
‘Supporting the Programme for Government Commitments on Shared Education’

Held on Thursday 13 December 2012, Riddel Hall, Queen’s University Belfast

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AGENDA

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<td>• Queen’s: demonstrating how school partnerships evolve to become effective collaborators</td>
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Notes from the Minister

Some of the barriers to shared education exist within education, people’s mindsets, in communities.....

Some of our legislation is a barrier to shared education. It may require a change in legislation.

We all need to challenge ourselves about how far we are willing to go for shared education.

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What is Shared Education?

Shared Education refers to schools from different sectors working together in a sustained process ranging from two or more schools making shared use of specialist facilities, through to co-ordinated timetabling and pupils taking classes across a network of schools.¹

The focus of Shared Education is delivering core curriculum activities where teachers and pupils work together across schools to achieve higher quality educational experiences. The delivery model involves four basic stages:

1. Establish partnerships between schools
2. Build collaborative links
3. Shared classes and activities
4. Promote economic, education and reconciliation outcomes

Shared education recognises that schools have interdependent relationships and promotes positive collaboration to support the common good. Ultimately it is about creating interdependencies between schools and making boundaries porous – it isn’t about threatening anyone’s identity or the creation of a Catholic/Protestant hybrid.
Supporting the Programme for Government Commitments on Shared Education

Partners in the Shared Education Project

The three partners that comprise the Shared Education Learning Forum (SELF) are as follows:

The Fermanagh Trust: a community foundation dedicated to creating a partnership of donors, non-profit-making organisations and the community, to find solutions to the pressing community needs in Fermanagh. The Fermanagh Trust is a registered charity which was established in 1995 to promote any charitable activities and initiatives which lead to social and community development that improve the conditions of life for the people in County Fermanagh and immediate hinterland. Since its inception, the Trust has supported hundreds of community-based projects in Fermanagh.

The Fermanagh Shared Education Programme develops linkages between schools from different sectors and builds bridges between the two main communities, creating the potential for future joint working, sharing and collaborating. It is hoped that the Shared Education Programme will contribute to the development of more integrative, cohesive and sustainable communities in Fermanagh.

NEELB/PIEE: the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) was established in 1973 and its constitution, as revised, is laid down in the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986. The Board consists of 35 members, appointed by the Minister responsible for the Department of Education for Northern Ireland, and is representative of the following: each District Council in the Board’s area; transferors’ interests; trustees of maintained schools; and those with an interest in the services for which the Board is responsible, including the Library Service, Youth Service and teachers. The Board is the local education and library authority for most of County Antrim and the eastern part of County Londonderry, comprising the Local Government Districts of Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Larne, Magherafelt, Moyle and Newtownabbey.

The Primary Integrating/Enriching Education (PIEE) sharing project is located within the NEELB. The project aims to support primary schools from different sectors, in close geographical proximity, to collaborate. The project is targeted at primary schools with an enrolment of less than 105 pupils. The schools in each partnership focus on curricular development in the areas of The World Around Us, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and The Arts, as well as providing opportunities for the continuing professional development of staff and opportunities for joint activities for parents and governors.

Queen’s University Belfast: the School of Education plays a leading role in influencing the development of educational policy and practice in Northern Ireland and has an established reputation for providing challenging and rewarding courses for professionals on both full-time and part-time bases. The School is a leading research centre, with an extensive range of national and international partnerships. The Shared Education Programme is one of the major research and development projects in the School and is supported by a Masters programme on Collaborative Leadership.

Key features of shared education

• Offers local solutions to cross-sectoral working (as opposed to a ‘one size fits all’ area planning approach)
• Works best where schools are in close proximity to avoid transportation costs of sharing
• Basis of sharing is sustained contact in the delivery of core curriculum activities
• Clear education, economic, reconciliation and social justice effects
• Maintains the identity of communities, threatening no-one’s ethos

How does it work?

In practical terms the implementation of this model is best exemplified through the Shared Education Programme (SEP) which started in 2007, is funded jointly by the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies, and is managed by the School of Education at Queen’s University, the Fermanagh Trust and the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Project in the North Eastern

Education and Library Board. The programme currently involves 150 schools, 44 partnerships and 11,000 children on a yearly basis. Three short examples illustrate shared education in practice:

(a) Enhanced Qualifications Framework: six schools in the Magherafelt area (two Maintained, two Controlled, one Integrated and one Special Education Needs school) provide support for Year 13 pupils to prepare them for third-level education by extending the post-16 curriculum provision. There are 29 different shared subjects/courses offered to all Year 13 pupils on a weekly basis. Overall 390 pupils availed of the subjects on offer, resulting in 574 hours of shared classes being delivered. The delivery model implemented by the partnership involves the majority of subjects being taken as ‘twilight’ classes and the remaining subjects are embedded into the school timetable in a collaborative block.

(b) Rural Primary Schools: two small adjoining rural primary schools (Controlled and Maintained, respectively) in Tempo, County Fermanagh came together to enhance the educational experience for pupils and teachers through collaborating with one another rather than working separately. Each of the 176 pupils within the two schools was given the opportunity to participate in shared classes in drama, dance, art and design, health related fitness, and science. All the subjects contributed to the pupils’ development within the NI Curriculum. A joint shared education policy has been developed between the schools, and teachers have also collaborated for staff development (e.g., Child Protection and First Aid training) and curriculum planning. Parental endorsement has been hugely positive in an area which has a significant legacy of conflict.

(c) Shared Teacher Initiative: two primary schools (Controlled and Maintained) within the North Eastern Education and Library Board area, each of whose futures may be at risk due to low enrolment, separately formed an education partnership to deliver the curriculum at Key Stage 2 in areas such as literacy, personal development and mutual understanding, music, art and sports. Such was the success of the collaboration that this partnership now employs a shared teacher appointed by a joint board of governors – an initiative which offers much wider potential for schools throughout Northern Ireland.

What are the benefits of Shared Education?

In our view, there are three significant benefits arising from shared education relating to: economic, education, and reconciliation.

Economic benefits: shared education between schools which have enrolment, educational, or financial difficulties offer an alternative to the Department of Education's current policy of closing such schools. School closures achieve limited savings to the Department of Education because the Age Weighted Pupil Unit comprises 80 per cent of the school funding allocation and this follows the pupil when his/her school closes. Our estimate is that the savings to the Department of Education, were it to close all primary and post-primary schools below the ‘sustainable schools’ enrolment thresholds, would be 3 per cent of their schools budget.

Education benefits: research evidence based on four selected primary and post-primary schools involved in the Shared Education Programme concluded that involvement in the initiative would increase the likelihood of: getting good GCSEs; gaining fluency in a foreign language; and going to university. This translated into increased lifetime earnings for participants in study. For an investment of £2m across the four projects, the educational benefits for children involved in the four projects were calculated at £25m. In short, the total net benefits across four primary and post-primary schools involved in shared education amounted to £23m.

Reconciliation benefits: there is a considerable body of research evidence to show the reconciliation benefits of sustained contact across school sectors in Northern Ireland. Research findings suggest that separate schooling is more likely to contribute to a bias in favour of persons from one’s own group and a prejudicial stereotyping of those from other groups. By considering the impact of pupils’ participation in the Shared Education Programme on cross-group friendships and intergroup anxiety, researchers have also confirmed the value of contact as a mechanism for promoting more harmonious relationships.
What’s wrong with the current education system?

In the recent Chief Inspector’s Report (2012), it was argued that although the education system across Northern Ireland achieves good value, its outcomes are too variable... too many children are failing to fulfil their potential.5 To address this, the Chief Inspector suggested that the quality of leadership and management across all school sectors, and particularly post-primary schools, needed to be improved. Minister O’Dowd responded to these challenges in a recent statement to the Assembly Putting Pupils First: Improving Outcomes; Improving Opportunities (6 November 2012). He intends, inter alia, to: support continuing professional development of teachers; reward principals who undertake leadership roles in under-performing schools; create mobility in the profession; and enhance the professional standard of teachers. All of these measures are aimed at raising educational standards.

How can shared education help to address these problems?

If we see shared education as a mechanism whereby schools which are educationally stronger are incentivised to collaborate with schools which are marginally weaker, then there is research evidence to suggest that there are key areas of improvement across schools in: teaching and learning; pupils’ behaviour; and education achievement.6 As a consequence, shared education will result in: a wider curriculum choice for pupils across the schools involved; promotion of the Entitlement Framework; encouragement of pupil mobility between schools through shared classes; and support of collaborative staff development activities. Maintaining a focus on raising educational outcomes, through stronger-weaker school collaboration, means that all schools, regardless of pupils’ background, have the opportunity to improve. Research also suggests this type of collaboration is more effective where leadership is strong and supportive of collaboration.7 Since schools which are currently competing for the same pupils are unlikely to want to collaborate (because they are from the same managing authority) then, by default, the collaborative partnerships will be cross-community. This, in turn, will have significant reconciliation benefits for students and society in the medium term. In short, shared education can complement the Minister’s agenda on improving education standards.

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December 2012

6. Ofsted Report, Leadership of more than one School (September, 2011), No. 100234.
Who is involved in the Sharing Education Programme (SEP) and what does it comprise?

At present there are 162 schools (62 per cent primary and 38 per cent post primary) across 47 separate partnerships participating in SEP, involving 12,771 pupils throughout Northern Ireland.

### Table 1: SEP – schools involved 2012/13

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<tr>
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<th>Post primary</th>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>QUB</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEELB/PIEE</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>101</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
<td><strong>162</strong></td>
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SEP comprises three broad strands of activities:

**Delivering Sharing Education**

Increasing the number of pupils experiencing shared learning with partner schools from different community backgrounds. The criteria for funding gives priority to increasing the number of shared classes that sustain pupil-to-pupil relationships and which assists curriculum delivery. Typical activities undertaken by schools include:

- Year 14 students completing A-level subjects in shared classes
- Year 12 students completing GCSE subjects in shared classes
- Jointly provided and accredited vocational training courses
- Combined citizenship (LGC) and personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) classes
- Science mentoring classes – primary schools children from mixed backgrounds attending science classes in a post-primary school
- Collaborative ICT projects through face-to-face contact and web-based learning
- Joint schools drama production as part of the GCSE curriculum
- Foreign languages training for cross-community primary schools
- Shared curriculum-based classes from P1–P7 in many primary schools every week, covering literacy, maths, arts, music and drama, etc
- Shared curriculum-based planning between teachers and shared training for parents and Boards of Governors at primary school level

**Supporting Teacher Development to Deliver Sharing Education**

Delivering shared classes to pupils from different community backgrounds places particular responsibilities on teachers and school planners. Educational and good/community relations experts support the teachers and planners involved in delivering Sharing Education.

**Ensuring Organisational Learning and Inter-community Collaboration Amongst Partner Schools**

Supporting school staff to manage change through mentoring and joint events to allow for networking, the sharing of practice, and facilitated discussions on problem solving and the development of new practice.
Department of Education Programme for Government commitments on shared education

• Establish a Ministerial advisory group to explore and bring forward recommendations to the Minister of Education to advance shared education
• Ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015
• Substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015

The commitments above provide an excellent framework for promoting the concept of schools working together in partnership to improve educational outcomes and give children and young people the opportunity to learn together. It is important that policy makers are provided with the evidence in order to ensure that schools are supported and encouraged to develop meaningful, sustained partnerships based on pupils meeting on a regular basis to take part in shared curricular activities.
Collaboration and School Improvement

It is clear that when we examine different societies, the context surrounding collaboration between schools can be different. The following examines the contexts of Northern Ireland and England. Collaboration and partnership working between schools in Northern Ireland takes place amid the context of an education system that is predicated on a historical commitment to denominationalism, which in itself is reinforced by political division. Education has now taken a prominent position as a core component in the reconstruction of post-conflict and post-genocide societies as well as underpinning economic stability and reconciliation. A major educational initiative which encourages schools to work together is the Sharing Education Programme (SEP). This initiative promotes sharing and collaboration between schools, where pupils from different schools and different religious and cultural backgrounds can learn together and where schools and teachers can share resources and expertise with the aim of developing sustainable institutional relationships. A core element of SEP involves creating cross-sector collaborative networks of schools which offer shared learning experiences for pupils in core curricular areas. The context in England is obviously different. Collaboration between schools and other organisations is nothing new and relatively embedded into the education system. Different forms of networks and partnerships have evolved over time. In the last two decades the potential of adopting collaborative approaches to school improvement and professional development has attracted intense interest from policy makers, practitioners and researchers from across the globe. In England the impact of the recession and government policies have led to the development of a more complex ‘middle tier’ marked by a decline in influence of local authorities, an increasing number of new alliances and chains of schools, and less-centrally driven school improvement strategies.

In Northern Ireland the four key Programme for Government commitments (2012–2015) on shared education offer an opportunity for sharing, and more broadly, collaboration between schools to embed within the education system; in particular, programme commitments which aim to (i) ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015 and (ii) substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015. It is important that this opportunity is capitalised upon and a key strategy will be to emphasise to Government and the Department of Education for Northern Ireland that sharing offers not only significant societal benefits in the form of young people from different ethnic backgrounds learning together and in the form of opportunities to share resources and minimise duplication, especially during the rationalisation of the education estate; but also that sharing and collaboration offers educational benefits and school improvement opportunities. While the contexts in England and Northern Ireland are distinct there is congruence, particularly around the relationship between collaboration and school improvement. The literature base demonstrates that the definition of school improvement is a broad term encompassing: (i) pupil performance (attainment, engagement, motivation and behaviour) (ii) teacher development (motivation, morale, practice enhanced skills relationships) (iii) leadership and (iv) economic improvements (sharing resources).


Mark Hadfield and Gavin Duffy
Supporting the Programme for Government Commitments on Shared Education

Gavin Duffy
Gavin Duffy is a Research Fellow at the School of Education, Queen’s University, attached to the Sharing Education Programme and a member of the Centre for Shared Education. Current research activity seeks to understand more about the context of sharing and collaboration between schools in Northern Ireland – in particular how schools develop institutional relationships; partnership activity which constitutes effective collaboration; and partnership working in challenging contexts such as contested space settings. Gavin is also involved in an international collaborative research project with Berkeley University, The Facing History Organisation and the Western Cape Education Department. This project examines the development of ethical civic factors in the face of identity-group conflicts, inside secondary schools in the United States, South Africa and Northern Ireland.

Gavin has a BA (Hons) in Sociology and Scholastic Philosophy, an MSSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice, a PGCE in Secondary Education and a PhD which focused on the education of young people in custody.

Other research interests include the education in custody and educational disengagement.

Mark Hadfield
My recent research has focused on the role of practitioner enquiry within collaborative school improvement efforts, including the role of young people and pupils, an interest that has arisen out of my secondment to the National College for School Leadership where I led the research team of their largest development and research programme, the Network Learning Communities programme. I have been involved in researching and supporting networks of schools for a number of years and have written extensively about the leadership challenges involved in collaborative school improvement. My most recent book on the subject provides a range of insights and tools to support school leaders: Leading School-Based Networks (Hadfield and Chapman 2009).
School-based intergroup contact in Northern Ireland – findings from two quantitative studies

Professor Joanne Hughes (Queen’s University Belfast) and Professor Miles Hewstone (Oxford) recently presented findings from two large-scale research projects that examined the relationship between cross-community contact between Protestant and Catholic school children in Northern Ireland and social attitudes. The first study is based on a survey of 577 secondary level pupils who participated in the Shared Education Programme, and a matched group of non-participating pupils. The Shared Education Programme operates throughout Northern Ireland and offers pupils an opportunity to engage in curriculum based contact. For example, pupils enrolled in neighbouring, mainly single-Community (Catholic or Protestant) schools may attend the ‘other community’ school for one or more GCSE O-, AS- and A-level subjects. The second study is an analysis of cross-community contact experienced by pupils attending Catholic, Protestant and Integrated secondary level schools across Northern Ireland. The study is longitudinal in that it aims to track pupils’ experience of contact and their responses to the ‘other’ community as they move through second level education. All post-primary schools were invited to participate and 51 schools agreed, giving a sample of 3,565 pupil participants.

Both studies are informed by an international body of contact literature and sought to test one of the most enduring theories in the social sciences – that positive contact with a member of another group (often a group that we negatively stereotype) can improve prejudiced attitudes, not just towards the specific member, but also towards the group as a whole (Allport, 1954). The studies measured: the number of ‘own’ group and ‘other’ group friends reported by pupils; levels of anxiety felt towards the ‘other’ group; ‘other’ group attitudes, including, for example, whether they would be willing to have a boyfriend, girlfriend from the other community; positive action tendencies, including the extent to which pupils might want to find out more about the other group and to support the other group; inter-group trust, measured, for example, by questions which asked about the extent to which pupils would trust the other group not to attack their group or to hurt people from their community; empathy – including the extent to which pupils felt they could understand the other group and empathise with them.

Findings

Both studies are consistent in finding that:

- Increased opportunity for contact leads to increased reporting of friends from the other community.
- As the proportion of other group friendships increases, so too do the levels of positive attitudes towards the other group.
- Out group friendships are associated with lower levels of anxiety felt towards the other group.

The first study controlled factors that might have skewed the findings. These included pupils’ stated religious community, their age, gender, and whether or not they were involved in collaborative activities outside of the Sharing Education Programme. Controlling for these variables means that the study cancelled out any independent effects that these control variables may have had on the findings. In the second study, an initial comparison was made between Protestant, Catholic and Integrated Schools. As expected, results showed that pupils in the integrated schools had more friendships and more positive attitudes than pupils in the other school types. However, findings also showed that pupils in the mainly Protestant schools were more positive than pupils in the mainly Catholic schools. Based on this finding, new school categories were created and the researchers looked at Catholic and Protestant schools with less than 5% of other community; Integrated schools (officially designated); Schools with 5–10% of other community (defined as ‘mixed schools’); schools with more than 10% other community (defined as ‘Super-mixed’ schools).

In addition, the study examined the responses of pupils who represented a ‘Tiny Numerical Minority’ (Protestant pupils attending Catholic schools and Catholic students attending Protestant schools). The graph below shows that responses from pupils in Super-mixed, Integrated and Tiny Numerical Minority categories are consistently more positive on a range of variables, including the amount of contact experienced, the intensity of the contact, friendships formed, the ability to empathise with others not from their own group, and more positive attitudes towards the other group.
The consistent message from this research is that increasing the opportunity for contact within and between all school types in Northern Ireland will, when those opportunities are translated into actual positive contact with members of the other group, have positive societal benefits. Accepting the current reality of a largely separate school system, the policy implications are clear. The NI Executive needs to deliver on the commitment to shared education made in the Programme for Government and all education policy should be proofed to ensure maximum opportunity for inter-group contact.

1 The studies reported here reflect collaboration between the Centre for Shared Education (Queen’s University Belfast) and the Centre for the Study of Intergroup Conflict (University of Oxford). In addition to Professors Hughes and Hewstone, other members of the research team include Dr Danielle Blaylock, Dr Andrea Campbell, Dr Caitlin Donnelly, Simon Lolliott and Dr Katarina Schmidt. Please contact Professor Joanne Hughes for more information on the research at joanne.hughes@qub.ac.uk
Reconciliation: Sustained Contact

Joanne Hughes

Joanne Hughes is Director of the Centre for Shared Education at Queen’s University Belfast. She is from Belfast and holds a BA and PhD on the subject of integrated education from the School of Social Anthropology at Queen’s. Her research interests are primarily in the role of education in divided societies and inter-group relations, and current projects include: a longitudinal analysis of inter-group contact experienced by post-primary school pupils in Northern Ireland; an examination of inter-school collaboration in Northern Ireland; and an exploration of the relationship between educational underachievement and disadvantage in different ward areas.

Professor Hughes has been keen to promote the applied value of her research and she has undertaken extensive outreach work with policy makers, government bodies, community groups and organisations. Her work informed a major review of community relations policy in Northern Ireland, and she was a member of a review team appointed by the Minister of Education to help draft a community relations policy for Education. She has also worked with local practitioners to devise and disseminate models of good practice in promoting intergroup relations, and she has extensive experience of facilitating groups and individuals representing different sectoral interests.

In addition to her contribution at local level, Professor Hughes has been involved in a number of international initiatives aimed at sharing peace building experiences in divided societies. Most recently, she has worked with UNICEF and the Ministry of Education in Macedonia to develop a National Programme of Inter-Cultural Dialogue. She was also a participant in a British Council sponsored initiative which engaged education experts from NI to work with senior officials from the Ministry of Education in Iraq, and she was an academic partner in a Local International Learning Project (shared learning between academics/practitioners in Northern Ireland and Israel/Palestine), and participant in a delegation to Israel of Northern Ireland community activists and academics to meet with Palestinian and Israeli Government Ministers, senior officials, academics and NGOs to discuss, inter alia, the role of education in divided societies. Professor Hughes has published widely in national and international peer review journals, and she is currently an editor of the prestigious British Educational Research Journal.

Miles Hewstone

Miles Hewstone studied psychology at the University of Bristol (First Class Hons., 1978), obtained his DPhil from Oxford University in 1981, his Habilitation from the University of Tübingen, Germany in 1986, and his DSc from Oxford University in 2008. He has held chairs in Social Psychology at the universities of Bristol, UK, Mannheim, Germany, Cardiff, UK and is Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Oxford, and Fellow of New College. He has published widely in the general field of experimental social psychology. His major topics of research have included: prejudice and stereotyping, intergroup contact, the reduction of intergroup conflict, sectarianism in Northern Ireland, and segregation and integration. He is the author of over 200 scholarly articles and contributions to edited volumes, and has written or edited over 20 books. He is a former editor of the British Journal of Social Psychology, and co-founding editor of the European Review of Social Psychology. He is a past recipient of the British Psychological Society’s Spearman Medal (1987), and its Presidents’ Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Knowledge (2001).

Professor Hewstone has twice been a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford (1987–88, 1999–00). His awards include the British Psychological Society’s Spearman Medal (1987), and its Presidents’ Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychological Knowledge (2001); the Kurt Lewin Award for Distinguished Research Achievement (2005), from the European Association for Social Psychology; the Gordon Allport Intergroup Relations Prize (2005), from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI); and the Robert B. Cialdini Award (2008), from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, the National Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences, in 2002, and served as its Vice-President (Social Sciences) 2007–9. He was elected an Honorary Fellow of the British Psychological Society in 2003.

Public policy input: Professor Hewstone’s work has reached a wide, non-academic audience (eg appearing on ‘All in the mind’ on BBC Radio 4, and being the subject of a full-page interview in The Guardian. He has presented his work to, for example, the Equality and Diversity Forum (Equal Opportunities Commission review), the Institute for Public Policy Research, Haringey Council, the Commission on Equality and Human Rights, the Housing and Community Cohesion Conference, and The Equalities Review, Cabinet Office; and he has presented expert testimony to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion. He currently serves as an adviser to the Department of Communities and Local Government, Community Attitudes Survey (2007–), and is a Fellow of the Young Foundation.
Sharing and collaboration between a cluster of primary schools in the Belleek area of County Fermanagh

Workshop led by the Fermanagh Trust

This workshop will map the journey of a partnership of schools from different sectors, highlighting the benefits of shared education, explaining how challenges were overcome and outlining the aspirations and vision for a shared education model for all of the children in the area.

Shared Education Partnership

A cluster of primary schools in the Belleek and Garrison area are working closely together in a collaborative network, to deliver high-quality education, to meet the needs of all the children in the area. St John the Baptist Primary School, Roscor and Belleek Controlled Primary School have been working through the Fermanagh Shared Education Programme since 2009/10.

This involves:

• Joint curriculum planning between principals and staff within the partnership
• Regular joint classes for all of the pupils from both schools
• Joint staff development
• Joint training and events for parents
• Joint training and meetings for the Boards of Governors
• Sharing of facilities and resources

Shared Teachers and Teacher Exchanges

The partnership has expanded this year to include St Martin’s PS, Garrison and St Davog’s PS, Belleek, with the purpose of maximising the teaching expertise in the schools across the cluster for the benefit of the pupils in each school. As a result, the schools share staff in the areas of Music, ICT and Special Needs, thereby widening the teaching repertoire available to each school.

Future Plans

St John the Baptist PS and Belleek PS have requested, as part of the on-going area planning process, that a shared education model is explored for this area.
The Fermanagh Workshop

The Fermanagh Trust and St John the Baptist PS and Belleek CPS

Rural Context and the Risks of Area Planning on a Sectoral Basis

A number of educational policies, including the implementation of the Sustainable Schools Policy and the Entitlement Framework, will have major implications for many schools. But these policies will have a more significant impact in rural areas, such as Fermanagh, where there is a greater predominance of small schools serving local communities. If school rationalisation takes place on a sectoral basis (i.e. amalgamations within sectors), there is a risk that there will be a greater number of school closures; more geographic areas without a local school; an increased challenge of providing quality education for minority communities; and over time, greater balkanisation and polarisation of the two main communities in Fermanagh.

Is there another way?

Shared Education can provide optimal solutions that are cost effective, retain educational provision in rural areas, provide quality education for pupils, retain ethos and identity of communities and build community cohesion and sustainability. The Terms of Reference for the ongoing area planning process states that opportunities should be identified for shared schooling on a cross-sectoral basis. This is consistent with the Department of Education’s commitments in the Programme for Government for Shared Education.

Currently, more than 90% of schools in Fermanagh are involved in Shared Education with more than 4,400 pupils participating in joint, cross-community classes and several hundred parents attending cross-community training initiatives and school events. An external evaluation reported that Shared Education has strengthened curriculum delivery and enhanced educational opportunities for pupils and it has helped break down barriers between our communities and reduced fear, suspicion and mistrust of the ‘other’ community.

Sustaining the Benefits of Shared Education – Developing a Shared Education Model

St John the Baptist PS and Belleek CPS

St John the Baptist PS and Belleek CPS are two small primary schools just 2.5 miles apart, located in the most westerly part of the region. The two schools, which have 53 and 43 pupils respectively, have worked closely together over many years. Their earliest collaborative links were established through the Schools Contact Programme, ie Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU), and these were further developed with the help of the Schools Community Relations Programme (SCRP). It was the Fermanagh Shared Education Programme (2009–2013) that enabled the schools to plan a more comprehensive educational programme jointly for the pupils, with regular shared classes. The close collaboration between the schools has progressed over the years despite staff changes in the schools, and this is largely due to the support of the local community, which has endorsed the consolidation of the partnership between the schools.

Shared Classes

In practical terms, the schools identify common needs in their school development plans and, through joint planning, the principals and teachers design a programme of Shared Education that is driven by curriculum targets. Currently, all of the pupils in both schools are involved in regular joint classes delivered by the teachers from the two schools. The Key Stage 2 pupils work together on the following areas of the curriculum: ICT, Numeracy and Community Heroes, while the Key Stage 1 pupils come together for the Respecting Difference Programme as part of Personal Development and Understanding (PDMU) and also Music.
Shared Teachers / Teacher Exchanges
This year the partnership has created links with two local Catholic Maintained primary schools, St Martin’s PS in Garrison and St Davog’s PS, for the purpose of sharing existing teacher expertise across the cluster in Music, ICT and Special Needs. As a result:

- A teacher from St Martin’s teaches Music in St John the Baptist PS and Belleek PS one day per week. This includes teaching shared classes.
- A teacher from Belleek CPS teaches ICT to pupils from St John the Baptist PS and Belleek PS pupils in shared classes and also to St Martin’s PS pupils. These classes take place in the ICT suite of the local high school, St Mary’s, Brollagh and also in the primary schools.
- All four schools share a Special Needs Teacher, who focuses upon Literacy and Numeracy.
- Through sharing of expertise, the teachers in each of the schools are being up-skilled in these areas of the curriculum.

Partnership Building
In addition to joint classes and sharing teachers, the schools have also focused on Partnership Building. This involves:

- Regular joint staff meetings;
- Joint school development days and staff training;
- Joint parent workshops, including literacy, ICT, and Respecting Difference;
- Joint celebration days, eg anniversaries and special occasions;
- Joint sports days;
- Joint family fun days;
- Joint fundraising;
- Joint training for governors;
- Joint meetings with governors; and
- Sharing of resources and school facilities.

Benefits Experienced from Shared Education
The interdependency that has developed between the two schools, St John the Baptist PS and Belleek PS, means that they can achieve more quality education jointly, for their pupils, than as individual schools operating alone. Not only have the pupils gained educationally, but the professional development of teachers has been a major outcome. Parents feel comfortable visiting both schools equally and are engaged in their children’s learning. The schools are jointly engaged in many community functions and events, helping to build community cohesion.

Development of a Shared Education Model
After working together for a number of years the governors, parents and staff of St John the Baptist PS and Belleek CPS wish to explore the development of a shared education model, to provide the best possible educational provision for the children in this rural community. They are committed to providing quality education jointly and building a shared future for the benefit of all the children in the local area. The challenge is learning how this can be achieved given the complexity of the current legislation and governance structures.
Sharing the PIEE: The Shared Teacher Experience

Workshop led by the PIEE Project

In 2011 the PIEE project trialled the joint appointment of a shared teacher within two of its partnerships. The success of this pilot led to its extension across nine partnerships in September 2012. The initiative presents an opportunity to further embed a culture of sharing within partnerships and to push boundaries further in regard to staff recruitment and a confederated approach to working. It has been found that the presence of an additional teacher, complementing the skills of existing staff and reflecting the needs of partner schools, greatly enhances the quality of education provision and also leads to an increase in shared time amongst pupils. The PIEE project believes that this form of collaboration will prove so productive that a partnership will seek to sustain it in its own right from within existing resources.

PIEE’s workshop will look at one partnership’s experience of recruiting and managing a shared teacher. Principals Emer Hughes (Moneynick PS) and Donna Winters (Duneane PS) will share with delegates their journey through the selection process, focussing on the practical outworkings of sharing a member of staff between two schools from different education sectors. They will discuss the lessons learned along the way and the benefits accrued by the partnership. In addition they will also give some consideration to the question of future sustainability. Eamonn Donaghy, the partnership’s joint member of staff, will offer his perspective on ‘a day in the life’ of a shared teacher and will speak about the opportunities and challenges posed by his unique role within the two schools.

Background to Duneane PS and Moneynick PS: Partners in Learning

Moneynick and Duneane are two rural primary schools which lie on the outskirts of Toomebridge and are situated 1.7 miles from each other. They had been working together intermittently over a number of years before joining the North Eastern Education and Library Board’s Integrating Education Pilot Project in 2007. Having experienced the benefits of this pilot, they applied and were successful in becoming part of the Primary Integrating Enriching Education Project which began in 2009.

Both Moneynick and Duneane are of similar size. Throughout the duration of the PIEE project the schools have seen how PIEE has impacted positively on all areas of their school communities: principals, staff, pupils, parents and governors. For principals and staff, being in PIEE has meant that they have been able to avail of opportunities to train and plan together. This has regularly taken place at principal and whole staff level. The Boards of Governors have played a vital role in the development of the partnership, supporting joint events showcasing pupils’ work and forming a subcommittee to appoint a shared teacher. Over the last number of years, the pupils have taken part in regular shared classes and are meeting even more frequently this year due to the employment of their shared teacher. Parents have enjoyed attending joint showcase events and have even taken part in joint parent only events like salsa dancing!

The principals, Emer and Donna have worked closely together since the beginning of the PIEE project and have offered mutual support to each other on school matters. They agree that, ‘Having another principal to discuss management and leadership issues with has been invaluable. The workload has been lessened as we have been able to talk things through and resolve things together.’

In the last term of the 2011/12 academic year, the Boards of Governors of both schools jointly appointed the partnership’s first shared teacher, Eamonn Donaghy. Eamonn has a specialist background in ICT but is particularly enthusiastic about integrating the children together in routine school activities. He works with all children in both schools, and delivers shared classes on a regular basis.
Conference Report

In 2011/12 the PIEE project piloted the appointment of shared teachers in 2 of its 10 partnerships; this was expanded to 9 partnerships in 2012/13 when funding to the project was extended by a further year.

The partnership represented at the conference consists of Moneynick and Duneane Primary Schools; the schools are located just over one mile apart and have a history of taking part in shared activities. Under the auspices of the PIEE project however this sharing has flourished and all children in both schools now have the opportunity to learn together in shared classes and to spend time together in the course of a normal school day. One of the major contributing factors to this enhanced sharing was the joint appointment of a teacher between the two schools in September 2012. The practice, benefits and challenges presented by such an appointment are summarised below;

Practice

• In preparation for the appointment both principals carried out a skills audit of their existing staff and identified gaps. This was cross referenced with the respective school development plans and it was agreed that the priority areas for the shared teacher would be literacy, PE and ICT.
• The proposals were jointly presented at a combined Board of Governor session during which governors were provided with an opportunity to split up and discuss any concerns regarding the appointment. Following this a joint subcommittee of governors took the lead in the recruitment and selection process. Candidates were expected to address the concept of sharing in their responses to questions asked at interview.
• Parents were informed of the process through the schools’ joint newsletter and principals were available to respond to any concerns raised.
• The principals drew up a timetable for the shared teacher which saw the week split evenly between the two schools but with one day spent delivering shared classes in both schools.

Benefits

• The educational benefits to pupils were apparent immediately. They had exposure to specialist teaching and in some cases the shared teacher was able to facilitate de-compositing of classes so that children could work solely with their own age group. In addition the greater numbers involved in shared classes provided for enhanced peer interaction which was often valuable in respect to academic background and gender balance.
• From a professional development aspect, existing staff also benefited from the specialist skills of the shared teacher.
• The presence of a shared teacher made it easier for schools to share resources; frequently the shared teacher would personally transport resources between schools for use with other classes.
• All the pupils ‘owned’ the shared teacher who in turn ‘owned’ all the pupils. This created a positive and safe environment where shared classes could more easily and comfortably take place.

Challenges

• The majority of challenges related to practical employment issues, eg holidays, PRSD, line management. None were insurmountable as those involved were prepared to be open, honest and flexible!

It was apparent that good relationships underpinned the successful appointment of the shared teacher for Moneynick and Duneane Primary Schools. Already for this partnership the shared teacher has become indispensable and when PIEE funding ceases the schools intend to find monies from within their own budgets or from other external sources in order to support the continuation of the post, albeit that this may be on a reduced scale.
Schools hope that DE and policy makers will recognise the educational and societal benefits to be accrued from having a shared teacher based on the PIEE model and will then support those schools seeking to implement it. If the Programme for Government commitments on shared education are to be met then there is a need to incentivise sharing. Schools are willing to make their contributions towards securing sustained and meaningful pupil contact but a long term investment from government is also required if a culture of sharing is to be successfully embedded in our schools.
Demonstrating how school partnerships evolve to become effective collaborators

Workshop led by the Sharing Education Programme at Queen’s University Belfast

This workshop presentation focuses on two themes: how schools in partnership can demonstrate effective collaboration and as a consequence, how partnerships evolve from being defined by shared activities between pupils to developing sustainable institutional relationships which are interdependent, collegial and focused on addressing common need. Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College have a strong tradition of collaborative working, through this partnership both schools offer a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular provision to their pupils. In terms of provision the schools have a joined-up approach to 6th form provision that enables them to provide curricular pathways for all pupils. The schools also work together in terms of key stage 4 provision, this allows the schools to reduce duplication of provision whilst ensuring the schools meet the requirements for the Entitlement Curriculum.

Through working together the schools ensure that all pupils can benefit from a broad range of vocational and academic subjects; the schools have also developed a number of shared extra-curricular activities, including a joint student council, a shared rugby team and a combined Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The schools are committed to continuing the development of the partnership, recently they have begun the process of appointing a shared Governors subgroup in order to ensure the continued development of the partnership. The schools are at the forefront of developing a collaborative partnership in the context of Northern Ireland and are committed to continuing the provision of high quality education for all pupils together.

The first aspect of the workshop will present some research findings on evolving collaborative practice and the second aspect will be presented by Principals from the Moyle Learning Together Project (SEP II Partnership involving Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High) This partnership will provide: context in terms of its history and origins; examples of collaborative activity; discuss the extent of their relationships at an institutional level; identifying common needs and outline plans for the future.
Queen’s University Belfast: moving through the shared continuum – the experience of a post-primary partnership

The workshop had several purposes: the first was to provide an overview of some of the fundamental learning that has emerged as a result of research and practice with regard to schools working together in SEP and related programmes. Secondly we were keen to demonstrate that a number of the partnerships involved in SEP were at the forefront of developing next practice in terms of how schools collaborate and support shared learning between pupils. Crucially a number of partnerships have become effective collaborators and the remit of their partnerships had evolved towards interdependency and constructed around common needs.

To demonstrate an example of this, Barbara Ward and Ian Williamson, Principals of Cross and Passion College and Ballycastle High School respectively provide the delegates with an insight into the day to day realities of forming, maintaining and developing a cross-sectoral school partnership.

Dr Duffy used the learning to date with regards SEP along with established and emerging national and international research to demonstrate how schools within partnerships develop institutional relationships and evolve; and the learning that the QUB team are accruing regarding how to promote and develop effective collaboration between schools.

In the first section of the presentation Dr. Duffy focused on two themes: how schools within partnerships develop institutional relationships and essentially evolve and secondly an overview of what constitutes collaborative effectiveness based on international research.

The findings of two research reports were presented, the first examining the notion of sustainable collaborative practice based on five school partnerships which had been funded in the first SEP cohort (2007–2010) and secondly, findings based on an on-going study which aims to contextualise the practice of shared learning and collaboration in a partnership involving three post-primary schools and five primary schools, all of which are located within a contested space context.

Dr Duffy argued that the development of “institutional relationships” between schools is key to the on-going sustainability and effectiveness of any school collaboration. Concluding his element of the workshop, Dr Duffy highlighted that the most effective school partnerships involved in SEP shared a number of traits, including: focus on common areas of need, a common sense of purpose; key advocates who supported collaboration, especially at senior levels within schools; an established infrastructure; where the idea of collaboration and the practice of shared learning had begun to normalise within partner schools and in some cases where there was clear evidence that schools were beginning to improve as a result of collaboration.

Ian Williamson and Barbara Ward provided a fascinating insight into the challenges and huge benefits of collaborative working. Both Principals were unflinching in terms of describing the challenges, particularly in the early stages of the partnership. The overwhelming message was the ability of schools in partnership to achieve so much more, educationally, more efficiently in partnership as opposed to alone.

The themes that arose from the practitioners presentation mirrored those identified by Dr Duffy; the establishment of the original partnership was based on common need, the schools are relatively isolated so in order to provide the fullest range of subject choice possible the schools realised that it was imperative that they worked together. The presentation touched on other areas such as the growing inter-dependence between the schools, the responsibility of ensuring whole staff and community buy in and the vital importance of the fostering and nurturing of a shared vision of what both schools want, supported by the necessary school policy framework.

With regards to the PfG commitments the message from the workshop was positive, certainly with regards the spirit of the commitments; both the research and the practitioners demonstrated that if supported schools can work together in order to achieve significantly improved educational outcomes at no additional cost. The schools have pioneered a new way of delivering education that is fit for purpose for a 21st Century economy it is incumbent on the Minister to fulfil the PfG commitments in a manner that replicates the learning and experience demonstrated at today’s workshop.
Shared Education in Northern Ireland: A Review of Literature

Foundational literature

This literature represents a foundational framework within which to locate the origins of shared education in Northern Ireland. Gallagher (2004) provides a starting point locating and comparing the education system in Northern Ireland with other societies where there is ethnic or racial division. Set within this context, education is considered as vehicle for promoting a shared and more cohesive society. Gallagher (2005) argues that the largely separate education system operating in Northern Ireland perpetuates ethnic division in a society trying to emerge out of conflict. Similarly, Hughes (2010) argues that separate education system may promote both ethnic and cultural isolation amongst children. Gallagher (2004; 2005) outlines how over recent decades, a series of educational initiatives have sought to mitigate the impact of ethnic division and improve community relations; these have included: (i) inter-sectoral contact programmes, (such as: Education for Mutual Understanding [EMU], Cultural Heritage and the Cross Contact Scheme) (ii) curricular initiatives, (including the introduction of local and global citizenship as discrete subject and devising common history and religious curricula) and (iii) attempts to create an entirely new sector based on religiously integrated schools. However these initiatives have demonstrated limited impact. Gallagher, (2005) instead proposes that schools be supported to explore partnership activities. A number of studies from Queen’s University Belfast (Atkinson et al. 2007; Donnelly and Gallagher, 2008; O’Sullivan et al. 2008) and wider (Russell, 2009, Oxford Economics, 2010) were then undertaken in order to provide baseline data and ascertain the extent and context of inter-school collaboration. Atkinson, et al. (2007) provided a significant review of literature; Donnelly and Gallagher (2008) explored the existing context of collaboration between schools and concluded that the principle of collaboration was met with enthusiasm be schools. Alongside this research, Fishkin et al (2007) carried out a deliberative poll in an ethnically divided market-town in Northern Ireland. The poll focused on exploring parents perspectives on education; elements of this poll identified that parents were largely supportive of the idea of schools working co-operatively. This research helped build a case for shared education and more broadly, inter-sectoral collaboration between schools and has led to attracting significant funds from Atlantic Philanthropies and International fund for Ireland for the Sharing Education Programme.

Theoretical perspectives

The concept of shared education is supported by a number theoretical perspectives. One such perspective, inter-group contact theory, explores the context and the quality of contact between pupils who engage in shared educational activities. This body literature (Hughes, 2010; Hughes et al. 2012; Hughes, 2012; Hughes 2012a; Hughes and Donnelly, 2012; Hughes and Donnelly, 2012a) indicates a number of important findings (i) separate schooling can be divisive whereby minimal and superficial contact between pupils can lead to physical and cultural isolation (ii) sharing offers a potentially more effective contact model than previous educational initiatives (iii) sharing offers significant community relations benefits and improved intergroup and relations and (iv) pupils who engaged in shared education demonstrated reduced levels of anxiety; demonstrated positive action and more trust towards one another other. Another theoretical perspective that has been applied is activity theory (Daniels, H, Edwards, A, Engestrom, U and Gallagher, 2009; Gallagher & Carlisle, 2009) in order to identify effective collaborative practice. This research demonstrates: (i) for effective collaboration to take place personal relationships between key professionals is essential and by extension effective collaboration is vulnerable when there are changes in key personnel (ii) proximity between sites (schools) is important, distance between schools presented challenges (iii) logistical challenges of collaboration could be resolved by reimagining school timetables to allow for travel, extending the school day and using ICT (iv) effective collaborative practice often emerges when schools are able to innovate and demonstrate informal practice (v) buy in from staff and school leaders is essential, as is their expertise.

Evaluation and context

There are a number of specific pieces of research carried out recently which evaluate or provide contextual data on sharing and collaboration between schools. An evaluation of the first cohort of the Sharing Education Programme (FGS McClure Watters, 2010) provides perspectives from pupils, teachers and school leaders. Knox (2010) provides a non-formal evaluation of 12 partnerships in SEP1, this report reflects the perspective of teachers and school leaders and focuses on four key areas, implementation, impact, sustainability and how shared learning and school collaboration can shape policy. Studies by Duffy and Gallagher (2012, 2012a) evaluate number of school based partnerships and identify effective practice and conditions which are most likely to lead to sustainable partnerships.

Programme Impact

A number of papers and reports devote time to understanding the logistics and benefits of sharing and collaboration, (Hughes et al. 2010; Duffy and Gallagher, 2012; Duffy and Gallagher, 2012a; Gallagher et al. 2010; Donnelly and Gallagher, 2008; Knox, 2010; FSG McClure, 2010). Common themes emerge in this literature, namely how schools negotiate issues such as: timetabling;
travel time between schools; ethos and resources or funding. As a counter-balance, this literature also highlights how schools innovate and develop solutions to logistical challenges. A number of benefits have already been cited particularly in the literature by Hughes (2010–2012), see also Donnelly and Gallagher, (2008) whereby sharing and collaboration has significant community relations benefits; improved intergroup relations between participants and as a consequence of regular and sustained contact, pupil anxieties of the other reduce. Much of this research outlines, as a consequence of schools collaborating, pupils benefit in terms of: enhanced curricular delivery and access to a broader range of subjects and resources. This literature base also highlights how teachers benefit from collaborative practice with other schools both in terms of professional development through shared practice but also personally where, like pupils, teachers involved in delivering shared learning have the opportunity to work with other teachers across sectors - teachers report valuing this opportunity. Schools also benefit in terms of developing stronger institutional relationships. As a consequence senior leaders and governors across sectors work more closely together and in some cases collaboration becomes a vehicle for school improvement.

Collaboration and improved educational outputs

The wider literature base demonstrates clearly that collaboration between schools can play a significant role in terms of school improvement. Broadly, the idea of school improvement includes a number of indicators:

• pupil performance (attainment, engagement, motivation and behaviour)
• teacher development (motivation, morale, practice enhanced skills relationships)
• leadership
• economic improvements (sharing resources)

For a selected review see (Muijs, et al. 2010; Chapman et al. 2011; Chapman et al. 2009; Hadfield and Jopling, 2012; Harris & Jones, 2010; Ainscow et al. 2006; Hadfield and Chapman, 2009) Research which focuses on the Northern Ireland context can equally demonstrate that sharing and collaboration can have positive impacts on educational outcomes. This literature can similarly be divided into the similar categories as outlined above: pupil performance (Borooah and Knox, 2012a; Borooah and Knox, 2012b; FGS McClure Watters, 2010; Gallagher et al, 2010); teacher development and perspectives of school leaders (Knox, 2010; Duffy and Gallagher, 2012a Duffy and Gallagher 2012b; FGS McClure Watters, 2010; Hughes et al 2010; Gallagher et al, 2010) and economic improvements (Borooah and Knox, 2012a Borooah and Knox, 2012b).

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APPENDICES
SLIDES

THE POSSIBILITIES AND PERILS OF COLLABORATION & NETWORKING

Mark Hadfield

Types of network

A range of collaborative initiatives in recent years in the UK and internationally have aimed to improve educational provision. They can be categorised as:

- New forms of service delivery
- Collaborative adaptations of existing provision
- School improvement networks
- Professional learning networks

UK policy and political context

- Multiple collaborative reforms instigated in England by Labour government from 1997 e.g. Excellence in Cities; federations; primary strategy networks.
- Often targeted at deprived areas
- Shift by coalition government elected in 2010 towards clusters of schools working to create a ‘self-improving school system’ (Hargreaves, 2011).
UK policy and political context

- Structural changes to local authority support changing schools’ relationship with local communities and central government.
- Shifts in the nature of local governance.
- Emphasis on high-performing schools leading and brokering collaboration with other schools, both to raise standards and train new teachers.

UK policy and political context

- Emergence of system leaders in the form of national and local leaders of education within new collaborative arrangements.
- Large scale funding cuts and reduction in local services.
- Increased support for alternative provision (e.g. free schools) and increased competition between schools.

Key questions

1. Are networks of schools effective in improving pupil outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning?
2. Are there similarities in the issues faced by leaders developing school to school collaboration?
3. What areas do effective leaders prioritize?
4. What are the main obstacles/mistakes to avoid?
Are networks of schools effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning?

- Notoriously problematic to identify the characteristics of effective school networks (Bell et al, 2006; de Lima, 2010).
- Clearest benefits associated with well-defined collaborative efforts targeted on specific groups of pupils.
- Impact in areas that single schools lack capacity to deal with on their own.
- Impacts on pupils, teachers and leaders

Are there similarities in the issues faced by leaders developing school to school collaboration?

- Creating the conditions for teachers and schools to work together
- Aligning collaborative support with school priorities, especially in targeting students for interventions
- Adapting and extending their professional networks and those of their staff

What areas do effective leaders prioritize?

- Developing a shared sense of responsibility for the educational success of their local communities.
- Creating a strategic approach to a common issue
- Generating high levels of trust, mutual knowledge and challenge.
- Investing in high quality professional development and knowledge transfer processes
What areas do effective leaders prioritize?

- Building collaborative structures within and between schools.
- Putting structures in place for schools to access external support.
- Commitment to developing leadership capacity at all levels.

What areas do effective leaders prioritize?

- Evidence-based and informed decisions.
- Distributed leadership.
- Shared purposes and values.
- Effective networking.
- Shared accord, and integrity.
- Collaborative CPD and joint working.

What are the main obstacles/mistakes to avoid?

- Failure to manage trust in early stages.
- Poorly developed foci.
- Limited macro-mobilisation.
- Collaboration does not extend to all levels.
- Lack of support for leaders of collaborative efforts.
- Sustainability is not considered at the outset.

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Outline

- Introduction to research
  - Collaboration between Centre for Shared Education (QUB) and Centre for the Study of Intergroup Conflict (Oxford)
- Two large-scale empirical studies
  - Evaluation of Shared Education Programme (SEP)
  - Comparison of cross-community attitudes and mixing in different types of post-primary school
- Policy implications
  - Cross-group contact must be encouraged in interests of shared and better society
  - Working within the separate education system, the SEP offers a solution

SEP Study: Rationale

- The SEP encourages schools to establish cross-sectoral collaborations
- SEP1 commenced in September 2007
  - 60 schools and around 5,000 pupils participated
- Contact theory informed the SEP rationale
  - Positive contact with a member of another group (often a negatively stereotyped group) can improve negative attitudes, not only towards the specific member, but also towards the group as a whole (Allport, 1954)
  - The contact hypothesis has been tested and verified (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006)
Study 1/SEP evaluation: Participants

- 577 Students from 14 schools
  - Mean age = 15.03, SD = 1.36
- Participated in Sharing Education Programme
  - N = 162
    - 61 Catholics (33 females, 28 males)
    - 101 Protestants (55 females, 46 males)
- Did not participate in the Sharing Education Programme
  - N = 415
    - 203 Catholics (123 females, 80 males)
    - 212 Protestants (132 females, 78 males)

Variables measured (incl.)

- Predictor: SEP / No SEP
- Intervening variables:
  - Friendship proportion
  - Intergroup Anxiety
- Outcome variables:
  - Attitudes towards outgroup
  - Outgroup trust
  - Positive action tendencies

To evaluate the impact of the Sharing Education Programme

- Involved in SEP
  - Higher proportion of outgroup friends
  - Less intergroup anxiety
  - More favourable outgroup attitudes / trust / positive action tendencies
  - mediated by friends and intergroup anxiety

Shared Education Program Model

Unstandardized regression coefficients are shown for significant paths only. SEP = Sharing Education Programme

The statistic means that the respondents who participated in the SEP, on average, reported having 6% more friends from the other community than those who did not participate in the SEP.

For every point that respondents move DOWN on the anxiety scale, their attitudes IMPROVE by 6.29 points.

The respondents who participated in the SEP, on average, reported scores on the positive action tendencies scale that were .18 units higher than non-SEP respondents.

Intergroup anxiety and Positive Action Tendencies were measured on a Likert scale from 1 – 5; Outgroup Attitudes on a feeling thermometer, 0 – 100.

The path analysis showing the effect of the SEP on the outcome variables, N = 577

* p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

(contrast codes: involved in SEP = +0.5; not involved in SEP = -0.5)
Study 2: Post-primary study

- Examination of quality and quantity of contact experienced by pupils at post primary level and out-group response
- Schools are generally represented as -Catholic, Protestant and Integrated - this can misrepresent the opportunity for contact, e.g.
  - the proportions of Catholics and Protestants attending integrated schools varies considerably, ranging from less than 5% to a religious balance of 44/47%
  - 6% of Catholic and Protestant schools have between 5% and 10% ‘other’ group pupils, and 4% have more than 20% ‘other’ group pupils
- Longitudinal study to (a) take account of opportunities for contact that present as pupils progress through school (e.g. SEP); and (b) understand the processes by which contact works over time

Respondents

- Year 8 students N = 3,565, 51 schools
  - Catholics
    - N = 2422, mean age = 12.36, SD = 0.49
    - 860 males, 1,393 females
  - Protestants
    - N = 1143, mean age = 12.34, SD = 0.50
    - 452 males, 623 females
- Wave 1 of 5 planned waves
Supporting the Programme for Government Commitments on Shared Education

### Multilevel Path Analysis

- **Between (school) level**
  - Percentage of outgroupers in each of 51 schools

- **Within (individual) level**
  - Number of cross-group friendships
  - Attitudes towards ethno-religious outgroup

#### Multilevel model: Protestant Respondents

- Between level variables:
  - Friends = .03, Attitudes = .01

- Within level variables:
  - Friends with Catholics: $\beta = .03***$ (w)
  - Attitudes towards Catholics: $\beta = .01***$ (b)

When the percentage of outgroupers in the school is increased by 1%, a participant will on average increase 0.03 points on the friendships scale.

For every point one goes up on the friendships scale, there is an increase of 0.03 points in positive attitudes.

*Attitudes were measured on a Likert scale from 1 – 5.*

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**Contact Variables**

All variables were measured on a Likert scale from 1 – 5.
Interim summary: Which schools do best?

- Integrated schools performed best – as expected
- Protestant schools performed significantly better than Catholic.
- Why?
- Protestant schools have more diverse student body
  - Protestant schools have more Catholic students, than Catholic schools have Protestant students

Do we need a more refined taxonomy of school types?

- ‘Single Community Schools’ (Catholic / Protestant)
  - vs. ‘Mixed’
  - vs. ‘Super-Mixed’
  - vs. ‘Tiny Numerical Minority’

New taxonomy of schools

- We retain only the Protestant and Catholic schools as ‘Single Community Schools’ (less than 5% of other community)
- And Integrated schools
- But we re-classify several schools as follows:
  - ‘Mixed’ schools (5-10% of other community)
    - 4 Protestant schools, but no Catholic schools
  - ‘Super-mixed’ schools (more than 10% other community)
    - originally Catholic (1), originally Protestant (2)
- Then we look at:
  - ‘Tiny Numerical Minority’ (Protestant pupils attending Catholic schools & Catholic students attending Protestant schools)
    - Protestants in Catholic schools (6 schools)
    - Catholics in Protestant schools (13 Schools)

Variables by New Schooling categorization

- All variables were measured on a Likert scale from 1 – 5.
Conclusions

- Opportunity for contact is a predictor of friendship and positive out-group responses
- Assuming a commitment to relationship building
  - Integrated schools are effective, but so too is contact experienced in separate schools
- The value of SEP is that the programme recognises separate schools as important symbols of community identity, whilst maximizing opportunity for contact

New Taxonomy of Schools: Cross-group Friendships

New Taxonomy of Schools: Attitude Measures