

A Final Evaluation of the  
International Fund for Ireland's

# Sharing in Education Programme

2013



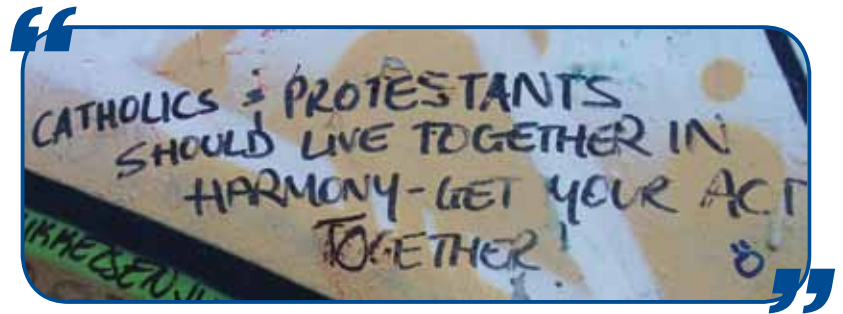
## Working towards:

Shared education  
Shared responsibility  
Shared action

## Working for:

Better learning  
Better schools  
Better society





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In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%





*Permanent peace in our country is not just a dream for me as a teenager growing up today in Northern Ireland. It is a sincere, genuine aspiration. I believe that enduring peace can only come about through true respect for others..... We must accept our differences if we are to move forward. I think that my age group should be the focus. We are the ones who must build new relationships with people from different communities. Barriers need to be broken down. If we are to take away prejudice from young people's minds, we can create a society that can get on together..... Peace is not easy. And it takes a lot of work to make it happen. I think that it is easy for some to sit back and just hold on to the past. For peace to be an actual reality, however, we all need to take responsibility in the present.*



Hannah Nelson speaking at the visit of the President of the United States of America to Belfast, June 2013.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The International Fund for Ireland (IFI) is an independent international organisation set up by the British and Irish Governments in 1986. The objectives of the Fund are to: promote economic and social advance; encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland; and, support programmes and projects which aim to facilitate the sharing of educational experiences among young people on a cross-sectoral basis.
- 1.2 The IFI has been working for many years to underpin efforts towards peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and has invested more than £21m in this area prior to the establishment of the Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP). The SiEP supports the strategic objectives of IFI by providing funding for projects that enable young people not only to participate in shared education activities but to provide sustainable models of good practice that will inform future practice in education. To their credit, the IFI providers are seeking also to share

the lessons, experiences and skills acquired over years of peace-building in NI with those addressing the challenges of peace-building in other regions, thus contributing positively to the international community.

1.3 The IFI supported 19 projects<sup>1</sup> within the SiEP managed by a liaison team within the Department of Education (DE) to:

- promote shared education by linking schools representative of the two communities;
- build on community relations within and between schools;
- support cultural outreach amongst young people representative of the differing communities/traditions; and
- address strategic gaps in achieving reconciliation through a cross-community, cross-border approach through education and the related services sector.<sup>2</sup>

1.4 The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) evaluated the 19 projects<sup>3</sup> and this forms the basis of the report. In addition, the ETI liaised with the three other projects funded by IFI and saw elements of their work through routine inspection and, in referencing the three projects, is content that their work complements the outcomes of this evaluation. In contributing to the developmental nature of the work, the ETI developed a set of quality indicators to guide both its own evaluation of the programme and to contribute to capacity building for the various partners in the projects. Inspectors encouraged project leaders to use, adapt and refine the quality indicators in their self-evaluations. The ETI provided formal feedback to each project at both the interim and

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1 In addition to the 19 projects, three other projects were funded by IFI and managed by the IFI liaison team within DE. These were: the Shared Education Programme, Queen's University Belfast; the Fermanagh Trust Shared Education Programme; and the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Project, North-Eastern Education and Library Board.

2 In November 2012, DE produced a Strategy for Delivery document for the programme. The purpose was to identify strategic gaps and areas where a more targeted intervention would be beneficial in meeting the Fund's strategic aims and objectives. The following were identified: The revised curriculum including the priorities of literacy and numeracy, the Entitlement Framework / Area Learning Communities, school leadership and Boards of Governors, non teaching/support staff, Education Other than at School, Looked after Children, Young Offenders, Extended Schools and school councils.

3 One of the projects was unable to complete its work.



final stages and, as a result, the projects were able to demonstrate clear improvement between the interim and final reports. This report is based on a broad and in-depth evidence base across the participating schools/organisations visited by the ETI over the period 2010-13 and which included over 374 meetings and discussions with project and school staff, children and young people, and at least 142 direct observations of learning sessions.

- 1.5 The projects were implemented across the formal and non-formal sectors including early years, primary, post-primary, special education, youth and community work, and teacher education, exploring the development of shared education in different contexts. The projects contributed to the four interrelated strategic aims of the SiEP. Often the work of each project contributed to more than one of the strategic aims. For ease of reference, however, the details of each individual project and key outcomes are provided in Table 1 linked to the aim that they most fulfilled. Details of each individual project and key outcomes are provided in Table 1 on pages 4-5.



Table 1

The aims of the SIEP were to:	What did the work of the 19 projects do?*	Key outcome of the project
promote shared education by linking schools representative of the two communities;	<b>The Change Makers Project</b> worked with 10 schools in partnership in the Lisburn and greater Belfast area to equip young people to be agents of positive change within and between school communities.	Young people benefited from learning how to tackle controversial and difficult topics in shared classes through the high-quality facilitation of learning. Quantitative and qualitative research was used well to inform ongoing planning of sessions in order to meet better the needs of the young people.
	<b>The Creative Change Project</b> worked with 10 schools in 5 shared education partnerships in the North Coast area with children, teachers, classroom assistants and parents/carers on the creative delivery of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).	Effective partnership between an institute of higher education, schools and parents resulted in young children from different traditions learning together through the creative delivery of PDMU. The partnership arrangements resulted in high-quality learning experiences for teachers, classroom assistants, parents, carers and children to help them understand the complex nature of the reconciliation process and how to be at ease with difference.
	<b>The Learning to Live Together Project</b> worked with 12 schools in 6 partnerships across South-Eastern Education and Library Board to promote positive community relations through using methodologies from the formal and non-formal sectors.	Staff contributed positively to shared education through working across the formal and non-formal sectors. These links brought freshness to teaching and learning approaches which engaged and motivated young people, particularly the more reluctant young people. The project showed that shared education can facilitate, and support, an understanding of difference in a respectful, cooperative and interdependent way for the benefit of all pupils.
	<b>The Partnership, Inclusion, Reconciliation, Citizenship and History Project</b> worked with 12 schools in 6 shared education partnerships in the North-Eastern Education and Library Board area to promote inclusion and reconciliation through Local and Global Citizenship and history.	By developing meaningful shared curricular learning opportunities, pupils engaged well together in a common purpose, promoting a greater acceptance of one another's views and opinions.
	<b>The Primary Curriculum Partnership Project</b> targeted 20 schools with experience in community relations to form 10 partnerships across the Southern Education and Library Board to develop the mutual understanding strand of PDMU through shared classes.	By children learning in shared classes and teachers working in shared partnerships using the PDMU curriculum with considered expertise, the children and staff handled controversial and sensitive issues more effectively. This resulted in raising the standards of learning in PDMU for the children and participating schools.
build on community relations within and between schools;	<b>The Classrooms Re-imagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers Project</b> provided 134 teachers with training in and through shared education to deal with issues of diversity, inclusion and community cohesion within the classroom and on a whole-school basis.	Shared teacher education at all phases is crucial to bring about change through: effective support, challenge and extending perceptions within the school setting in the community. Key to these programmes was the opportunity for teachers to work alongside others from different phases to become more aware of the continuum of education which all young people experience.
	<b>The Facing Our History: Shaping the Future Project</b> worked with 178 teachers, 101 student teachers and 855 pupils to explore the shared history of the two main communities in Northern Ireland in dealing with sensitive and contentious issues through transformative learning experiences in order to contribute to reconciliation.	Effective history education can be a transformative experience and can make a significant contribution to the process of reconciliation; it is crucial that all history teachers are equipped with the skills for handling sensitive and controversial issues in the classroom and that all young people have shared experiences to consolidate their learning.
	<b>The Promoting Reconciliation through a Shared Curriculum:</b> worked with 24 primary and 16 post-primary schools across the Western Education and Library Board to develop shared learning classes through PDMU and Local and Global Citizenship.	A key strength was the professional development of teachers and the provision of resources to support the statutory aspects of the curriculum for PDMU and Local and Global Citizenship. The training of teachers was crucial to develop their confidence and skills in handling sensitive and contentious issues, especially with young people in shared classrooms.
	<b>The Sharing Classrooms: Deepening Learning Project</b> trained 414 teachers working in shared classrooms across the 29 ALCs.	Most young people adapt positively to learning within shared classrooms; where concerns arise they relate to issues of integration regarding gender, socio-economic background and school type. In establishing a genuinely inclusive ethos of shared education, school leaders, teachers and staff need to be supported in developing appropriate strategies to address these challenges.

\* Much of the work of each project met more than one of the key aims of the SIEP. For the ease of reference the projects are sorted according to the aim they most fulfilled.



	<p><b>The Welcoming Schools Project</b> worked with 18 schools across the Southern Education and Library Board to take proactive steps to make them a more welcoming place for all young people regardless of religion, race or creed and for schools to engage more effectively with the community.</p> <p><b>The Belfast Old Firm Alliance Project</b> worked with 2,167 children and young people to develop good relations through sport in interface and divided communities across the greater Belfast area.</p> <p><b>The Cultural Learning and Social Skills Project</b> worked with 671 young people from diverse backgrounds, isolated locations and vulnerable social situations to engage in community relations programmes to develop their social skills and to provide positive alternatives to the various anti-social circumstances and self-harm influences in the North-West region.</p> <p><b>The Distinctive Voices: Collective Choices Project</b> worked with 530 young people across 22 schools to explore their own story and the stories of others from differing backgrounds in shared learning experiences.</p> <p><b>The Reel Frontiers Project</b> worked with 533 pupils across 20 schools to explore themes of division and conflict through the medium of film and through engagement with associated workshop activities to creating their own original films about contentious issues that affect the people of Northern Ireland.</p> <p><b>The Sharing Education Together Project</b> facilitated the learning of over 7,348 young people in reconciliation programmes through training by 336 young volunteers.</p> <p><b>The Together through Culture Project</b> worked in 38 schools with pupils from both traditions to promote a greater understanding of the Irish language and culture through linking primary schools with post-primary schools.</p>	<p>By children learning in schools that developed innovatively a welcoming ethos for all, the children and staff showed greater respect for themselves and others. This resulted in a much greater understanding of a truly welcoming ethos and how to engage more effectively with the community through a climate of reassurance and acceptance fostered within and beyond the school gates.</p> <p>The medium of soccer was an accessible way to engage children, young people, parents, teachers and community workers in promoting reconciliation. It offered an opportunity for those involved, in a neutral and safe environment, to begin to understand diversity and how to promote tolerance.</p> <p>When community relations activities are under-pinned with meticulous planning and preparation, pupils of all ages can benefit from a rewarding and enjoyable experience through engaging with others from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>By giving young people the opportunity to explore their own story and the stories of others from differing backgrounds in shared learning experiences, they can make a difference in their current communities and for the future.</p> <p>By exploring themes of division and conflict through the medium of film and through engagement with associated workshop activities and creating their own original films, pupils can gain a deeper understanding of a range of contentious issues that affect the people of Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Young people in post-primary schools responded well to the approaches modelled by the young volunteers and facilitators when discussing contentious and sensitive issues. The local area learning communities were a useful starting point from which to promote shared education.</p> <p>Through a study of interests in names, place names, song, dance and traditions and the Irish language in shared classes, the young people gained a greater understanding of language and culture. Through shared classes between primary and post-primary schools, the children and young people were given better opportunities to be prepared for transition.</p> <p>The pre-school stage of education provided a key window of opportunity to influence parental attitudes and behaviours in promoting reconciliation and having a positive effect on their children in their formative years. The commonality of being a parent helped the parents involved to dialogue and overcome barriers to engagement across traditional community divisions.</p> <p>By adults modelling good relations and leading by example, at whole-school level, children got to know, empathise with, and respect one another in neighbouring schools, and from schools across the border. This helped to create a culture of respect and tolerance among primary school children by facilitating contact and opportunities for discussion of sensitive issues such as identity, friendship, diversity, sectarianism and peace and reconciliation.</p> <p>The youth work approach used to support and progress the young people was highly successful in raising their aspirations, and preparing them to engage in education, training or employment.</p>
<p>support cultural outreach amongst young people representative of the differing communities/ traditions; and</p>		
<p>address strategic gaps in achieving reconciliation through a cross-community, cross-border approach through education and the related services sector.</p>		

- 1.6 Each project reflected the strategic aims through a set of more detailed and complementary objectives. The reality of making these practical and effective in demonstrating measurable outcomes for young people was complex given the multiple views and definitions of what constitutes shared education in NI, and the lack of a substantive body of research to guide evaluative processes.<sup>4</sup> Developing the work of the projects required vision, energy, courage and resilience in taking risks, to discover how to educate young people better and tackle difficult issues.
- 1.7 Over the period 2010-13 the projects report that over 46,500<sup>5</sup> children, young people, staff, parents/carers, grandparents, governors, youth and community workers and others involved in education across NI, including 428 schools, were involved directly or indirectly in the SiEP. Their experiences have enabled the ETI to identify how shared education can be instrumental in promoting better learning as we work collaboratively towards a better future. The significant funding by IFI for the SiEP has enabled those involved to engage with issues of reconciliation, diversity, community relations, respect and trust through moving shared education experiences from an aspiration to a reality.

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4 Donnelly, C. and Gallagher, A. M. (2008) in *School Collaboration in Northern Ireland: Opportunities for Reconciliation*, School of Education, Queen's University, Belfast highlighted a range of specific issues raised by participants about the challenges of engaging in cross-sectoral collaboration.

At the time of writing, Professor Joanne Hughes, Dr Caitlin Donnelly and Professor Miles Hewstone are conducting a longitudinal examination of Inter-Group Contact in NI. Preliminary findings indicate that increased opportunity for contact leads to increased reporting of friends from the other community; as the proportion of other group friendship increases, so too do the levels of positive attitudes towards the other group and out-group friendships are associated with lower levels of anxiety felt towards the other group. *A Report on the Sharing Education Learning Forum Conference 2012* p10.

V. Boorah and C. Knox (2013) in *Shuffling desks or improving education performance? Area planning in Northern Ireland*, University of Ulster highlight an approach to compare the quality of education performance of those schools engaged in cross-community collaboration with those which operate as discrete units.

5 This figure is based on the progress reports of the project submitted to the IFI liaison team within DE by August 2013. The programme ends in December 2013 and thus the final figure may be higher.

- 1.8 The report identifies what lessons can be learnt from the experience of the projects in piloting how best to help young people from the two main communities and other backgrounds to explore their uniqueness, to recognise and value diversity in order to be able to engage better in life and work with increased confidence, self-esteem and respect for others. The report concludes with a series of recommendations for consideration at policy and school/organisation level. It presents a work in progress and a challenge to all through shared responsibility and action to become better at shared education.



## 2. The context

### 2.1 The historical context

- 2.1.1 In developing the SiEP, the IFI recognised that 92.6% of the school population was educated in either Catholic maintained schools or controlled or voluntary schools attended mainly by Protestant children or young people. The SiEP aimed to break down the barriers arising from the historic conflict in NI by providing a range of opportunities for young people to learn together and to reach the highest possible standards of educational achievement. Shared education should not be seen as just another initiative nor is it a new concept.<sup>6</sup> The SiEP sought to build on the lessons learned across many years in the development of community relations in NI. Key developments in this process are detailed in the timeline in Appendix 1.

### 2.2 The policy context

*Shared education is not a bolt-on or an optional extra. It is fundamental to delivering good schools, and central to my vision that every learner should achieve his or her full potential.*

Minister of Education, October 2013

- 2.2.1 The development of shared education aligns closely with the role of DE to promote personal well-being and social development, so that young people gain the knowledge, skills and experience to reach their full potential as valued individuals and active citizens, as envisaged in DE's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy. The Programme for Government (PfG) 2011-15<sup>7</sup> targets for DE with respect to shared education include: to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015; and to increase substantially the number of

6 Plans for sharing in education date back to 1831 when the Board of National Education was charged to establish a model school in Dublin "to promote the untied education of Protestants and Roman Catholics in common schools." In 1923, the Education Act proposed a non-denominational system of education and in 1974 the Minister of Education proposed a plan for 'shared schools'.

7 The Programme for Government 2011-2015 Building a Better Future (NI Executive, 2012).

schools sharing facilities by 2015. In addition, the work of shared education as evidenced by the SiEP links well to the four tenets of DE's policy of school improvement, *Every School a Good School*, through promoting child-centred provision, high-quality learning and teaching, effective leadership and a school connected to its local community (see diagram 2 in Appendix 3).

- 2.2.2 Given these developments, the Minister of Education appointed a Ministerial Advisory Group whose independent report was issued in March 2013 detailing 20 recommendations to advance shared education. The Minister of Education responded to these recommendations in a statement to the NI Assembly in October 2013 emphasising the importance of shared education.

## 2.3 The curriculum context



*The most dramatic and significant change within society in Northern Ireland recently has been the move away from violence towards a culture that supports democratic politics. Education has a responsibility to support this. There has already been a commitment to the improvement of community relations through Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) which, along with Cultural Heritage, has promoted inter-cultural understanding and contact. Local research indicates, however, that more controversial political and social issues tend to be avoided in schools and that there is a specific need to strengthen young people's social, civic and political awareness.*



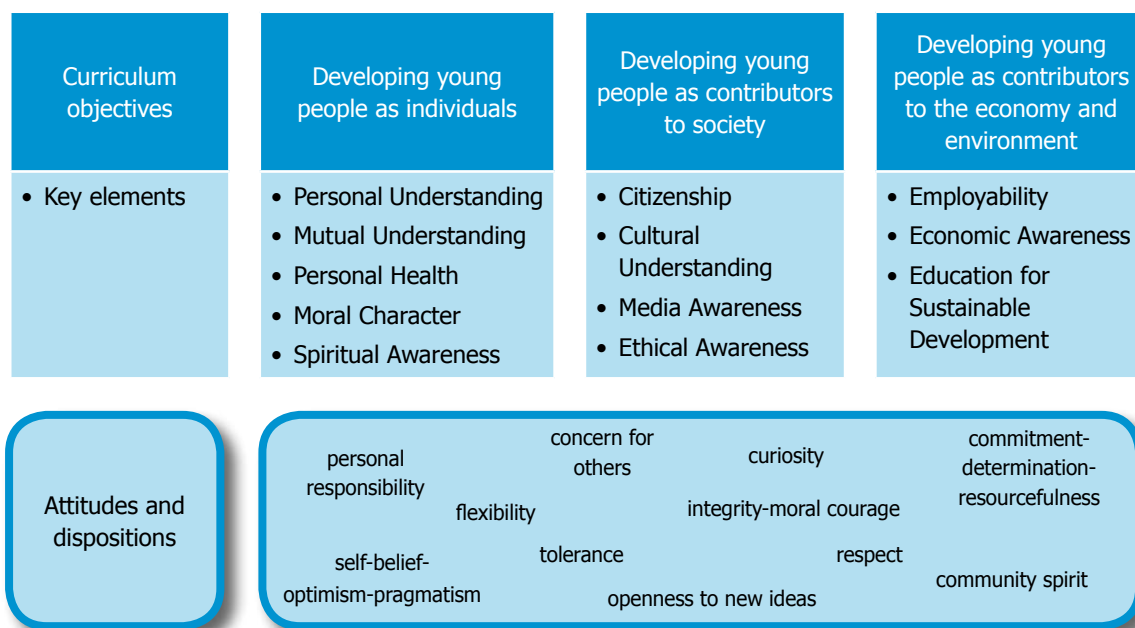
Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, 2007

- 2.3.1 The statutory curriculum provides a core enabling framework to promote shared education. The Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC) was revised in 2007 with the aim of empowering young people to develop their potential and make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives through three key objectives; the development of the young person as an individual; a contributor to society; and a contributor to the economy and environment. Key elements which focus on the real and relevant issues that young people need to assimilate in preparation for life and work in NI society are embedded in the individual areas of learning (subjects). These key elements, linked to the curriculum objectives that they serve and the attitudes and dispositions that they promote are listed in



figure 1.<sup>8</sup> Inherent in the NIC was the recognition that NI society was emerging from conflict.

**Figure 1**



2.3.2 The learning areas of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) and Learning for Life and Work (LLW) are key vehicles for embedding shared education through the NIC. They were developed specifically to enable young people across the key stages to learn about themselves and others, developing tolerance, respect and open-mindedness through understanding similarities and respecting differences between people in the local community and beyond in order to help them address the challenges and opportunities they may encounter in society. In addition, all subject strands but in particular, religious education, history, geography, English, languages, drama and art and design provide opportunities for teachers to design learning programmes that explore identity, diversity and promote reconciliation, developing the attitudes and

8 Eight competences for lifelong learning are detailed in the *European Reference Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, Education and Training, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007. These competences are: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and cultural awareness and expression. The NIC aligns with these competences.

dispositions outlined in figure 1. This evaluation found evidence to demonstrate that shared education activities have the potential to meet the aims of the NIC in a more holistic way through preparing young people better for life and work in an interdependent NI and a globalised world.

- 2.3.3 Shared education also provides practical experiences and contexts for young people to develop better their thinking skills and personal capabilities, skills needed for lifelong learning; for example, applying critical thinking in shared classes helps young people to suspend judgement and become open-minded; to be willing to explore alternative viewpoints and imagine “otherwise”. Independent thinking and personal awareness through engaging with different viewpoints develops the young people’s confidence and self-esteem to safeguard them against dogmatisms and peer pressure. The development of interpersonal skills through shared classes enables young people to listen carefully in order to adapt language and behaviour to take account of others’ feelings, and to develop the ability to work together, manage disagreements and reach agreed outcomes. The table in figure 2 highlights how ETI aligned the quality indicators to evaluate the young people’s achievements from effective shared education to support the development of thinking skills and capabilities in the NIC.

**Figure 2**

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (from NIC)	Achievements and Standards from ETI Quality Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing Information</li> <li>• Thinking, problem-solving, decision-making</li> <li>• Being Creative</li> <li>• Working with Others</li> <li>• Self management</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evaluate the extent to which the young people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show a clear understanding of the rationale of the project and can articulate their learning in a manner appropriate to their age and ability;</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of the causes of division including misunderstanding, prejudice and sectarianism;</li> <li>• demonstrate high levels of interest and open-mindedness, listen actively and show fairness and respect for the views of others;</li> <li>• engage with others and respond genuinely to the views, opinions and feelings of others;</li> <li>• express their vision for a fair, just, interdependent and diverse community/society;</li> <li>• demonstrate self-awareness through articulating and supporting their own viewpoints clearly and calmly;</li> <li>• manage their behaviour in a range of new situations;</li> <li>• demonstrate empathy and acknowledge the hurt, losses and perspectives of others;</li> <li>• engage willingly with others and co-operate well in group activities;</li> <li>• demonstrate effective group work skills when working in new groups and in dealing with sensitive and contentious issues;</li> <li>• display understanding and sensitivity towards the rights, opinions and feelings of others and the ability to handle conflict and confrontation with maturity;</li> <li>• demonstrate the ability to apply their learning from the project in new and different situations;</li> <li>• develop a critical understanding of local community issues and how they might affect and influence change to promote reconciliation and community coherence.</li> </ul>

## 2.4 The concept of shared education

2.4.1 This evaluation acknowledges the multiple definitions, views and starting points of all stakeholders involved in delivering elements of shared education in our society.<sup>9</sup> It does not seek to offer any additional definition or to suggest that one definition is sufficient, other than to say that sharing will always require compromise. Compromise will not and cannot always be equal for both parties but the vision statement of *Every School a Good School* provides a clear guiding principle placing the interests of young people rather than institutions at the centre of efforts to improve educational improvement and tackle underachievement.

2.4.2 The professional view of ETI is that shared education is not an event or series of lessons but, rather a process in which to embed a whole-school approach to shared education to prepare young people better for life and work. The evidence from the evaluation confirms that schools/organisations are at different starting points along a continuum. In Appendix 3, on the basis of the evidence from this evaluation, the report offers some working diagrams as a starting point to the development of a continuum to promote shared education. The following understanding of the concept of shared education arises from the work in the context of the SiEP.

Shared education involves young people from **diverse** backgrounds learning together, enabling them to recognise and value diversity and develop higher levels of **mutual understanding**. It refers to methodologies and environments where pupils interact by sharing, building on and widening one another's knowledge, skills and experiences and beginning to **reconcile** differences to promote a shared future. Shared education is more than just a shared space.

<sup>9</sup> Appendix 2 details further definitions, interpretations and explanations of the concept of shared education.

<sup>10</sup> *Every School a Good School: A Policy for School Improvement*, Department of Education, p5.





### 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The evaluation was carried out over the period 2010-2013. The ETI's approach to the evaluation centred on building capacity within the projects to reflect and evaluate progress alongside providing external and objective evaluations. The inspectors evaluated the quality of the provision against a customised set of quality indicators<sup>11</sup> which were shared with the project leaders to ensure transparency and openness. Inspectors encouraged the individual projects to use these indicators to help schools/organisations involved in reconciliation work evaluate the quality of the provision beyond the life of the programme. Throughout the work, particular emphasis was given to developing a common language and understanding between projects and schools/organisations with regard to the potential impact of the work on curriculum and school/organisation development planning.

3.2 In addition, the inspectors:

- held discussions with children, young people and other participants both formally through pre-arranged group meetings and informally;
- observed lessons and training sessions;
- met with principals, senior leaders, parents, governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, external facilitators in the schools/organisations visited;
- met with the project teams to discuss their work and review the quality indicators with them in conjunction with the projects' processes for evaluation of the provision which included audits, questionnaires, focus groups, critical friends, peer reviewers and external researchers;
- evaluated the outcomes for young people through their engagement in discussions, group tasks, reflective pieces of work, focus groups and accreditation;
- evaluated the quality of the planning, resources, support material and assessment arrangements developed by the project teams;
- scrutinised a wide range of documentation including the initial funding bids and the regular progress reports submitted by the projects;

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11 The indicators which were reviewed in September 2012 can be accessed from the ETI website.

- attended training days and conferences hosted by the projects and conferences organised by the IFI Liaison Team within DE which brought representatives from the projects together to share their experiences; and
- analysed the online representation and case study material of the projects.

3.3 The findings from across the 19 projects comprise this final evaluation. In addition, a composite oral report was provided in September 2011 and interim findings were reported back in detail to each project in June 2012 and in June 2013. Case studies from the projects are available on the ETI website.

3.4 Throughout the process, inspectors considered carefully the starting point of the projects and the progress made in delivering the aims and their impact on young people over the lifespan of the SiEP. At the interim point it became clear that all stakeholders including ETI found it difficult to articulate the tangible outcomes for young people using shared/common language with ease or precision. The ETI drafted more precise quality indicators aligned with the thinking skills and personal capabilities and attitudes and dispositions to learning within the NIC (see figure 2) with a view to linking the desirable outcomes more explicitly to the NIC. The original aims and objectives remained the key focus of the evaluative process but ETI refined its focus on learning through paying more particular attention to evaluating:

- the participants' personal and social development and their willingness to engage in accepting differing views and attitudes, confident in their own beliefs and views;
- the participants' outcomes and achievements in terms of self-esteem, confidence, resilience, communication, managing emotions and taking greater responsibility for their learning;
- the knowledge, understanding and skills of participating staff in facilitating effective shared learning and tracking participants' progress; and
- how well school and other leaders developed a vision for shared education, conducted staff training, raised community awareness and planned sustained shared classes.



*The discussions were really interesting and it made me more aware of the prejudice and discrimination in our society and of how it is wrong to make assumptions about people.*

Pupil

*Why can't we do more of this?*

Child



*I find that my children, when they go to the other school, they're looking for their friends from the other school, we have outings together, the parents are brought together, so I think that has been a breakdown of a barrier..... I think the religions around this area would be a lot more tolerant of each other, and we do get on... it's nice to see the children, teachers and parents coming together.*

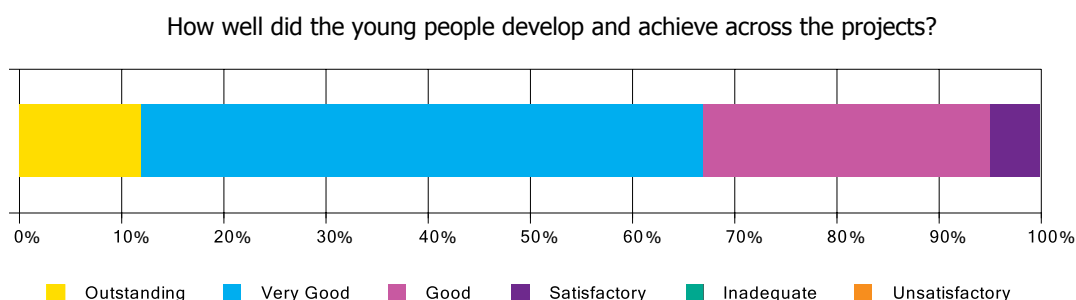
Parent

*This is by far the most interesting and thought-provoking work I have been involved in and it really challenged the pupils to think about symbols of sectarianism and their impact on their lives. The visit from the other controlled primary school to our school really broke down barriers and it was wonderful to see how well the pupils interacted with each other and their understanding of each other's cultures.*

Teacher

## 4. THE FINDINGS

### 4.1 Project outcomes and achievements



#### Going well

- 4.1.1 In almost all of the projects, the participants developed good personal and social skills through their engagement with others in exploring controversial, sensitive, complex and relevant issues to their lives. In the most engaging practice, they increased their self-confidence, self-awareness and self-reflection and were able to talk readily about themselves and their experiences. They were open to meeting others with differing perspectives; they were calm and respectful in discussions, listened attentively and displayed good levels of empathy and acceptance of the responses of others. They developed good standards across a range of skills, including language and literacy, information communication technology, problem-solving and decision-making, critical and creative thinking.
- 4.1.2 In almost all of the projects, the participants increased their awareness of the impact of their attitudes and actions on other individuals and communities. In the most innovative practice, the participants demonstrated a greater understanding of the perspectives of the other community and placed a high value on working alongside those from other traditions. They contributed well to discussions about the divisions within our society and the different perspectives on a range of contentious issues relating to identity, religion and culture. They articulated the importance of education in shared contexts in helping to remove the misconceptions or ignorance that surround issues of conflict in NI including practical suggestions about how to resolve conflict.



- 4.1.3 In almost all of the projects, the participants were able to evaluate their own learning through, for example, reflective journals/diaries, questionnaires and discussions. The majority of the projects provided them with the opportunity to achieve an accredited qualification or an award designed with set criteria. Comparisons cannot be made, at this point, across these accredited courses as to the currency of the accreditation. Nevertheless, the steps to accredit the learning experiences did signify for the participants that the work was meaningful and enabled the projects to track the progress of individuals.

### **Lessons arising**

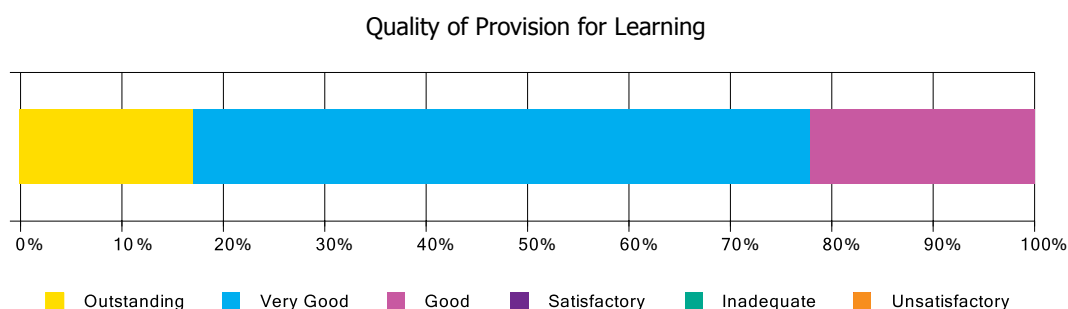
- 4.1.4 The schools/organisations engaged meaningfully in the SiEP when the projects could demonstrate clear systems to track the progress in the participants' understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviours. When there was insufficient evaluation of the work on outcomes, the work remained superficial.
- 4.1.5 There was no one-size-fits all approach to the work. When the projects had a clear and honest recognition of the profile and views of the participants, including the understanding of, and response to, the fears, inhibitions, practical barriers and closed mindsets, the planned learning was customised to the particular starting points of the participants.
- 4.1.6 The most effective projects were progressed at a pace appropriate to the participants' needs as opposed to working within an inflexible structure. It took time to enable the participants to develop personally and socially in order to be able to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in shared contexts in order to impact on, and develop the appropriate attitudes and behaviours necessary for shared learning. It was in the latter stages of the SiEP that more demonstrable learning outcomes were apparent.

4.1.7 **In going forward**, there is a need:

- for schools/organisations to evaluate consistently the impact of the work of reconciliation on the young people's attitudes, behaviours, understanding and skills to be able to demonstrate clearly the progress of young people and to inform future planning;
- for schools/organisations to focus on the development of the young people's maturity and higher-level skills of negotiation, compromise, collaborative problem-solving, managing disagreement, conflict and confrontation through innovative, inspiring and experiential learning strategies; and
- for all stakeholders to recognise, value and reward shared learning through accreditation and assessment arrangements across phases.



## 4.2 Quality of provision for learning



### Going well

- 4.2.1 The SiEP brought a fresh impetus to collaborative learning to motivate and engage young people. It complemented curriculum planning and stimulated a variety of innovative learning and teaching strategies focused on consolidating the participants' understanding of diversity and of the part each can play in the process of reconciliation. Given the controversial, complex and sensitive nature of much of the work, the most effective methodologies focused on the facilitation of learning<sup>12</sup> to promote a greater level of experiential learning.<sup>13</sup>
- 4.2.2 Almost all of the projects planned and developed the shared education work, crucially, through the NIC including PDMU, World Around Us, Local and Global Citizenship, history, language and sport. These projects provided continuing professional development to support teachers, youth workers and other educational providers in being confident in the use of a range of skills and methodologies to facilitate shared learning, including addressing controversial issues.
- 4.2.3 Participating staff responded willingly to the challenges of facilitating shared education. In the best practice, the staff planned effectively to meet the needs and interests of the participants in a safe and respectful environment. This included adapting approaches to reflect the local context, and the

12 Facilitation is about the process of helping people to explore, learn and change. It encourages people to reflect on their experiences and how they are learning.

13 Experiential learning can be described as learning that is achieved through reflection on everyday experience. It takes place through the active involvement of the whole person as a spiritually, energetically and physically endowed being encompassing feeling and emotion, intuition and imaging, reflection and discrimination, intention and action. (Heron, John 1999 *The Complete Facilitator's Handbook*. London: Kogan p2.)

differing personal, social, emotional, behavioural, and learning needs of the participants. The staff deployed a range of appropriate learning strategies that promoted well the participants' skills in active listening, critical thinking and responding to others. In the best practice observed, the staff created a safe learning environment characterised by mutual trust encouraging high levels of engagement. They were aware clearly of the inhibitions and anxieties of participants as they engaged in the reconciliation process. Crucially, they modelled the values of reconciliation, including trust, respect, openness, sincerity, active listening, empathy and inclusion. They used effective methodologies to develop the participants' understanding both of themselves and of others to foster the development of positive attitudes and dispositions. They provided challenging and thought-provoking experiences enabling the participants to explore and discuss relevant, current and contentious topics relating to their local communities and NI. They engaged the participants emotionally in the learning process, challenged their thinking through adopting a range of different standpoints and provided opportunities for them to manage conflict through shared working.

- 4.2.4 The SiEP encompassed all ability ranges, including vulnerable young people and parents/carers, and provided examples of how to differentiate the learning to address the various needs of the participants. The participants' preconceptions about the ability of others were often challenged when engaged in a shared task.
- 4.2.5 In the more innovative practice, the project staff provided scenarios and experiences where the participants could apply their learning to everyday situations. This included the use of different perspectives of members from the main communities, case studies, storytelling and role-play related to issues of conflict. The depth of the learning was captured through a range of creative approaches including multimedia, art, drama, music and literary genres.
- 4.2.6 Across the SiEP, the staff assessed regularly the impact of the shared learning on attitudes and behaviours through questionnaires, focus group interviews, reflective journals, peer observation and external evaluation. The analysis of this assessment was used to inform future planning.

## Lessons arising

- 4.2.7 When schools/organisations were clustered within easy access of one another they addressed better the practical constraints such as transport costs and found local solutions to promote community cohesion. Where schools knew how to access support from the non-formal sector when contentious issues arose, there was evidence that this collaborative practice resulted in a quicker resolution.
- 4.2.8 Involving parents/carers can be complex and time consuming, nevertheless evidence demonstrates that, when projects persevered with the engagement of parents/carers, it led to a more enriched experience for participants.
- 4.2.9 The most engaging work was tailored to meet the needs of the young people and different local contexts using the views and experiences of the young people to plan the programme in response to issues<sup>14</sup> of conflict, fear, isolation, bullying, intimidation and identity, rather than using prescribed resources which inhibited the learning.
- 4.2.10 When shared education was high quality it was planned carefully across the school/organisation partnerships to include:
- learning outcomes identified for young people at different year groups and entry points in order for the work to be progressed appropriately;
  - a wide range of learning strategies with opportunities and experiences for the young people to work purposefully in small groups and pairs to explore differences, manage conflict, take decisions and solve problems; and
  - the facilitation of the learning process of reconciliation rather than merely teaching the words associated with reconciliation.
- 4.2.11 The most effective assessment of the learning was when it was part of an ongoing process and integral to informing the next steps.

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14 A range of the issues identified by children and young people is detailed in the Shared Education The Views of Children and Young People, Children and Young People's Report 2013, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Young People.



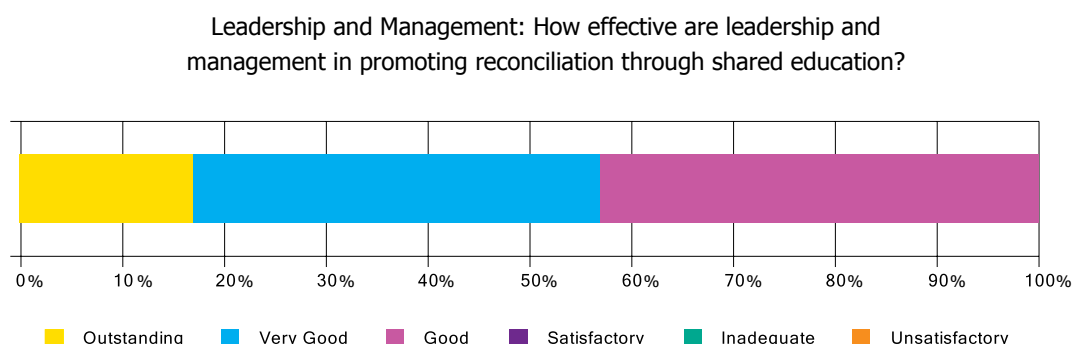
#### 4.2.12 In going forward, there is a need to:

- support staff across all phases in developing further their confidence and competence in using a wide range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes to provide progressively challenging experiences for young people in tackling controversial and sensitive issues.

*“Learn about the flags before you fly them.”*  
Pupil



### 4.3 Leadership and management of the projects



#### Going well

- 4.3.1 The IFI Liaison Team within DE managed effectively the selection of the projects and monitored and reviewed rigorously the projects' work to ensure that progress was assured and focused entirely on the impact on shared learning and associated skills. As the SiEP progressed there were obvious links between projects which the team encouraged and facilitated. In particular, the team linked the work well to the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) policy of DE.
- 4.3.2 Through regular monitoring reports and accountability meetings, the IFI Liaison Team within DE worked flexibly and open-mindedly with the leaders of the projects to achieve an acceptable balance between being creative and taking risks to maximise the learning about shared education with appropriate systems for accountability. Given the complexities involved at the beginning of the programme, most projects constantly had to adjust their approaches and administrative procedures to remain focused on the overarching aims of the SiEP.<sup>15</sup> In the later stages of the project the IFI Liaison Team within DE worked with the ETI to combine and simplify reporting arrangements for both quality and finance.
- 4.3.3 Project leaders and participants across the projects were creative in piloting a range of shared education models to promote reconciliation across religious, cultural, economic and social divides. This included practical examples of overcoming barriers to shared education such as timetabling, transport costs

<sup>15</sup> Project underspends were due to a range of factors including the late starts, recruitment of staff, competing school priorities and degree of understanding of the shared education concept amongst schools/organisations.

and competing priorities within schools, as well as philosophical barriers including closed mindsets and a narrow vision of the potential of education.

The range of models included:

- developing shared learning through local partnerships between schools/ organisations;
- work in shared classes in schools through curricular areas;
- work in shared classes in post-primary schools through the development of the Entitlement Framework;
- shared classes between primary and post-primary schools to improve transition for the young people;
- shared parenting classes;
- shared education within schools and with the community; and
- cross-border shared education experiences.

4.3.4 The leaders of the projects were effective in supporting participating schools/ organisations to develop shared education. Their clear vision for, and commitment to, shared education impacted positively on schools/organisations and helped to develop enhanced self-evaluation and improvement. The process of embedding a robust, 'no excuses' approach to self-evaluation for improvement developed significantly over the duration of the programme.

4.3.5 There were examples of the excellent use of the voice of the learner to improve the quality of the provision and to inform further planning. This process brought a sense of realism about what worked and what remains to be done in order to plan better for going forward.

4.3.6 An important element of success was the recruitment, deployment, support and development of staff to promote the SiEP. This ensured that most of the project staff brought high levels of expertise and experience in community relations, reconciliation and diversity, including the skilful facilitation of learning to handle controversial and sensitive issues. This level of expertise was required to ensure the necessary levels of engagement and supportive working relationships between the projects and the schools, organisations, groups and individuals when developing the complex work of shared education.

- 4.3.7 The project staff recognised the importance of working in partnership to build effectively the capacity and expertise across the projects. There were examples of how projects worked together to link the work clearly with school improvement and to use audits, action plans and arrangements for monitoring and evaluation suitable for school contexts. Where appropriate, the project staff linked actively with the non-formal sector and relevant agencies such as the careers, training and education sectors to meet better the needs of young people.
- 4.3.8 The SiEP provided participating teachers and staff with opportunities to develop their pedagogical skills at a time of restricted access to continuing professional development. This included access to appropriate resources which supported better partnership working.
- 4.3.7 Almost all of the projects addressed effectively the areas for improvement identified in the interim report in June 2012.

### **Lessons arising**

- 4.3.8 Most of the projects struggled to meet all of the individual aims in a measurable way. The view of the inspection team was that projects oversold what might be possible in an effort to ensure funding although this was in no way intended to be duplicitous but as a result of their conviction and belief in the possibilities within the work they were undertaking. It will be important in work such as this which requires a significant investment in building good relationships across stakeholder groups, that a longer lead-in time is established which allows projects or schools with good ideas to benefit from professional support in having their ideas shaped and refined into practicable implementation plans. In turn, the delivery partners can feel confident that they are providing what they have articulated so they can concentrate their energies on the young people rather than on accountability against worthy but imperfect project aims.
- 4.3.9 A longer lead-in time would also allow for more targeted work with schools/organisations. External facilitators and project leaders need more support in recognising how to engage effectively with schools so that issues around duplication of provision in some schools/organisations, and an absence of provision in others, are avoided. While it does not do harm as such, it does not make for the most efficient deployment of resources.

4.3.10 When the leaders at all levels within the schools/organisations developed a clear understanding of the purpose of shared education in delivering the curriculum and preparing young people for life, the work was not viewed as just another initiative. Schools/organisations identified their starting point and planned effectively to move from single identity work to sustained shared education, building on existing cross-community work and partnerships. Rather than leaving the work to individuals, time was given to gain whole-school/organisation commitment to the purpose of shared education. This was phased through the development planning and self-evaluation process, linked closely to the outworking of the aims and ethos of the schools/organisations, incorporating parents and governors to give ownership to the wider community. Other policies within the schools/organisations such as the suite of pastoral care policies and those linked to learning and teaching were addressed through the development work on shared education. Crucially the schools/organisations gave priority to the continuous professional development of staff in developing an in-depth understanding of the reconciliation process and the skills it requires, enabling staff to clarify their own views and feelings in order to be more competent and confident in facilitating meaningful exploration of controversial and sensitive issues with young people.

#### 4.3.11 **In going forward**

- IFI, DE and other funders need to continue streamlining the planning and accountability processes for project-driven work of this nature aiming for clarity in planning and effective reporting on quality and finance, while not distracting teams unnecessarily from the practical delivery of the projects.
- Schools/organisations need to work with external facilitators as appropriate to identify where they currently are in respect of shared education to enable them to set realistic aims and objectives and ensure planning links with, and builds upon, other initiatives within the schools/organisations.
- Schools/organisations need to use their improvement process to develop shared education through staff development, the appointment of key people to lead and co-ordinate the work, a system to evaluate the quality of the provision and outcomes and engage with parents/carers and the community.





“

*I would hope that, if children learn to get on with each other and overcome their difficulties and see that we're the same early on in life, that as they go through school and out into the community they'd learn to live together.... What I've done is sow seeds and all we can do is hope that in years to come, something will stick with them.*

Teacher”

“

*This work has given me a greater knowledge of the important role that a teacher can play in breaking down boundaries.*

Teacher”



“

*Being emotionally literate in NI is very difficult as we are not an emotionally cultural society.... But it's about making children aware of their emotions.... It's not wrong to be angry, it's how you deal with that anger... It's giving strategies....*

Principal”

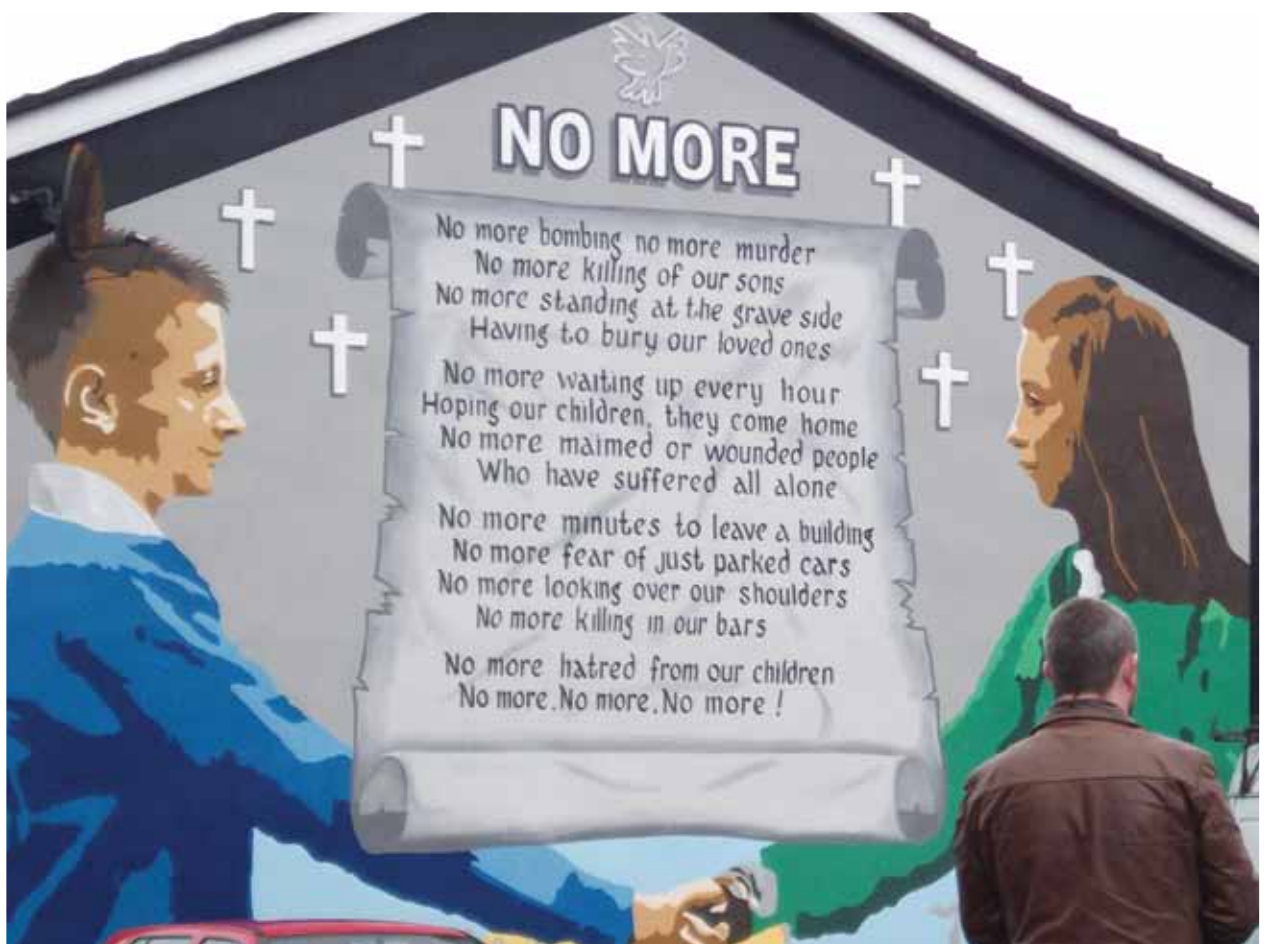


## 4.5 Sustainability

- 4.5.1 At the time of the final evaluation, almost all of the projects had plans to sustain the learning. The depth and quality, however, of these plans vary from those which aim to disseminate information to those which are focused on embedding the learning. Where the projects were clear about how to sustain the work, the participating schools/organisations have appropriate plans which include: integrating shared education action within other school priorities such as raising standards in literacy and numeracy, reviewing their ethos, ongoing staff development and dissemination of good practice and improving the quality of learning and teaching in areas of the curriculum such as PDMU, WAU, Local and Global Citizenship, history, geography, languages and sixth form enrichment programmes. Some schools plan to sustain the work irrespective of significant additional funding as they were convinced of the benefits of shared education. These included: sharing staff expertise, the impact on learning and access to better resources and facilities. There were examples of seconded teacher development officers who are now able to use their expertise to embed shared education within their own school contexts. Of importance are the plans to develop shared education in teacher education.
- 4.5.2 The Education and Library Boards (ELBs) plan to develop shared education further through whole-school improvement work and developing links between the curriculum and youth services to embed the CRED policy. The higher education institutes, ELBs and other managing agents of the projects are well aware of the benefits of planning to progress the work further through multi-agency links and partnerships. There are useful examples of where the projects linked their work to the competences of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland.
- 4.5.3 On an individual basis, the projects plan to sustain the work through the resources developed and disseminated through websites, multimedia, conferences and newsletters and, in some instances, gaining alternative sources of funding for the work. Notably, all involved in the work, the individual stories of children, young people, teachers, classroom assistants, parents, carers, senior leaders, governors and other educationalists provide a rich resource for furthering the development of work in this area.

#### 4.5.4 Going forward

The challenge is to consider how best to integrate the work of the SiEP within the education system in light of the PfG targets. It is a commendable goal to provide all young people with a shared education opportunity throughout their school career. However, while the quantitative target is useful, much remains to be done to ensure the experience is effective, sustained and progressive, particularly in schools that have not yet begun the process. Schools will need support to move along a continuum to embed high-quality shared education. It is also important to recognise the challenges to sustaining the learning accrued from the SiEP which include: changes in staffing arrangements and the loss of staff with the necessary expertise both in projects and schools, insufficient funding for collaboration and CPD, perception within schools/organisations of competing initiatives and policies from DE and the effectiveness in how schools engage with shared education. In helping to address these challenges DE officials need to work more collaboratively to ensure that school improvement policies signpost connections to, and opportunities for, shared education.



“

*A fresh perspective, seeing  
new ways of operating.*

”

Governor



“

*It's about understanding that children  
need to branch and spread out in meeting  
different people because, if you don't give  
children the opportunity to mix, then they  
become closeted in their own community.*

”

Parent

## 5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The longer-term aim for all schools is for shared education to be so integral to the ethos and fabric of each school community that it becomes 'the way we do things around here'. All of the requirements to achieve this aim are enshrined in the aims of the NIC, but schools, like our society, are at different starting points.
- 5.2 Only by honest self-reflection will any school community be able to identify its starting point and only with a genuine commitment from all stakeholders can schools be supported to work through the complexities of achieving an aim for children and young people that has so far eluded our wider society. In the short to medium term that will only be achieved through ongoing collaborative practice which allows schools to reflect on how much progress they have made in meeting that longer-term aim. They will continue to need to be supported by each other but also through initiatives such as the SiEP and project-led work gradually reintegrating what they learn into custom and practice.
- 5.3 The following nine recommendations are ETI's professional view of how schools can be supported in practical ways: for some; to begin their journey on a continuum which builds true understanding rather than compliance, and for others; to keep pushing the boundaries moving ever closer towards the longer term aim.



These are:

	Recommendations
For DE	<b>R1</b> to ensure that school improvement policies signpost connections to, and opportunities for, shared education;
For DE in conjunction with other stakeholders including the Education Skills Authority/ Education and Library Boards/General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland, Youth Service, Institutes of higher education, IFI and other funding bodies	<p><b>R2</b> to build on the effective collaborative work of DE and IFI in future education programmes, through strategic planning which focuses on maximising the number of young people involved and the quality of the practical work, through for example, providing professional support to refine good ideas within bids, identifying specific target groups across schools, and streamlining and combining reporting mechanisms to fulfil the requirements of a range of funders;</p> <p><b>R3</b> to commission the development of a continuum of shared education which outlines the key milestones in moving from shared education as additional to the work of a school to being embedded in its ethos, thereby realising the aims of the NIC in a more holistic way;</p> <p><b>R4</b> to reflect the importance of shared education in policy and planning for teacher education, in particular to draw on the emerging shared education continuum in how teachers and youth workers are educated;</p> <p><b>R5</b> to work collaboratively to provide those who work in the formal and non-formal sectors with high quality resources and professional development, and to develop their confidence and competence in using a range of learning strategies necessary for work in shared classes to provide progressively challenging experiences for young people in tackling controversial and sensitive issues;</p> <p><b>R6</b> to recognise, value and reward shared learning through accreditation and assessment arrangements which promote the development of young people's higher-level skills of negotiation, compromise, collaborative problem-solving, and managing disagreement, conflict and confrontation with maturity;</p>
For schools/ organisations	<p><b>R7</b> to identify with external facilitation as appropriate, their starting point and set realistic aims and objectives within the broader education plan/school development plan and in the plans for the wider area learning community;</p> <p><b>R8</b> to use the improvement process of the school/organisation to develop shared education through staff development; the appointment of key people to lead and co-ordinate the work; the evaluation of the impact of the quality of the provision on the young people's attitudes, behaviours, understanding and skills; and engage with parents, carers and the wider community; and</p>
For ETI	<b>R9</b> to develop further, the quality indicators for the identification of effective practice in shared education and identify and disseminate effective practice.



## 6. Conclusion

**Table 2: The following table details the extent to which the SiEP met its four overarching aims.**

The aims of the SiEP were to:	Overall, were the aims achieved?	Emerging issues
<b>promote shared education by linking schools representative of the two communities;</b>	Achieved	The programme promoted effectively links between schools in shared education partnerships. The extent of the sustainability of these partnerships without additional funding remains to be seen.
<b>build on community relations within and between schools;</b>	Achieved	The challenge remains to engage schools/ organisations not already involved in community relations work.
<b>support cultural outreach amongst young people representative of the differing communities/traditions; and</b>	Achieved	The programme focused on targeted young people and there remains the need to ensure all young people can access effective shared education opportunities.
<b>address strategic gaps in achieving reconciliation through a cross-community, cross-border approach through education and the related services sector.</b>	Achieved	A more co-ordinated approach across all government departments to shared education is still needed.

- 6.1 The learning accrued from the SiEP is significant. The evidence demonstrates that high-quality shared education contributes to better learning for young people. When the contexts and experiences were high quality, young people demonstrated positive attitudes and dispositions to learning, developed their thinking skills and personal capabilities and displayed good personal and social skills.
- 6.2 Of notable significance, the SiEP provided reassurance to the wider society of the commitment to look positively to the future and cultivate a common ground to support reconciliation work in schools/organisations. The SiEP provided a range of practical models of how to develop shared education across educational settings. The key to success was the strong focus on high-quality



shared learning experiences and processes rather than a rush to ensure as many shared classes as possible.

- 6.3 It is too early yet to assess the long-term impact of the work of the projects but sufficient work has been done to demonstrate the positive impact of shared education for young people. The process is not complete but indicators of change are identified for the continued attention of all stakeholders and society.



**1831**

The Board of National Education was charged to establish a model school in Dublin "to promote the united education of Protestants and Roman Catholics in common schools."

**1923**

**Education Act**  
This Act proposed a non-denominational system of education.

**1923****1969**

**1969  
NI Community Relations Commission**

The then Ministry of Education appointed this commission to 'investigate the contribution schools might make to improve community relations.'

**1981****First Integrated School**

Lagan College was established in Belfast by the campaigning parent group All Children Together.

**1981****1974****1974**

**Plan for 'shared schools'**  
The Minister of Education proposed a plan for 'shared schools'.

**1982****1982**

**The Improvement of Community Relations:  
The Contribution of Schools**

Circular DENI 1982/21 stated that every teacher, every school manager, Board member and trustee, and every educational administrator within the system has a responsibility for helping children to learn to understand and respect each other, and their differing customs and traditions, and of preparing them to live together in harmony in adult life.

**1989****Education for Mutual Understanding**

As part of the Education Reform Order, the promotion of cross-community understanding was formalised in the school curriculum through the introduction of the themes of Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage.

**1999****1999**

**Joined in Equity, Diversity and Interdependence**

This initiative was established to: develop a coherent strategy for children, youth work and education for citizenship within the NI youth sector; and to embed the inter-related principles of equity, diversity and interdependence into the ethos, policies and programmes of the organisations which make up the youth sector.

**1987****1987**

**Cross-Community Contact Scheme**

DE launched the Cross-Community Contact Scheme which was designed to encourage schools and youth groups to bring together young people of different community backgrounds and to foster the development of positive, cross-community relations.

**1989**

## APPENDIX 1

2013

**Ministerial Advisory Group**

The Minister of Education appointed this group whose independent report was issued in March 2013 detailing 20 recommendations to advance shared education. The definition of shared education that the Ministerial Advisory Group was asked to use involved 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.

2013

2011

2011

**Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy**

In June 2008, the Education Minister initiated a review of DE's Community Relations (CR) policy. The review concluded that as a result of a combination of factors, the CR work was often seen as an add-on rather than integral to the curriculum. A new policy, *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education* was launched in March 2011. The aim of the policy is to improve relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those from different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.

2009

**Schools for the Future: A policy for Sustainable Schools**

This policy emphasised the need for new opportunities for collaboration and sharing in education. Furthermore, through the implementation of the Entitlement Framework and the creation of area learning communities, schools are encouraged by DE to develop collaboration with members of their learning community in order to ensure young people have access to a broader, better balanced range of courses and pathways that are relevant to their needs and interests and can help them succeed as adults in life and at work.

2007

2007

**NIC – Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) and Local and Global Citizenship**

The Education Order 2007 mainstreamed the requirement for schools to promote the development of young people as active citizens. The key objectives of the NIC are to develop the young person as an individual, as a contributor to society and as a contributor to the economy and the environment. This curriculum brought the introduction of PDMU in the primary sector and Local and Global Citizenship in the post-primary sector.

2005

**A Shared Future**

*A Shared Future: The Policy and Strategy Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland* made substantive recommendations on education and how it should be delivered.

2005

2006

2000

**Dissolving Boundaries Programme**

The Dissolving Boundaries programme uses ICT to facilitate cross-cultural educational linkages between schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

2006

**The Independent Strategic Review of Education**

The Report of the Independent Strategic Review of Education *Schools for the Future: Funding, Strategy, Sharing* addressed the use of resources in education, the need for better strategic planning of the schools' estate, and the need for improved sharing and collaboration.

## APPENDIX 2

## Current definitions/explanations and interpretations of shared education

### The Ministerial Advisory Group

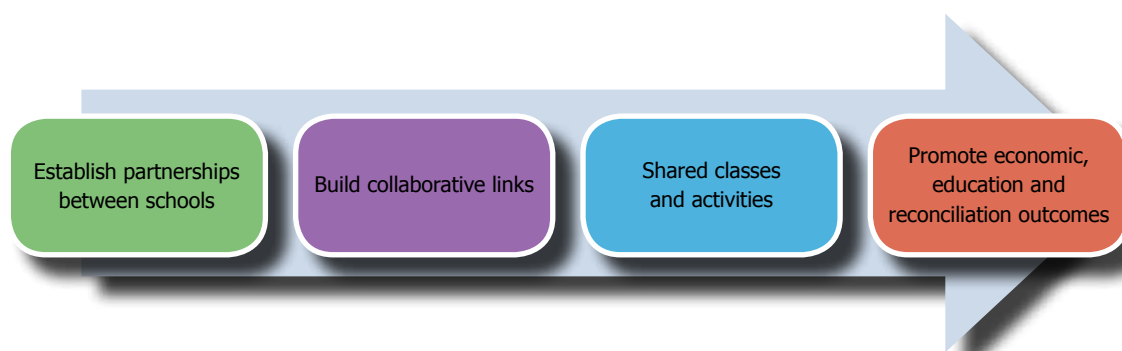
The Ministerial Advisory Group provided this definition of shared education in its report in March 2013.<sup>16</sup>

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

### The Shared Education Learning Forum

Three other programmes were also funded by IFI. They are: the Sharing Education Programme, Queen's University, Belfast; the Fermanagh Trust Shared Education Programme; and the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education (PIEE) Project, North-Eastern Education and Library Board. These three partners comprise the Shared Education Learning Forum (SELF) which sees shared education as:

*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. 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.*



*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.<sup>17</sup>*

<sup>16</sup> Advancing Shared Education: Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group, March 2013.

<sup>17</sup> A Report on the Shared Education Learning Forum Conference 2012, p2

The PIEE model was based on the idea of shared education as regular and sustained engagement between pupils and teachers from two or more schools of different management types and the project developed the use of a shared teacher. Findings from research commissioned by the North-Eastern Education and Library Board are summarised below.

<b>Educational Benefits</b>	<b>Societal Benefits</b>	<b>Economic Benefits</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School improvement/raising standards</li> <li>• Collegial Support</li> <li>• Exchange of ideas and good practice</li> <li>• Training and professional development</li> <li>• Increased staff confidence, motivation and morale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaningful interaction for pupils</li> <li>• Greater parental engagement</li> <li>• Increased cross - community understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of resources</li> <li>• Joint buying power</li> <li>• Sharing of staff</li> </ul>
Evaluation of the Primary Integrating/Enriching Education Project. Final Report: A Legacy of Partnership. Dr A Hunter, Dr J Bates, Dr A McCully and Dr U O'Connor-Bones (2012)		

The PIEE project used the 'Gradient of Collaboration' illustrated below to help schools who begin to engage in sharing to understand progression in developing shared education.

<b>Level 1: Association</b>	<b>Level 2: Co-operation</b>	<b>Level 3: Partnership</b>	<b>Level 4: Confederation</b>
Informal discussion between principals	Planned activities	Joint planning for joint activities	Joint project management group
Low level sharing of resources eg books/ space	Documents/schemes of work	Shared documents/ schemes of work	Joint planning and target setting
Virtual communication eg email, web cam	Shared resources - physical/financial	Shared resources - physical/financial  Sharing of staff	Joint responsibility for implementation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activities</li> <li>• joint staffing</li> <li>• shared budget/ portion of budget</li> <li>• shared accountability</li> </ul>
	Face-to-face contact of same children and adults longer than an hour at a time over a few weeks per year	Frequent and sustained face-to-face contact of same children and adults eg 6 weeks in a row per team	Frequent and sustained contact of same children and adults over full school year
Adapted from 'Working a Cluster' Sheelagh McGrogan RTU 1997			



The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People published a report in April 2013 on *Shared Education: the views of children and young people*. In that report, the following diagram was used to explain shared education.



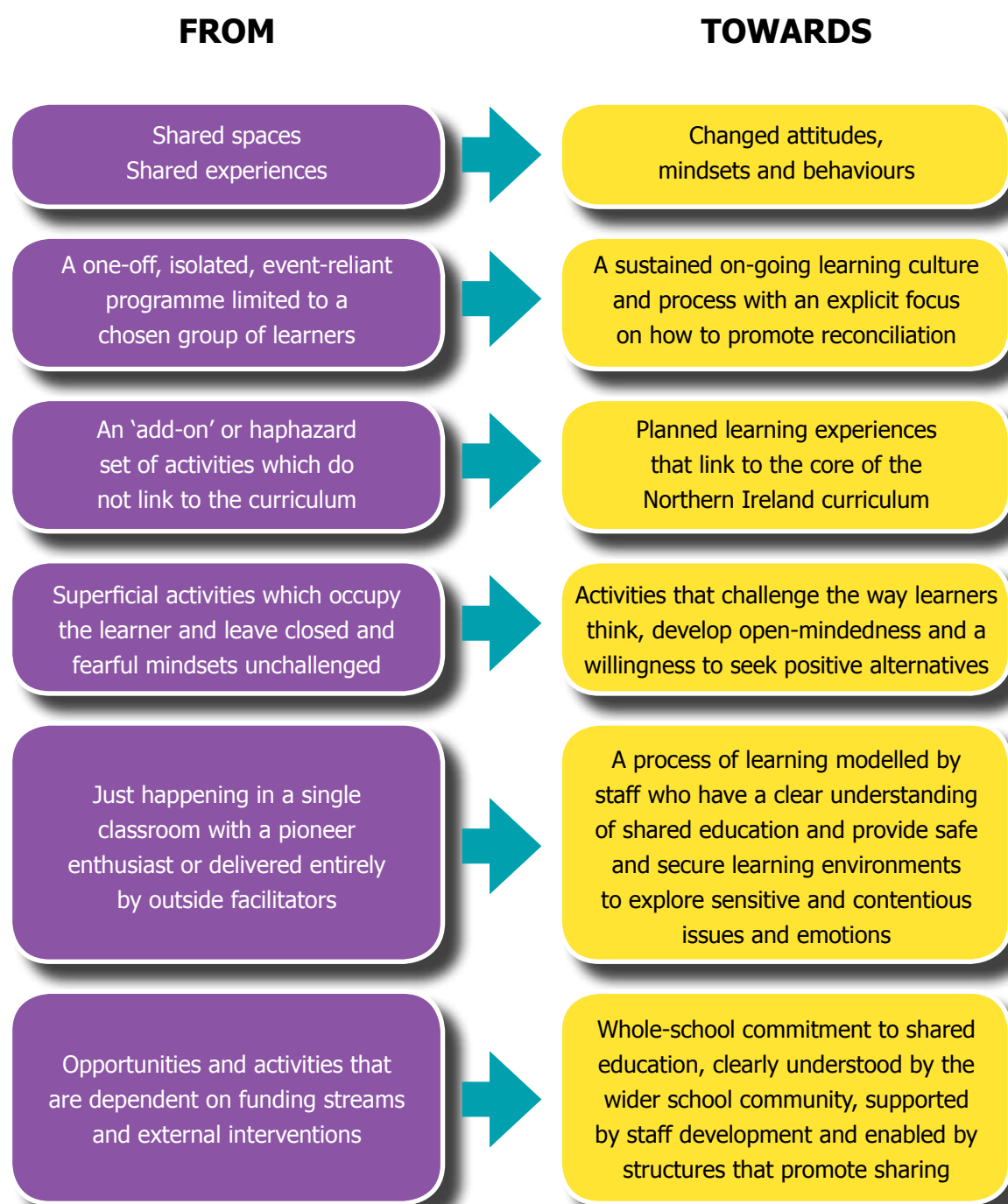


## APPENDIX 3

### Diagram 1: Different starting points

This diagram highlights the various starting points of some schools/organisations in the SiEP and how they aimed to sustain and progress the quality of the shared learning.

#### Promoting a more effective practice continuum



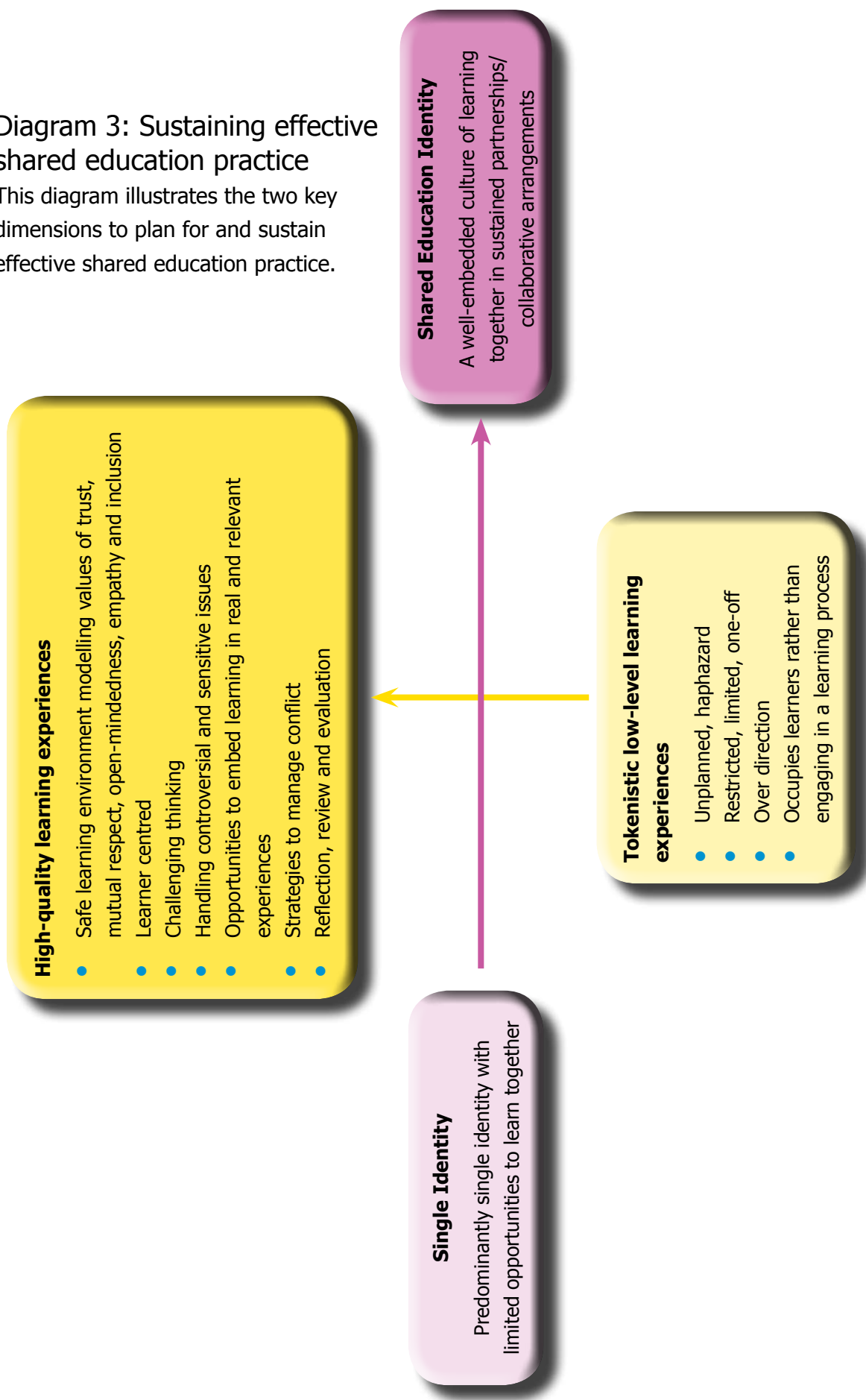
## Diagram 2: Whole school improvement

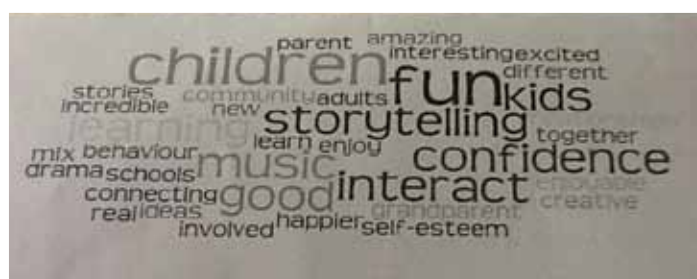
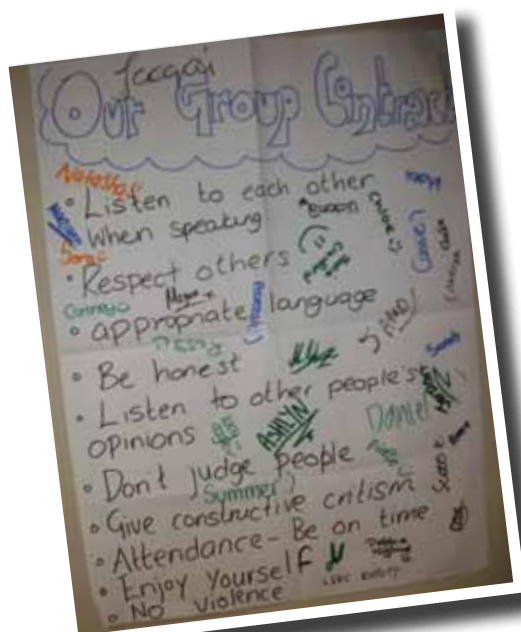
This diagram highlights how some schools used their involvement in the SiEP to develop shared education as a vehicle for whole-school improvement, linked to the DE policy for school improvement 'Every School a Good School'.



### Diagram 3: Sustaining effective shared education practice

This diagram illustrates the two key dimensions to plan for and sustain effective shared education practice.







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