

Rosie Hassin

Past Pupil, Ulidia Integrated College

I started at Ulidia Integrated College in its second year – grey mobiles on a hockey pitch in a wee town near Carrickfergus. We had old desks and anything that was donated from other schools. It was cold a lot of the time, but through all that you just knew it was a brilliant school. We just laughed – it was a fun time and we managed. The teachers were fantastic and we learnt so much from each other as well. When I was first considering going to Ulidia there were rumours it wouldn't survive but at the open night you just knew that wouldn't happen – it was going to thrive and grow and it was going to work. For the first three years we relied on the IEF, the governors and the parents to keep going, then we got our government funding and it was fantastic.

Then when I was in upper sixth, two of us got the opportunity through the IEF to go to Washington and promote integrated education. We got to meet President Bush on St Patrick's Day and we could tell him what integrated education meant to us, and why it was so important for key American people to be supporting us. It wasn't hard as I had such a passion for Ulidia; it wasn't like any other school and from the first day I knew it was important for people to be educated together, all religions and none, and all different abilities. It was fantastic to tell people how Ulidia had grown from those cold grey mobiles to a fully-functional school with so many pupils.

8/20



The IEF's continuing support for Ulidia IC more recently included a Promoting a Culture of Trust (PACT) grant for a cross-community sports initiative. Ulidia IC students have also benefited from the Carson Awards scheme for creative projects on the theme of integration.

