



Learning Together

Issue 17 Winter/Spring 2012

News from the Integrated Education Movement in Northern Ireland

PACT For The Future



Pupils from Holywood Primary School and St Patrick's Primary School who took part in a recent PACT programme joined guests at Stormont to launch this year's grant programme.

Politicians have been challenged to invest in sharing as the Integrated Education Fund launched the latest Promoting a Culture of Trust (PACT) grants programme at the Long Gallery in Stormont.

IEF Chair, Marie Cowan, told guests that PACT is one of many sharing schemes for schools, and like many of them is totally dependent on charitable funding. The scheme has been supported by BT Ireland, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Ulster Carpets. Marie Cowan said:

"The draft Programme for Government promises an increase in the number of opportunities for children to participate in sharing schemes. Given current budget restrictions, will we see this commitment in principle translated into action to maintain and increase sharing between schools? Many of us in this room will be watching with interest."

The IEF PACT programme invites all schools in Northern Ireland to apply for grants for projects which bring schools together to explore diversity, culture and history. Activities should involve staff, parents and the wider community.

Holywood Primary School Principal, Debbie Crookshanks, spoke at the launch about their collaboration with St Patrick's Primary School and said "The IEF PACT scheme has been the springboard for our vision for the school communities of Holywood. Both schools are committed to maintaining these links in the future."

Children from the two schools were at the event in historical costume to reflect one of the themes of their project: World War II.

Marie Cowan ended by urging the Executive to learn from people who have experience of cross-community education in both sharing and integration, adding "These young people are showing the way."



IEF Trustee, Joanne Stuart MBE (centre) chatting with Peter Morris and Carmel O'Connor from BT Ireland during the launch event



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- IEF Gala Ball Launched
- Strangford IC Pupil Addresses Senate Chamber
- Help From Down Under For Integrated Primaries
- Carson Awards Programme Celebrated At The Lyric
- Brownlow IC's Story: Thirty Years Of Integration – Twenty Years Of Transformation.
- One School Of Thought Campaign Gathers Pace

If you have any stories about sharing and integration that you would like us to include in future newsletters please email learningtogether@ief.org.uk



Join the discussion online using hashtag #PACT13

Strangford Pupil Addresses Senate Chamber

Visit www.ief.org.uk/news to see more photos of the event



New Years Honour for IEF Trustee, Joanne Stuart

Fellow trustees, staff and supporters of the Integrated Education Fund would like to offer their congratulations to IEF trustee, Joanne Stuart, who has recently been named in the New Years Honours List.

Joanne Stuart, Director of Attrus Ltd, is a former chair of the Institute of Directors in Northern Ireland and has been awarded an OBE for services to business in the community. She has advocated the cause of integrated education for many years and has worked tirelessly to promote the importance of business to the wider community.



Broadcasters Denis Murray and Lynda Bryans joined Cathal O'Hagan, St Louis' Grammar School and Jake Proctor, Strangford IC for the Senate Chamber event.

A 15 year old pupil from Strangford Integrated College took the floor in the Senate Chamber in Parliament Buildings to explain how much he values integrated education. Jake Proctor, an Executive Trustee of the NI Youth Assembly, proposed the motion "This House Believes the Time is Right for a Fully Integrated System of Education" before an audience of politicians, educationalists and business leaders at an event chaired by TV presenter Linda Bryans and hosted by the Integrated Education Fund.

Cathal O'Hagan, a pupil from St Louis' Grammar School in Ballymena responded to Jake's speech, and perspectives from East and South were provided by guests from the SHARES project in Lancashire and from Educate Together in Dublin. The event was sponsored by MLAs Trevor Lunn, Mervyn Storey and Conall McDevitt. Former BBC correspondent Denis Murray shared his thoughts about the changes in Northern Ireland in recent years.

Jake said "Studying at Strangford Integrated College has shown me how to understand and deal with difference, and working with people from other communities has been an absolute pleasure and a privilege."

This view was underlined by SDLP Education Spokesman Conall McDevitt "I look around this room and I don't see a lobby, I see a community of people with an interest in education and its capacity to build society."

DUP MLA Mervyn Storey, Chair of the Education Committee, added "No sector should feel threatened by change; but let's not forget that children have to be at the centre, not parties nor institutions."



L to R: Mervyn Storey MLA, Mark Millar and Helen Flanagan, Lancashire Shares project, Trevor Lunn MLA, Baroness May Blood MBE and Paul Rowe, Educate Together.

Scarecrow Winners At Greenmount



Pupils were treated to the Greenmount RSPB nature trail after the awards, for a quick lesson in how to guess the age of a tree.

Integrated primary school pupils met at the Greenmount Campus of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) in Antrim to receive trees which they won during the Garden Show Ireland Scarecrow Competition last summer. The overall winner was "Blossom", submitted by All Children's IPS, and it was lovely to see two of last year's P7 pupils, now studying at Shimna Integrated College, who had helped make the scarecrow, and who came back to their old school to help collect their prize.

The annual competition is open to all integrated primary schools and is generously sponsored by Allianz. The Fund is delighted that Claire Faulkner of Garden Show Ireland has announced that Allianz will support the competition again this year. We are grateful to CAFRE for donating the prizes.

After taking charge of their saplings and learning a bit about them, the children got to explore a bit of the Greenmount nature trail for a quick lesson (courtesy of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) in how to estimate the age of a tree – without chopping it down first!

Everyone seemed to enjoy their morning, and we hear that many of the guests used the journey back to school to start planning their entries for next year's competition!

Brian Sees Family Donation Bring Children Together

Brian Dickie, a member of the IEF's Campaign Council and international businessman, returned to his Northern Ireland roots recently to visit Crumlin Integrated Primary School. Crumlin IPS's transformation to integrated status was given approval by the Department of Education in 2010.

Brian, who was born and brought up in County Tyrone, and his wife Susan have supported the establishment of the school's new integrated playgroup.

Forsaking the boardroom table for jigsaw puzzles and the sand-pit, Brian enjoyed meeting children at the pre-school facility which is now in its second year.

The children were delighted to show Brian their classroom and the school welcomed the chance to thank him and Susan for their support. Brian and Susan have been very generous donors to the IEF and are long-standing members of the American Ireland Fund.



Pupils from Crumlin Integrated Playgroup were delighted to show Brian around their classroom!

Help From Down Under For Integrated Primaries

Two integrated primary schools, Forge and Glengormley, are benefiting from generous grants from the Australian Ireland Fund and Sir Warwick Fairfax Trust. Forge IPS in South Belfast has been provided with a new classroom which will help it keep up with growing demand in the area. The classroom is a joint venture between the donors and the IEF, who together have paid for the classroom and its installation. Local IEF supporter James Hagan helped source the new unit for Forge. The school had outgrown its core building and its playgroup has also expanded. The playgroup, which was originally funded by the IEF, celebrates its 10th Anniversary this year.

At Glengormley IPS pupils have been keen to show off their new 'Inclusion through Technology' project which is also supported by the Australian donors. Baroness May Blood, IEF Campaign Chair, visited the school recently to



Baroness Blood joined with Glengormley IPS pupils and Principal Mr Nigel Arnold for a music class during her visit.

see the work in action. After admiring new laptops which were bought with the grant, Baroness Blood was treated to music from the children and lunch with the staff.

Glengormley IPS Principal Nigel Arnold says "We were all delighted to welcome Baroness Blood to the school to celebrate with us. When Teresa Keating of the Australian Ireland Fund saw our children learning and playing together earlier this year she wanted to support us and we are very grateful to the Australian Ireland Fund for helping develop our new computer facility."

Happy Forge IPS pupils in their brand new classroom.



Excellent Schools At NICIE Conference

Three more schools have earned Excellence in Integrated Education Awards (EIEA): congratulations to Braidside Integrated Primary, Hazelwood Integrated Primary and Hazelwood Integrated College. They were presented with their certificates at the NICIE AGM by the Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Niall O'Donnghaill. The schools led prayers and sang for the guests and the Head Boy and Head Girl from Hazelwood IC told the audience about the impact integrated education has had on them. Training is underway in many schools to support progress towards the EIEA.

Date for the diary:

Integrated Education Week will be launched at Stormont on Friday 2nd March; this year's theme is "journeys".

Creative Talents Celebrated By Carson Awards

Ten Club – A Small Way To Make A Great Contribution

The Fund has recently re-launched its Ten Club initiative so that everyone can get involved in supporting its work on a regular basis. By donating just £10 a month (or more if you can) you will be enabling more money to be donated to projects supporting growth and development in integrated schools and through meaningful sharing projects. Since 1998 the IEF has contributed over £16 million to integrated education and cross community initiatives across Northern Ireland. There are very few integrated schools that have not benefited substantially from the Fund at some point in their development.

Please help and support us by visiting www.ief.org.uk where you can join today and start donating! You can also call Gemma Marlowe at the IEF on 028 9033 0031 if you would like more information, or email gemma@ief.org.uk.



IEF supporter and Carson Awards donor, Tony Carson joined with John Linehan and pupils from across NI to celebrate the launch of this year's Carson Awards programme.

Budding stars in the realms of theatre, art and film gathered at the Lyric Theatre for the annual Carson Awards Ceremony. Local celebrity John Linehan handed out trophies and certificates to pupils from integrated schools who had shown their creativity and skill in exploring the meaning of integration. An invited audience enjoyed a showcase of the winning projects.

Funding for the programme has been provided by Frank Carson and his son Tony, a successful entrepreneur. Frank was unable to join the celebration, but sent a video message, telling the students "I'm thrilled to bits to work with the young people of Northern Ireland through these awards. It's always a pleasure to see the creativity of students, to see integrated schools going from strength to

strength and I hope they keep up the good work."

Guests were welcomed by Baroness May Blood, IEF Campaign Chair. Baroness Blood pointed out that in Northern Ireland around 30,000 jobs are linked to the creative industries, meaning the young prize-winners will not have to travel to develop their careers.

Ronnie McQuillan, who won a Carson Bursary while he was a pupil at Hazelwood Integrated College, told how the funding had helped him to complete a film project, and said that he has gone on to gain a place at York University to study film and TV production. He has since won an award at the Cinemagic film festival.

The scheme is again providing bursaries for students during 2012 and we look forward to

showcasing their work upon completion. Don't forget that the Carson Prize is open until 27 April 2012 to all pupils in both primary and second level schools. Prizes will be awarded across Key Stage categories and winners will receive a trophy and a cash prize of £500 for their school. Contact Michael Henderson at the IEF for more information.



Guests were treated to a short scene from one of last year's award winning drama projects, 'Delicates'.

IEF Launch New Grant Programmes

The Integrated Education Fund, thanks to the continued generosity of our donors, supports a variety of projects, which see children of different cultures and backgrounds meeting and learning together for part or all of their school lives. We see any degree of positive cross-community activity as a step on the road to a fully shared future. We are delighted to be able to announce a pledge of a million pounds to promote and support sharing between and within schools. As school budgets come under increasing pressure, the Fund is keen

to help initiatives which enable young people to learn, play and grow together.

The money is available under four schemes: The **IPIS** programme (**INCREASING PLACES IN INTEGRATED SCHOOLS**) contributes to the overall costs of necessary work for schools whose development plans include expansion. We also support schools which want to take the next step and consider **TRANSFORMATION** to integrated status. These are awarded at two levels – for schools exploring the possibility and for schools in the first three years after receiving controlled integrated status (the first year of which is usually conditional). **PACT (PROMOTING A CULTURE OF TRUST)** encourages schools to collaborate in

cross-community projects which involve pupils, staff, families and the wider community in exploring political, cultural and religious differences. The applications for this year's round of grants are now open and will close on 23rd February 2012.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION grants promote interest in sharing within and between communities, by funding events to discuss local demand for greater sharing and the possibilities for the future.

More details on all these grants, as well as application forms where appropriate, can be found on our website www.ief.org.uk



Thirty Years Of Integration – Twenty Years Of Transformation *The Brownlow Integrated College Story*

Brownlow was the first school to test new legislation enabling a school to transform to integrated status.

When Frank Loan joined Brownlow College as Principal in 1986, he found a school with a tremendous community spirit. The religious and ethnic mix enriched everyone's experience, and the cohesive aspect of Craigavon - quite rare in Northern Ireland at the time - set the context for potential change.



Local parents had meanwhile formed *North Armagh Group for Integrated Education*, chaired by Chris Moffet, and organised a public meeting to call for a second level integrated school in the area. Hearing about this, Brownlow staff felt their school was already heading in that direction, so Frank Loan and a colleague went along.

The transformation of Brownlow offered the campaigners a way ahead. The group decided to support the school's campaign, initially for one year to test the commitment of its governors and Principal. It is to their everlasting credit that the Brownlow Board took the steps to follow this path.

Not everyone was content but the bulk of parents retained their faith in the school. Eventually a parental petition led to a successful ballot.

Of course this was only the first basic step in a process which has continued with outstanding success to the present day.

Looking back, says Chris Moffet "The path to integration was beset by reversals, conflicts and hostility as well as oases of mutual calm and reflection. Brownlow integration supporters were accused of treachery by some Unionists and criticised and hindered even by Education Board representatives. It was a steep learning curve - but on reflection, these early tribulations helped to win respect for people's tenacity and spirit."

Mr Black Goes Green!

Staff from Phoenix, Spires and Glengormley Integrated Primary Schools made it to the finals of the 2011 Green Teacher of the Year competition. The contest, sponsored by Belfast Harbour and organised through Action Renewables, called for nominations from across Northern Ireland and asked pupils to describe how their teacher looks after the environment and educates children about green issues. Special congratulations go to Mr Black of Phoenix IPS who came second overall.

Crumlin Integrated Primary School has also had its 'eco' credentials recognised with its second Green Flag award - apparently the produce from their vegetable garden is delicious and very much appreciated by local pensioners!

Date for the diary:

Join Brownlow IC for their 20th anniversary of transformation on 30th March in The Seagoe Hotel, Portadown. To find out more and to get your hands on tickets call 028 3834 6072



First Minister Says Shared Language Project Shows The Way



Project coordinator, Laura O'Hare and one of the main project funders, Dr Gerard O'Hare joined in the celebrations with pupils.

First Minister Peter Robinson has underlined the value of sharing and integration at a ceremony to celebrate a language project in County Down. Awarding certificates to primary school 'graduates' of the *Sharing Languages, Sharing Cultures (SLSC)* project, Mr Robinson praised everyone involved – the schools of all management types who join on a cross-cultural basis for language classes; Shimna Integrated College which runs the project; parents

who have been supportive throughout; Queens University Sharing Education Programme which backed SLSC in its early years and funders Dr Gerard O'Hare CBE and Atlantic Philanthropies who have helped keep the programme going.

Peter Robinson said "I want to see a situation where what you do is not the exception but is replicated all across Northern Ireland.... If we are to make a real impact we must build bridges not for a single crossing but for a permanent link from one side to another. This programme has laid a solid foundation."

Sharing Languages, Sharing Cultures involves 253 children from the South Down and Mourne area and is co-ordinated by teacher Laura O'Hare from Shimna Integrated College.

At the event, Dr O'Hare accepted a *Times Educational Supplement* 'Outstanding Community Partnership Award' for the project on behalf of the funders and schools, alongside Ian McMillan, a teacher at Shimna who initiated the project. Thanks to Dr O'Hare and Atlantic Philanthropies the scheme can continue for two more years.

The ceremony continued with dance, songs from the pupils in German and Spanish, and a solo performance from singer Tommy Sands, who also entertained us with an excerpt from his autobiography and an animal fable about the importance of learning languages!



First Minister, Peter Robinson MLA presents a graduation certificate to one of the pupils who took part in the project.



Speaking: Personally



Personally Speaking – Dan Campbell, Ulidia Integrated College

I am a 6th year student at Ulidia Integrated College in Carrickfergus. I also attended three integrated primary schools - in Londonderry, Glengormley and Larne- so I think I have a fair amount of experience in an integrated environment!

I feel that integrated education definitely has a positive influence on pupils. I do have many friends that are not in integrated education and from interacting with them and seeing how they react to people from other ethnicities or cultures I feel that young people that are in integrated education find it much easier to accept and interact with people who have a different belief system to their own. My experience of young people who have been through integrated education is that they are also more open-minded in their whole attitude to life. By this I mean that they look at life with more open eyes and are more willing to discuss and consider the opinions of others around them. An environment such as the one I experienced during my time in integrated education is, by its very nature, a melting pot of different ideas and opinions born from the different beliefs of the assorted individuals at the schools.

Surrounded by so many different, often conflicting, ideas and opinions I was forced to accept that not everyone will agree with what you are saying and that sometimes you will find yourself changing your view. This is the main reason that I feel my experiences of integration have been so positive; everyone gets on better because they are forced to accept the fact that everyone is different and this allows for a much healthier and happier environment for education.



Personally Speaking – Dr Gerard O'Hare CBE

I grew up deep in the countryside near the Mourne. As a rather isolated youngest child, I was overjoyed when a new family moved in a few fields away. This family – the Truells – were different; they were artists; the father was English, with a strange accent, and the mother, a Dubliner, had an even stranger accent!

They were embraced by the local community, though, and their son Charlie became my best friend. With no electronic games and only three TV channels we used our imagination and the great outdoors for our play. Other differences soon emerged; I had to give up sweets for lent; Charlie had to go to Sunday school. That didn't really matter, but going to separate schools was harder to accept. Still, we spent happy hours together, until the day the police came to Charlie's house.

The Truells were told that because of some historic military link, it was deemed unsafe for them to stay. Not safe, I heard, for my best friend to play with me anymore.

The family left - for New Zealand. Their last morning, I gave Charlie one of my favourite toys: a little blue engine. I kept the carriage that went with it, and told Charlie we would link them again when we next met.

Charlie has never felt comfortable enough to come back to the Mourne – but this year the little blue carriage and I are going to Auckland. I want to see my friend again, and I want to be the engine to bring him home.

I can assure him that people are coming together in harmony, respectful of difference and sharing experiences. I'm sure that when he sees the photographs and hears the story of the Sharing Languages, Sharing Cultures project, he will believe that we have moved on, and will want to be part of this land again.





Strangford IC Student To Put Integrated Education On The Agenda

Jake Proctor, a 15 year old pupil from Strangford Integrated College, is urging all young people to join the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and help him make integrated education a priority for the Assembly.

Jake is a Trustee on the Executive Committee of the youth forum, an organisation which promotes the voice of young people in Northern Ireland.

Anyone interested in debating, decision making or just sharing ideas and issues can get involved in the NIYF.

You can tweet Jake Proctor: @Flynnjake or email jproctor462@c2kni.net



Table Talk

The Integrated Education Fund has been bringing thinkers, movers and shakers round the table to share their views on education – where we are now, where we'd like to be, and how we get there.

The Fund sponsored a discussion, reported in agendaNI magazine, between educationalists including trades union representatives and a civil servant. Former Principals, including IEF Chair Marie Cowan, discussed their experiences and IEF trustee and businesswoman Joanne Stuart looked at what employers need from the education system. John McGrath, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education, set the tone when he said "We have too many places. We don't have any planned system. This needs radical change if we're going to make the best use of the money we've got."

Before the civic discussion in the Senate Chamber at Parliament Buildings, a seminar offered East-West and North-South perspectives as visitors from Lancashire and Dublin spoke about sharing. Helen Flanagan and primary school Principal Mark Millar from the SHARES project in Skelmersdale described how collaboration across sectors has led to economic



L to R (BACK ROW) : Rev Ian Ellis (Church of Ireland); Joanne Stuart (Director of Attrus Ltd/IEF Trustee); Adeline Dinsmore (former Principal, Ashfield Girls' School); Marie Cowan (IEF); Seamus Seanson (Irish Congress of Trades Unions); PJ O'Grady (retired Principal, St Patrick's Bearnageeha). (FRONT ROW): Audrey Stewart (Ulster Teachers' Union); Michelle Marken (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools); Baroness May Blood; Owen McQuade (AgendaNI); John McGrath (Department of Education).

and academic improvements. Mark said it had taken a cultural shift because the education system places schools in competition with each other, but when Principals began to share both problems and expertise, what emerged was the sense that "My neighbour isn't so different."

Paul Rowe, Chief Executive of Educate Together in the Republic of Ireland, described how, in opening non-denominational schools in response to parental demand, the organisation had developed strategies to promote cross-cultural sharing at a time when the community in Ireland is becoming increasingly diverse. He said Educate Together's mission is to "Educate, advocate and innovate" with the aim of developing a system where children are not labelled or separated according to the religious identity of their parents.

The Programme For Government – A Programme To Integrate?

Are our political leaders brave enough to really listen to the advice they seek? The recent publication of the Programme for Government includes a commitment to establish an Advisory Group on shared education. This is a welcome development...especially if, as could be expected, any such group considers the evidence of 30 years of planned integrated schools, of which there are now 62 educating 21,000 children.

Our policy makers have to consider whether they want a system that manages the existing division in education or one where integration, not separation, lies at the heart of our schools; where being educated together is the norm rather than the exception. For a number of years we have heard politicians admit that if we

were starting with a blank page then the separated system we have today is not what they would devise. So let's challenge them to take this opportunity to design an education system for the 21st century. In seeking advice, they are preparing to meet that challenge. Their starting point must surely be to consider how exactly integrated schools have managed to successfully educate children of all faiths and none in shared classrooms for the last 30 years despite enormous challenges. Such evidence must be central to any advisory group reporting to the Minister.

Other models of shared schools could of course emerge, and we would acknowledge the valuable experience of projects such as the Shared Education Programme managed by Queens University. All this evidence will demonstrate that it is possible to successfully educate children together in this society. So our policy makers and politicians must be brave and take the steps necessary to once and for all support the development of an education system based on the integration, not separation, of our children.



Campaign supporter and Cool FM DJ, Pete Snodden and co-presenter Kirsty McMurray welcomed Kevin Baird to the breakfast show to discuss the campaign.

We were delighted to hear that a rising rock star wanted to pledge his support to the One School of Thought campaign. Kevin Baird, bassist with the internationally-acclaimed Two Door Cinema Club, was home in North Down for Christmas and joined the IEF team to add his voice to the call for education reform.

After a live chat on Cool FM's breakfast show with presenter Pete Snodden (a fellow One School of Thought supporter) Kevin travelled via Stormont to the Waterfront Hall.

Here we were joined by another sure-fire star of the future, Malone Integrated College pupil Christopher Maher who successfully answered a call for a fan to help record a video with Kevin. Christopher was cool and knowledgeable as he quizzed the musician on life with the band, plans for the future, and why the OSOT campaign is important to him.



Malone IC student, Christopher Maher makes the most of his chance to interview Kevin.

Kevin says "I feel like Northern Ireland has come such a long way in many areas but education is lagging behind. Once children live and learn with people outside their normal stomping grounds we can finally root out the misconceptions which run often unnoticed through each strand of our society."

Chris said "I feel really lucky - it's been a privilege to meet Kevin. I agree with him that it's crucial to break down barriers, reduce conflict and improve communication. It can only enhance our country's image and attract investment - building a better future for Northern Ireland socially and economically."

Watch the full interview and pledge your support online today at www.oneschoolofthought.org.uk

Talking About Education

The IEF is campaigning to develop an education system fit for the 21st Century: good schools offering equality of access and esteem to all children. The Fund is supporting a series of conferences across Northern Ireland about the kind of education people want, the kind of community they would like to live in and the changes they can imagine taking place. The events are jointly hosted by the Rural Community Network and the IEF with a number of local partners and chaired by BBC presenter William Crawley.

We began in South Tyrone in November and in South Down in late January, where "Our Children - Their Education" brought local parents, community workers and educationalists together with politicians to explore the way ahead.

At both these events, there were lively discussions on such issues as what a good school should feel and look like; how collaboration and sharing



between schools can lead to better education opportunities and how parents can have a say in the future of local schools. Each conversation begins with a look at the challenges facing the area, and parents have the chance to hear from politicians and professionals as well as to ask questions and give their own views.

We will be in Castleterragh next, on 23 February 2012, followed by Armagh, Garvagh, North Antrim and Belfast. You can find out more at www.ief.org.uk or by ringing Karin or Chris at the IEF on (028) 9033 0031.



Rising Stars Sign Up For One School Of Thought



Kevin Baird adds his name to the campaign at Stormont.

One School Of Thought Gathers Support At Westminster!

As the One School of Thought campaign gathers pace, with thousands of signatories on its website, Naomi Long MP (Alliance), has tabled an Early Day Motion at Westminster, calling on policymakers to support the push to make sharing in education a high priority.

The EDM (number 2297) states:

"That this House congratulates Lagan College on the 30th anniversary of its founding as the first integrated school in Northern Ireland; recognises that 30 years on and despite repeated public polls demonstrating high levels of public support for mixed religion schools and excess demand for them, still only seven per cent of children in Northern Ireland attend integrated schools which seek to promote mutual understanding; further recognises that greater moves to educate children together in Northern Ireland would both enhance a shared future and help overcome the segregation in society which sustains sectarianism; and urges policymakers to support the recently launched One School of Thought Campaign to make sharing in education a higher priority in light of the social and economic benefits, commitments in the Belfast Agreement and wider international support."

The EDM has cross-party support including backing from members of all the Northern Ireland parties actively represented at Westminster. The campaign launched with an open letter signed by 75 high-profile people from the worlds of business, arts, sport and community activism, calling for a commission to examine how to reform education delivery in Northern Ireland.

The movement was initiated by the Integrated Education Fund and organisers are keen to see that any reform of the system is made with due consideration of the need for a shared and cohesive society.



Join the discussion online using hashtag #edni12

Fund Thanks Supporters At House Of Lords



PR Pointers For Schools

Principals, teachers and governors from integrated schools have attended workshops hosted by the IEF around Northern Ireland, to help them develop their communications and public relations activity.

The first speaker at each event was Russell Moore, a Director in thinkRLA advertising agency in Belfast and the Fund invited a local journalist to each workshop to talk about what editors and reporters look for in order to fill their pages.

Sam Fitzsimmons, Integrated Education Fund Communications Manager said "These workshops have gone down really well – we wanted to offer an opportunity for local integrated schools to work together and learn how to better promote their schools within their communities. The feedback has been great and we are now working on further seminars looking at how to use social media – like Facebook and Twitter – to best advantage."



IEF supporters Harvey & Allison McGrath and Susan & Brian Dickie.

Major donors and supporters of the Integrated Education Fund gathered in the House of Lords recently when they were invited to a reception and dinner by the IEF Campaign Chair, Baroness May Blood. Also in attendance was cherished Belfast-born comedian, Frank Carson who, along with his family, sponsored the event.

As part of the celebrations marking 30 years of integrated education, the keynote speaker was Sheila Greenfield, the founding Principal of the first formally integrated school, Lagan College. She was joined by the current Principal, Amanda McNamee, former Principal and former IEF Trustee, Brian Lambkin, and a past pupil of Lagan, Suzie Smyth, who had also attended Forge Integrated Primary School.

Suzie told the guests and supporters "I'm very pleased to be able to show how the support of people like you has provided me with the opportunity of going to schools which represented all sides of our community. Even though Northern Ireland is a very different place today from 30 years ago, I believe we still need to create more opportunities for children to learn together and I'll always be a champion and advocate for that."



Logan College Principal, Amanda McNamee is seen pictured with Campaign President, David Montgomery and the founding Principal of Lagan College, Sheila Greenfield.

Growing Network Of Friends In Dallas

Fundraising Manager Brian Small was proud to once again represent the IEF at Kevin Curley's Shamrock Shootout Charity Golf Tournament in Dallas last autumn. Speaking after the event Brian said "Kevin has been supporting integrated education through this event since 2002. The principal beneficiary has been Cranmore IPS, where the Curleys have funded both the Playgroup and Sensory Room. Kevin's involvement has helped to open the door to further amazing support that we receive from a number of our friends in Dallas – especially Belinda, Alan, Steve and Julie and the Ireland Funds. We owe Kevin and Brinda a huge debt of gratitude."

The visit also gave Brian the chance to catch up with Camilla Ballard and the members of the First Presbyterian Church in Dallas. Members of the church's Youth Group will be coming to Northern Ireland in June to undertake some voluntary work with Blackwater Integrated College. Brian gave a short talk on the influence of the Presbyterian Church on Ireland's history, explained how and why integrated education developed over the last 30 years and expressed especial thanks to the group of children who have already raised a large amount of money for Blackwater through a golf tournament of their own.

Brian, Camilla Ballard and Pastor Joe Clifford of the Dallas First Presbyterian Church were delighted to be invited to an AIF lunch by head of Dallas Chapter, Netta Blanchard who, with her 'right arm' Elisabet Bordt, looks after Brian so well when he visits.

Late news from St. Simon's Island Georgia: We have just received a brilliant gift from the Moroney Foundation thanks to Bill and Molly Norrett. Thank you from all in the IEF!



Rachel Throws A Party To Help IEF



Supporters Claire Gormley, Rachel Hannon and Rosie Smyth joined with IEF Campaign Director, Paul Caskey.

Rachel Hannon, a volunteer with the IEF's Great Britain Team, very generously hosted a pre-Christmas drinks party in London's Bridge House in November. Rachel invited a number of her friends for an informal evening of drinks and chat whilst giving an opportunity to Paul Caskey, IEF Campaign Director, to make a short presentation on the work of the Fund. Paul was joined by two former past pupils of Lagan College, Rosie Smyth and Clare Gormley, who were happy to share their experiences of integrated education with the guests. The evening was a wonderful way to make new friends, raise some vital funds as well as spread awareness of the work to more people in London. We thank Rachel, and her husband Nigel Stockill, for their tremendous support.



IEF supporters Nigel Stockill, Louise Jefferson and James Murphy.

Angelika In Rome To Discuss European Youth Network

Angelika Nowicka, a sixth form pupil from Hazelwood Integrated College, visited Rome in November for a meeting organised by the Open Society Foundation. The meeting was held to discuss the possible creation of a European Youth Network for young people from newcomer or marginalised backgrounds. Angelika was joined by Susanne Wardlow, Hazelwood's Youth Worker, Paula McIlwaine of NICIE and Paul Caskey of the IEF. The meeting was attended by a number of NGOs from across Europe concerned with promoting inclusive education and working with marginalised youth. Angelika was a

wonderful ambassador for Hazelwood IC and the Integrated Movement. Angelika, who is a member of the Northern Ireland Student Assembly, spoke two years ago at a Citizens' Panel event at Hazelwood, relating her experience of living and studying in Northern Ireland as a young person from a Polish background. Angelika was also part of a group visiting Brussels in 2011 to raise awareness of the issues with policy makers across Europe. She is hoping the European Youth Network can really take off and provide a platform for young people to share experiences, support each other and campaign to make inclusive education available to all. The IEF and NICIE thank the Open Society for their continued interest and support.



Angelika Nowicka and Susanne Wardlow during the trip to Rome.

Date for the diary:

Queen's University will host an international conference in March on peace education in areas of conflict around the world. Full report in the next issue of Learning Together!

London Calling!

If you are, or know, any former integrated school pupils currently living in London/South-East England who might be interested in developing some form of network then please let us know. We currently have a number of former students who would be keen to get involved, and we would be keen to have some more! One of the IEF's London-based donors is even willing to host an informal dinner party to kick-start the conversation. Please contact Paul at the IEF for more information on (028) 9033 0031 or paul@ief.org.uk.





Gearing Up For Integrated Education's Birthday Parties

This year sees a series of events marking 30 years of integrated schools in Northern Ireland ...as well as the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Integrated Education Fund so we are busy planning our contribution to the celebrations – a Gala Ball at the Europa Hotel, Belfast on Friday March 16th .

We shall be presenting some celebrity guests and providing top entertainment together with fine cuisine. The BBC's 'mentalist' David Meade, and Courtenay Fitzpatrick, past pupil of New-Bridge Integrated College, joined us at the Europa Hotel in a DeLorean sports car to launch the Fund's anniversary Gala Ball.

Integrated education began thanks to the efforts of a small group of parents whose dedicated campaigning led to the opening of

Lagan College in September 1981 – the same year that the first DeLorean cars rolled off the production line in Belfast!

David says "The achievement of those parents more than thirty years ago shows what you can do if you put your mind to it....the movement has snowballed, with sixty-one integrated schools around Northern Ireland training young hearts and minds and bringing children of all denominations together. The movement towards greater sharing can only mean a brighter future for Northern Ireland."

A big vote of thanks goes to Robert Lamrock, chair of the NI DeLorean Owners' Association, who generously lent his pride and joy for the photoshoot.



Tickets for the Gala Ball can be obtained from Brian or Gemma at the IEF: 028 9033 0031 or gemma@ief.org.uk / brian@ief.org.uk Tell your friends! Individual seats are available at £100 and tables of 10 will be £1,000.

Remember, we are always on the lookout for tantalising items for auction, as well as any help and ideas for fundraising around the event. Visit www.ief.org.uk or visit us on Facebook for updates on the event.



41-43 University Street
Belfast BT7 1FY
Northern Ireland

t: 028 9033 0031
f: 028 9033 0061
e: info@ief.org.uk

www.ief.org.uk

www.facebook.com/IntegratedEducationFund

www.twitter.com/iefni



Calling for an education system fit for the 21st Century

Pledge your support for the campaign online today at oneschoolofthought.org.uk



Join us online for daily discussions, polls and debates on the latest education topics that matter to you. Have your say on the big issues by joining up on www.facebook.com/IntegratedEducationFund or by following us at www.twitter.com/iefni Please help us to spread the word by encouraging your friends to join too!