

# The Shared Education Signature Project Evaluation Report

October 2018

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ETI: Promoting Improvement in the Interest of all Learners



Providing inspection services for:  
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## Executive Summary

The Shared Education Signature Project (SESP) contributed to improving the learning experiences provided for, and the outcomes attained by, pupils across the phases. The pupils highlighted the contribution that their shared learning experiences has made to their personal, social and academic development. Through the SESP, the pupils accessed a range of creative, vibrant and stimulating learning opportunities that would not have been otherwise possible.

Effective learner-centred planning resulted in an increase in the number of pupils, staff and curricular areas involved in the SESP. In post-primary schools, there is limited cognisance taken of the shared education experiences of the pupils who have transferred from primary education. Similarly, there is limited understanding within primary schools of the post-primary experiences of pupils.

Pupils spoke very positively about the SESP, in particular the friendships that they developed and the enriched learning experiences they enjoyed. It was evident that, while proud of their own school's ethos, pupils identified with, and felt a sense of belonging to, the partnership. There was a general consensus among the pupils that all schools should be engaged in shared education.

In the best practice, the views of the pupils were listened to, valued and acted upon. Joint school councils played an important role in shaping the development of the partnerships. In a small number of partnerships, the views of the pupils were not given sufficient consideration in the planning, delivery and evaluation of shared education.

Through learning with others, the pupils developed positive attitudes, including empathy, respect and inclusion. During observations of shared learning, the pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of, and responded sensitively to, the views, opinions and feelings of others. As their involvement in the SESP developed, the pupils felt comfortable in sharing their views, ideas and aspects of their identity with one another.

Key to the success of the shared learning was the comprehensive and collaborative planning by teachers prior to lessons. Through their joint planning they aimed to ensure that the learning activities were inclusive and that account was taken of the pupils' individual learning, social and emotional needs.

Partnerships made purposeful and innovative use of spaces in schools and in their communities; activities for large groups of pupils were managed very successfully. The distance between the schools can act as a barrier to joint working; this can impact negatively on learning time and incur excessive travel costs.

When partnerships explored sensitive and controversial issues, such as aspects of history, the learning was deeper than in other situations. Learning which took place in perceived single-identity and symbolic venues challenged pre-conceptions held by pupils and adults. Not all partnerships were at a stage in their journey where they felt able to address issues that could be regarded as sensitive or controversial and there is a limited understanding of reconciliation outcomes; additionally, partnerships report that measuring pupils' attitudinal change is a challenge.

In some of the partnerships, shared education is regarded as an 'add-on' rather than an integral part of learning and teaching; this was particularly evident in post-primary partnerships. Furthermore, some of the partnerships did not recognise sufficiently the potential of key curricular areas such as Personal, Social and Emotional (PSE) development in pre-school, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) in primary schools and Learning for Life and Work (LLW) and history education in post-primary schools to support their shared learning.

Staff valued and benefitted from the joint professional learning resourced through the SESP. The SESP resulted in many of the staff reflecting on their own identities and thinking about the impact of their 'lived experience' and what they felt comfortable in discussing in the classroom. The shared education coordinators worked creatively to overcome the initial challenges of joint working and, in many instances, the coordinators reported that their professional learning increased as the partnership progressed.

In the most effective practice, partnerships worked with a range of organisations such as community relations bodies, environmental groups, and others; this work was beneficial to the pupils, the staff and the communities. There was limited evidence of partnerships evaluating the impact of working with external partners on the professional learning of staff.

Effective leaders had a clear vision for shared education which was embraced by the whole school community. In these partnerships, shared education featured prominently in the schools' development plans and was an important contributor to school improvement. In the partnerships which reached the expanding and embedding stages, a key feature was the increasing involvement and empowerment of staff in the leadership and development of shared education.

In the most effective practice, the partnership's action plan contained well-focused targets, informed by rigorous and honest self-evaluation. Staff met regularly to reflect jointly on progress in meeting their targets and, as a result, had a clear view of the impact of the work and of their way forward within the framework.

Leaders understood that the governors had an important role to play in promoting the benefits of the SESP for the pupils, their families and the wider communities. In the

most effective practice, the governors worked together to develop joint approaches to aspects of school improvement and to share perspectives on community relations.

The highly effective partnerships engaged parents in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the SESP. Partnerships overcame parental concerns about, or opposition to, shared education by highlighting the beneficial learning outcomes for the pupils.

Parents reported that they also enjoyed developing friendships with parents from the partnership school(s). In addition, the parents stated that they felt welcomed by the staff of the other school(s) and were comfortable in new and unfamiliar environments.

The SESP enabled partnerships, and in particular, young people to model good community relationships in communities where there is an absence of adult leadership in this regard. A small number of partnerships reported that they faced community opposition to shared education but they resolved to progress and celebrate the work in the best interests of their pupils.





# Introduction

## Background

Education has a key role in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in Northern Ireland, and has a crucial part to play in creating a secure and cohesive community. There is an increasing understanding by policy-makers, schools and communities that schools should contribute to reconciliation<sup>1</sup>. In the early 1980s, Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) sought to encourage contact between pupils attending controlled schools and those enrolled in maintained schools. The contact programmes of this era provided the foundations on which shared education could be built. In March 2011, the CRED policy<sup>2</sup> was launched with the aim of providing opportunities for children and young people to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions, through formal and non-formal education. This policy, which was updated through an addendum in 2016<sup>3</sup>, underpins the community cohesion aspect of shared education. Shared education focuses on providing opportunities for children and young people from different religious and socio-economic backgrounds to learn together.

## Policy Framework

The Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 provides the legislative framework for enacting shared education, placing a duty on both the Department of Education (DE) and the Education Authority (EA) to “*encourage, facilitate and promote shared education*”.<sup>4</sup>

The Shared Education Act sets out the purpose of shared education as:

- a. to deliver educational benefits to children and young persons;
- b. to promote the efficient and effective use of resources;
- c. to promote equality of opportunity;
- d. to promote good relations; and
- e. to promote respect for identity, diversity and community cohesion.

1 See for example Hughes and Donnelly (2012) Hughes, J. & Donnelly, C. (2012), 'Promoting good relations: the role of schools in Northern Ireland. In: *Everyday Life after the Conflict: The Impact of Devolution and North-South Cooperation*. McGrattan, C. & Meehan, E. (eds.). Manchester University Press p. 185-200.

2 [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/promoting-community-relations](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/promoting-community-relations)

3 Sharing works - a policy for shared education | Department of Education ([www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/sharing-works-policy-shared-education](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/sharing-works-policy-shared-education))

4 Shared Education Act [www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/20/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/20/contents)

The Act also defines the minimum core requirements for shared education as the education together of:

- a. those of different religious belief, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons; and
- b. those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not.

The Act is supported by “*Sharing Works - A Policy for Shared Education*”<sup>5</sup>, which sets out how shared education should be implemented in schools.

## Shared Education and the Northern Ireland Curriculum

Shared education complements well the objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum which requires schools to develop children and young people as individuals, as contributors to society and as contributors to the economy and the environment<sup>6</sup>. Within the curriculum, key areas such as Personal, Social and Emotional (PSE) development in pre-school, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) in primary schools and Learning for Life and Work (LLW) in post-primary schools provide significant opportunities to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills which will support children and young people to live and work in a diverse society.

Prior to *Sharing Works - A Policy for Shared Education*, inspection evidence indicated that there was variation in the quality and effectiveness in how schools prepare pupils to live comfortably with diversity and how to respond appropriately to differences in cultural identity<sup>7</sup>.

## The Shared Education Signature Project

The Shared Education Signature Project (SESP) was launched in November 2014. The project was created under the Delivering Social Change (DSC) Framework<sup>8</sup> and is funded by Atlantic Philanthropies, the Department of Education and the Executive Office. The SESP is focused on raising educational standards and promoting reconciliation through shared learning and collaborative working. Partnerships



5 [Sharing works - a policy for shared education | Department of Education](#)

6 [www.ccea.org.uk/curriculum/overview](http://www.ccea.org.uk/curriculum/overview)

7 [The Chief Inspector's Report, p25 www.etini.gov.uk/content/chief-inspectors-report-2012-2014](#)

8 [The Delivering Social Change Framework was established by the Northern Ireland Executive to tackle poverty and social exclusion.](#)

of two or more nursery, primary, post-primary and special schools were invited to apply to participate in the SESP<sup>9</sup>. In their applications, partnerships had to demonstrate an existing commitment to shared education and the educational benefits. At the time of the report, 371 schools were involved in the SESP, which exceeds the target set for 350 schools by 21%.

<b>SESP Partnership Information</b>			
	<b>All schools</b>	<b>Involved in SESP</b>	<b>% of school type</b>
Nursery	497	16	3.22%
Primary	836	246	29.43%
Post Primary	140	99	70.71%
Special	39	10	25.64%

<b>2017/2018 SESP Partnership Information</b>	
Total schools involved	371
Total number of partnerships	159
Total number of pupils	51,302
Total number of teachers	7,196

Early in the process, DE established the SESP Project Board to oversee the development, delivery and governance of the SESP programmes, with representation from key stakeholders and funders. The EA, which is responsible for the operational delivery of the project, advises, monitors and provides support for the partnerships through a team of Development Officers. In addition, the EA leads on the implementation of other shared education projects including: the Peace IV Collaboration<sup>10</sup> through Sharing in Education (CASE)<sup>11</sup> Project in partnership with

9 Application details can be found at [www.sepni.org](http://www.sepni.org)

10 [www.peaceivni.org](http://www.peaceivni.org)

11 The Peace IV CASE project became operational in late 2017 for those schools not already engaged in shared education and who did not meet the original SESP criteria for funding. The CASE project specifically targets primary and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland with limited or no previous experience of providing shared education opportunities to their children and young people.

Léargas<sup>12</sup> (RoI); the Shared Education Campuses Programme<sup>13</sup> and the leadership and co-ordination of the Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) Summer Camps programme<sup>14</sup> by the EA Youth Service.

Recently, the EA established a Network for Shared School Improvement (NSSI) within the SESP. The NSSI will develop a self-supporting network of partnerships who will collaborate and share best practice within and among schools in the SESP. A key feature of the network will be to identify and address shared education school improvement priorities.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) was commissioned by DE to provide an independent evaluation of the SESP and to issue a final report in 2018. An interim report<sup>15</sup> by the ETI was published in September 2016 which outlined the progress made by school partnerships in the programme until June 2016.



12 Léargas manage international and national exchange programmes in education, youth and community work, and vocational education and training. [www.leargas.ie/about-us/](http://www.leargas.ie/about-us/)

13 The Minister for Education launched the Shared Education Campuses programme in January 2014. Through the programme the Department of Education is seeking to invest in innovative projects involving the need for new shared facilities [www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/shared-education-campuses-programme](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/shared-education-campuses-programme)

14 Beginning in summer 2015, the Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) programme provides a range of opportunities for young people aged 11 to 19 years across Northern Ireland to come together to build positive relationships across what have become divided parts of the community.

15 [www.etini.gov.uk/publications/interim-report-shared-education-signature-project](http://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/interim-report-shared-education-signature-project)

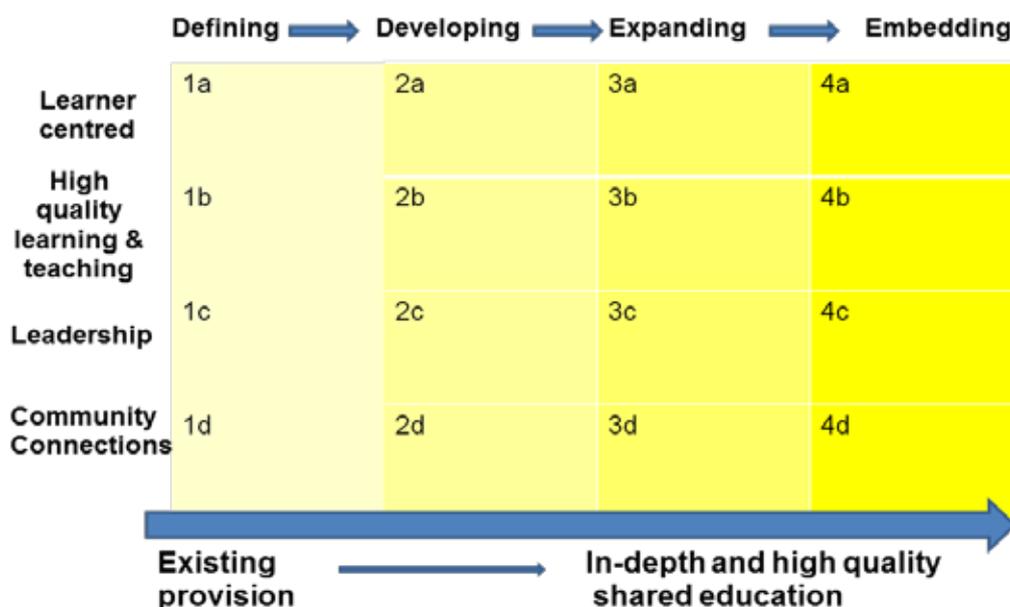
# Methodology

The aims of the evaluation were to:

- evaluate the progress in the delivery of the project;
- highlight and disseminate examples of good practice through case studies; and
- make recommendations to promote further improvement in the project in the interest of all of the learners.

The ETI created the Developing Shared Education Framework for School Partnerships (the framework) which supports partnerships in self-evaluating the quality of their shared education provision, and setting targets for development (Appendix). The framework is aligned to the four pillars of Every School a Good School: learner-centred, high quality learning and teaching, leadership and management and community connections. Two additional shared education frameworks have been created by the ETI to support early years and youth settings<sup>16</sup> in the implementation of shared education.

## The Developing Shared Education Framework for School Partnerships



<sup>16</sup> [www.etini.gov.uk/publications/developing-shared-education-framework-youth-provision-partnerships](http://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/developing-shared-education-framework-youth-provision-partnerships)  
[www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/developing-shared-education-early-years-settings-framework-collaborative-partnerships-2016-2017](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/developing-shared-education-early-years-settings-framework-collaborative-partnerships-2016-2017)

Each partnership was required, through joint self-evaluation, to identify its baseline position across the four development stages of the framework: defining, developing, expanding or embedding. The position of each partnership on the framework was quality-assured by the ETI during the baseline visit and the progress of each partnership was then measured against the baseline position in subsequent monitoring visits. Partnerships were expected to progress at least one level within three of the four pillars during the lifetime of the SESP, with the ultimate aim of progressing towards extending shared education provision and making it sustainable by June 2018.

## Evidence

From April 2015, the ETI completed evaluations of 125 of the 159 SESP partnerships. Of these 125 baseline evaluations, 107 partnerships were monitored on at least one occasion.

ETI Evaluations		
	Partnerships Baselined	Partnerships Monitored
Primary school partnerships	76	64
Post-primary partnerships	33	30
Partnerships, which included a mix of educational settings*	16	13

\*ie post-primary/primary/special/nursery or Irish Medium Education

The baseline and monitoring visits included:

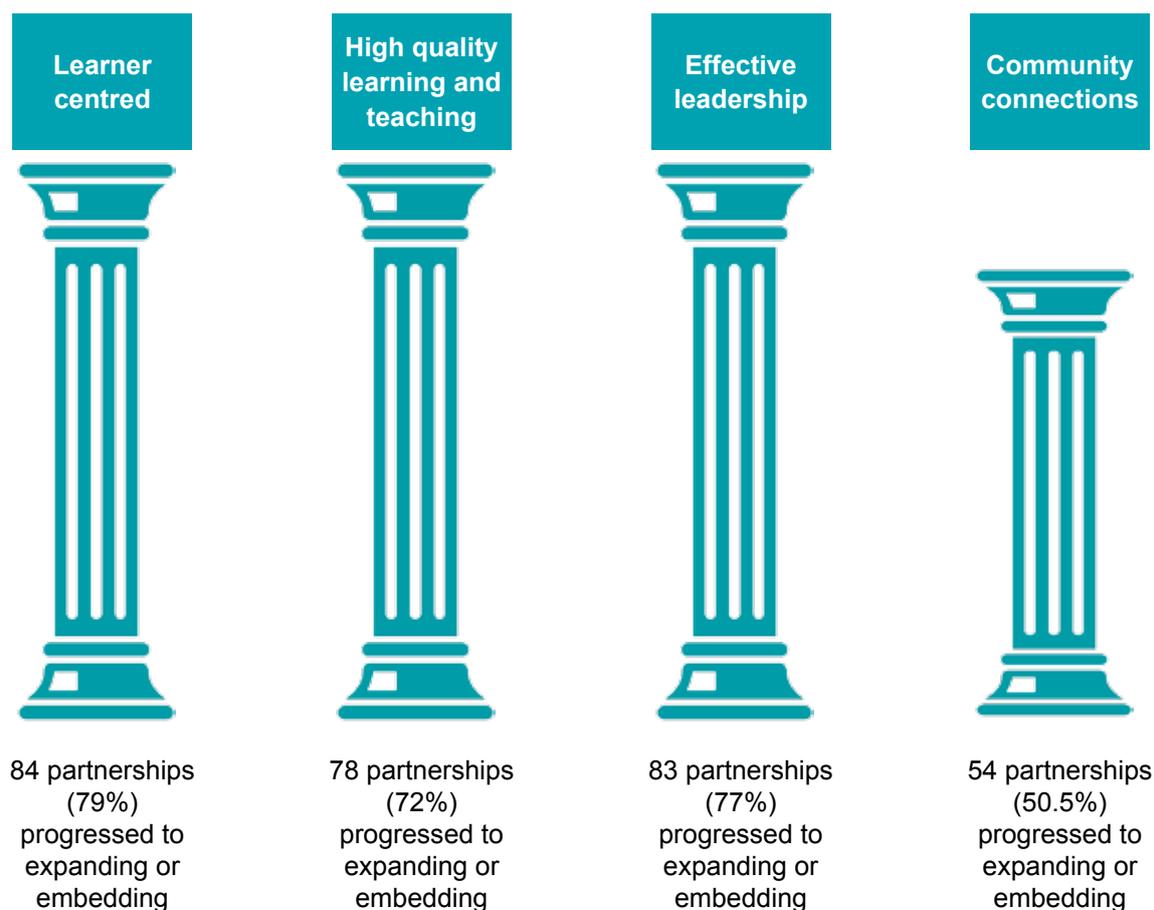
- observations of shared learning experiences;
- discussions with pupils and staff, and where possible, parents and governors involved in the SESP; and
- the review of the partnerships' SESP documentation.

As part of the evaluation, the ETI sampled a small number of the Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) courses organised by the EA.

## Key Findings

Of the 107 SESP partnerships monitored, 76 (71%) progressed one level in three of the four pillars on the framework.

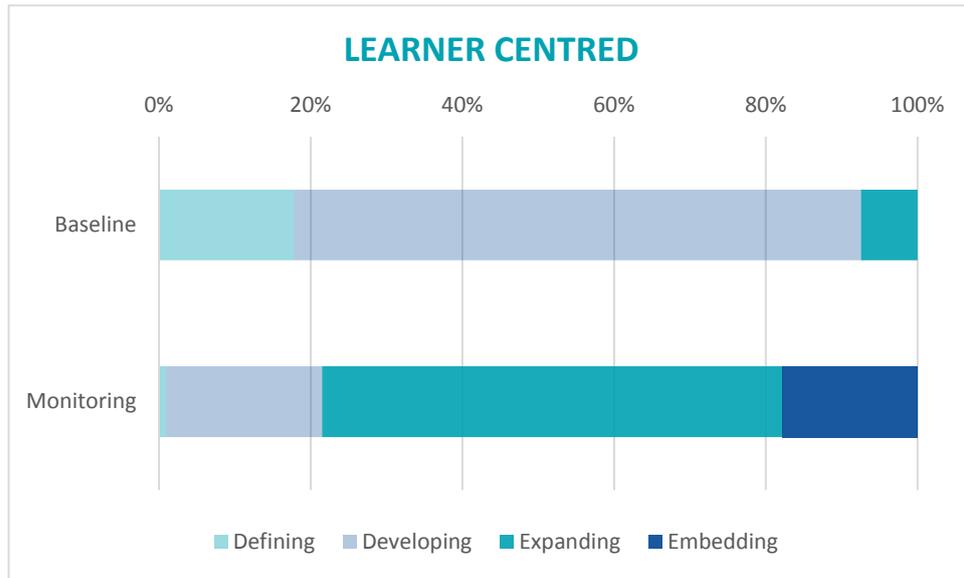
Progression through the four framework pillars:



Progression to the embedding stage of the framework	
Learner centred	19 partnerships (18%)
High quality learning and teaching	16 partnerships (15%)
Effective leadership	23 partnerships (21%)
Community connections	7 partnerships (6.5%)

There has been an increase across the reporting period in the numbers of pupils, teachers, leaders, governors, and parents involved in shared education. The target for 350 schools to be participating in the SESP by the end of the project in June 2019 has been exceeded, with 371 schools in the 159 partnerships engaged.

## Learner Centred



### Going well

In the Learner Centred pillar of the framework, 79% of the 107 partnerships were evaluated as being at the expanding or embedding stages at the time of the final monitoring visit. Through effective learner-centred action planning, partnerships increased the number of pupils, staff and curricular areas involved in the SESP. In

some partnerships every pupil and member of staff participated in, and benefitted from, shared learning. There is evidence that the SESP has contributed to improving the learning experiences provided for, and the outcomes attained by, pupils across the phases.

Through learning with others, the pupils developed positive attitudes, including empathy, respect and inclusion. During observations of shared learning, the pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of, and responded sensitively to, the views, opinions and feelings of others. As their involvement in the

"All of the pupils will have spent at least three years with their counterparts by the end of the project."

Fair Hill Primary School and St Colman's Annaclone Primary School

"Working within each other's environment is now second nature to the pupils involved. They look forward to the visits to each other's school and in some cases, are confident enough to talk openly about sensitive areas of diversity."

Fair Hill Primary School and St Colman's Annaclone Primary School

"...the partnership decided to focus on improving the children's numeracy and problem-solving skills. New mental maths resources were bought for the partnership and joint mathematics lessons were planned and facilitated for year 3 and 4 children.

The children benefitted from having a better understanding of the relevance of mathematics in real life situations through for example, a visit to a local factory and bank where they considered profits and percentage promotions and participated in a Financial Capability workshop."

Gaelscoil na Speirini and Kilross Primary School

SESP developed, the pupils felt comfortable in sharing their views, ideas and aspects of their identity with one another.

The pupils highlighted the contribution that their shared learning experiences has made to their personal, social and academic development. Importantly, the pupils recognised that these skills are key skills for life and are applicable to their career pathways. The pupils highlighted how, through their shared learning experiences, they had benefitted from new learning and teaching strategies and additional resources, for example in mathematical problem solving.

Pupils spoke very positively about the SESP, in particular the friendships that they developed and the enriched learning experiences they enjoyed. It was evident that, while proud of their own school's ethos, pupils identified with, and felt a sense of belonging to, the partnership. There was a general consensus among the pupils that all schools should be engaged in shared education.

The views of the pupils were listened to, valued and acted upon. For example, at the time of the interim evaluation report, pupils reported that they would like more time to play together and socialise. It was evident, in the later evaluation visits, that this and other ideas put forward by the pupils had informed the work of the partnerships. In addition, joint school councils played an important role in planning for and shaping the development of the partnerships. The views of pupils involved in joint school councils were well integrated into the

planning and evaluation of shared learning experiences.

When inspectors met with groups of pupils from the partnership schools, it was evident that they were at ease with one another and comfortable in one another's environments. Many of the pupils reported that they meet up after school, for example at the local youth centre and sports clubs, and that they sustained their contact by keeping in touch through social media.

"It is now normal practice for pupils and staff from both schools to openly move regularly between the two school sites to avail of an enhanced curriculum choice. The partnership has created opportunities for pupils to benefit from curricular and extra-curricular activities in both schools."

St Louis Grammar School and  
Kilkeel High School

"The result of this long history of partnership working has seen many friendships endure long past their years in primary school, with children who are now young adults still meeting with the friends they met through shared education lessons.

Teachers are close friends and consult each other on many aspects of learning and teaching outside the Shared Education umbrella. Parents have also become friends and work together on many projects outside Shared Education."

Hart Memorial Primary School and  
Presentation Primary School

"The children are well involved in the planning of their shared education experiences. Their evaluations of the programmes inform and improve the shared education provision across the partnership. Our Shared School Council have organised joint school discos, party in the park and talent shows."

Hart Memorial Primary School  
and Presentation Primary School

"Feedback from pupils through questionnaires and the School Councils highlighted the fact that pupils believe the partnership has made learning a more enjoyable and engaging experience."

Fair Hill Primary School  
and St Colman's Annaclone  
Primary School

Residential trips were particularly valued by the pupils, who reported that the free time in the evenings provided opportunities for spontaneous discussion around aspects of identity, similarity and difference.

The involvement of youth services in a small number of the partnerships evaluated made a positive contribution to developing the pupils' leadership and self-advocacy skills. In the best practice, this learning was consolidated through evening youth programmes which furthered the pupils' understanding of other communities and cultures and strengthened their friendships.

### Going forward

The pupils reported that they felt privileged to be involved in the SESP and stated that all pupils should have the opportunity to engage in similar shared learning experiences.

In a small number of partnerships, the views of the pupils were not given sufficient consideration in the planning, delivery and evaluation of shared education.



## The Pupils' Voice: Primary

Because of the friends I have made through this, I now know it will be easier to make new friends when I go to my next school...I am now not as nervous changing schools and am looking forward to making new friends.

I like how we are different cultures and religions and use different languages and we all respect each other.

I love the way we can learn how to respect how they do things different from us.

Shared Education has given us the chance to learn so much more in a fun day.

We learned about each other's traditions and learned to be accepting.

I like that we get to play together at break-time. We get to play soccer with each other.

We have been given an opportunity that our parents did not have, so I think for the future our communities will get along a lot better because we have experienced Shared Education and learned to be respectful of everyone.

We have learned that it is important to respect each other's views and cultures because not everyone is the same.

We have now been taught about acceptance and that it is ok to be different.

My favourite day in school is the day we meet up with my mates in the shared education class. We have a laugh and we discuss many topics.

I enjoyed being part of our Shared School Council 'Gaelross' as we worked together to plan decisions for our partnership.

## The Pupils' Voice: Post-primary

Through Shared Education we are given many opportunities including building friendships, breaking down barriers such as stereotypes and gaining social skills for the future. This programme's main aim is to build resilience and we believe it has developed ours. We enjoy going on shared education trips as it is a fun day out to reconnect with all our new friends. Our fondest memory of shared ed over the past couple of years has to be the residential at Ganaway. It gave us time to freely talk to anyone and everyone and also took part in enjoyable activities like a high ropes course, orienteering and archery. We really think the residential brought us closer as a group and allowed us to make memories we would cherish forever.

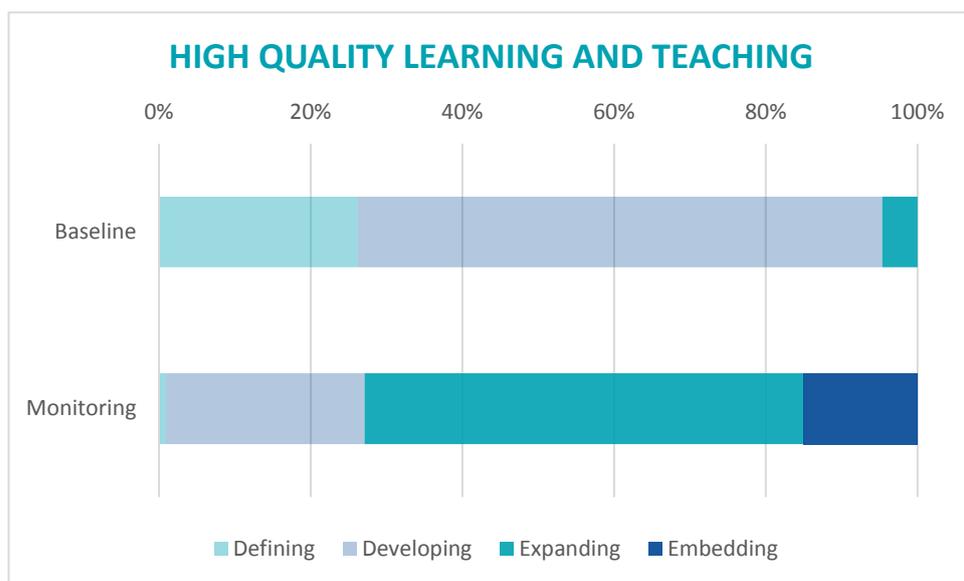
Shared education is a good programme to conduct as it is a fun way to learn and socialise. The things we learn can be academic, personal or physical. Socialising is also made easier as we are always working together. This improves our teamwork skills and strategies and the activities are always fun. Also, we learn about how to cope with carious situations in our lives and how to respond to them.

We love our shared education days out! They are always different, fun and interesting. I have enjoyed meeting new people and making new friends and it has helped improve my confidence. I enjoy the games we play and the things we learn about ourselves and other people. I just wish we had more days out with shared education.

Through shared education we have had many opportunities to make new friends and build stronger relationships between the three schools. We have had many workshops in which we learnt how to build up our resilience, enhance our positive mindset, deal with mental health and cope with pressures of exams.

Shared education is a really good way of getting to know other people from other schools. I thought that it was great to spend a day with students from my school and other schools and being involved in activities and game with them. In my opinion it was a really fun way to get to know other cultures and people from different religious backgrounds. Overall shared ed is really fun and a great opportunity to meet new people.

## High Quality Learning and Teaching



### Going well

In the High Quality Learning and Teaching pillar of the framework 72% of the 107 partnerships monitored were evaluated as being at the expanding or embedding stages at the time of the final monitoring visit. At the time of the baseline visits, only five partnerships were evaluated as being at the expanding or embedding stages. The effective collaboration and creative curriculum management of the partnerships was one of the key features of their progress through the framework. Through the SESP, the pupils accessed a range of creative, vibrant and stimulating learning opportunities that would not have been otherwise possible. As the partnerships developed their expertise and confidence, they introduced new ways of collaborating and covered a broader range of curriculum areas.

Key to the success of the shared learning was the comprehensive and collaborative planning by teachers prior to lessons. Through their joint planning they aimed to ensure that the learning activities were inclusive and that account was taken of the pupils' individual learning, social and emotional needs. In the best practice, contextual information about each school and pupil information were shared by staff so that the individual needs of the pupils were met and any barriers addressed. This dedicated time to plan for and review learning together was particularly important as more pupils and staff became involved in the partnership work, so that the pupils' learning became increasingly coherent and progressive.

"The schools' shared approach to curriculum planning and evaluation, through regular teacher consultations, has had a positive impact on the quality of planning and more importantly, on the outcomes for children."

Fair Hill Primary School  
and St Colman's Annaclone  
Primary School

"Following the self-evaluation of the first year, both schools identified that the need for a more formal method to measure pupil progress and to monitor school improvement, so this became an important aspect of the work in the second year.

In year 2 the partnership focused on literacy to improve reading standards. Joint literacy lessons were planned and facilitated weekly for year 5, 6 and 7 children. As a result of this collaboration, all of the children's reading ages improved from their Progress In English (PIE) assessment results in 2016."

Gaelscoil na Speirini and  
Kilross Primary School

Through the SESP, teachers reported the benefits of learning with, and from, one another. Teachers reflected on their strengths, developed shared resources and assessed learning through a variety of creative approaches including team-teaching, classroom observations and joint evaluations.

Importantly, the SESP resulted in some teachers reflecting on their own identities and thinking about the impact of their 'lived experience' and what they felt comfortable discussing in the classroom.

"Teachers discussed the introduction of new GCSE and A Level specifications and agreed to develop and share resources across the three schools. As a result of the meetings, teachers across the schools communicate more regularly to provide support and guidance to one another."

Lisneal College, St Cecilia's  
College and St Marys' College

"The larger mixed groupings have encouraged teachers to introduce more collaborative-based tasks where pupils investigate, record, and report findings together. The collaborative tasks also provide opportunities for children to get to know each other personally, as well as concentrate on the set task."

Fair Hill Primary School and  
St Colman's Annaclone Primary  
School

Partnerships made purposeful and innovative use of spaces in schools and in their communities for shared learning and celebratory events. Often, activities for large groups of pupils, for example in unfamiliar settings, sports grounds and community halls, were managed very successfully by staff. In addition, the choice of perceived single-identity and symbolic venues challenged pre-conceptions and enhanced the pupils' learning.

In the most effective practice observed, teachers skilfully addressed both the 'reconciliation' and the 'raising standards' objectives of the SESP, thereby developing well the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. While for some partnerships this was challenging, the pupils engaged well with the learning and with one another.

When partnerships explored sensitive and controversial issues, such as aspects of history, the learning was deeper than in other situations. Through the exploration of aspects of recent history, pupils were enabled to appreciate differing perspectives and interpretations and understand how narratives around the past have shaped attitudes and actions. The teachers, on occasion assisted by parents, provided rich learning opportunities which were supported by highly-effective questioning which promoted rigorous critical thinking and, importantly, empathy with others.

"The collaboration between both schools over the years continues to provide opportunities for pupils from both sides of the community to work together over a sustained period of time. It has allowed the young people to develop positive relationships, feel confident to express themselves and their opinions about a range of complex and difficult religious and community issues and most importantly to make new friends.

The wider curriculum has provided pupils with a greater choice of subjects, teaching environments and career pathways. In addition, student outcomes continue to improve and the academic results are extremely positive. Shared Education has become an integral part of school life within our partnership and community."

St Louis Grammar School & Kilkeel High School

## Going forward

Not all partnerships were at a stage in their journey where they felt able to address issues that could be regarded as sensitive or controversial. Some partnerships reported that they needed time to strengthen their relationships and build trust before engaging in such activities. Others stated that they did not have the



confidence and skills needed to handle sensitive and controversial issues and reported the need for ongoing professional learning and up-to-date resources, in particular in citizenship education.

Across the sector, there is a limited consensus and understanding of what is meant by reconciliation outcomes. In addition, some of the partnerships did not recognise sufficiently the potential of key curricular areas such as PSE, PDMU, LLW and history education to support their shared learning.

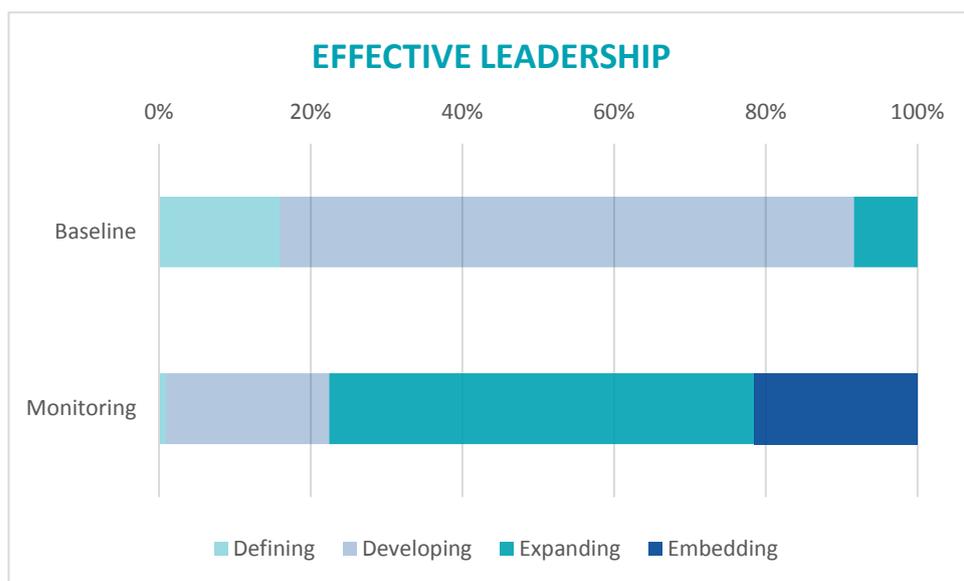
In some of the partnerships, shared education is regarded as an 'add-on' rather than an integral part of learning and teaching; this was particularly evident in some of the post-primary partnerships.

In post-primary schools, there is limited cognisance taken of the shared education experiences of the pupils who have transferred from primary education. Similarly, there is limited understanding within primary schools of the post-primary experiences of pupils.



While most teachers cite the benefits of shared education experiences on the pupils, partnerships report that measuring pupils' attitudinal change remains a challenge.

## Effective Leadership



### Going well

In the Effective Leadership pillar of the framework 77% of the 107 partnerships monitored were evaluated as being at the expanding or embedding stages at the time of the final monitoring visit. Of the 107 partnerships 23 (21%) had progressed to the embedding stage of the framework by the end of the evaluation.

"The vision of the schools is to allow all the pupils to understand each other's culture and to prepare them for a shared future in adult life."

Fair Hill Primary School and St Colman's Annaclone Primary School

Effective leaders had a clear vision for shared education, underpinned by agreed values and behaviours, which were embraced by the whole school communities. In these partnerships, shared education featured prominently in the schools' development plans and was an important contributor to whole school improvement.

"As a result of the actions taken to promote professional dialogue and collaboration, shared education is truly woven into the fabric of each school's ethos, core values and plans."

Lisneal College, St Cecilia's College and St Marys' College

"The Shared Education Project has given our schools the opportunity to work together to develop key areas we target within the curriculum in order to bring about school improvement."

St Brigid's Primary School and Ballykeel Primary School

Currently, a key focus of the partnerships is considering the aspects of the shared learning that can be sustained when the SESP finishes.

In the partnerships which reached the expanding and embedding stages, a key feature was the increasing involvement and

empowerment of staff in the leadership and development of shared education. Staff were enabled to share and use

"All middle leaders were provided with one full day to share their learning from each of the staff development sessions, identify priority actions for improvement and plan effective strategies to raise academic achievement. The professional development sessions provided middle leaders with a deeper understanding of effective strategies that promote effective practice in the classroom and how rigorous self-evaluation is used to achieve aspirational targets for pupils."

Lisneal College, St Cecilia's College and St Marys' College

their expertise, interests and own lived experiences to provide high quality learning experiences for the pupils; partnerships reported that this was both recognised and appreciated by parents and governors.

The SESP created excellent opportunities for staff development within the partnerships, which was particularly welcome in a climate where this is extremely limited due to budgetary constraints.

The shared education partnership coordinators had a clear understanding of the aims of the SESP and worked collaboratively to enable the success of the partnerships. They worked creatively to overcome the initial challenges of joint working. In many instances, the coordinators reported that their professional learning increased as the partnership progressed.

In the most effective practice, the partnerships' action plans contained well-focused targets, informed by rigorous and honest self-evaluation. Staff valued time to meet regularly with other teachers to reflect jointly on their partnership's progress in meeting their targets and, as a result, had a clear view of the impact of the work and of their way forward within the framework.

The involvement and support of governors was crucial in the development and success of the SESP. Leaders understood that the governors have an important role to play in promoting the benefits of the SESP for the pupils, their families and the wider communities. In the most effective practice, governors worked together to develop joint approaches to aspects of school improvement and to share their perspectives on shared education.

"As a result of the Shared Education Project, sharing has become very natural for both schools and they now embrace all opportunities for staff development and any individually-offered opportunities are extended to the partner school. The teaching staff greatly value the continued sharing of good practice between both schools, as well as the opportunities for continued professional development."

St Brigid's Primary School and Ballykeel Primary School

"The sharing within the partnership has evolved naturally and currently every pupil from year 1 to year 7 participates enthusiastically in shared classes and activities. The activities are delivered concurrently in each school to a mixed group of children, therefore saving on transport costs and ensuring sharing becomes part of normal school life."

St Brigid's Primary School and Ballykeel Primary School

### Going forward

While there is evidence of schools including shared education in their School Development Plans, this remains an area for further development going forward.

The distance between the schools can act as a barrier to joint working; this can impact negatively on learning time and incur excessive travel costs.

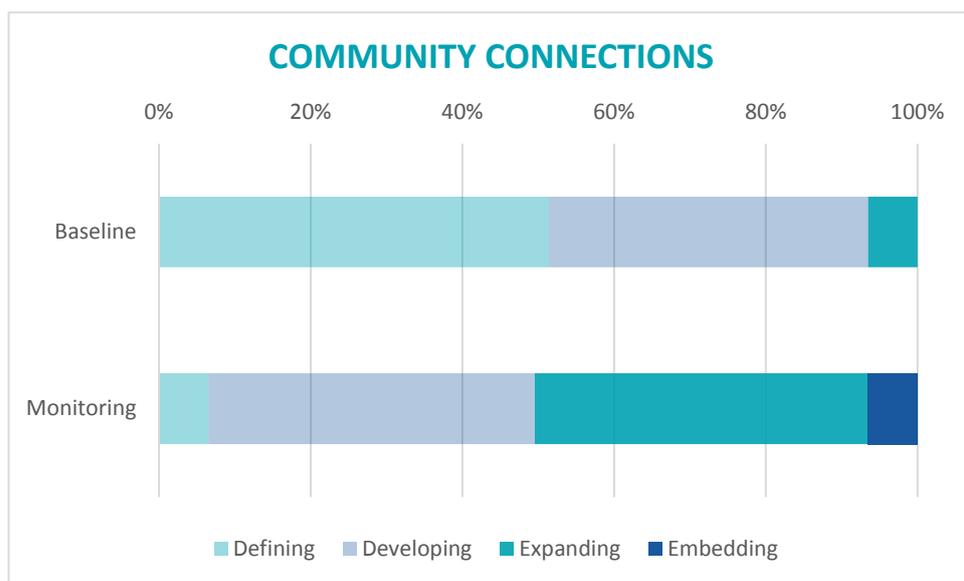
"Planning is given a high priority and shared school development projects form part of the School Development Plans for both schools."

Hart Memorial Primary School and Presentation Primary School

There was evidence of inequality of access to shared learning, particularly for some larger schools where not all pupils were able to engage in and benefit from the SESP.

Some partnerships reported that they were unable to avail of the Teachers Professional Learning courses due to the short notification period; in addition they reported that there was insufficient time to arrange substitute cover.

## Community Connections



### Going well

One of the key strengths of our project is the positive engagement from members of the community including parents, local business owners, school governors and various political representatives. Community engagement has had a positive impact both on pupils and the local community. Through the establishment of strong community links members of the community are aware of the positive aspects of shared education and are motivated in supporting our projects.

Crumlin Integrated College, Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, St Joseph's Primary School and Crumlin Integrated Primary School

In the Community Connections pillar of the framework just over 50% of the partnerships were evaluated as being at the expanding or embedding stages at the time of the final monitoring visit. This contrasts sharply with the baseline evaluations when 55 (51%) of the 107 partnerships were evaluated as being at the defining stage in their community connections. By the end of the evaluation, seven partnerships still remained at the defining stage.

The highly effective partnerships engaged parents in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the shared learning activities. A range of approaches were used, such as joint parental workshops, parental participation in shared classes and attendance at celebratory events.

From the start of the SESP, schools used a variety of methods, including questionnaires and focus groups, to seek parental views on shared education and the impact of the SESP on their children. Partnerships overcame parental concerns about, or opposition to, shared education by highlighting the beneficial learning outcomes for the pupils.

Parents reported that, as well as their children benefitting from the SESP, they also enjoyed developing friendships with parents from the partnership school(s); this

was particularly evident in the nursery and primary partnerships. The modelling of good relations and friendships by the parents and the staff in the presence of the pupils was identified by the parents and the

staff as a valuable outcome in pre-school shared education. The parents reported that they valued highly the pupils' developing early friendships and having ongoing opportunities to learn through the SESP. In addition, the parents stated that they felt welcomed by the staff of the other school(s) and were comfortable in new and unfamiliar environments.

"Staff members attend parent-teacher meetings in each other's schools which has firmly established positive relationships with parents from all sides of the community."

St Louis Grammar School & Kilkeel High School

"Parents report how valuable they have found the experience and how they could adapt what was presented, in the many areas and stations, to a home environment with their own child. Parents and children from both schools continue to integrate naturally, with friendships and connections that will be nurtured into the future."

Oakfield Primary School and Acorn Integrated Primary School

The SESP enabled partnerships, and in particular pupils, to model good community relationships in communities where there is an absence of adult

leadership in this regard. Pupils reported that they were disappointed and frustrated by the lack of leadership shown by adults in creating a shared future.

"We view the SESP as an opportunity to promote community cohesion and inclusivity while keeping learning at the heart of the project."

Crumlin Integrated College, Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, St Joseph's Primary School and Crumlin Integrated Primary School

"To overcome community perception issues about the programme and to promote social cohesion, the partnership developed successful intergenerational projects which focused on arts and crafts and social interaction activities between the children and the elderly in local care homes. In addition, parents recognise and value the benefits to their children of the new resources and learning opportunities provided through the shared education programme."

Gaelscoil na Speirini and Kilross Primary School

In the most effective practice, partnerships worked with a range of organisations including community relations bodies, environmental groups, and residential homes for the elderly. In the intergenerational projects, shared learning experiences were enjoyed by the pupils, the staff and the elderly residents.

"The delivery of each project relies on the participation of members of the community to enhance the learning experience for pupils. A local historian and fishermen actively participate in the delivery of lessons. They bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our projects and pupils are able to avail of resources and develop skills they would not normally access without shared learning."

Crumlin Integrated College, Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, St Joseph's Primary School and Crumlin Integrated Primary School

A small number of partnerships reported that they faced community opposition to shared education but this only increased their resolve to progress the work in the best interests of their pupils and to promote and celebrate their shared learning in the community.

## Going forward

Partnerships reported that Community Connections was the most challenging of the four pillars, especially where shared education is not understood or valued by the communities.

"In a divided community, the Shared Education Project has afforded our pupils, teachers, Board of Governors and wider school community to develop understanding, reconciliation and friendships with one another."

Hart Memorial Primary School and Presentation Primary School

Most of the partnerships reported that making greater connections with their local community was a key area for them to develop further. From the outset of the evaluation, it was evident that connecting to the local community was a challenge for many of the partnerships; at the

time of this report only seven partnerships had progressed to the embedding stage of the framework.

"We endeavour to bring our joint partnership ethos to the community "working together for a brighter future".

Crumlin Integrated College, Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, St Joseph's Primary School and Crumlin Integrated Primary School

There was limited evidence of partnerships evaluating the impact of working with external organisations on the professional learning of staff.



# Learning for the Education Sector

## The Strategic Overview of Shared Education

A key feature of the success of the SESP has been the strategic leadership provided by the SESP Project Board, the DE and the EA. Through the Project Board, key stakeholders have worked collegially and collaboratively, steering the development of shared education. The Department of Education has guided, supported and provided appropriate challenge to the EA in the ongoing management and delivery of the project, drawing on the Department's extensive expertise from previous community relations programmes. The EA has had a consistent focus on the continuous development and improvement of the project. The EA's staff have been responsive to the evolving needs of the partnerships, drawing on the expertise of the SESP Project Board to resolve emerging issues and progress the project.

## The Contribution of Education to Community Cohesion

While all areas of learning in the curriculum are required to contribute to the development of children and young people as individuals, as contributors to society and as contributors to the economy and the environment, particular subjects and areas of learning offer significant opportunities. The Chief Inspector's Report<sup>17</sup> noted that:

*A key objective of the Northern Ireland Curriculum is to develop children and young people as contributors to society and key subjects bear responsibility for providing classroom learning that promotes understanding as a foundation for shared education experiences.*

The evaluation indicates that, while the SESP in general has had a positive impact on the attitudes of the pupils towards others, there is a need for further support in the delivery of the curriculum, in particular, through subjects that offer opportunities to explore aspects of identity, culture and history. To help pupils consolidate their learning, more explicit links should be made between shared education, developing attitudes and dispositions in subjects such as PSE, PDMU, LLW and history education.

Further debate and clarification is required for the sector to develop a common understanding of the key terminology, for example reconciliation and shared education. Some partnerships reported that they have struggled with the objective of 'reconciliation' and expressed a preference for a term such as 'understanding'. In some of the partnerships, the teachers reported that the pupils had little knowledge of Northern Ireland's recent history and peace process and did not understand, or have

<sup>17</sup> The Chief Inspector's Report 2012-14, p25 The Chief Inspector's Report, p25 [www.etini.gov.uk/content/chief-inspectors-report-2012-2014](http://www.etini.gov.uk/content/chief-inspectors-report-2012-2014)

any experience of sectarianism. Others have reported that while the pupils had not lived through conflict, the impact of the period was evident in the collective memories of the local community and in some instances, had resulted in some level of hereditary trauma. There is a need for more knowledge of, and a wider debate about, how schools are addressing the perceived gap in pupils' knowledge and understanding of the recent past, and the contribution education can make to community cohesion.

## Accessing Shared Education

The SESP was open to schools which already had an established partnership. Therefore, not all schools could apply to be involved in the SESP. The geographical location and availability of partner schools in some communities is a challenge; during the evaluation, some schools reported that it had been difficult to find partner schools within their vicinity. At the time of this report 71% of primary schools and 29% of post-primary schools were involved in the SESP. Further work is required to establish why more schools are not participating in shared education, and to inform the education sector and communities in general about the benefits of shared education. The recent Peace IV Collaboration<sup>18</sup> through Sharing in Education (CASE)<sup>19</sup> Project aims to target those schools who could not meet the application criteria for the SESP.

The regularity of contact is important for pupils to build relationships with one another; however, managing contact can be very challenging in practical terms. This was particularly evident in post-primary schools, where timetabling and external examinations had to be considered. This underpins the importance of long-term planning by the partnerships.

For shared education to have the greatest impact on pupils and society, there needs to be a coherent pupil pathway from pre-school through to the end of post-primary education, which builds progressively the pupils' self-awareness and understanding of others.

## Professional Learning

Shared education is making an effective contribution to developing leadership across the partnerships and can contribute further to creating learning leaders, learning organisations and learning communities. The EA and the partnerships recognise the importance of continuous staff development to empower and build capacity among staff.

"All middle leaders were provided with one full day to share their learning from each of the staff development sessions, identify priority actions for improvement and plan effective strategies to raise academic achievement."

Lisneal College, St Cecilia's College and St Marys' College

<sup>18</sup> [www.peaceivni.org](http://www.peaceivni.org)

<sup>19</sup> The Peace IV CASE project became operational in late 2017 for those schools not already engaged in shared education and who did not meet the original SESP criteria for funding. The CASE project specifically targets primary and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland with limited or no previous experience of providing shared education opportunities to their children and young people.

A key feature of the partnerships which made the most progress within the framework was their distributed and empowering leadership opportunities.

The EA has placed an appropriately high focus on building teachers' pedagogic practice and expertise through TPL. While the schools that attended mostly reported the benefit of this training to their professional development, some issues were raised including; the short notification period for the courses, the application process and the cancellation of courses due to low numbers.

"Annually, all staff spend one day planning and a further day evaluating the outcomes of the programme. Around half of the staff have also benefitted from new Teacher Professional Learning days."

Fair Hill Primary School and St Colman's Annaclone Primary School

Teachers reported that they felt inspired by the learning on the TPL courses and that they acquired new ideas. However, there is need for the TPL courses to focus more clearly on how teachers can facilitate pupils to develop values, attitudes and skills and understand better those held by others. Going forward, there is a need to develop and deliver training which empowers teachers to address controversial and sensitive issues confidently.

The EA's recent introduction of a Joint Practice Development (JPD) programme is an important and well-conceived development and supports teachers through an appropriate focus on classroom-based action research. Additionally, the NSSI clusters will be well placed to determine and provide locally based training matched to the needs of the teachers and pupils.

## **Sustaining Shared Education**

The issue of sustainability beyond the life of the SESP is an important one, given the level of investment by the funders. While teachers and leaders expressed high levels of commitment to the partnership and the work, in many situations they reported concerns about the sustainability of the work, particularly given the proportion of spending on travel for pupils and teacher release. They were apprehensive that the benefits accrued to date for the partnerships and their communities might diminish if they could no longer access sufficient funding. The context, nature and journey of each shared education partnership is unique; it is shaped by the needs of the pupils, the capacity of the staff and leadership and the support and understanding of parents and the local community.

Connecting with the local community proved to be a challenge for most of the partnerships. Most partnerships engaged well with parents and recognised the importance of parental support for their shared education work. In addition, the new friendships that many parents reported set an excellent example to their children. However, while the engagement with parents has been positive, further work is required to engage with the wider community.

Feedback from school leaders has highlighted the benefits of collaboration; for example, sharing resources including additional facilities, teachers and staff training. Partnerships have found the additional funding available for shared education and the efficiencies gained through sharing resources invaluable in a climate of budgetary challenges.

Many of the partnerships have moved from single shared education events to more sustained programmes and classes. The most effective shared learning experiences involved opportunities for the teachers to facilitate whole class and small group discussions where the pupils explored issues which were relevant to their academic, social and personal lives.

With the inclusion last year of shared education indicators in the ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework<sup>20</sup>, the reporting on the impact of shared education on school improvement, learning and teaching and pupil outcomes will continue to contribute to school reports. Over the last 12 months, there has been an increase in the reporting on shared education in mainstream inspection reports, for example:

*“the school is involved in a shared education programme and a cultural exchange initiative which have enriched significantly the educational experiences for the pupils and staff involved.”*  
(St Dominic's High School, Belfast, October, 2017)

*“In discussion with inspectors, a group of year 14 pupils spoke with inspiring maturity, honesty and good humour about their experiences in a shared education programme with their partner school in Lisburn. The pupils praised the programme, valued the friendships gained and talked about the significant attitudinal changes they have experienced as a result of this involvement in shared education. The pupils acquired and can apply problem-solving skills, which they use in real life situations to alleviate poverty, demonstrate social responsibility and address appalling local issues, which destroy individuals and communities, such as suicide.”*  
(St Colm's High School, Twinbrook, November 2017)

<sup>20</sup> ISEF [www.etini.gov.uk/articles/inspection-and-self-evaluation-framework-isef](http://www.etini.gov.uk/articles/inspection-and-self-evaluation-framework-isef)

## Recommendations

### Department of Education:

1. To develop a coherent plan for mainstreaming and reporting on the progress of shared education.
2. To continue to explore ways of ensuring that the benefits achieved through the SESP can be consolidated and built upon, including through creating opportunities for partnerships to learn from the most effective practice and encouraging public awareness of the benefits of shared education for partnerships and communities.
3. To encourage effective practice in subjects such as PDMU, LLW and history education which contribute to shared education by promoting pupils' understanding of identity and culture.
4. To support schools in measuring the outcomes and impact of shared education, including developing effective methods of monitoring and evaluating attitudinal change.
5. To promote and encourage a pupil pathway of shared education experiences from pre-school through to the end of post-primary education, which builds progressively the pupils' self-awareness and understanding of others.

### Education and Training Inspectorate:

1. To develop further the shared education self-evaluation framework to reflect the learning from the SESP.
2. To consider how shared education continues to be evaluated and reported on.
3. To consider how key curricular areas such as PSE, PDMU, LLW and history education are contributing to shared education through the development of pupils' attitudes and dispositions.

## **Education Authority:**

To continue to provide professional learning and support for the partnerships, including through:

1. supporting the partnerships to enhance and develop further their community connections;
2. working with leaders, staff and the NSSI to identify and address the development needs of the partnerships, including support with creative methods of collaborative curriculum design and delivery;
3. developing, in liaison with other agencies, up-to-date resources and guidance which are matched to the personal, social and community issues which pupils face currently, including controversial and sensitive issues;
4. assisting partnerships in the development of methods of evaluating educational and reconciliation outcomes for pupils as a result in their participation in shared education; and
5. building the capacity of staff to understand the issues faced by their pupils and to explore the issues that are relevant to their communities.

## **Partnerships:**

1. To continue to explore ways of sustaining shared education beyond the SESP's lifetime, so that learners, staff and communities continue to benefit from the achievements to date.
2. To progress further the community connections dimension of their partnership through developing closer working relationships with others in the community, including, for example, the youth service.
3. To develop partnership approaches to learning and teaching curricular areas such as PSE, PDMU, LLW and history education so that the potential of these subjects to contribute to shared education is realised.
4. To ensure that the pupils' views and ideas are a key feature of the planning, delivery and evaluation of shared learning.
5. To develop, with key stakeholders, a pupil pathway in shared education from early years to post-primary which is coherent and progressive.

## Case Studies

### Presentation Primary School and Hart Memorial Primary School

#### Context

Hart Memorial Primary School and Presentation Primary School have a long history of working together for over 20 years. This began with EMU, CRED and the Primary Curriculum Partnership programme and in the last three years the Shared Education programme. Led by the principals from both schools, working initially with one class, growing to eleven classes, and currently ten of the shared lessons involve team teaching.

#### Action

There are close working relationships among all of the staff in both schools who plan together on curricular areas, and the Boards of Governors who come together once a year to discuss Shared Education at joint Board of Governors' meetings. Each Board of Governors has a shared education representative who also attends regularly the parent focus group meetings.

Planning is given a high priority and shared school development projects form part of the School Development Plans for both schools. The partnership has held joint Continued Professional Development opportunities for all staff, teaching and non-teaching, in areas such as Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and newcomer issues. Teachers recognise the benefits to learning and teaching from planning together and analysing their monitoring and evaluation of joint lessons.

Over the past three years, we have seen an increasing role played by both our Shared School Council and our Shared Parents Focus group. Both these groups meet regularly to discuss ideas, which as a partnership we use to develop further their deep friendships and to progress the learning and teaching for all of our children.

The children are well involved in the planning of their shared education experiences. Their evaluations of the programmes inform and improve the shared education provision across the partnership. Our Shared School Council have organised joint school discos, party in the park and talent shows. They have created a Shared school logo which adorns our Shared Education tee shirt that every child wears when singing our Shared school song at the start and end of every joint lesson this year. Our Shared School Choir have showcased our shared school song during performances in community venues such as local shops, care homes and at many other community gatherings. The Shared School Council have benefitted from real life practicalities such as organising buses and contacting organisers from the local council.

## Impact

The result of this long history of partnership working has seen many friendships endure long past their years in primary school, with children who are now young adults still meeting with the friends they met through shared education lessons. Teachers are close friends and consult each other on many aspects of learning and teaching outside the Shared Education umbrella. Parents have also become friends and work together on many projects outside Shared Education.

In a divided community, the Shared Education Project has afforded our pupils, teachers, Board of Governors and wider school community to develop understanding, reconciliation and friendships with one another.

## **St Brigid's Primary School and Ballykeel Primary School**

### Context

St Brigid's Primary School opened in 2007 and as a new school was keen to foster links with Ballykeel Primary School, which is a school of similar size. The collaborative work of staff and pupils from St Brigid's and Ballykeel began in January 2012 with the launch of the 'Media Initiative for Children: Respecting Difference' programme. Successful CRED Enhancement and PACT<sup>21</sup> funding applications paved the way for collaborations through the SESP.

### Action

The continued and ongoing success of the PDMU activities in year 1 and year 2, and the strengthening relationships between the two school communities, led to World Around Us being identified as an area of development and collaboration between both schools. The sharing within the partnership has evolved naturally and currently every pupil from year 1 to year 7 participates enthusiastically in shared classes and activities. The activities are delivered concurrently in each school to a mixed group of children, therefore saving on transport costs and ensuring sharing becomes part of normal school life. We value our pupils' views and opinions regarding our collaboration, and the establishment of our joint school council has ensured there is an increased pupil voice regarding Shared Education. The discussions that take place within council meetings subsequently feed into school improvement.

Outside of their SESP work, the partnership has continued to develop established shared learning experiences, namely joint staff development days and basketball activities. Many staff members also meet socially as a result of friendships formed through the partnership.

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<sup>21</sup> Promoting A Culture of Trust

## Impact

As a result of the Shared Education Project, sharing has become very natural for both schools and they now embrace all opportunities for staff development and any individually-offered opportunities are extended to the partner school. The teaching staff greatly value the continued sharing of good practice between both schools, as well as the opportunities for continued professional development.

Additionally, The Shared Education Project has given our schools the opportunity to work together to develop key areas we target within the curriculum in order to bring about school improvement. Staff sharing available training that is relevant and engaging has enthused teachers and enabled highly productive outcomes. Fundamentally, the schools' governing bodies are extremely supportive of the partnership.

Evaluations of completed parental questionnaires lead the partnership to confidently conclude that the programme is having a positive impact upon all their children and ultimately, the wider community.

## **Gaelscoil na Speirini and Kilross Primary School**

### Context

Gaelscoil na Speirini and Kilross Primary School, which are just over 3½ miles apart, have been working together for the past six years. In the first 3 years, they had worked together through the Reconciling Communities Project, Decade of Commemorations, and the CRED Project.

The partnership has almost completed its third year of the shared education programme which is focusing on overall school improvement to raise attainment in both schools.

### Action

In the first year of the shared education programme, the focus for the children was on the World Around Us. They start with the topic of "Being and Belonging" through which the children get to know themselves, each other, their communities, the partnership school and the staff. In this first year 'Gaelross Mini Enterprise' was set up; Gaelross was the pupils' agreed name for the programme.

Following the self-evaluation of the first year, both schools identified that the need for a more formal method to measure pupil progress and to monitor school improvement, so this became an important aspect of the work in the second year.

In year 2, the partnership focused on literacy to improve reading standards. Joint literacy lessons were planned and facilitated weekly for year 5, 6 and 7 children. As a result of this collaboration, all of the children's reading ages improved from their Progress In English (PIE) assessment results in 2016.

In addition, the children discussed sensitive issues such as flags, discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping, cultural symbols and enjoyed a joint drumming workshop.

In year 3, following the improvement in the children's engagement and ability in reading during year 2, the partnership decided to focus on improving the children's numeracy and problem-solving skills. New mental maths resources were bought for the partnership and joint mathematics lessons were planned and facilitated for primary 3 and 4 children.

The children benefitted from having a better understanding of the relevance of mathematics in real life situations through for example, a visit to a local factory and bank where they considered profits and percentage promotions and participated in a Financial Capability workshop.

Going into year 4, the partnership have jointly evaluated the need for the development of pupils' and staff ICT skills.

## Impact

The partnership has formed a joint School Council called Gaelross through which the pupils make decisions regarding their shared learning experiences. For example, Gaelross voted on how our partnership could celebrate Easter and Christmas time together. The children's work on this project promoted unity through a sense of their shared traditions, and when the local press published the winners of the partnership's Easter Egg Hunt the children were delighted.

To develop further positive cross community relations, our joint council contributes to and distributes a Gaelross Newsletter throughout each school. It celebrates the children's achievements and the treasury of opportunities they participate in, as a direct result of shared education. To overcome community perception issues about the programme and to promote social cohesion, the partnership developed successful intergenerational projects which focused on arts and crafts and social interaction activities between the children and the elderly in local care homes. In addition, parents recognise and value the benefits to their children of the new resources and learning opportunities provided through the shared education programme.

Teachers believe that our shared education partnership has made a difference in the following ways:

- Improving standards within both schools
- Tracking progression rigorously to inform planning going forward.
- Delivering high quality staff development
- Supporting reflective practice; and
- Improving community interactions.

## **Fair Hill Primary School and St Colman's Annaclone Primary School**

### **Context**

Fair Hill Primary School is situated in Kinallen with an enrolment of 310 pupils. St Colman's Primary School is located in Annaclone with an enrolment of 220 pupils. The schools entered the Shared Education signature project in 2015 after working together previously in an Art and ICT project linked to community groups in both locations. The major themes have been Science Technology English and Maths (STEM), Information Communication and Technology (ICT) and Diversity.

The vision of the schools is to allow all the pupils to understand each other's culture and to prepare them for a shared future in adult life.

### **Action**

The key to the partnership's successful development of STEM, ICT and PDMU is the time and investment afforded to the continuing professional development of staff and the shared planning of the lessons. Fundamentally, shared teaching, over full days, has improved curriculum development as well as social dynamics.

Annually, all staff spend one day planning and a further day evaluating the outcomes of the programme. Around half of the staff have also benefitted from new Teacher Professional Learning days. A partnership with the AMMA centre, focusing on the development of ICT, has resulted in increasingly positive outcomes for the children.

The children have two school based topic days and an educational trip at the end of the project. All of the pupils will have spent at least three years with their counterparts by the end of the project.

## Impact

Working within each other's environment is now second nature to the pupils involved. They look forward to the visits to each other's school and in some cases, are confident enough to talk openly about sensitive areas of diversity.

The larger mixed groupings have encouraged teachers to introduce more collaborative-based tasks where pupils investigate, record, and report findings together. The collaborative tasks also provide opportunities for children can get to know each other personally, as well as concentrate on the set task.

The teachers have embraced the creative activities in PDMU and STEM and developed these for pupils with the use of more open-ended tasks. Creation of a video game in year 3 and coding in year 7 served to 'motivate the children and also provided access for pupils who may be discouraged by the writing element of such activities. Well-planned and developed learning experiences are increasing pupils' STEM and ICT skills, which will benefit them greatly as technology continues to advance.

The schools' shared approach to curriculum planning and evaluation, through regular teacher consultations, has had a positive impact on the quality of planning and more importantly, on the outcomes for children. Lessons in STEM have been redefined, resulting in increased pupil engagement and increasingly high standards.

More recently, the development of the partnership's work within PDMU and sensitive areas of diversity has been positively received and feedback from pupils through questionnaires and the School Councils highlighted the fact that pupils believe the partnership has made learning a more enjoyable and engaging experience. The partnership has also been fundamental in establishing several genuine friendships between the children.

## **Oakfield Primary School and Acorn Integrated Primary School**

### Context

The partnership started with a solid foundation resulting from work on the Community Relations Equality and Diversity NI (CRED) programme with key stage two classes from both schools. The next natural step was to extend this through Shared Education with the aim of involving all classes from Nursery to year 7. Within a relationship built on trust, common areas for development were identified and actions planned to address these. The areas identified included activity-based learning and numeracy. The overarching aim of making a positive difference within the wider community, was achieved through collaborative work involving stakeholders including the staff, parents, pupils and governors.

## Action

Carefully planned training in a number of areas which married to the shared school development needs, was rolled out to stakeholders. A useful example was the playful learning course facilitated by Stranmillis College. Staff returned enthused about their shared learning and disseminated the key points to all staff. The practical outworkings of this resulted in the direct development of outdoor learning within each school. Parents from both schools subsequently attended a seminar, provided by school staff, followed by a practical and interactive joint play session with the children from their Year 1 classes.

## Impact

Staff now feel empowered to confidently deliver activity-based learning and have the capacity to sustain this improvement. Parents report how valuable they have found the experience and how they could adapt what was presented, in the many areas and stations, to a home environment with their own child. Parents and children from both schools continue to integrate naturally, with friendships and connections that will be nurtured into the future. Significantly, through the Queens University Survey, the Year 7 pupils report increased confidence, regarding their transition to post-primary schools, as a direct result of the extensive friendships made through our Shared Education programme.

## **Lisneal College, St Cecilia's College and St Marys' College**

### Context

To raise achievement across the three schools, opportunities for professional dialogue and the sharing of good practice were identified as key enablers to pupils' success at Key Stage 4 and Post 16.

### Action

Professional development sessions were offered to all teaching staff across the schools. Differentiation, the use of ICT and digital technologies, and the effective monitoring and evaluation of standards were agreed as priority areas across the three schools.

The heads of department for English and Maths were provided with time to meet during each term to share successful current practice, plan, monitor and review the strategies implemented across the three schools. All middle leaders were provided with one full day to share their learning from each of the staff development sessions, identify priority actions for improvement and plan effective strategies to raise academic achievement.

New activities to attract and retain more children from Lisneal College were introduced to the Saturday school.

## Impact

The professional development sessions provided middle leaders with a deeper understanding of effective strategies that promote effective practice in the classroom and how rigorous self-evaluation is used to achieve aspirational targets for pupils.

Teacher feedback provided guidance on future joint professional development across the schools.

Teachers discussed the introduction of new GCSE and A Level specifications and agreed to develop and share resources across the three schools. As a result of the meetings, teachers across the schools communicate more regularly to provide support and guidance to one another.

Teachers and leaders understand and value the impact that shared education can have on promoting achievement and professional learning, as well as improving community relations.

Over 22 Lisneal College pupils attend St Mary's College each week for Saturday school. This is a significant increase on the previous academic year. Pupils are much more relaxed attending events in other schools.

As a result of the actions taken to promote professional dialogue and collaboration, shared education is truly woven into the fabric of each school's ethos, core values and plans.

## **Crumlin Integrated College, Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach, St Joseph's Primary School and Crumlin Integrated Primary School**

### Context

Crumlin is a small town that has recently experienced rapid population growth and boasts a diverse community made up of people from different backgrounds. We view the SESP as an opportunity to promote community cohesion and inclusivity while keeping learning at the heart of the project.

The four local schools in Crumlin have been participating in shared learning since January 2016. Pupil participation has increased from 69 pupils in year 1 to 300 pupils in year 3. Pupils from year 5 to year 10 are currently involved in the programme. With the unique nature of our cross phase SESP, including pupils from three primary schools and one post primary school, it was crucial to ensure that shared lessons had learning at the core while remaining accessible and relevant to all pupils.

We currently deliver three programmes of shared learning within the 'World Around Us/ Environment and Society' curriculum set in the context of our community and wider area.

## Action

Each programme of learning begins in September with ice breaker events and following the completion of six lessons, including educational visits, ends with a celebratory event in June.

The delivery of each project relies on the participation of members of the community to enhance the learning experience for pupils. A local historian and fishermen actively participate in the delivery of lessons. They bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our projects and pupils are able to avail of resources and develop skills they would not normally access without shared learning.

Outdoor learning is at the core of lesson planning and pupils come together to visit shared spaces in the local area, including the Crumlin Glen and Crumlin Community Centre. The close proximity of the four schools means pupils can easily move around the community to partake in lessons, at different schools, adding to the sustainability of the project.

## Impact

The success of shared learning is evident from pupil and community feedback, and community connections are considered to be embedded within our partnership.

Through pupil discussion and feedback, it has become apparent that pupils view shared spaces within the community differently, for example Crumlin Glen. Pupils stated that they feel more comfortable availing of services in the community and that the relationships they have established have increased their confidence when embarking on new experiences.

One of the key strengths of our project is the positive engagement from members of the community including parents, local business owners, school governors and various political representatives. Community engagement has had a positive impact both on pupils and the local community. Through the establishment of strong community links members of the community are aware of the positive aspects of shared education and are motivated in supporting our projects.

Our Shared Education Project has provided opportunities for members of the wider and school community to meet and establish relationships beyond the school environment. SESP has highlighted that the promotion and development of reconciliation within the pupil body and the community have gone beyond the contrived and unnatural. Through our SESP we are establishing relationships across all sections of the community together for the common good of Crumlin. We endeavour to bring our joint partnership ethos to the community “working together for a brighter future”.

## St Louis Grammar School & Kilkeel High School

### Context

Since the Specialist Schools initiative in 2009, both schools have continued to collaborate enabling the partnership to develop and strengthen as the number of joint workshops and events increased. A shared sixth form curriculum began in 2010 with Engineering and COPE being offered as new subjects in both schools. The number of joint subjects offered has also increased significantly; currently we have joint classes in seven subjects plus a wide range of other activities, including extra-curricular, subject specific events, parent events, staff development and collaboration between departments.

### Action

Since beginning the SESP project, and in order to develop the programme further, an action plan was developed with the support of the EA which focussed on four key areas; Learner Centred, High Quality Learning and Teaching, Effective Leadership and Community Connections. Each school appointed coordinators that work closely together with both school Principals as a team to deliver targets set and planned outcomes for the partnership. It is now normal practice for pupils and staff from both schools to openly move regularly between the two school sites to avail of an enhanced curriculum choice. The partnership has created opportunities for pupils to benefit from curricular and extra-curricular activities in both schools. Facilitated by successful joint CPD events hosted in both schools, staff now work collaboratively developing and sharing new teaching resources and sharing expertise. Staff members attend parent-teacher meetings in each other's schools which has firmly established positive relationships with parents from all sides of the community. The partnership also hosts joint parent events such as Internet Safety and other curriculum and pastoral workshops. This collaborative work is strengthening year on year and is now becoming more embedded in the junior year groups within the partnership.

### Impact

The collaboration between both schools over the years continues to provide opportunities for pupils from both sides of the community to work together over a sustained period of time. It has allowed the young people to develop positive relationships, feel confident to express themselves and their opinions about a range of complex and difficult religious and community issues and most importantly to make new friends. The wider curriculum has provided pupils with a greater choice of subjects, teaching environments and career pathways. In addition, student outcomes continue to improve and the academic results are extremely positive. Shared Education has become an integral part of school life within our partnership and community.

# Appendix

## Developing Shared Education

### A Framework for School Partnerships

#### Introduction

Whilst our education system reflects historical divisions in society, the benefits of educating children and young people together are increasingly recognised. In recent years, the concept of Shared Education has developed to provide opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.

Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together for better education and reconciliation outcomes.

Shared Education is defined as the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- Meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;
- Involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- Delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

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

The vision is for:

*Vibrant, self-improving Shared Education partnerships delivering social change through educational benefits to pupils; promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion; and encouraging the efficient and effective use of resources.*

## Shared Education to date

Since the early 1980s, DE has developed and implemented a range of programmes to promote cross-community relations by bringing young people from each of the two main traditions together. The overarching aim was to improve mutual understanding and relationships between the two main traditions without excluding any other tradition. Many schools also developed their own working relationships with other schools from different backgrounds independently. In 2011, DE launched a new Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy which encouraged schools and youth settings to work collaboratively.

In recent years, and with the support of external funding from the International Fund for Ireland and the Atlantic Philanthropies, the concept of a more strategic approach to Shared Education has evolved and a series of pilot projects were implemented.

## Wider context

Shared Education is developing within a wider legislative and policy context that is designed to promote equality and good relations.

“Building a Strong and Shared Community” has been recognised by the Northern Ireland Executive both as a key priority within its *Programme for Government 2011-15* (PfG) and as essential to the growth of a strong, modern economy and society. The PfG sets out three specific objectives for the Department of Education relating to Shared Education:

- to establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to advise on advancing Shared Education;
- to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in Shared Education programmes by 2015; and
- to substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

The Executive’s commitment to creating a united, reconciled and shared society is also outlined in the Together: *Building a United Community Strategy* which presents a vision for society based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation. It lays the foundations for a transformed and more shared society in the future and Departments are working together to ensure outcomes are delivered on the ground.

The strategy undertakes to “*enhance the quality and extent of Shared Education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience*”.

Shared Education sits within a broader education policy framework designed to improve educational outcomes for young people and tackle the significant tail of educational under-achievement that has characterised our education system by breaking the cycle of social disadvantage, educational failure and restricted life chances. Notably, the system has embedded both the concepts of self-evaluation and collaborative delivery that evidence indicates are necessary in the development of effective Shared Education programmes.

### The case for shared education

There is an extensive body of international research regarding the effectiveness of school collaboration generally and in divided societies more particularly.<sup>22</sup> This has been supplemented by specific local evidence, particularly a series of evaluations of Shared Education pilot projects. These include major reports by the Education and Training Inspectorate and the Atlantic Philanthropies funded Sharing in Education Learning Forum on the impact of Shared Education in schools.<sup>23</sup>

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.

### Shared education going forward

With funding from the Executive, the Department of Education and Atlantic Philanthropies, the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project will provide the means to support Shared Education to develop in schools over the next four years. Funding of £25 million over four years will be available. This represents a significant commitment against the backdrop of an extremely challenging financial

<sup>22</sup> The report of the Ministerial Advisory Group provides an extremely useful literature review of both international research evidence and local studies.

<sup>23</sup> ETI, A Final Evaluation of the International Fund for Ireland's Sharing in Education Programme (November, 2013); RSM McClure Watters, Evaluation of the Sharing Education Programme - Programme Level Summative Evaluation Report (May 2014)

landscape in the coming years. This funding will focus initially on schools that have already engaged in this work.

The overall aims of the Signature Project are to scale up the level of sharing drawing on existing evidence; mainstream financial support for any additional costs and improve the educational and reconciliation outcomes in schools working collaboratively. School projects will provide opportunities for shared curricular learning experiences. The projects will increase the extent, frequency and continuity of meaningful shared contact between peer groups over the funded period. School partnerships must demonstrate clear educational benefits resulting from the project, including reference to planned improvement in educational and reconciliation outcomes for learners within the curriculum.

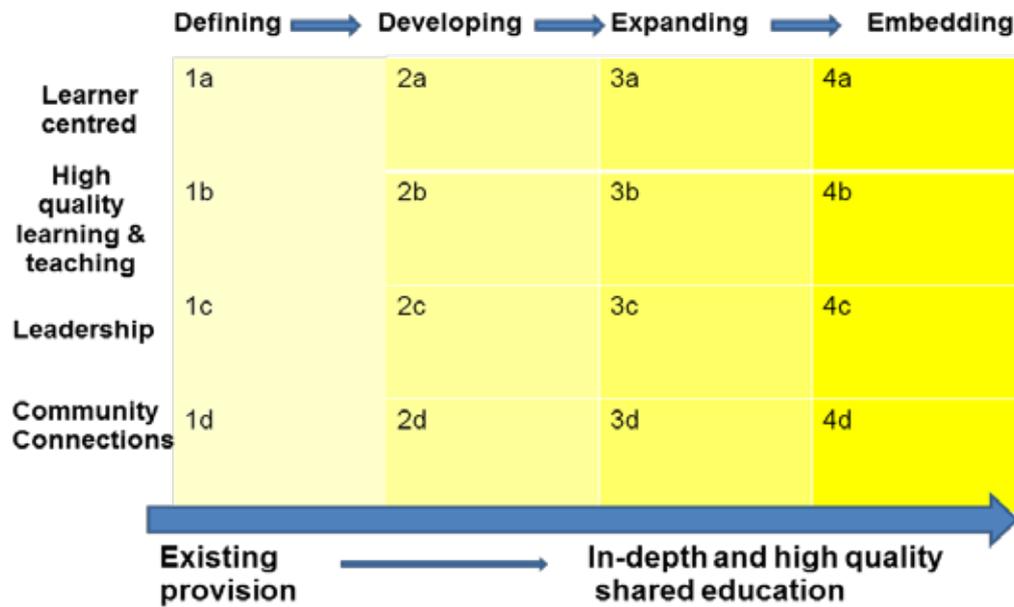
In addition, the Peace IV Programme will provide funding to support further the development of Shared Education in schools that have not yet engaged in Shared Education, as well as across pre-school and youth work settings in a way that will complement the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Programme. The ETI will inform DE and stakeholders through the ongoing evaluation of the learning from the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Programme on how best to support educational establishments in offering shared education in the longer term from 2018 onwards.

### The framework

This framework provides school partnerships with the means of self-evaluating the extent and quality of their shared education provision and to set targets for development. Schools are at different starting points along a continuum in regard to shared education. For some, they are beginning their journey to build true understanding rather than compliance, and for others, in embedding high quality shared education.

ETI will work alongside schools in supporting the development of quality in shared education through honest and robust self-evaluation, recognising the time, resources and strategic planning needed to progress shared education effectively. It is not intended given the starting point of different partnerships that all will reach 'embedding' after 4 years. Key here will be the partnership identifying the progress made in demonstrating measurable educational outcomes and delivering social change by achieving conditions in schools and communities whereby children and young people become better learners, more fully engaged in learning and more likely to demonstrate positive attitudes, dispositions, behaviours, understanding of reconciliation and respect for others.

## Self-evaluation: Mapping our<sup>24</sup> journey to effective shared education



<sup>24</sup> Schools should seek to engage in self-evaluation as a partnership at the outset in order to plan collaboratively joint actions to bring about improvement.

Learner-centred	Defining 1a	Developing 2a	Expanding 3a	Embedding 4a
<p><b>Participation in shared education</b></p>	<p>Schools identify the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop learning beyond predominantly single settings and one-off events</li> <li>Seek ways to give pupils a say into shared learning</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage pupils in single class/year group in sustained shared education activities to learn better</li> <li>Listen and act on pupils' views on shared education</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage groups of pupils in more than one class/year group in sustained shared education to learn better</li> <li>Use pupils' views to inform the improvement of shared learning</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage pupils in multiple classes/year groups and beyond the classroom in sustained shared education to learn better in a planned and progressive way</li> <li>Integrate pupils' views across partnership in the ongoing review process for further development of shared learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Surmounting barriers eg cognitive, emotional, social and physical</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have greater awareness of diverse backgrounds and experiences of pupils</li> <li>Build capacity to meet wider needs of pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit, identify and understand diverse backgrounds of pupils</li> <li>Develop strategies and structures to help pupils work with others from differing backgrounds to surmount barriers to learning and achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan collaboratively and use effective strategies and structures to enable pupils to surmount barriers to learning and achievement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, monitor and review collaboratively consistent and well-developed strategies and structures to enable pupils to surmount barriers to learning and achievement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcomes<sup>26</sup> Education and reconciliation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve outcomes for pupils</li> <li>Develop pupils' understanding in how to engage in promoting reconciliation for life and work in NI and globally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and target strategies to improve outcomes</li> <li>Develop pupils' understanding about intended outcomes of shared education in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting the aims of NI curriculum</li> <li>Helping them to learn and attain better</li> <li>Developing skills in promoting reconciliation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate progress in measurable outcomes for pupils across the curriculum and beyond the classroom</li> <li>Prepare pupils better for their next stage of education and the diverse world of life and/or work through acquiring skills in reconciliation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate improved measurable outcomes for pupils through shared education across their curriculum experience</li> <li>Prepare pupils well for their next stage of education and the diverse world of life and/or work through their knowledge, understanding and skills in reconciliation</li> </ul>

<sup>25</sup> For example, at developing stage, sustained could mean a minimum of 6 quality shared contact sessions, expanding to a minimum of 12 shared contact sessions and at embedding stage, shared classes are daily/weekly.

<sup>26</sup> Educational outcomes could include skills in communication, using mathematics, ICT, thinking skills and personal capabilities, attitudes and dispositions for learning, behaviours, attendance, punctuality, progress measured through internal data and standards in public examinations/accreditation.

	<b>Defining 1b</b>	<b>Developing 2b</b>	<b>Expanding 3b</b>	<b>Embedding 4b</b>
<b>High quality learning and teaching</b>	<b>Defining 1b</b> Schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the need to understand effective planning for sustained shared education beyond events</li> </ul>	<b>Developing 2b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit provision for shared education, identify and plan steps for development including extra-curricular/enrichment activities</li> <li>Implement agreed plans to develop high quality shared education across partnership</li> </ul>	<b>Expanding 3b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan for effective shared education throughout the curriculum and beyond the classroom</li> <li>Monitor and review regularly the effectiveness of planning and implementation to bring about improvement in processes and outcomes</li> </ul>	<b>Embedding 4b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and embed coherent and effective shared education throughout the curriculum and beyond the classroom</li> <li>Involve pupils regularly to inform planning for continuous improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Quality of learning experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the need for pupils to be included more fully in the learning environment through experiential and meaningful shared learning</li> <li>Consider what shapes identity and ways to be at ease with difference</li> </ul>	<b>Developing 2b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to plan, develop and facilitate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive, inclusive learning environments</li> <li>Effective learning strategies and methodologies</li> <li>High quality shared learning</li> </ul>	<b>Expanding 3b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to facilitate and expand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive, inclusive learning environments and methodologies in shared classes across the partnership</li> <li>High quality shared learning and engage pupils to attain better</li> </ul>	<b>Embedding 4b</b> Partnership staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create safe, respectful and high quality shared learning environments</li> <li>Use effective learning strategies consistently to enable high quality shared learning and to improve pupils' attainment</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment for, and of, shared education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek ways to baseline pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, dispositions and behaviours in shared education from which to track progress</li> </ul>	<b>Developing 2b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a baseline of pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, dispositions and behaviours in shared education from which to track progress</li> </ul>	<b>Expanding 3b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and use a range of methods to monitor and track progress in pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, dispositions and behaviours in shared education</li> </ul>	<b>Embedding 4b</b> Partnership schools collaborate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track and evaluate consistently, progress in pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, dispositions, and behaviours in shared education to inform next steps across the partnership</li> </ul>

Effective Leadership	Defining 1c	Developing 2c	Expanding 3c	Embedding 4c
<p><b>Strategic leadership for shared education:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLT</li> <li>• MLT</li> <li>• Governance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SLT and MLT initiate work to clarify an agreed understanding of shared education in partnership</li> <li>• Governors engage in process to seek agreement and/or clarity about the aims and purposes of shared education</li> <li>• Schools identify the need for their ethos to reflect more fully in reality at all levels a respect for diversity and mutual respect</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership schools: Consult with governors, staff, parents and pupils to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a clear vision for shared education in the local context</li> <li>• Agree benefits of shared education for pupils and wider community</li> <li>• Review their partnership ethos</li> <li>• Evaluate critically how best to develop aims of shared education</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership schools: (SLT, MLT, staff, governors, parents and pupils) collaborate across the partnership to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate clearly their vision for shared education</li> <li>• Expand shared education through governance, curriculum, planning, learning and teaching collaboratively across partnership</li> <li>• Reflect the aims of shared education through ethos, pastoral policies and processes</li> </ul>	<p>Partnership schools: (SLT, MLT, staff, governors, parents and pupils) collaborate across the partnership to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish collaborative leadership and management of shared education</li> <li>• Develop collective ownership for outcomes and quality provision</li> <li>• Embed shared education through governance, curriculum, planning, learning and teaching</li> <li>• Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote mutually respectful working relationships at all levels through jointly-developed pastoral policies and processes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Action to promote improvement in shared education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared education yet to feature clearly in the schools' development plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct honest and frank evaluation of the extent and quality of shared education to inform development plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jointly evaluate and develop sharply-focused action plans to improve pupil outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate, refine and implement actions to ensure improved outcomes for pupils</li> </ul>

Effective Leadership	Defining 1c <i>(continued)</i>	Developing 2c <i>(continued)</i>	Expanding 3c <i>(continued)</i>	Embedding 4c <i>(continued)</i>
<p><b>Empowering and supporting staff in shared education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole-staff/governors training on shared education required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify effective practice in shared education</li> <li>• Empower staff to identify their own needs for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)</li> <li>• Designate personnel to lead and manage shared education</li> <li>• Collaborate, plan and deliver professional development to develop staff confidence and competence in shared learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable staff to access CPD regularly to identify and disseminate effective practice in shared education</li> <li>• Designate teams across the partnership to lead and manage shared education to promote coherence across provision, policy and practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed ongoing CPD targeted to address those areas of shared education practice which prove complex and challenging, including embedding collaborative leadership at all levels</li> <li>• Motivate and enable staff to provide high quality shared education</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources/ Accommodation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources and accommodation are not yet shared with another school or wider community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share resources and accommodation between schools and wider community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan the allocation of resources and accommodation between schools and wider community to provide shared learning and value for money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and use resources and accommodation between schools and wider community to improve shared learning experiences, value for money and outcomes for pupils</li> </ul>

Community Connections	Defining 1d	Developing 2d	Expanding 3d	Embedding 4d
<b>Parents/Carers</b>	<p>Schools identify the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable parents/carers to understand the aims of shared education within context of NI curriculum and between partnership</li> </ul>	<p>Partnerships schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop ways to engage parents/carers on the purpose, benefits and expected outcomes of shared education</li> </ul>	<p>Partnerships schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform parents/carers regularly of emerging outcomes of shared education between partnership and their views are used to inform improvement</li> </ul>	<p>Partnerships schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage parents/carers in the review of outcomes of shared education to inform further development</li> </ul>
<b>External partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote links between schools and external partners beyond those which are ad hoc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit the extent, depth and quality of liaison with external partners</li> <li>• Engage appropriately with external partners to support shared education practice and to build staff capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link and build on existing effective shared education practice by external partners</li> <li>• Evaluate existing practice delivered by external partners to inform future planning and focus on building capacity of school staff to deliver</li> <li>• Model the values and effective practice of partnership working in collaboration with external partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and evaluate collaboration with external partners to demonstrate impact on pupils outcomes</li> <li>• Build strong internal staff capacity to facilitate high quality sessions with less dependence on external partners</li> </ul>
<b>Community access and engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend access by the local community to school resources and activities to develop shared education</li> <li>• Engage with diverse community voices on shared education</li> <li>• Consider ways for pupils to share their shared education experiences across the schools and the local community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop opportunities for local community access to both schools' resources and activities</li> <li>• Engage appropriately with diverse community voices on reaching an understanding of the complexities of shared education</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for pupils to share the outcomes of their shared education experiences across the schools and the local community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek and use greater community engagement effectively to promote shared education</li> <li>• Use issues raised from diverse community voices to inform collaborative planning</li> <li>• Enable more pupils to share the range of outcomes of their shared education experiences with local community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ongoing community access to schools' resources and activities to promote shared education and community cohesion</li> <li>• Respond proactively to issues raised from diverse community voices, including skilful handling of communication and media</li> <li>• Share and celebrate regularly the outcomes of shared education with local community</li> </ul>



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## **The Shared Education Signature Project Evaluation Report**

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October 2018

