



# Exploring Transformation

**Towards  
Tomorrow  
Together**

## Sharing

The majority of schools in Northern Ireland are involved in some degree of cross-community work. Many are keen to emphasise that they are open and welcoming to all applicants, whatever their background and culture, and are rightly proud that for decades they have been seen as a mixed school for all the local community.



## Integrating

For schools which want to take the next step and become integrated, the process can be straight-forward and very rewarding. Integrated schools make a positive commitment to a declared ethos which respects difference and nurtures all cultures. Pupils can explore their own and other's traditions without compromising their own identity. Transformation to integrated status only happens where parents agree it and surveys show more than 70% per cent of parents would support their local school in such a move.

## Why transform?

By moving towards integrated status, a school is publicly declaring its commitment to an ethos of respect for diversity. By bringing together children of all faiths or none, integrated education encourages future generations to build trust, openness and understanding. Staff and principals emphasise that by transforming they have developed and strengthened links with the wider community while providing opportunities for pupils to broaden their perspectives which better prepares them for a culturally diverse world. Parents and pupils find taking the step has been an enriching experience which often forms the natural culmination of the work already being carried out in many schools towards a more cohesive and peaceful society.



## Where do we start?

The transformation process can begin in one of two ways:

1. The school's Board of Governors decides it would like to consider transformation and consults parents

or

2. A written request is submitted to the Board of Governors by at least 20% of the parents

A secret ballot is conducted among all parents, run independently by the Electoral Reform Society. Schools may run information evenings and events before the vote to make sure everyone involved understands what transformation means.

If the parents vote in favour of transformation then a Development Proposal is submitted to the local Education and Library Board and the Department of Education for consideration. If the Development Proposal is approved, the process begins. The school will promote itself to the minority tradition within the community; the Department of Education considers that an integrated school should aim to achieve a religious balance of 70:30 though it accepts that a transforming school may take several years to work towards achieving this goal.

## Is there any help for us if we decide to transform?

Yes! In the next two pages there are details of the grants available from the Integrated Education Fund (IEF). Over the years we have worked with schools exploring and undertaking the transformation process and with their help and the experience gained we've tried to make our grant programme more accessible and aim the money where it is most needed. You will also get support from the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) which works with parents, staff and governors. When controlled schools transform, their respective Education and Library Board (ELB) will remain the school's employer and can also provide support and guidance throughout the process. Advice, guidance and financial support for activities both pre and post transformation may also be available from the Department of Education (DE).

## **IEF Grants**

The money for IEF grant programmes comes from funds raised by the IEF in Northern Ireland, Ireland, Great Britain and internationally.

The financial support that enables the IEF to make grants to schools is generously donated by private individuals, small businesses, large corporations, government agencies, trusts and philanthropic organisations.

## **IEF Grants for Transformation**

IEF Grants for Transformation can offer financial support to schools during two main stages of the transformation process – firstly, exploring the process to decide if it is right for your school, and secondly, undertaking the process.

## **IEF Grants for Schools Exploring Transformation**

**(Grants of up to £2,500 available)**

IEF Grants for Schools Exploring Transformation are awarded to support schools and their communities which are looking at what sharing already exists in their school and whether this could be increased, developed or formalized through the transformation process. These projects can last up to two years and grants of up to £2,500 are available.

These grants can financially assist schools which would like to, for example, explore possibilities, provide information sessions, understand what is involved, grow confidence and raise awareness about current education provision and the potential for transformation to integrated status.





## **IEF Grants for Schools Transforming (Grants of up to £30,000 available)**

IEF Grants for Schools Transforming are awarded to support schools during the first three years of having controlled integrated status (the first year's status is usually conditional). Grants of up to £30,000 are available and are given on condition that the grantee allocates half of the grant to support the school's transformation and half of the grant to market the school's transformation.

The following are examples of how financial support in these particular areas could help:

### **Supporting the school community through the transformation process**

This can include activities such as updating library and literacy resources, purchasing sporting equipment and/or musical instruments associated with the cultural identity of the pupils from the school's minority community, and enabling staff, governors and parents to avail of training opportunities to facilitate the transformation process.

### **Marketing the transformation of the school**

Some schools have employed successful marketing activities such as new school signage, producing new school prospectuses or leaflets, and establishing or updating a school website, etc.

### **How to apply for IEF grants**

The IEF welcomes applications from primary and post primary schools in Northern Ireland. Applications received will be assessed against the programme eligibility criteria and grants will be awarded subject to the availability of funds.

For further information about the above grants, the transformation process or other IEF grants, please visit [www.ief.org.uk](http://www.ief.org.uk) or contact the IEF Grants Officer by telephone: 028 9033 0031.


## Case Study 1 –

### How it all began for one rural, medium sized, controlled integrated primary school.

The process was initiated by the school Board of Governors and lasted nearly two years. During this period much of the work focussed on discussing the transformation option, sharing information about what this would mean for everyone involved and ultimately asking the parents to vote on the proposal to transform.

During this time the school Board of Governors hosted a number of meetings for all the key stakeholders. The school Principal held a seminar for the governors and the whole school staff as well as an information evening for the governors, whole school staff and all the parents who were addressed by representatives from NICIE, the school's ELB and an existing integrated primary school. The school Principal then held a further information session for governors, the whole school staff and parents. Following these meetings and some further informal discussions with a range of stakeholders the Board of Governors unanimously resolved to hold a ballot for the parents to vote on the governors' proposal to transform to controlled integrated status.

The ballot result was positive and the Board of Governors then submitted their Development Proposal for transformation to their ELB. In the Proposal the school outlined the rationale behind their decision which included that the school was originally established as a non-denominational school to educate children of all religions. The culture of trust, with respect for other people's beliefs, ideas and traditions was already embedded in the school's ethos. In transforming to integrated status, the governors believed that the school would be returning to its original purpose: integrated education for the children of the village and the greater surrounding area. Five months later the proposal was approved by the Minister of Education and the following September the school opened its doors to existing and new pupils of the new Controlled Integrated Primary School.



## **Case Study 2 – What being integrated means in one urban, medium sized, controlled integrated college.**

At this controlled integrated college the Board of Governors, whole school staff and pupils all believe in integration in practice. A core aim of the school community is to make every effort to help pupils feel comfortable about difference, to celebrate the diversity within the staff and pupil body and employ such variety as a positive resource.

The plurality of the communities which make up the local area is reflected at any given time in the school population. Integration for the school means all communities, all nationalities, all abilities and all socio-economic backgrounds working and learning together. There is a Staff Integration Committee which explores new ways to celebrate the diversity of faith and cultural identities within the school community.

That the college is integrated can be felt throughout the school and is successfully conveyed through displays of pupil work and school policies. The ethos is reflected in the pastoral care provided, curricular and extra-curricular activities offered and regular whole school events and initiatives which celebrate local and world-wide religious and cultural diversity. In addition, the college library and other resources are multi culturally inclusive. Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff are provided with additional, specific training in order to support the delivery of the integrated ethos.



## Help and Support from the Integrated Education Fund

The Integrated Education Fund is a financial foundation for the development and growth of integrated and shared education in Northern Ireland. It was established in 1992 as an independent fundraising and grant making organisation, and campaigns for the development of meaningful sharing and integration in education.

Since its foundation, the Integrated Education Fund has invested more than £14 million in shared schooling, contributing to an increase in the number of integrated schools from 18 in 1992 to 62 in 2011 – the number of children who are educated in integrated schools has increased from 3,408 to over 20,000. Demand for places in many integrated schools exceeds capacity each year, reflecting a widespread wish to see more integration for our young people.

The Fund has also awarded grants totalling over £930,000 for more than 211 projects exploring and celebrating religious and cultural diversity involving over 485 schools from the integrated, maintained and controlled sectors





## **Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education**

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) was established in 1987 to develop integrated education.

The organisation has worked with parent groups assisting in the establishment and ongoing support of 40 Grant Maintained Integrated Schools and has supported the successful transformation of 22 schools to Controlled Integrated status – the work achieved has been ground breaking.

NICIE looks forward to supporting any new schools applying for transformation.



## Department of Education

The Department may provide additional time-bound funding to help schools with the transformation process. Funding from within the Transformation Budget is provided to assist schools with:

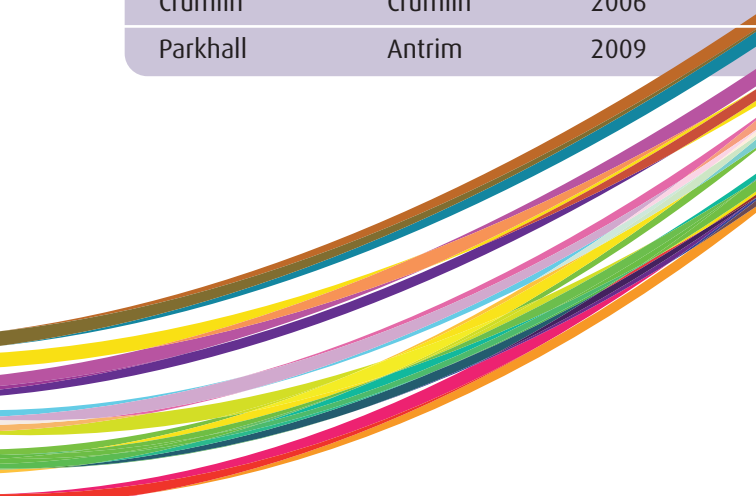
- Provision of additional teaching staff to ensure the religious education of the minority community in the school
- Cost of a new school prospectus
- Provision of in-service training for staff and members of the Board of Governors
- Costs associated with the additional administrative duties required by integrated status



## Transformed schools in Northern Ireland as of September 2011

(in chronological order)

	Town/City	Year Transformed
<b>Integrated Primary Schools</b>		
Carhill	Coleraine	1991
Portaferry	Portaferry	1995
Rathenraw	Antrim	1996
Annsborough	Castlewellan	1997
Bangor Central	Bangor	1998
Kilbroney	Rostrevor	1998
Kircubbin	Kircubbin	1998
Carnlough	Carnlough	2001
Glengormley	Glengormley	2003
Round Tower	Antrim	2003
Glencraig	Holywood	2004
Groarty	Londonderry	2005
Ballycastle	Ballycastle	2007
Cliftonville	Belfast	2008
Ballymoney Model	Ballymoney	2009
Fort Hill	Lisburn	2009
Crumlin	Crumlin	2010
<b>Integrated Colleges</b>		
Brownlow	Craigavon	1991
Fort Hill	Lisburn	1998
Priory	Holywood	1998
Crumlin	Crumlin	2006
Parkhall	Antrim	2009





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