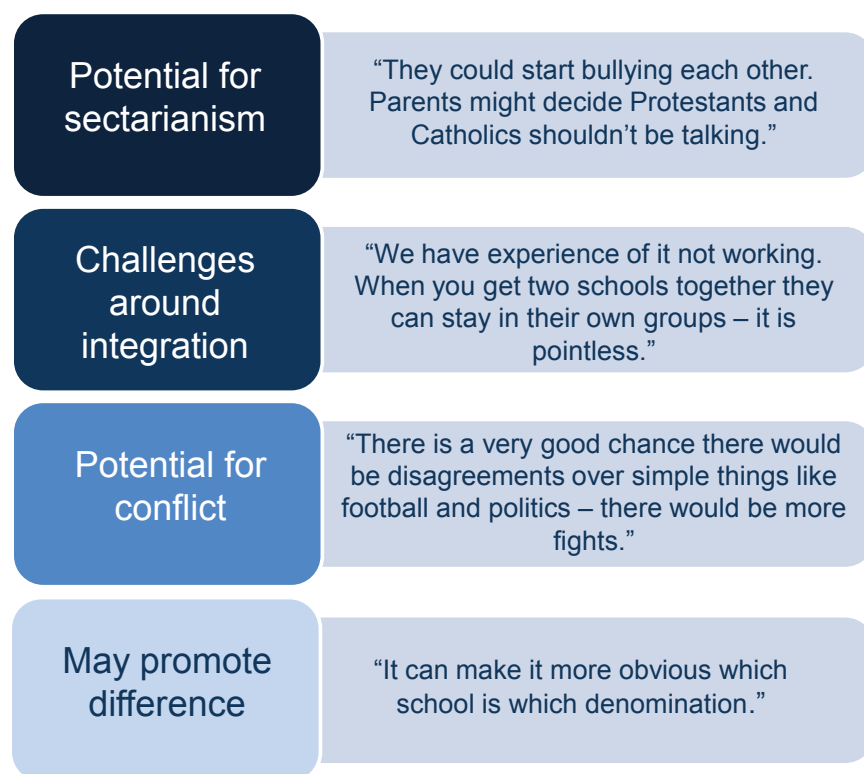
Mixing with children of a different religion was cited as a potential disadvantage by a minority of respondents: 12% of primary pupils and 5% of post-primary pupils. This was of a greater concern for Protestant students (8% compared to 4% of Catholic respondents). A fifth of post-primary students did not select any of the disadvantages in the questionnaire.

There were also differences by school management type, with 23% of non-grammar respondents highlighting having to mix with people very different to themselves as a concern, compared to 16% of grammar students and 10% of respondents from integrated schools.

Figure 10: Potential disadvantages of shared education



Participants in the focus groups also highlighted a number of disadvantages they thought could arise from sharing classes or taking part in activities with students from schools of a different religion, outlined in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Perceived disadvantages of shared education identified by focus group participants

7 Views on integrated education

At primary, a majority of focus group participants supported the idea of integrated education. At post-primary pupils generally advocated integrated education over shared education, pointing to benefits around inclusion and integration. However, a minority of pupils stated that they would not like to attend an integrated school, preferring instead to attend school alongside pupils from a similar background.

Students who attended integrated schools were particularly supportive of the model, with most preferring it to shared education. Some, however, supported school choice and advocated having both shared and integrated approaches available. Participants in Irish-medium education were also supportive of integrated education.

"I like both ideas, but my favourite would be integrated education... I think it brings people together."

(Pprimary participant)

"Without full integration opinions aren't going to change. We still have our Protestant and Catholic schools; we mix for computers but we still go home to our Protestant and our Catholic schools."

(Post-primary participant)

The following figure highlights the main potential advantages and disadvantages of integrated education highlighted by participants in the focus groups.

Figure 12: Potential advantages and disadvantages of integrated education

8 Conclusion

This paper has shown that a majority of pupils are in favour of shared education, with most also supportive of integrated education. However, some participants in the research highlighted a number of concerns and potential disadvantages around sharing projects, classes or facilities with students from other schools. Areas that could be given further consideration include:

- The reasons why more primary school pupils have participated in shared education than their counterparts at post-primary;
- The different levels of support for and enjoyment of shared education between Protestants and Catholics;
- The reluctance of some students to take part in shared education with schools of a different management type;
- The perception of some focus group participants that shared education may accentuate differences between pupils;
- The extent to which pupils from different schools integrate when they take part in shared education.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Information Service Briefing Note

Paper 000/00

10 October 2014

NIAR XXX-XX

James Stewart

Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry Focus Groups

1. Background

The Committee for Education is undertaking an Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education. The Terms of Reference are as follows -

The Education Committee will:

- Review the nature and definition of Shared Education and Integrated Education as it applies across all educational phases – including consideration of the need for a formal statutory definition and an obligation in statute to facilitate and encourage Shared Education;
- Identify the key barriers and enablers for Shared Education and Integrated Education;
- Identify and analyse alternative approaches and models of good practice in other jurisdictions in terms of policy interventions and programmes;
- Consider what priorities and actions need to be taken to improve sharing and integration – including the effectiveness of the relevant parts of the CRED policy; the need to engage more effectively with parents/carers; and the role of Special Schools.

The Assembly's Research and Information Service (RaISe) and Education Service are working together to find out about students' opinions and experience of Shared and Integrated

education. The research will take the form of a qualitative study. Qualitative research generates words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis. It is effective in finding out about people's experiences and understanding different perspectives. The research will be performed using a focus group format.

2. Research Protocol

Aims and Objectives	<p>The research will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitude towards mixing in general • Attitude towards both models (Shared and Integrated) • Positive outcomes • Negative outcomes • Attitudinal Change • Behavioural change • Levels of enjoyment • Impact on motivation • Barriers • Thoughts for the future
Methods	<p>Research will survey the views of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils who have experienced Integrated Education • Pupils who have experienced Shared Education • Pupils who have experienced neither models <p>Research will involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured Interviews lasting 40 minutes • Working with schools from a variety of sectors • Approximately 8 pupils in each focus group • Sessions performed in Parliament Buildings and the school setting
Ethical Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymity will be guaranteed • Measures will be taken to minimise bias • Parental consent will be sought
Resources Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Officers • Research Officer • Bursary Student • Education Administration Team • Recording Equipment • Rooms in Parliament Buildings • Hansard Irish Medium translator
Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Schools by 29 September • Approach Schools by 08 October • Develop Topic Guide by 10 October • Commence structured interviews 13 October • Deliver outreach 10 November • Complete report by 18 December

Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results will be forwarded to the Committee for Education as a component of its report • Participating Schools will be alerted once the Inquiry report is published
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3. Definitions

For the purposes of the research, Shared and Integrated Education have been defined in the following ways.

Shared Education

The Ministerial Advisory Group¹ defines Shared Education as involving the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- Meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of, learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;
- Involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- Delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Integrated Education

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education² describes Integration Education as bringing children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Statement of Principles can be found at the following URL: <http://www.nicie.org/about-us/nicie/statement-of-principles/>

4. Technique

The methodology is designed to ensure that the findings will reflect the research aims, rather than reflecting the bias of the researcher, or a very atypical group. This means that the technique will be:

- Reproducible: the same topic guide could be used to generate similar information;
- Systematic: interviewees will not be selected because they support our pre-existing ideas about the answers;
- Credible: the questions asked and the ways in which they are asked will be reasonable for generating valid accounts; and
- Transparent: methods will be written up so that readers can see exactly how the data were collected and analysed.³

1 <http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/Filestore/Filetoupload,382123,en.pdf>
2 NICIE website: <http://www.nicie.org/teachers/what-is-integrated-education/>
3 Brikci, N. (2007) A Guide to Using Qualitative Research Methodology Medecins Sans Frontieres

4.1. Selection of Schools

The research aims to have a balance of responses from the following school categories.

Primary	Post-Primary
Controlled	Controlled
Maintained	Maintained
Integrated	Integrated
Irish Medium	Irish Medium
Rural	Rural
Urban	Urban
	Secondary
	Grammar

In the first instance, the schools booked on the Education Service programme were considered for participation in the focus groups. The visiting schools were listed by category to identify schools from specific phases and sectors. Schools were selected to represent a wide geographical area.

It was ascertained that a majority of the categories in the target cohort could be surveyed by working with schools booked on the Education Service programme. However, Irish Medium and Primary Integrated schools were not represented, so Education Service has arranged outreach to deliver focus groups in the school setting. School selection is illustrated in Appendix 1.

4.2. Topic Guide

Topic Guides are used mostly in semi-structured interviews (See Appendix 2). It has a list of the key questions relevant to the topic, with some useful prompts to encourage the interviewee to talk about specific issues if they do not arise spontaneously.

4.3. Briefing for Interviewers

RaISe has produced a briefing for interviewers to ensure that the process is standardised (See Appendix 3). The interviewers will meet prior to the first focus group to reaffirm the procedures.

4.4. Recording

All focus groups will be recorded using a digital audio recorder. The audio files will be saved on a shared network drive. The interviewers will be accompanied by a scribe who will summarise the salient points which arise during conversation.

4.5. Irish Medium Education

The Education Service will deliver an outreach visit to an Irish Medium school to carry out a focus group session. A member of Hansard who is fluent in Irish will translate the Topic Guide and accompany the interviewer during the focus group session. The interviewer in question has GCSE level Irish. The responses will be translated into English.

4.6. Analysis

The Assembly's Research and Information Service will analyse the data and write an associated report which will be forwarded to the Committee for Education in December 2014.

4.7. Briefing Pack for schools

The Education Service will create an information pack for schools which will explain the concepts of Shared and Integrated Education. This will be sent to schools and used to prepare the pupils for the focus groups.

Appendix 1: School Selection Table

Primary							
Controlled		Maintained		Grant Maintained Integrated		Controlled Integrated	
Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Ballymagee Primary School		St Josephs Primary School	St Brigids Primary School				Carclough Primary School (part of wider group)
Whiteabbey Primary School		Holy Child Primary School	New Row Primary School				
		Longfower Primary School	St Brendan's Primary School				
			St James' Primary School				
			St Macartan's Primary School				
			St Mary's Primary School				
Secondary							
Controlled		Maintained		Grant Maintained Integrated		Controlled Integrated	
Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Carrickfergus College	Castlederg High School	St Patrick's Academy	Dean Magurc College	Lagan College	New Bridge Integrated College		
	Barbridge High School						
Grammar							
Controlled		Voluntary Grammar (RC)		Voluntary grammar (Other)			
Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban			
Grosvenor Grammar School	Collegiate Grammar	Aquinas Grammar School	Mount Lourdes Grammar School	Bangor Grammar School		= invited	
	Lurgan College	Dominican College, Fortwilliam		Belfast High School		= accepted	
		Rathmore Grammar School		Belfast Royal Academy		= declined	
		St Dominic's High School		Bloomfield Collegiate			
				Friends' School			
				Methodist College			
Special							
Urban	Rural						
Loughshore Educational Res	Castletower School						
Irish Medium							

Appendix 2: Topic Guide

Shared/Integrated Education Inquiry

1. The Government is currently working on plans to change schooling in Northern Ireland. All schools will be expected to think about sharing classes, teachers or facilities with other schools of different religions.

How do you feel about schools allowing pupils from other schools to use their sports facilities or equipment like computers?
2. How would you feel about having classes with pupils from other schools of a different religion? What about doing projects or sports?
3. C an you think of things that might be good if young people from schools of a different religion get together? (Unprompted, then probe if necessary)
 - Using their sports facilities and computers or equipment
 - Getting the opportunity to be taught by different teachers/ sports coaches
 - Doing classes we don't normally get to do at our school, like learning a new language; getting the opportunity to do a different subject or qualification
 - Making new friends
 - Doing interesting projects
4. Can you think of any disadvantages if young people from schools of a different religion get together? (Unprompted, then probe if necessary)
 - Having to share our sports facilities or computers
 - Having to travel to get to the other school
 - Having to be with young people of a different religion
 - Having to mix with young people who are very different from me, or having difficulty mixing
 - Wearing a different uniform
5. Integrated schools educate children from both Protestant and Catholic traditions together, as well as those of other faiths and those with no religious faith. This is different from shared education as pupils of different religions go to the same school rather than attending two different schools.

How would you feel about attending an integrated school? Why do you say that?

Appendix 3: Interviewer Guide

Shared education inquiry: focus groups

The main purpose of focus group research is to learn about participants' experiences and views: the idea is that listening to others' experiences stimulates memories and ideas in participants.

Introductions

- Facilitator to explain the reason for the group and what will be done with the findings. May be useful to let them know that we are there to learn from them
- Confidentiality – explain that they may be quoted but they will not be named, the quotations will be non-attributable (for example, we would remove the name of the school or teacher if they reference it)
- Ask them to be as honest as possible and to talk about both the good and the bad
- State that the discussion should be informal and that different views to those expressed by others are welcome
- Need agreement from all participants on the use of the recording. Reassure participants that the recording will not be used for anything other than note-taking purposes

During the group

- Always ask open questions and allow the discussion to flow. If one person gives an answer it can be useful to find out whether this view is widely held or not, for example by saying *'do you all agree with that?'* *'does anyone have a different view?'*
- It is often useful to probe to gain further information, for example *'tell me more about that'*, *'why do you say that'*, *'any other views?'*
- While discussion should be as free-flowing as possible, need to keep it moving and wind up particular questions as required, and also keep participants on topic

Ending the session

- Thank participants for their time and participation – let them know that the information they have shared is valuable for this project.
- Ask them if they have any questions or other points they'd like to make



Published by Authority of the Northern Ireland Assembly,
Belfast: The Stationery Office

and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

TSO

PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN

Telephone orders/General enquiries: 0870 600 5522

Fax orders: 0870 600 5533

E-mail: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Textphone 0870 240 3701

TSO@Blackwell and other Accredited Agents

£22.00

Printed in Northern Ireland by The Stationery Office Limited
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ISBN 978-0-339-60593-0

