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

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 inquires 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

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

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Eddie Toner, Chairperson

Moy Village Action Plan

Produced by

macada

Moy Area Community and Development Association

November 2013

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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.

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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".*

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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.

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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.

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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.

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- *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.

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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 Councils 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.

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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.
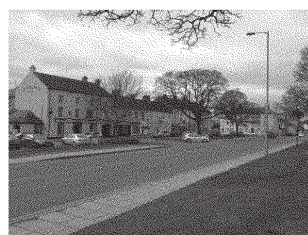

The core of the village has exceptional architectural character and was designated a Conservation Area in 1984. Development in and adjacent to the conservation area will have regard to the guidance contained in the Moy Conservation Area Booklet.

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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.
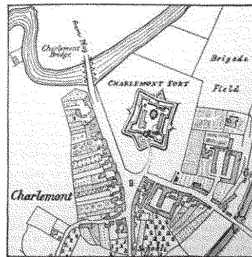
The second and third Earl were responsible for rebuilding Roxborough Castle but after the third Earl died the castle was later demolished in 1920. The bridge over the Blackwater separating Co. Tyrone and Co. Armagh was erected by Lord Mountjoy and rebuilt by William Daragan. The Famous Soldier and Australian 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.

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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.

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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).

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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 phones 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

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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.

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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

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

Big enough to facilitate drama, musical productions

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!!

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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

Facilities for older people to socialise who don't like pubs e.g. bingo/social evenings

Pensioner awareness/help/ visiting/ respect to elderly

Socials e.g. whist, bridge, tea dances

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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.
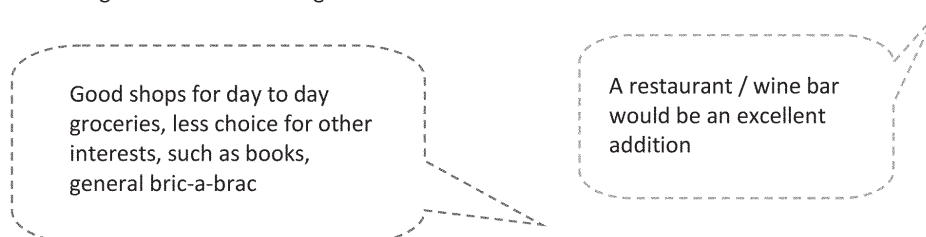
More social interaction amongst all sectors of the community

More police presence

Curb anti-social behaviour

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.

Good shops for day to day groceries, less choice for other interests, such as books, general bric-a-brac

A restaurant / wine bar would be an excellent addition

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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.
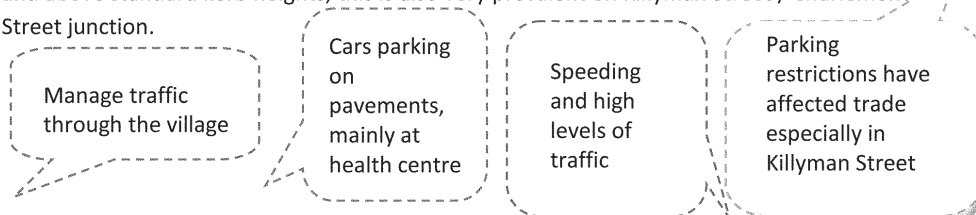
Many areas within Moy are in the conservation area and therefore any developments need to be considered carefully that they fall within the conservation guidelines.

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.

> Renovation of derelict buildings is needed

> General upkeep of developments-generally run down
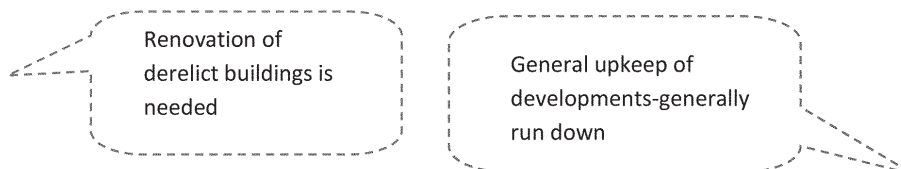
Roads/Transport

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.

> Manage traffic through the village

> Cars parking on pavements, mainly at health centre

> Speeding and high levels of traffic

> Parking restrictions have affected trade especially in Killyman Street

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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.
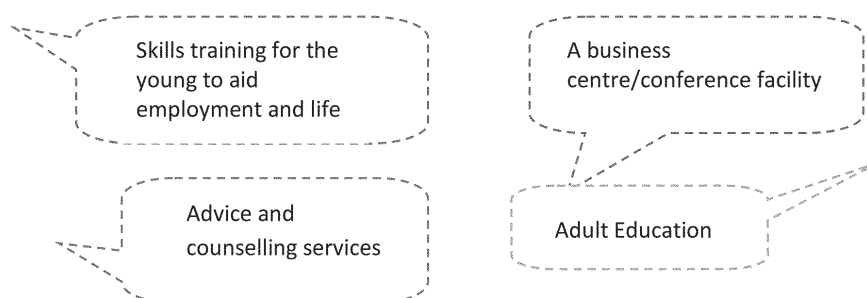
Selling our wonderful history to many visitors to Moy

The River Blackwater could be promoted for tourism / sporting activities, paths developed etc

Local Tourism Information Centre

Restore areas of cultural importance-encourage tourism

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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.

> Skills training for the young to aid employment and life

> A business centre/conference facility

> Advice and counselling services

> Adult Education

Employment
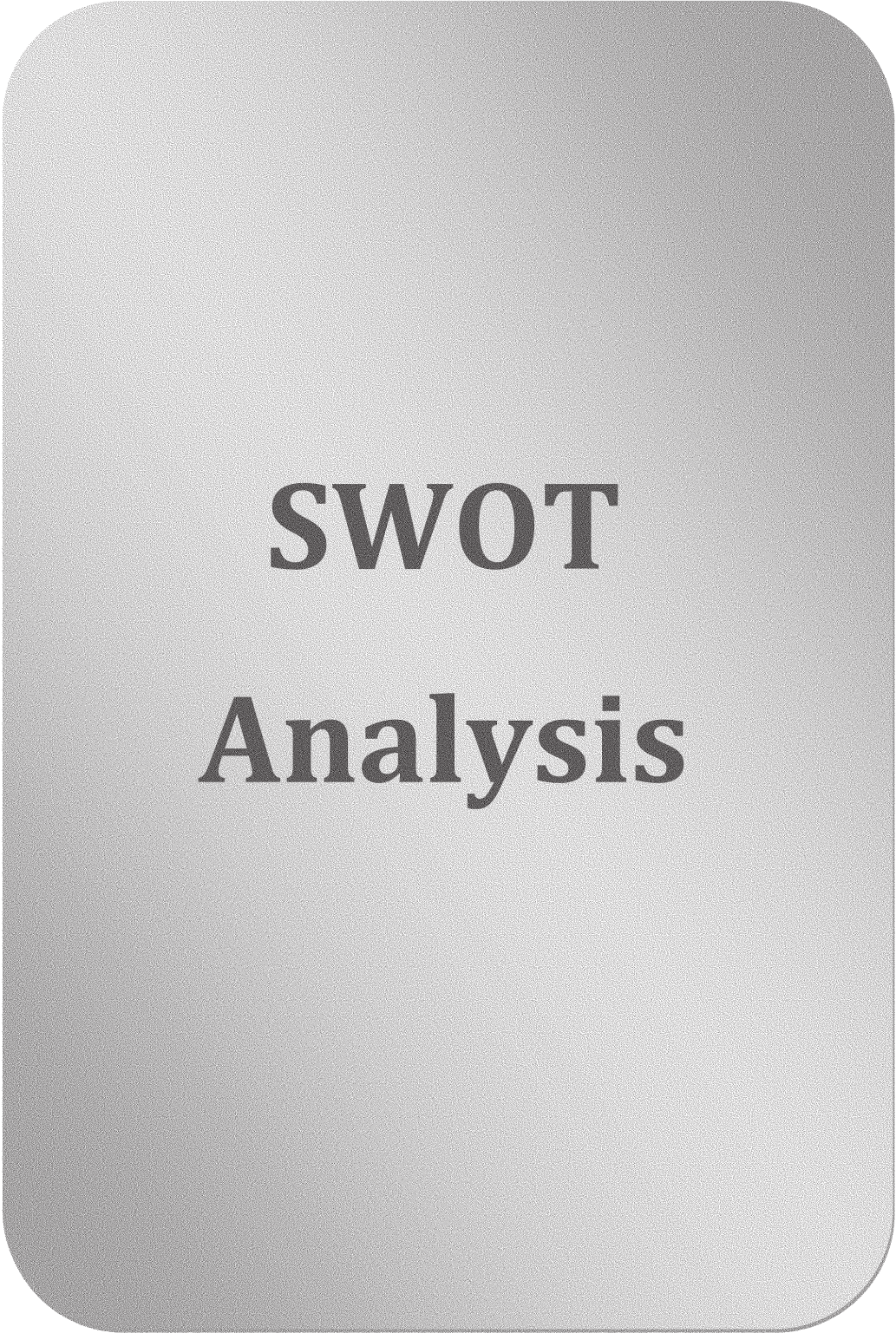
An opportunity exists to provide incubation services for start-up business ideas, which could be linked to training/educational services.

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.

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SWOT

Analysis

SWOT Analysis

The key priorities have been consolidated to form a SWOT analysis of the village.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• 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	• 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

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SWOT Analysis

Opportunities	Threats
• 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	• 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

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Developments to Date

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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

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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

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Action Plan

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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

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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, GovtDeptsesp 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

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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

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Conclusion

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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**

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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

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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;

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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;

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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.

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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

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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.

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Appendix 2

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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May

What's On!

May 2013

Newsletter of
Moy Area Community
and Development Association

macada

May/June

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 the 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

SQUARE WHEELS CYCLE CLUB
Moy - Tyrone/Armagh

Club Open Day
Sunday May 12th, 10.30am

Speeds & distances for all abilities.
Fresh coffee & cake in Tommey's Bar afterwards.

facebook.com/SQ.wheels
squarewheelscc@gmail.com

weekend & midweek club runs, TT,
racing, touring, sportives, youth

May

Moy Playgroup Pub quiz
9pm Plas, Dungannon St. Moy
byrne30@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 de-
tails

Multi Cultural International Big Breakfast
June 15th
St. John's PS Moy

macada
Moy Area Community and Development Association

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What's On!

Newsletter of Moy Area Community and Development Association

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 855705

U.6 Funstart (4-6yrs)
6pm
St. John's P.S. / £1
Karol McQuade / 07825 855705

Yoga
6.45pm
St. John's Primary School /
£3 Karol McQuade / 07825 855705

Circuits
7pm-8pm
Moy Presbyterian Hall / £4
Arlene Burke / 07759 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 /
£3 Karol McQuade / 07825 855705

U.8 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 0742345714O

U8 & U10 Gaelic Football
10am Moy GAC pitch
Ronan 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 0742345714O

A.L.I.V.E (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

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Appendix 3

BACKGROUND

HISTORY OF MOY

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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 ascendency 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

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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 Laverty 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 Laverty 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 Laverty 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 in1833. 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

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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 ascendency 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.

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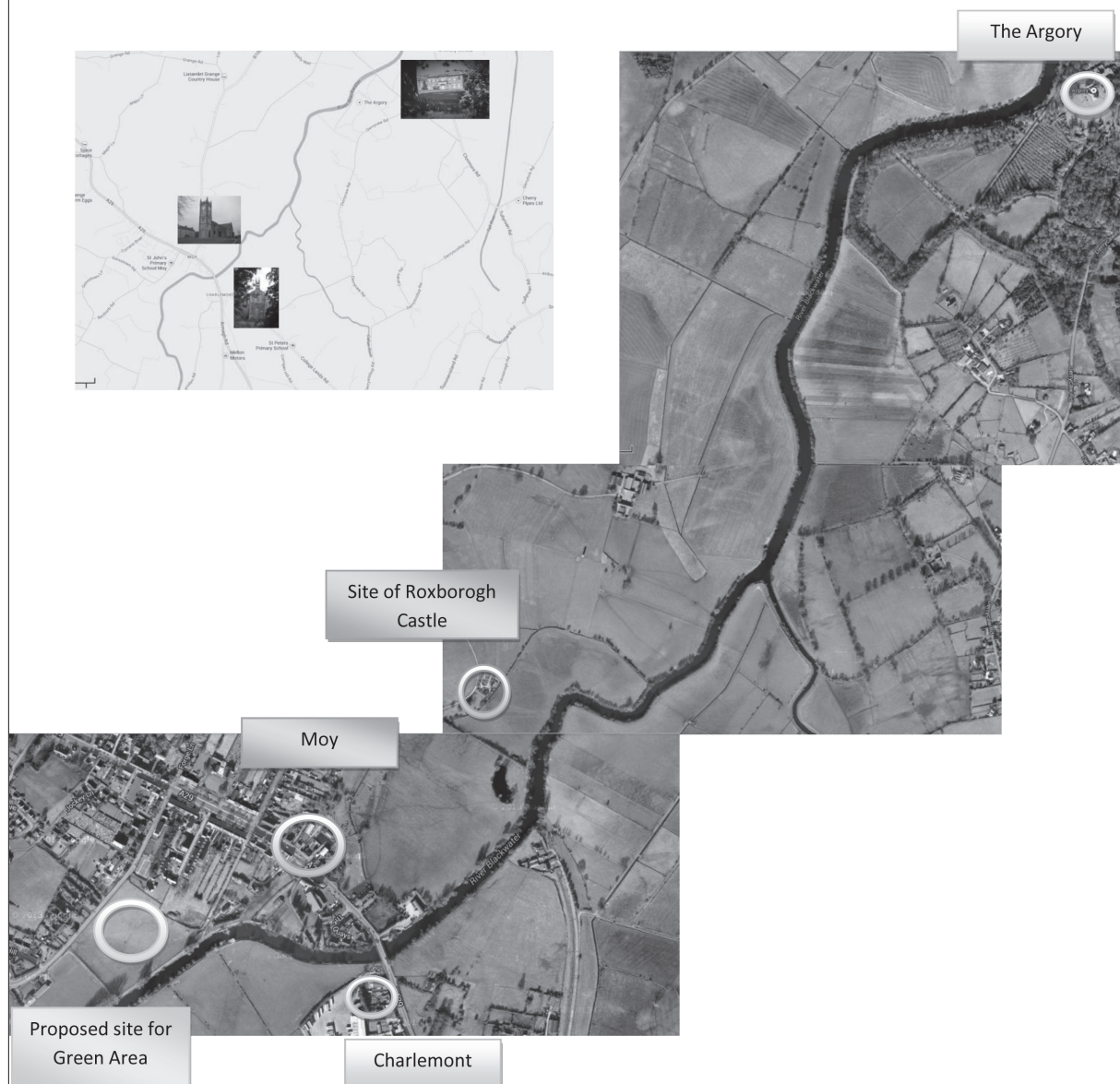# Appendix 4

GREEN SPACE

& PARK

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PROPOSED GREEN SPACE & PARK FOR MOY VILLAGE

The Bandstand

The Planets

The Den

Preliminary Site plan 1:1000

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Gorestown Road

Gorestown Road

Gorestown Road

Gorestown Road

Moy

Heritage standard walls & gates at road side & footpath

The Play Area

Open area

The Den

The Bandstand

Carpark
12-15 cars

The Planets

The Boardwalk

Dock for 6 boats

River Blackwater

The Connection

Appendix 5

VILLAGE WALK

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PROPOSED MOY VILLAGE WALK(s)

Legend
Route 1 - length 1.5 miles
Route 2- length 1.1 miles

Appendix 6

RIVER WALKWAY

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Map of Riverwalk from
Moy/Charlemont to Argory

The Argory

Site of Roxborogh
Castle

Moy

Proposed site for
Green Area

Charlemont

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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.AntrimBT56 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

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 set-backs 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

> **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 it 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

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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

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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   Connelly 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 performance[8] 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 Hulsey, 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.

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.

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17   Institute for Government (2012). op. cit.; The Academies Commission (2013). op. cit.

18   Connelly 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]

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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

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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 it 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 shred 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

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 (SCRP) 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 PIEE 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 PIEE Project

7.   Unlike many previous initiatives, which focused on pupils alone, PIEE'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 PIEE 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

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 PIEE

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 PIEE 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 PIEE 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 PIEE 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 PIEE schools were acutely aware of the need to secure parental and governor support for PIEE processes and activities.

17.   PIEE'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 PIEE, 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 PIEE project. Data collected from schools showed clearly that schools quickly took advantage of being able to share physical resources with their partners.

21.   The PIEE 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.

22.   It should be noted that entry to the PIEE 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.

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.

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 in 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

NICCY 1

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 none[2]. 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 intakes[6]. 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

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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) survey[8] and 16 year olds, through the Young Life and Times (YLT) survey[9]. 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

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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 issue[11]. 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]

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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 indentified 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.

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[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 Commisssion

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:

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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 identify, 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

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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.

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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**

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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

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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.ofmdfmni.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 NIHRC 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:

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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

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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.

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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 apologies 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@qub.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☐

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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.

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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

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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 alone class lines.

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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

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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 that 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 under achievement 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.

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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.

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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.

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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 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

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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.

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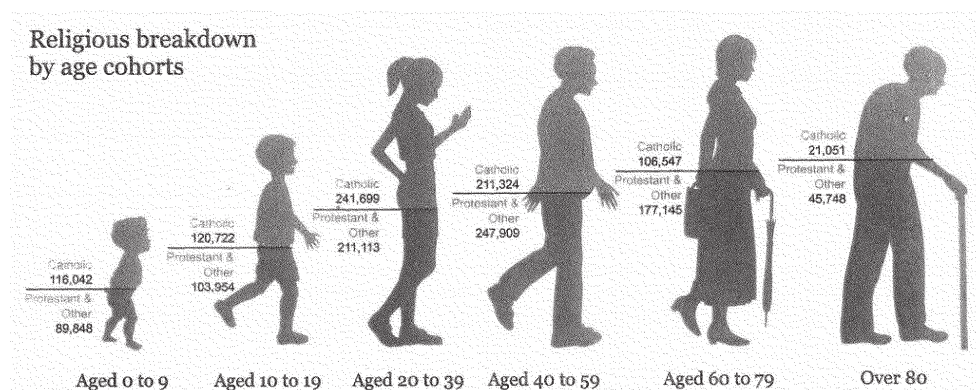
If we maintain the status quo of our system of education then we can predict a shift from the present share out of schools where there is already a majority of catholic schools to a situation where that majority becomes more pronounced.

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

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

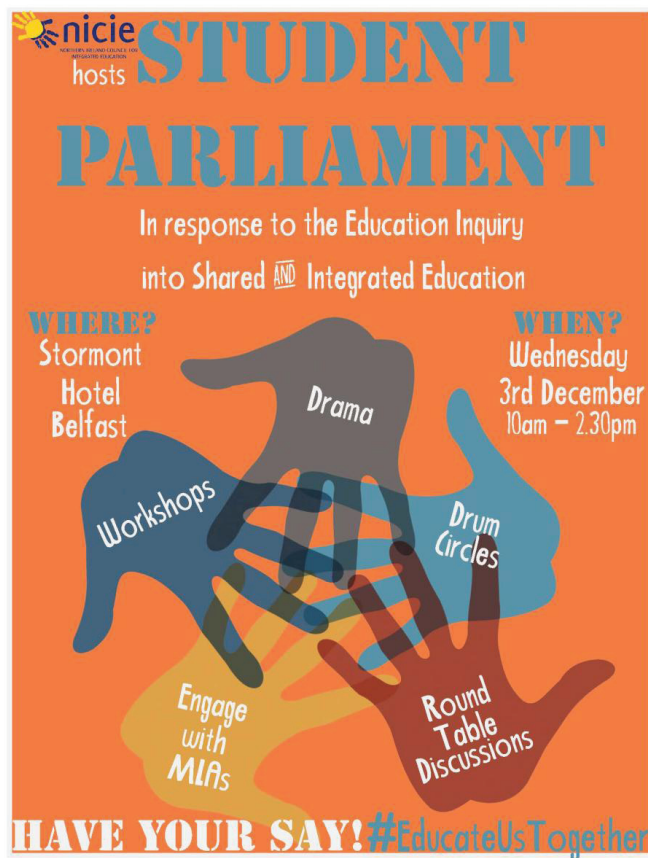10

Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (3)

Report from Integrated Schools Youth Parliament

Stormont Hotel

3rd December 2014

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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 tableaus. 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?

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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 Educations 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 its self 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 the 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 or 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 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, the 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 shoudl 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 encouter 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 bac, 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 opportunties 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 turbulance 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
- Cliodhna 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

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[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:

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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., 2010[5] 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, 2007[6]) 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.

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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 based[7]), 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 Ireland[8] In addition bullying and peer pressure continue to feature as major concerns within our schools[9]. It has been highlighted that the elements of health education that relate to mental health and wellbeing within many schools are underdeveloped[10] (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.

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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. (Cliodhna 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)

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12   Zajonc, A., (2009). *Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love.* Lindisfarne Books. 99

- Developing good habits of mind early on in childhood in terms of building selfawareness 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 form 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 than 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 regulation[14] (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 moment[16] (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

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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., 2009[18].) 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., 1992[19]) 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

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 5-10minutes 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

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.

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 system[34]. 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., 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

34   Kaiser-Greenland, S., (1990) The Mindful Child, New York: Free Press. 88.

self and other and foster appreciation among staff[35]. 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, 2009[36]). 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 encourages[37]. 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 2014[38], 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 classsroom: 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

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, 2009[46]). The MBSR programme has been adapted for use with children (Saltzman & Goldin, 2008[47]). 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).

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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   Salzman, 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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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.

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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.

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48   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.

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.

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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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3.8   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 self and other and foster appreciation among staff[58]. 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, 2009[59]). 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.

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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

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 encourages[60]. 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 201461[61], 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.

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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

Report for

Education Committee

Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

October 2014

keeping
parents at
the heart of
what we do...

2014
35th
anniversary
ParentingNI

LEADING ORGANISATION FOR SUPPORTING PARENTS

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.

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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

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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 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.

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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.

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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 October2014. 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.

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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.Fermangh 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

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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

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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*

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*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 be 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

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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.

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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

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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.
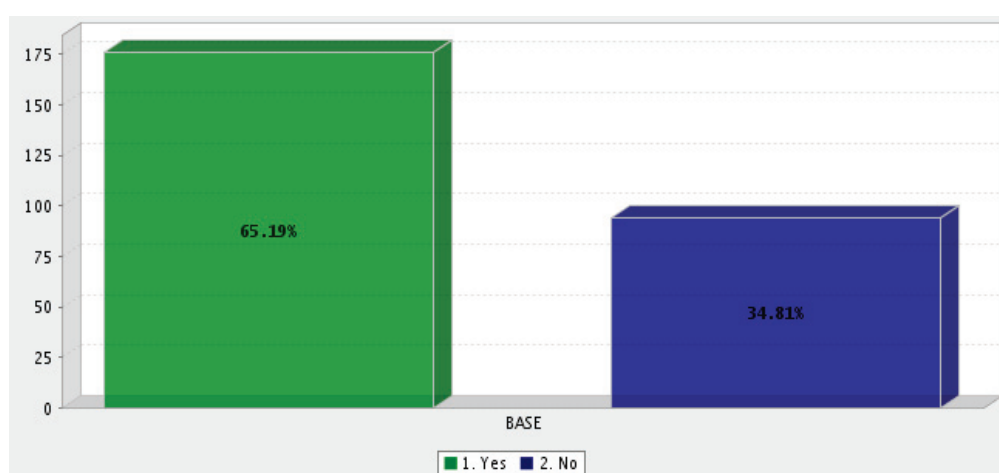
Figure 2

Do you have a child/children who currently goes to an integrated school (including nursery/preschool)?

270 parents in total responded to this question.
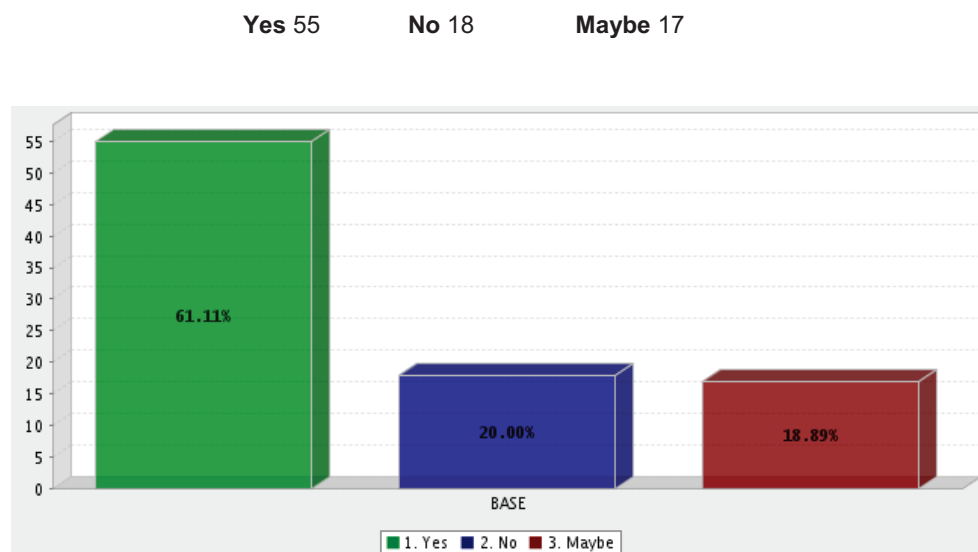
Yes 176   **No** 94

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.

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Figure 3

Would you consider sending your child to an Integrated School?

Yes 55   **No** 18   **Maybe** 17

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

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- 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.

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Figure 4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Shared Education

Advantages of Shared Education	Disadvantages of Shared Education
- 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	- 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

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	classes still being taught
	• Loss of parental choice
	• Difference in uniforms can lead to exclusion and highlight difference
	• Minimal inclusion of children with special needs

Figure 5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Integrated Education

Advantages of Integrated Education	Disadvantages of Integrated Education
• 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	• One community being the minority • It depends on the locality of schools so not may not fully reflect 'true' integration • None-*" we should disband divisive education and cease funding schools who have religion as a requirement for entry either perceived or actual"* • The Identities of children can be lost • Misperceptions by parents, staff who think that integrated education is a

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• Promotes the concept of NI as a nation and promotes national identity rather than British or Irish	neutral environment
• Prepares pupils for society which is mixed e.g. the workplace	• No real value placed on spiritual moral issues too eager to please to proclaim all things to all men, a melting pot,
• Builds relationships between cultures	• Can be harder for pupils to retain their identity especially when they go back to segregated communities after school
• None. One parent said it is *'a middle class attempt at social mobility through education, shouldn't be placed above any other type of education offered'*	• 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
• Pupils are more aware of the common ground between their peers	
• Promotes equality regardless of background	• Under-funded and lack of resources from government
• Fully inclusive society, ethos of inclusion in integrated education	• Availability limited of integrated schools in certain areas to meet demands, limited amount of places in schools
• Reduces fear of 'the perceived other'	• Many parents see integrated as just another sector rather than a good model that is beneficial for children and society
• Education under same roof, financial benefits	
• Helps children understand religion is a choice, not born into religion	• Issues of bullying for being different
• Embraces the child holistically rather than only academic achievement	• Local history not taught (ie. why people from different communities feel the way

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• 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	they do) • 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.

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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.
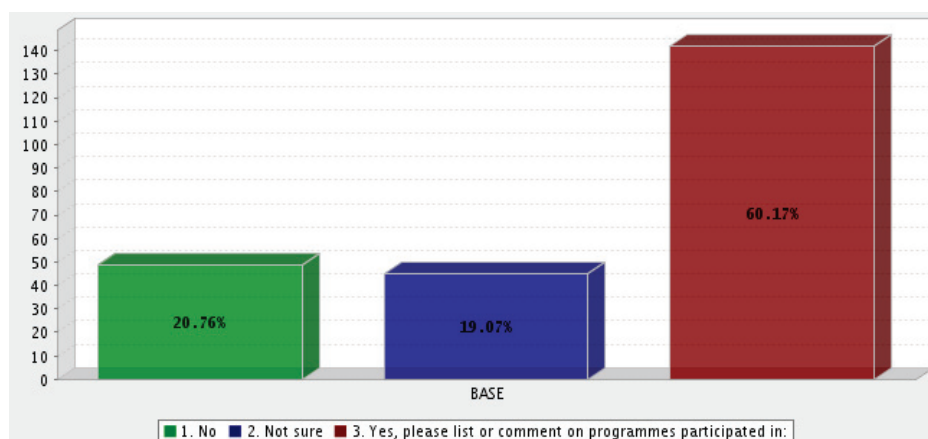
Parents were then asked to list the types and names of programmes that their children had participated in. These were then grouped into the following areas;

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- 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;

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- 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 societial clubs (eg beavers, scouts must pledge allegiance to Queen)

- Residential trips (eg to Corrymeela where differences can be explored in a 'safe space')

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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

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- 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

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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

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- 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?

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**Committee for Education
Room 375,
Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw,
Stormont,
Belfast,
BT4 3XX**

10th November 2014

Dear Peter,

<u>Parent Survey – single teacher training facility</u>

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

<u>Parent Survey – single teacher training facility</u>
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

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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

Contents

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 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 are 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 ides 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

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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 schools[1]. 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

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1   Knox and Borooah (2014). Briefing Notes for Committee for Education, 15th October 2014

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 Group[3] 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.

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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 lives[5] (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 cohesion[6]'.

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 Strategy[7].

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.

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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 serous 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:
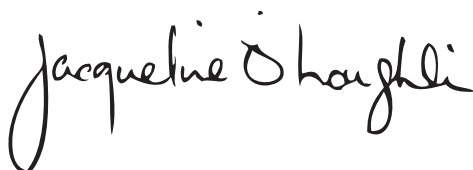
■ School collaboration presents significant practical challenges in relation to matters such as timetabling, curriculum planning and transport and thus strong leadership within schools is essential;

- 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,

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,

Dorothy McKeating (Principal)

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

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,

Professor Roger Austin
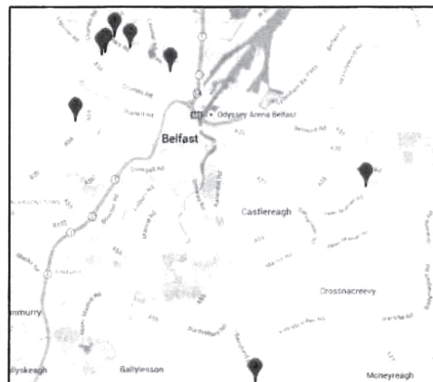
_____
Faculty of
Social Sciences

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

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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!
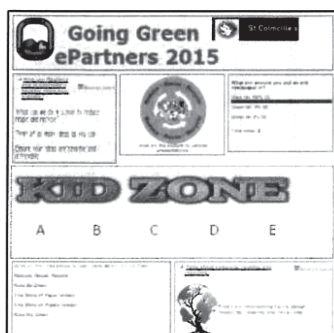
So far on Fronter there has been a total of 700 posts from the 26 partnerships. (11/03/2015) The most from one partnership was 145 posts!!!

Some of our favourite posts are displayed in the graphic below:

Video Conferencing

Schools use a video conferencing tool called Collaborate for real-time contact. Some schools are using Collaborate to play games like hangman and noughts and crosses. This is a great way for the kids to get to know each other before their face-to-face and we heard a good story about how Collaborate is also creating friendships outside of school:

"Just want to share the news a child in my class told me today. That child had been to Jump Lanes a local recreational facility within our city where they spend their time bouncing on trampolines. Whilst there they had spotted a child from our partner school that they had recognised through the use of Collaborate. Due to this they were quite willing to speak to each other during their time there. Even though this was a chance meeting it was nice to hear that the children were willing not only to talk to each other but more importantly spend their time playing together. In the words of

Further information about ePartners is available from Professor Roger Austin – rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk

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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

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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
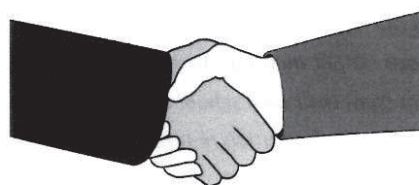
"The children absolutely love the "pen-friend" aspect of the project and have found that they have many things in common. It's a great experience of them to enter into the world of "e-mail" to share information." – **Teacher**

"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

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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*
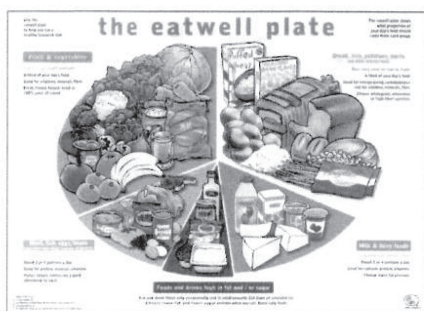
"We explained the Fronter task that we would like them to carry out. This was to visit a supermarket and note down the various flavours and colours of cupcakes that were available on shelves. We then invited the children to report their findings into the discussion board on Fronter." - *Student*

"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

Further information about ePartners is available from Professor Roger Austin – rsp.austin@ulster.ac.uk

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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

University of **ULSTER**

School of
Education

The role of ICT in linking schools; emerging lessons from the
Dissolving Boundaries Programme, 1999-2014
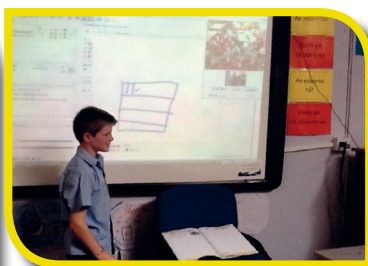
The Dissolving Boundaries programme, funded by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and by the Department of Education and Skills in the Republic of Ireland, has linked 50,000 young people, 570 schools and 2,600 teachers on cross-border work over 15 years, using ICT as the main means of communication, 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.

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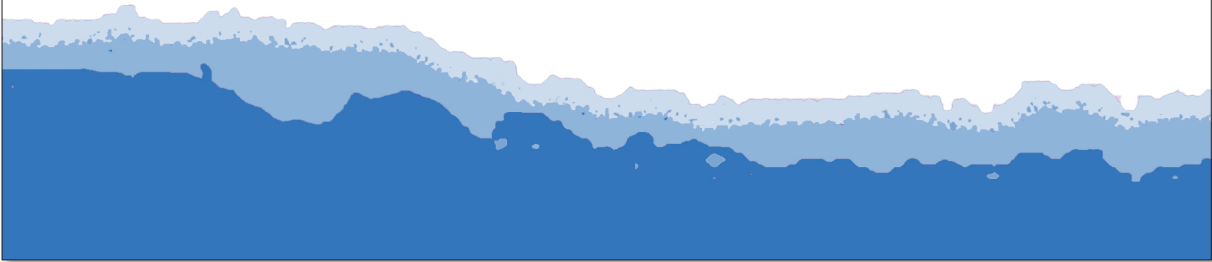
Bonnell, J., Copestake, P., Kerr, D., Passy, R., Reed, C., Salter, R., Sarwar, S., Sheikh, S. (2011). Teaching approaches that help to build resilience to extremism among young people. (Research Report DFE-RR119) OPM and National Foundation for Educational Research.

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
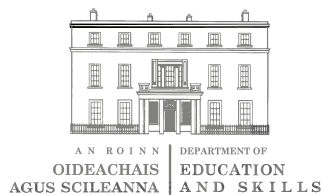
JOINT EVALUATION REPORT

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 (SCRP)[1]. Specifically where a school is both in the DB and SCRP 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

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1   SCRP 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 (SCRP)[2].

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2   SCRP 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.

Appendix

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 at to whether the initial experiments will continue to be supported once philanthropic sources of funding sources 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 Palmary 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 ethnoreligious 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 friendshipdeveloping 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 heterogonous 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 (Morrisey & 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.

| Schools in isolation | Emergent partnerships organic/enacted | Less sustainable and irregular shared activity | Sustained and regular shared activity | Culture of Collegiality | Institutional Interdependence (Symbiotic) |
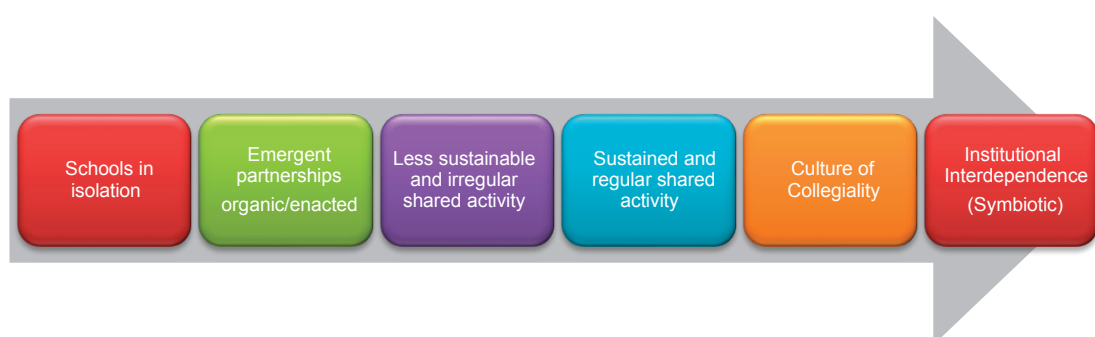
Figure 1: Collaboration Continuum: Duffy, Stewart, Baker & Gallagher, 2014

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 Progamme 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 friendshipdeveloping 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 perspectivetaking. 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

PTA NI | A PTA FOR ALL SCHOOLS
A VOICE FOR ALL PARENTS

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 attainment[1]. 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.

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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@RowandaleIPS.co.uk
Website: www.RowandaleIPS.co.uk

24 October 2014

Response to Education Committee Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education

Rowandale 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.

Rowandale, 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://morethanaclub.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 "lodestar" 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

Seaview Enterprises
mes que un club

CONTENTS

"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

SECTION 1

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:

- 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 Match 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

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SECTION 1

PROJECT OVERVIEW

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	**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) **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 Cliftonville IPS, Hazelwood IPS, Newtownabbey CHS, Monkstown CHS (NEELB) and Dominican Fortwilliam have been consulted as a part of bid development and are supportive but not formal partners yet.
Educational Benefits	The majority of the educational benefits will be focussed on that of physical education and community relations. All of the partner schools and those intending to use the proposed facilities will have a net positive benefit in terms of their education. The developing partnership will ensure that all school goers (from primary one through to upper sixth) from the partner schools will benefit from enhanced shared education opportunities and facilities. The project will ensure provision for those in mainstream, voluntary, CCMS, and special educational settings
Societal Benefits	There are a number of clear societal benefits associated with this proposal, namely; • Improved community relations through the use of a shared space • Enhanced opportunities for sport, community and health development through the development of proposed facilities • Community regeneration in a DSD designated neighbourhood renewal area • Creation of up to 500 construction jobs, 15 full time jobs on site post construction and further economic stimulus into this area

Essential Criteria	Additional Information on Partner Role
Endorsement from Managing Authorities	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.
Evidence of Community Support	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. 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.
Context of Area Planning	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.

Desirable Criteria	Additional Information on Partner Role
Location	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
Evidence of Existing Sharing	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.

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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 this 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 Fall & 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 DEFEICIT 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 rational 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

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SECTION 2

RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

▮ 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 protestors' 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 2010.6These 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)

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SECTION 2

RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

■ 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

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Foundation (P1, P2), and Key Stage 2 (P5, P6, P7)

At Foundation stage, study will focus on the

- 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).

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 *Mes Que un Club* 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 '*Maximised sharing*' 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'.

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.

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

- 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.scdl.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;

- Learning for Life and Work
- PE
- Games

In addition, the Shared Campus prospectus will focus on thematic units in;

- Personal Understanding Who am I?
- Citizenship Growing up in Northern Ireland
- Education for Sustainable Development

Within PE, the focus is on;

- 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

SECTION 2

RATIONALE, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

◼ EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS / OFFER

Keys Stage 4 (Years 12 & 12) and 5 (Years 13 & 14)

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 (Connolly, 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

Qualifications Offered at KS4 and KS5 will be;
- 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

Coach education programme for post 16 pupils to include;
- 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.bodylabni.com/
- Nutritional Development Level 2   Body Lab
- Stripping it back: motivation & team dynamics'

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)

Post Primary Enrichment:

The Loughside Shared Campus will provide an enriched curriculum to include;
- 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

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.

Additional Curriculum Offer

Tertiary: BMC will offer a full Community Education Programme , including
• 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

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

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.

SECTION 3

CONSTRAINTS

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
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.	This facility will require appropriate levels of investment to realise the vision as proposed.
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.	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.
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.	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.
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.	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.

Legal / Environmental	Political
Belfast City Council currently own the site with a management arrangement in place with Loughside Boys FC.	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.
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.	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.
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."	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.
The vast range and levels of stakeholders on this site will necessitate the development of a robust management structure.	

SECTION 4

STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

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; • 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 13th February 2014 and was approved at Full Council on the 3rd 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 and active and central role in any outworkings of the stage 1 Strategic Outline Business Case.

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SECTION 5

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

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 expanded 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 sixe) 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.

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SECTION 6

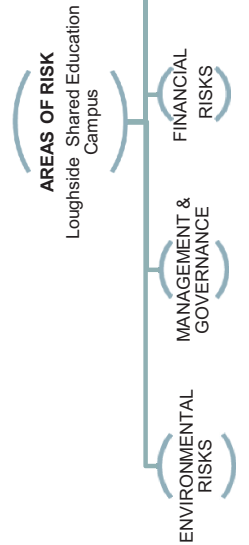# COSTS, BENEFITS AND RISKS

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.

AREAS OF RISK
Loughside Shared Education Campus

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS — MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE — FINANCIAL RISKS — ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION RISKS — EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT RISK — DEVELOPMENTAL RISK — PLANNING TECHNICAL APPROVALS — POLITICAL RISKS

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

10
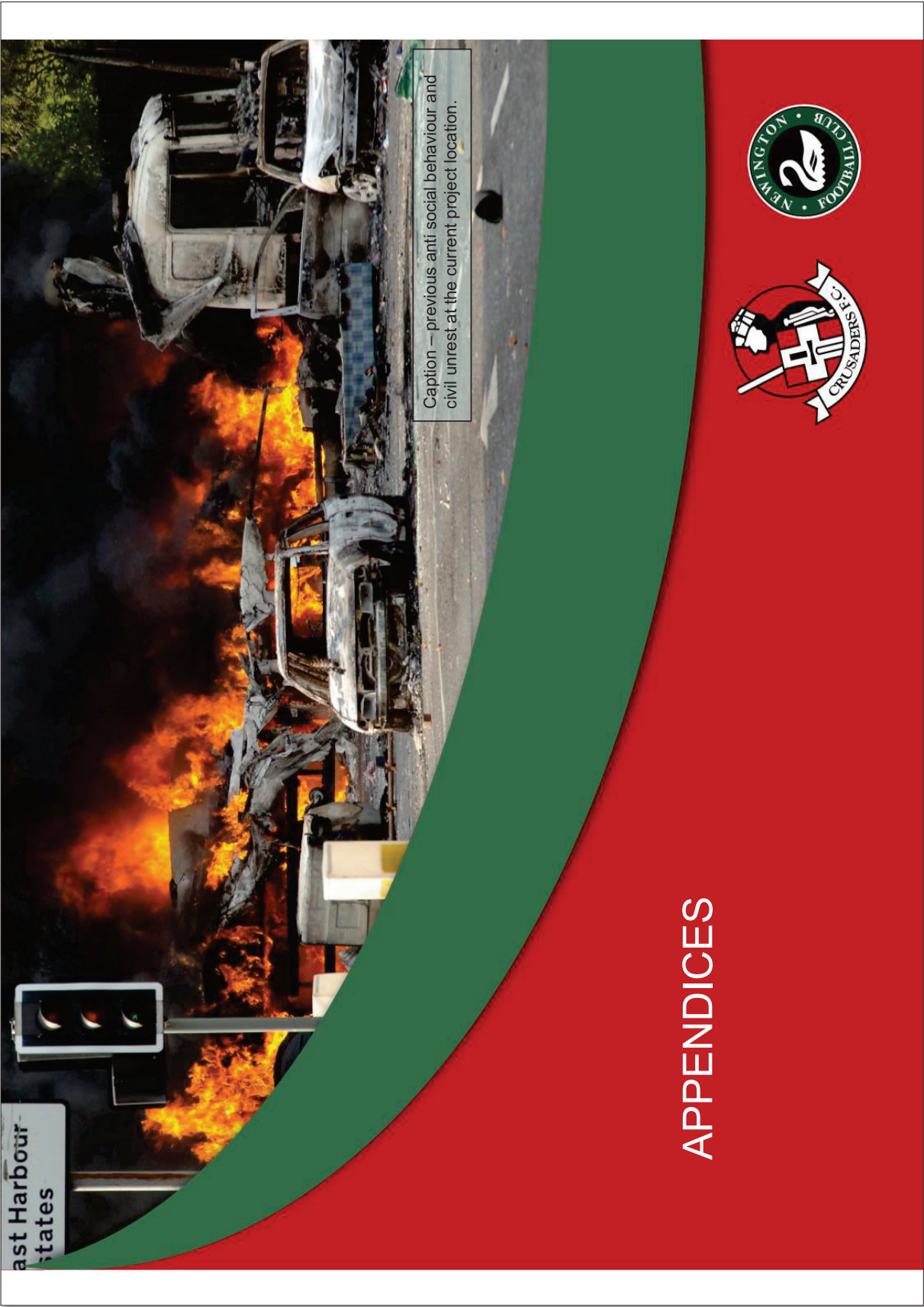
Caption – previous anti social behaviour and civil unrest at the current project location.

East Harbour Estates

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL MINUTE

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;

1490

APPENDIX 1

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL MINUTE

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
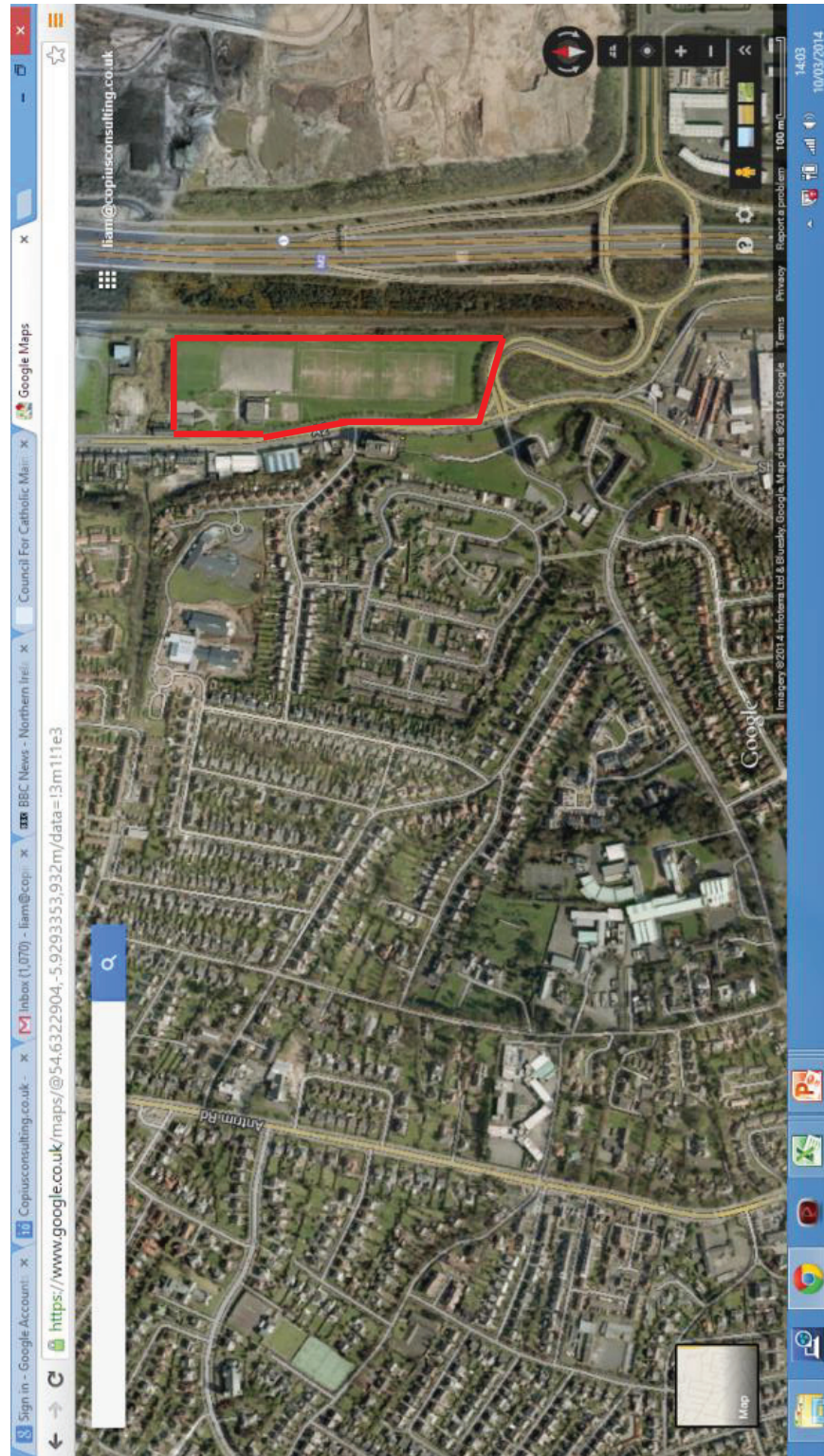
APPENDIX 3

CURRENT AND REQUIRED SCHOOLS PROVISION

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

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
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	• -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	• -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

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
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)

APPENDIX 4

CURRENT AND FUTURE COLLABORATION

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.

35x25m
MUGA

91x55m
water based synthetic
hockey pitch

55x35m
MUGA

65x45m
MUGA

Parking

Six Court
Indoors Sports
Arena

Changing / Education
pavilion

120M x 75
3G Pitch

75.000

Parking
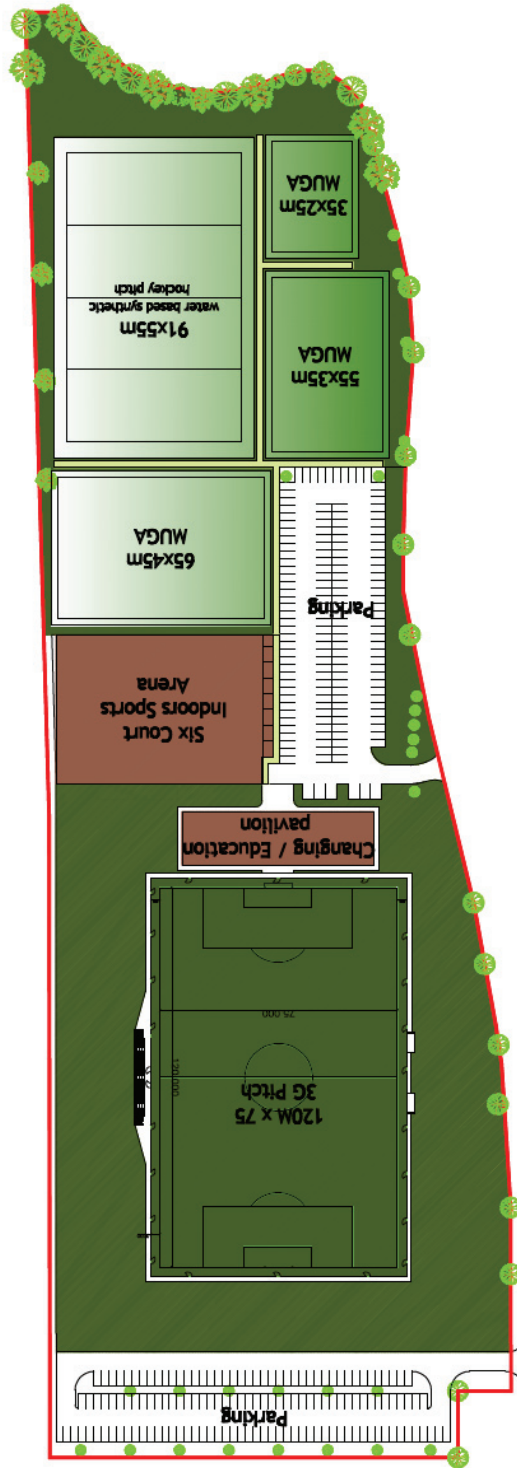
EARLY COST ESTIMATES FOR PROJECT   APPENDIX 6

EARLY INDICATION OF CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Please note that these costs will require further testing if the project moves to stage two of the process.

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

APPENDIX 7

KEY FOR THE STAKEHOLDER ISSUES

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 initiave.*[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).

APPENDIX 8

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

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

DRAFT TIMETABLE

2013-14	harmonised days	NO DAYS PUPILS IN	NO. DAYS TEACHERS IN
August	15	2	7
September	0	21	21
October	1	19	19
November	1	19	20
December	7	15	15
January	1	20	20
February	2	18	18
March	0	21	21
April	7	12	12
May	1	18	21
June	0	20	21
July	23	0	0
	58	185	195

teachers due in school 195 days
pupils between 185 and 190

Legend:
- Harmonised Closures
- Teaching Day
- 5 Baker / Inset Day (non-teaching days)
- School Development Day (up to 5days)
- OPTIONAL

APPENDIX 10

Draft Document on Learning Partnership Guidance

Hard copy of draft document is presented overleaf

APPENDIX 11

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

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 'Bearnageeha'
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

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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

APPENDIX 13

SIGNED BY BELB SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

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

South Eastern Education & Library Board

Mapping the Journey to Shared Education

1.0   Introduction

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

2.0   CRED Policy

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

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

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

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

3.0   Key Elements of the Policy

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

4.0   The Role of Teachers and Youth Workers

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

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

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

5.0   Outcomes

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

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

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

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

6.0   Future

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

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

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

7.1   The SEELB 'Learning to Live Together' programme was established to support pupils to benefit from shared educational experiences. Youth Workers applied their skills of informal social education within school settings to help realise and build the vision of a shared future. This helped to promote understanding between pupils and staff in paired post primary schools from the divided and diverse communities of Northern Ireland. It also helped to facilitate integration between the participating schools and the communities within which they were located. The project established strong strategic alliances between formal and informal education and delivery was enhanced through the sharing of skills and expertise between youth workers and teachers.

7.2   The 'Learning to Live Together' project has been operational since June 2011 and supports Cross Community contact between young people in the SEELB area. The 'Learning to Live Together' programme was a three year project facilitated by the SEELB and was funded through the International Fund for Ireland's (IFI) Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP) which seeks to break down barriers from Northern Ireland's historic conflict by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn and work together.

7.3   It brought together young people aged 11 to 16 from both sides of the community with the aim of encouraging contact, dialogue, promoting reconciliation and community relations. The project was awarded £672,000 by IFI to build bridges between schools and communities demonstrating the funding commitment to the promotion of Peace and Reconciliation. The fund also committed to help young people to benefit from shared educational experiences.

7.4   Through a combination of classroom sessions and workshops, culminating in residential experiences, young people have taken part in a variety of programme areas which allowed them to explore their understanding of prejudice, discrimination, and sectarianism and increase their awareness of diversity. Participants were also able to complete Open College Network (OCN) accredited awards.

7.5   The project has built strong partnerships between schools and the SEELB's Youth Service. Youth Workers have worked in harmony with link Teachers to support and facilitate projects that provided opportunities for young people from different community backgrounds to come together to discuss and compare differences and celebrate diversity. Participants on the 'Learning to Live Together' Project have enjoyed a wealth of different experiences which will help them to make their contribution to building a better future for Northern Ireland.

7.6   Staff from Schools and the Youth Service worked together to help pupils develop a greater understanding of their identity within the context of Northern Ireland. Teachers and Youth Workers have completed training to help them to plan for sustainability after the end of the funding period in December 2013.

8.0 **'Learning to Live Together' School Partnership Participants**

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

9.0 The 'Learning Together' Programme

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

10.0 **Key Stage 2/Key Stage 3**

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

10.2 Outcomes for pupils included:

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

11.0   Key Stage 4

11.1   The Key Stage 4 aspect of the programme had a focus on the delivery of outcomes for young people through an accredited course. The OCN Certificate in Personal Success and Well-Being was accredited by OCNNI and has the equivalence of a Grade B pass at GCSE level.

11.2   The OCN Programme consisted of a menu of Level 2 modules from which 10 were selected, to be completed over a two year period. When candidates successfully complete the 10 modules they will be awarded an OCN Certificate in Personal Success.

11.3   The normal model of delivery allowed for the majority of the modules to be delivered by the Youth Worker/Link Teacher in the school environment. However, in-built flexibility also allowed for the delivery of up to 2 modules to be   delivered by Youth Service in a community or residential setting.

11.4   The menu of OCN level 2 programmes was as follows:

- Drugs and Substance Abuse;
- Understanding Risk;
- Teamwork Skills;
- Valuing Equality and Diversity;
- Personal Identity and Self Esteem;
- Beliefs and Values;
- Understanding Relationships;
- Understanding Rights and Responsibilities in Society;
- Developing Confidence and Self Esteem;
- Enrichment Activities.

12.0   Methodology

12.1   The various elements of the 'Learning Together' Programme were delivered as discrete Curriculum Programmes timetabled to meet the needs of the targeted group of pupils. There was also an opportunity to build the various elements of the programme into existing Curriculum subject areas and timetable for example:

- Religious Education (RE) incorporated OCN Level II Unit on Beliefs and Values;
- Learning for Life and Work (LLW) incorporated OCN Level II Unit in Understanding Rights and Responsibilities in Society.

12.2   At the planning stage of the programme the school Leadership Teams and Youth Service Managers worked together to ensure that the programme was delivered to ensure the best outcomes for pupils and to facilitate timetabling within School, best utilising resources. This helped to ensure a Shared Educational approach between the School and the Youth Service.

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

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

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

13.0   Conclusion

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

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

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

13.2   The ETI suggested:

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

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

13.4   The Signature project will also make more effective and efficient use of limited resources to improve value for money.

13.5   Within the pilot phase of the Shared Education Signature Project, 4 of the schools who were involved the IFI funded 'Learning to Live Together' Programme have submitted applications for funding. These include:

- St Colm's High School (Twinbrook) and Fort Hill Integrated College (Lisburn)
- St Mary's High School (Downpatrick) and Nendrum College (Comber)

13.6   A number of other schools have indicated their intention to apply in Cohort 2. These include:

- St Malachys High School (Castlewellan) and Laurelhill Community College (Lisburn)
- Movilla High School (Newtownards) and St Columbanus' College, (Bangor)
- St Colmcille's High School (Crossgar) and Priory Integrated College (Holywood)

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

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

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

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 (SCRP) 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
Lack of Effective School Leadership: Lack of leadership and vision to promote and see the value of shared education will be a significant barrier. 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. 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.	**Effective School Leadership**: 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. 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. Existing good relationships between school leaders and staff from participating schools is clearly beneficial in providing a foundation upon which collaboration can be built.
Shared education viewed as an additional initiative to be implemented within an already crowded curriculum 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.	**A perspective which views shared provision as an opportunity to enrich and enhance the existing curriculum, rather than an additional initiative to be implemented** 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.

Barriers	Enablers
Lack of staff expertise and training 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.	**Availability of high quality professional development for all staff** 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.
Time: 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. 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.	**Time**: 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. 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.
Pupils: 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 acknowledges and attended to.	**Pupils**: 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.
Funding: Lack of adequate funding or removal of funding will inhibit the quality, depth and sustainability of sharing and collaboration.	**Funding**: 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.
Resistance from parents/ local Community: 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.	**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.

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 muted 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

Speedwell Trust

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]

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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' campuses[7], 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*

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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.ofmdfmni.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

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8   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

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.

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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.

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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.

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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

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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.ofmdfmni.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.

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26   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.

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, hightlights the 'false ecomony' 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.
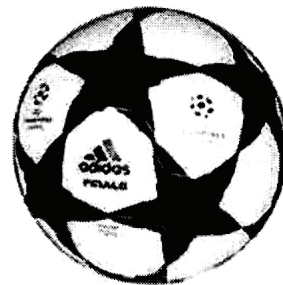
Integration is AWESOME!!!

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 dleighted 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 statue to facilitate and encourage Shared Education

Given the obligation on the Education Minster 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 overwhlemed

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 at 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 Scotalnd (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 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 schoool 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 were 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.holywood-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 Pffeifer 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 was 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 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 under estimated 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 form 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.

The Aspect Group of Prospect, International House, Turner Way, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 8EF
T 01924 207890 F 01924 369717 E aspect@prospect.org.uk W www.prospect.org.uk

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 PIEE 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

ASCL Northern Ireland

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 childrens" 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 under pin 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, 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.

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 stature 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 PIEE 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 "QH

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 Education[1]. 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 findings[2] 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 2013[3] and it will be important to listen to the views expressed in this report.

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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/Filetoupload,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 arrangments.

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 or 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

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO Chair in Education for Pluralism,
Human Rights and Democracy
Northern Ireland

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]

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[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

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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.

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[2] OFMDFM 'Good Relations Indicators – 2012 Update', published Jan 2013.

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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:

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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]

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[3] http://www.courtsni.gov.uk/en-GB/Judicial%20Decisions/PublishedByYear/Documents/2014/[2014]%20NIQB%2069/j_j_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

4

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 Alterative 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**:

5

✓ **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.**

6

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 enrols 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

WELB
WESTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

Mr P McCallion
Committee Clerk   RW/CS
Committee for Education
Room 241, Parliament Buildings
Stormont   27 February 2015
Belfast
BT4 3XX

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

| 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

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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*

1

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.

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2

Census Data - October 2013

1

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	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	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

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		Protestant N	Protestant %	Catholic N	Catholic %	Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion N	Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion %	Total pupils
0271	Strabane Controlled Primary School	86	33%	146	55%	32	12%	264
0320	Gaelscoil Neachtain	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

		Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	Total pupils
1303	Linavady 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%	1,538
50.0%		46%		93%		55%		57%

4 Maintained Primary Schools with 10%+ Protestant Enrolment

		Protestant		Catholic		Other Christian / Non-Christian / No religion		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	Total pupils
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%

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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;

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- 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;

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- 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.

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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.

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**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

YCNI Response to TBUC inquiry, October 2014

Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) 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 (YCNI) 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 YCNI 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. YCNI 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 YCNI 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. YCNI endorses the need for a continuum of provision which includes both Shared and Integrated Education.

The YCNI 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.

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