



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Committee for Education

# OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Sharing in Education and Shared Education Programmes:  
International Fund for Ireland, Education and Training  
Inspectorate and University of Ulster

18 June 2014

# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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**Members present for all or part of the proceedings:**

Mr Mervyn Storey (Chairperson)  
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson  
Mr Chris Hazzard  
Mr Trevor Lunn  
Mr Seán Rogers

**Witnesses:**

Mr John Hunter	Education and Training Inspectorate
Dr Adrian Johnston	International Fund for Ireland
Professor Colin Knox	University of Ulster

**The Chairperson:** I welcome Professor Knox, Dr Adrian Johnston and John Hunter. Thank you for making the journey to Fermanagh to join us. Our journey down this morning was very pleasant. Your presentation is on the sharing in education programme (SiEP) run by the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and its evaluation by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). I will hand over to you, and then we will, undoubtedly, have questions from members.

**Dr Adrian Johnston (International Fund for Ireland):** Committee members, thank you for giving us the opportunity to come here this morning. I am delighted to be here to share the work and some of the findings from programmes that the IFI has run over the last number of years to 2013, specifically the sharing in education programme and the shared education programme (SEP).

As you can see, I am joined this morning by John Hunter from the Education and Training Inspectorate, who evaluated 19 of the projects in the sharing in education programme for us, and Professor Colin Knox from the University of Ulster, who appraised three of the shared education programmes for us. I suppose that I should clarify the difference between the two.

The sharing in education programme refers to the 19 projects that were core funded by the International Fund for Ireland and delivered through the Department of Education (DE). The shared education programme refers to three programmes that were co-funded by us and Atlantic Philanthropies. They involved Queen's University Belfast, the North Eastern Education and Library Board, through the primary integrating/enriching education project (PIEE), which, I know, some of you will be aware of, and, of course, the Fermanagh Trust.

As independent funders, the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies were able to commit a huge amount of money, effort and resources to the programmes. That helped to shape the proof of their concept and to widen the discussion on shared education.

The IFI has invested around £18 million in these programmes. Prior to their inception, the fund had, at its core, youth and education programmes, and, before this, we contributed up to £21 million to those. They were a precursor to the shared education programme. The IFI board believes that these two programmes are probably among the most important, meaningful and impactful programmes that we have supported over its 27-year lifetime.

From 2008, the fund has been involved in shared education. To promote sharing and reconciliation, we have helped in the region of 65,500 children to take advantage of shared education opportunities across 22 projects. They spanned all sectors of education from early years — I know that some of you are aware of some of the teacher training and development opportunities — and involved engagement with the whole family network.

Reconciliation has been core to the fund's activity over 27 years, but so, too, has the vision of a prosperous and shared society, and we felt that education was a core component of that. Through this programme, we have delivered high-quality educational experiences. We have shown how standards can be raised right across the education sector and how sharing can, therefore, contribute to a better society for everyone.

The programmes make a very compelling case for sharing. That is backed up by practice and by a wealth of research, which confirms the benefits of shared education: improved academic outcomes; economic advantages for schools and wider society; enhanced reconciliation outcomes; and, because of the appreciation of diversity and mutual respect, more rounded young people in the education system.

From these programmes, we have a rich vein of research, which, I am sure, will be talked about. That learning is free for the Department to utilise as it sees fit in its consideration of how schools can become more involved in sharing. We believe that, as we all move forward, the projects that were shared under the shared education banner have a role to play in a genuine shared future. The proven models in the sharing in education programme and the SEP can make a real, meaningful impact, not only on the Department's plans but on the Programme for Government commitments and, ultimately, the Together: Building a United Community strategy.

I am sure that you saw the SiEP evaluations back in December. Those were distributed to the Committee. As the evaluations show, most of the targets that were put in place for the programmes were not just met but, in some instances, very much exceeded. The young people who took part gained academically, and, for some, it was their first contact with peers from different community backgrounds.

I would like to pay tribute to all of the pupils, parents, teachers, schools and to the whole school network that contributed to the project's success. I would also like to pay tribute to Atlantic Philanthropies, which had the vision and helped to core fund some of our activity, and the Department of Education for its guidance and support through the International Fund for Ireland liaison team and its engagement at project level. That should be commended.

As I said at the outset, IFI believes that it has made a huge commitment of money and effort to shared education. We believe that the legacy of the development of the programmes and models stands to benefit all schools and learners. Thank you for the invitation, and thank you very much for your support and interest in this work. We are quite happy to take any questions that you might have for us.

**The Chairperson:** Thank you. Colin or John, do you want to make any comments at this stage?

**Professor Colin Knox (University of Ulster):** No, thank you.

**The Chairperson:** John, we would like some clarification on the role of ETI. There was much discussion of ETI in the Assembly yesterday, and it created a bit of interest. Can you explain ETI's role in the sharing in education programme in particular? Was it a facilitator or did it act as the inspector?

**Mr John Hunter (Education and Training Inspectorate):** We were commissioned to provide an evaluation of the sharing in education programme, but it was a learning curve. We had to learn to work differently and much more developmentally with the projects. That is because the programme was new and different. As mentioned, the approach was not that this was a journey that would have

an end product. We were to work alongside, support and provide ongoing commentary and advice to the IFI. In fact, one of the strengths was, I think, the interim report, which served as a reminder of the need to continue to think of the aims and objectives of shared education in each of the projects. We were not there to police the system; we were there to work and learn alongside it, but, at the same time, to provide an objective evaluation.

**The Chairperson:** Did ETI write the final evaluation report?

**Mr Hunter:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** In that final report, there is a recommendation that ETI develop further quality indicators and material on good practice for dissemination to schools. Where are we with that? Correct me if I am wrong, but has ETI ever produced material on particular aspects of educational provision? Historically, that was the remit of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA). So that we are clear in our mind, will you clarify where all this is leading to?

**Mr Hunter:** Coming from the special education side, I take a lead on a lot of survey work, and much of our work was based on developing indicators. Together Towards Improvement, for example, was designed to allow schools to recognise how we work but also to provide indicators so that they could benchmark the whole practice.

This evaluation was not, in itself, unusual. What was unusual was that we had to work towards an interim report and develop the indicators as we learned from the practice, from the project and from the aims and objectives. Quite a lot of the indicators emerged from our work with the projects and our knowledge of how they were outworking, particularly from the aims and objectives as set. We produced those for the report and have been tasked by DE to develop them and have them ready for September or October.

**The Chairperson:** Of this year?

**Mr Hunter:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** That will, I assume, be for dissemination to all schools.

**Mr Hunter:** Yes.

**The Chairperson:** Professor Knox, we have always valued your input to the Committee: your reports, assessments and evaluation of a number of issues. We are here today, rightly so, in Fermanagh. To those who have joined us in the Public Gallery, I would like to say that we are delighted to be here. There have been some very good examples of work undertaken by the Fermanagh Trust, which we will hear from later. Shared education has been very much put in focus as a result of the Treacy judgement, and, yesterday, we had a debate in the Assembly that we will no doubt regurgitate at some stage during this Committee meeting. In light of that judgement, we all recognise that, as far as one eminent member of the legal profession is concerned, there is a distinction between integrated education and shared education. Colin, from your experience and professional viewpoint, what do you believe could be the long-term implications of that in light of what has been going on with the sharing in education programme, the proposals from the Executive on how we roll this out and how it all plays out with the integrated sector and shared education?

**Professor Knox:** Start with an easy question, Chairman. *[Laughter.]* First, thank you very much for inviting us along to share our views with you. You asked a question about the links between shared and integrated education. We have always — when I say "we", I am talking about the shared education programme within the wider SIEP family — seen shared education as part of a graduated journey towards greater interdependence between schools. The starting point is acknowledging that greater interdependence promotes the kinds of things that Adrian mentioned, such as better education outcomes, better reconciliation outcomes and better economic benefits for the school sector. In fact, we have developed a graduated system. It is like a benchmarking system and can place any school on a scale of "no sharing" right through to "integrated". So we do not see this as a case of either/or; we think that schools are on a journey.

I will use a bus metaphor. The end point of the journey might be integrated schools, but many schools will choose not to buy a ticket for the full journey. They will choose, because they want to protect their

identity, to get off the bus sooner, at, for example, collaboration. They will, perhaps, as collaboration enhances the performance of both schools, choose to take that journey a bit further. It is unfortunate that people tend to say "shared education versus integrated education". In fact, in Fermanagh, the other projects at Queen's and the PíEE, integrated schools were part of the programmes. They were not in any way excluded, and many played a constructive part in them. We in shared education were not saying that we were a sector apart.

I want to link to a point that John made. One of the roles that ETI will play in the outworking of this through the new £25 million Delivering Social Change shared education programme will be to work to develop the kind of graduated system in which schools can see where they are on the scale and how they can, if they want to, scale up. If they want to become more interdependent and feel that there are educational, reconciliation or economic benefits from doing so, there will be funding available to them to make that enhanced journey.

I do not want to paint this as either/or. There are opportunities for schools here depending on where they are now, where they want to take this and the extent to which they want to broker interdependencies with other schools. There is not a one-size-fits-all model. A good case in point is Fermanagh, where a number of rural schools have decided that their fate lies in much greater interdependency. Lauri and Catherine from the Fermanagh Trust will be able to give you good examples of where that works well.

We are not saying that the only route for schools will be a shared future, an integrated sector or single-identity schools. There are options. We have demonstrated that this range of model can work. It will depend on circumstances therein. Our research found that the area-planning process was, in our view, a crude instrument and one that has created the spectre of this being about closing schools down.

We did some costings. If you closed all the schools that are unviable in DE terms, you would save about 3% of the education budget. Is that worth it for all the angst that will come to your doorstep when the primary school plans are issued and constituents are knocking on your door, asking, "Why are you closing our school"? There are options to broker relationships that could create much more sustainable schools and interdependencies; make the boundaries between controlled and maintained schools much more porous; and, in some cases, save rural communities. I am stealing Lauri's thunder here, but that is, essentially, a model that has worked well in this county.

**The Chairperson:** We will pick up on the economic benefit with Lauri and his colleagues. Let us look at what are set out as being the overall economic, reconciliation and educational benefits. Often, we look first at the educational benefit. If there is none, the other elements seem to become secondary. That is a common flaw when we start to look at programmes like this.

John, how does ETI give qualitative expression to the educational programme in a way that gives it an evaluation? In many respects, you are not comparing like with like because there are nuances: for example, a rural as opposed to an urban setting, and, particularly here in County Fermanagh, you have very isolated communities. How do you get a sense of that equilibrium of quality outcome?

**Mr Hunter:** First, if shared education is about anything, it is about respect for difference. So we have to begin by accepting the realities that come with a system that is separate and divided. People like me come from the viewpoint that, whatever the sector, it should be a part of, not apart from. Shared education has the potential to remind us that we should not live in silos and that by sharing, learning and working together, there are dividends for others.

In that sense, one of the themes to arise from the evaluations, from Colin and from our side, was that, to promote shared education, we must look at localised contacts because schools must work within their locality. The issues that come into play in an interface area will be different from those in a very wide rural area. In the old inspectorate terms — I have been long in the game — we have to look at, not look for. At the beginning, we decided that we would move towards writing about the shared education that we find on inspection. We decided to start by identifying good practice for schools and learners and, in so doing, identify and celebrate that through the inspection process as a benchmark for others, but not as a structure in which they cannot think in and reflect their local context.

**The Chairperson:** Finally, before I go to members, your paper has an example of the education benefits, which you link to economic benefits. The example is of the four selected primary and post-primary schools involved in the shared education programme. You translate the investment of £2

million across the four projects into increased lifetime earnings of £25 million for participants in the study. Will you expand on that a wee bit, because the Minister is telling us that we will not have a big lot of money? However, on Monday, he will announce considerable capital investment. We get caught in this difference between capital and resource. The overall Northern Ireland education budget — £2.1 billion or £2.2 billion — is not a paltry sum, but money is spent on a variety of other things, and sometimes the Committee has seriously questioned whether we ever get any value for money from them. Here is a project that involved a partnership between Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland, with some money put in by the Department. Could any better economic model be presented? Would any other model be as much of an incentive? I do not in any way want to take away from reconciliation and the value of communities and schools that are different coming together, but is that economic model being sold in such a way that we all understand its ultimate benefits?

**Professor Knox:** That is a very good question. I do not think that it has been sufficiently well sold, Mr Chairman. The references here are academic. We have sold it to peer colleagues throughout other parts of the UK and beyond. I think that we have done a bad job at, if you like, putting that into a language that is comprehensible for policymakers and learners.

I will go back one step: one of the reasons why we are passionate about shared education is that we see significant educational benefits here. How do you demonstrate and provide evidence to ensure that that is the case? The example that you referred to was a relatively small-scale study, with four selected primary and post-primary schools. They were selected because they were part of the shared education programme administered through Queen's University, PEE and the Fermanagh Trust. We went into those schools and did an in-depth analysis with all the information, data, usage and number of kids participating. We talked to principals about how shared education had enhanced the curriculum offer for those kids and how they had been able to share resources and expertise. In other words, we tried to quantify how interdependency between those schools had translated into educational benefits.

In crude terms, it was a cost-benefit analysis. Working alongside principals, teachers, parents and students, we asked what they saw as the educational benefits flowing from working together, the costs of doing that and what contributions were IFI and Atlantic making. We had to operationalise that in some way. Principals said that, as a consequence of working with those schools, children were more likely to get better GCSEs.

In one case, there was a partnership between primary and post-primary schools, where the post-primary teachers came into the primary schools to teach a foreign language. We asked principals to what extent they thought that those children were more likely to go to university as a consequence of working collaboratively, and we put costs on those.

The study has been published, so economists have to make certain assumptions about these things. Some of those assumptions can be challenged, and we are up for that. The outworking showed that, for an investment of £2 million from IFI and Atlantic, the net educational benefits of getting better GCSEs, language skills and the prospect of kids going to university, worked through the lifetime of the programme, were £23 million.

There is great potential in the Delivering Social Change shared education programme to expand that research beyond a small-scale study. We are also aware of research in England that went much further on collaborative models of stronger and weaker schools — to put it crudely — coming together to enhance the overall performance of those two types of school.

We are convinced that there are quantifiable educational benefits as a result of collaboration. With the new programme, we hope to be able to demonstrate that in a wider landscape since the new Delivering Social Change programme is aimed at all schools in Northern Ireland, including those that have had no shared opportunities so far. I am sorry that that was such a long-winded answer.

**The Chairperson:** Members made some interesting comments in the House yesterday on their views of integrated education. There is a huge challenge for us. On the way here, I passed schools that are in splendid isolation, and you wonder how they relate to other schools, even in their own sector. I went past one very isolated rural post-primary school, and, further down the road, there were other smaller schools. You wonder whether they have any real connection with one another, other than being feeder schools for the post-primary school. You wonder how much of that there is, because that is where we take shared education to a completely different level.

I have said repeatedly that we have got ourselves into a very narrow trench where shared education is solely about getting Catholics and Prods together, and that is the only issue that we are interested in. That narrow view does a disservice to shared education. It is part of it, but there is a wider context and issue, which has much wider implications and benefits.

Thanks for that, Colin.

**Dr Johnston:** The fund's position was never that, when the shared education programme was developed, integrated education was part of it. The integrated education sector could partake in the choice that was available to all pupils, students and families if they wished to have that choice. At that time, it was still the norm that 93% of our students were being taught in what you might term a single identity schools, but at least with an element of segregation amongst them in the schools. From a reconciliation perspective, the fund thought that that norm had to be challenged — there was a desire for that, even in society — and for an element that brought students together in facilities. That is why the fund initially became engaged. However, there is common factor about isolation. We have talked about the issue before at the fund, and we keep talking about Fermanagh, but Fermanagh is a great example of how isolated communities and schools can come together in a shared way. At the core of that, the common factor in all programmes is educational outcomes for the students and the schools identifying their potential weaknesses and other schools' strengths and collaborating across topics and facilities to be able to raise academic achievement for all pupils. In the integrated sector, the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) delivered projects for us throughout the shared education programme. So, the fund has never seen this as a shared versus integrated argument whatsoever. In fact, integrated education was very much part of our thinking and the choice that will be available for families and pupils.

**Mr Hunter:** I want to widen that slightly. I looked at the 19 projects, and one of the major and important outcomes is not simply academic — we debated long and hard about aspects that showed that there were improvements in learning outcomes — but it made pupils better learners, in our view, because of the social dividends. The fact that they were able to work and learn alongside pupils in other schools meant that they had to have a sense of who they were and where they were coming from and articulate that across various lessons. The social aspect is vital, as is the fact that it helped to raise their language understanding of shared education, reconciliation and prejudice. Getting youngsters into discussions and debate allowed them to begin to challenge, and all this is beginning to show that the curriculum itself is a major vehicle for shared education. Lots of it was hidden in the history programme, and we did a short scoping study of Key Stage 4 history because we were concerned that there was diversion and diversity there. Critical thinking skills were also beginning to show an effect. Academically, that will improve outcomes, but it will take some time.

We must not forget the impact of staff and schools coming together physically, which throws up major themes. We need to get in strongly at initial teacher education level and at early school development level, and we need to be innovative and different, expect the unexpected of all the outcomes and maybe not be too hung up on this leading to improved GCSE results. One of the words that comes across strongly to me in all the projects is "engagement". I am also responsible for pupils who fall out of the school system and into alternative provision. Those numbers are rising, and there is potential for interest, because one striking feature is that the quality of teaching is the route to improvement and that it was more innovative and different, and used people other than teachers. That brought something new, different and more creative that helped engagement. So, the outcomes will take time, but they are engaging pupils. You could swear on it, where I am coming from, that it led to special and mainstream schools working much more closely together rather than their being siloed and isolated. The dividends were quite sizeable, and it will take time to embed them and for standards to rise. That is the wider view.

**Mr Hazzard:** Thanks for the presentation. I will keep to the World Cup theme. In the run-up to Bosnia's game last week, there was an interview with Edin Dzeko in one of the Sunday papers in which he talked about his experiences at school in Sarajevo. The parallels were frightening; he talked about kids in different uniforms being sandwiched together in classrooms, but the divisions always remained. They knew that they were different because they were wearing different uniforms in the same classroom. I could not help but think of Moy and our own situation here and draw parallels straight away. He said that he felt that it was a superficial reconciliation project.

It started me thinking about playing devil's advocate and looking critically at what we are talking about today. The IFI has spent nearly €1 billion on projects, yet we have more peace walls now than ever. I know that one of the IFI's targets is to encourage economic and social advancement. The gap

between the wealthy and the poor in our society is probably worse now than ever. Again, to play devil's advocate, are we in danger, looking back 20 years, of saying that it was a superficial project, that it did not go far enough and that, for whatever reason, it has not done what it said on the tin? Do we need to take a new route? Do we need to intensify what we are doing? It was the parallel that I saw that caused me to think about that. The subject was frighteningly provocative for me, anyway. I want to throw that out there and hear your thoughts on it.

**Professor Knox:** I will jump in. That is a very fair and rational observation, and drawing on the World Cup is probably apt in that sense, with the example you have given. We have attempted to learn from previous experiments — if I can call them that — with reconciliation, community relations and good relations work, which could be distilled into things such as the education for mutual understanding (EMU) programme. There has been a significant step change beyond those types of well-meaning but broadly superficial programmes, when we put two sets of kids on a bus to the Giant's Causeway, they had a good day, came back and forgot about it.

**The Chairperson:** It is a good place to go.

**Professor Knox:** It is a good place to go, but they forgot about the substantive reconciliation benefits. There has been a substantive step change in what shared education is doing. I take John's point entirely about this being more than just education benefits, but one of the significant selling points of shared education is education benefits for parents. They are much more willing to let their kids be part of a shared education experience if they think that it will enhance education outcomes. I am not for one moment devaluing the wider, rounded experience that those children will get, but the fact that it is embedded in potential improved education outcomes means that parents are much more willing to let their kids participate in it and support it as a means of improving their kids' education. What parent does not want their child to have a better education experience?

The experiences across SiEP and SEP are that that model, which is built on a wide body of research by colleagues from Queen's University on sustained contact, not one-off experiences, not only improves education outcomes but produces much better reconciliation outcomes. At one stage, one might have been able to say that they could end up with the kind of superficial reconciliation experience that you described, but I think that we have moved on significantly from that. We have much greater hopes and aspirations for shared education, not least because the role of the inspectorate will now be very helpful in embedding that in an inspection system in which schools will expect to be looked at for their shared experiences.

**Mr Hunter:** I will make a small point. The most important thing about your World Cup example is that everyone is playing, and there is a set of rules that they all live by.

**The Chairperson:** For those who qualified. *[Laughter.]*

**Mr Hunter:** What is nice about it is that it allows for different styles of playing and so on, so there is commonality. The Welcoming Schools project did something because it raised the importance not only of schools and pupils but of schools opening doors to welcome the parental body, the environment and the community. If shared education is to be significant, it cannot work in isolation from the parental aspect or a local community. The report points out that there are different starting points, and we have to recognise that there are schools out there that have not participated or did not wish to participate. Colin is quite right; if it is shown that, by learning across and alongside others that we can improve the quality of learning, it will sell itself over time. Who is to say? Maybe we will get to the World Cup in due course.

**Dr Johnston:** I will respond from the fund's perspective. You are quite right: we have contributed €1 billion to projects over 27 years, and I can clearly see how some projects could be deemed superficial. Projects can look superficial if there is no means to an end, or if change is not implemented at the end of a project. The very distinct difference in the shared education programme — this is where the fund sees it as having the most impact — is that it has paved the way for the legislative change that is required to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to take part in shared classes and facilities.

Key to that — Colin touched on it — is that families have also embraced that ethos. A real societal change has been implemented through the shared education programme, and we have seen that with parents or communities who may not have engaged in peace and reconciliation activities historically but who are doing so because they see that there is an opportunity or advantage for their son,

daughter or family. That is the real difference in the shared education programme, which is why I understand where you are coming from in that some projects in the past could have looked very superficial, but a distinct change has been made at legislative level as well as at community level.

We have to be mindful that some young people have excluded themselves from the education system, and, from the fund's perspective, one of the key elements of shared education is how to engage with those young people as well. There are young people who are excluded from formal education — maybe they have excluded themselves or have just dropped out — and that is a key focus of the fund at the moment. At the end of the shared education programme, we do not just say, "This is where it ends": It is about the young people who are not getting those opportunities, how we can engage with them, maybe get them back into formal education and looking at other opportunities for them.

**Mr Hazzard:** I agree that we are seeing an intensification, which is good. I think that NICIE is looking to a Macedonian example of integration through language, crossing language barriers and so on, which is a very good sign. I wanted to put that point out there to play devil's advocate for a minute.

**Mr Rogers:** I do not want to hit too hard those of us who were involved in EMU many years ago by talking about its superficiality, but one of my first experiences of shared education was when Limavady High School and my school in Kilkeel met and were in each other's classrooms for a couple of days. If you look at that from the outside, it seems crazy — two schools from opposite ends of the Province — but, when I reflect on it, the important thing is that we had to start somewhere. My good friend in Limavady High School, David Dunlop, was pushing for this, and I have seen how that school has come on in sharing education and how it is working and learning together with St Mary's. I also saw that in my own school.

Many years ago, our cross-community activity was a biannual soccer match — that was it — but that has come on as well, and now there is work and learning together. We all have to start the journey in different places, but it is important that we take it on. John, you say that about 70% of schools are involved in sharing. Is that all cross-sectoral sharing? Will you put a bit more meat on the bones about the quality of sharing?

**Mr Hunter:** If you see it as layers of sharing, some people simply had meetings, and the approach was almost tokenistic, but that has changed over time. Fundamentally, when relationships develop and good relationships work, it moves to strategies. Through the IFI programme, we are beginning to see, more and more, the term "shared education" fighting its way into school development planning. Unless there is a whole-school approach, and school leaders are willing and committed to driving it, it will remain as token sharing.

I can give an example. I sat in a classroom in which youngsters from two schools were being led by a teacher who was talking about the words of reconciliation. What was interesting, being the magpie in the system, was that they sat apart from one another and spoke through the teacher. After having a conversation with the teacher and going back to it, the dynamics had changed. In addition, the teacher almost allowed the youngsters to control the setting. They moved towards talking, but not about the words of reconciliation. I sat in on a simple lesson in which the youngsters talked about what they did at the weekend. They suddenly found that, while living in different places, there is a commonality between where we go, what we do, whether we have a drink and whom we support. People began to make friendships. To me, that was much more significant than their learning the language of the formalised side. It takes time, and schools do it differently.

Schools have linked up for drama and developed relations because of smaller pupil numbers for particular subjects, so that has widened. It enhances the early learning communities. Strangely enough, it is more difficult in schools that are closer together. It is easy to link up with a school that is far away because it is not a rival. However, the closer the schools are, the more local superstitions there are. They have to do it in a nice, simple, straightforward way. That usually happens because two teachers have become friends at work. It then becomes bigger and stronger and moves out to the broader population. For it to really work, however, it has to have commitment at leadership and whole-school level.

When the interim report was published, it was significant that the projects that were not doing well had taken their eye off the ball. I am thinking of one project in which the youngsters linked together on a football scheme, with Celtic and Rangers being the two teams. The footballing skills were developing really well at the beginning, but their knowledge of reconciliation and working together was not. So, rebalancing, building, monitoring and evaluation, preferably by the organisers themselves rather than

by external people like me, is the way I think that it will move forward. In that sense, the numbers are growing.

In one programme, the two university colleges got together. The programme has now finished, but they have sustained it. They still maintain the links and the development, so sustainability is developing. Welcoming Schools also made links. In another couple of programmes, people gained accreditation and are using that as leaders in their organisations. There are lots of dividends that prove that it will develop more and more over time. As someone who went through the EMU programme, I always thought that it had wonderful potential and wondered why the goalposts had moved. This has helped to kick-start the concepts that were in that, as has the CRED programme.

**Mr Rogers:** Is that good practice being disseminated to all schools?

**Mr Hunter:** It has been available through the report. One of our core targets for the next couple of years is that we should produce resource material. If we put another hat on, we produced resource material for special educational needs, which has been highly valued by schools. We think that we now need resource material of best practice for shared education so that it would provide a stimulus and a benchmark and something that shows how others have gone on this journey and how people can develop it. That is part of our thinking with the next round of shared education — that it should end up with physical material.

A lot of the projects have produced some wonderful material, and they are living within the projects. There was a conference to disseminate that, but I will take the comment that it needs to be much wider and shared much further through better networking than we currently have.

**Mr Rogers:** The report talks about the production of a shared education continuum tool. Was that produced?

**Mr Hunter:** There is a diagram, which was our attempt to show the beginnings of it. Putting some meat on the continuum is the task that has been handed to me and my team to produce for the Department for the end of September. Therefore, there would be something against which new projects could be benchmarked. The desire of that is to allow schools to see shared education not as an event but as a process. They can see where they currently are and move themselves through school development and targets along that, away from being isolated, being siloed or being single identity towards having a shared and wider identity working across the continuum. It is not just running one way. It is a continuum that will go in different directions. It is still a process.

**Mr Rogers:** I think that it would be a useful tool for schools, particularly for their self-evaluation, to see where they are and what they need to embed in their school development plan as they go ahead.

**Professor Knox:** I will just add a quick point to that to update the information about the ETI's work. As part of the business plan for the Delivering Social Change shared education programme — the £25 million programme — colleagues at Queen's, based on their experience of the shared education programme in the three projects, have developed a graduated scheme to allow schools to position themselves in that in terms of applications for funding. Point 1 is where schools have not had any prior contact at all, and it goes up to, I think, point 4, where you have the Limavadys of this world, who are essentially interdependent.

**Mr Lunn:** I do not want you to think that I am in any way hostile to what you are doing. I had better say that at the start. It might sound as if I am, but I am not, honestly. Your programmes are terrific, and I have no doubt that there are educational benefits and some societal benefits. Frankly, there is a vast difference between those two benefits. That is what worries me.

Sharing has been around for years, long before the IFI came along. My daughter participated in the shared language scheme between Friends' School and Rathmore. I hate to say how many years ago that was, but it was probably 25. The big push is on now for shared education. I think that, to some people, it is a convenient alternative to pushing for the real thing, which is integrated. I have no expectation that our whole system will somehow become integrated in my time or my children's time. It is not going to happen.

Take as your starting point the word "reconciliation", which has been used quite a bit: I do not believe that children at age four or five need reconciliation. They just need to enter a school situation where working together, living together and playing together are the norm. To me, if Together: Building a

United Community is to mean anything, that has to be a very valid part of the structure. You can move on to housing and all the rest of it, but, as far as possible, they should be brought through school together.

I know that you have done a fair bit of inspection work on this, John. I understand how you can evaluate the educational benefits, though I think that trying to isolate the educational benefit of the sharing programme, as opposed to what might have happened if the schools had not been sharing, must be difficult, given the way in which she looked at that. How do you evaluate the societal and community benefits?

**Mr Hunter:** There are a couple of things. I am looking at one project, which, as part of its outworking, employed a researcher who did a questionnaire. Out of that, they looked at the attitudinal change in those who participated and in the wider community. I think that we have to evaluate the impact through the eyes and the presentation of the participants in this.

I am a big believer in schools producing their own evidence of the importance of what they do on behalf of youngsters in the community. Our job should be to quality-assure that externally to ensure that they are doing it in the correct way. I take the point that it is difficult, but I think that, when schools continually work together, it becomes — I think that we used these words in the report — "The way we do things around here". When we get to that stage, we know that we have actually done something significant.

**Mr Lunn:** This is the way that we do things around here, but we have no intention of coming together. We will continue to use separate uniforms and premises and to come together for educational benefit. As each group of children goes through each school, it is the same procedure over again on a seven-year cycle.

**Mr Hunter:** I think that we have to take a longer-term strategy. When you move into the FE sector, the training side and the university side, the issues that were apparent in a segregated system are no longer there. So, I think that we have to prepare folk at that younger stage. I think that the curriculum is a major vehicle for that. The PD&MU and Learning for Life and Work are routes to give youngsters the skills that they need, which they have to take out and beyond the school classroom.

In my day, you got into the classroom and you taught. That was it; nobody bothered you. Now you are measured as a whole school, and we are moving towards being measured as a school community. We are also moving towards area learning communities. Therefore, the dividend for an area learning community must be seen through the improvements in wider society. How we will measure it is not that easy, and how we will write about it is even tougher. However, I still think that it is important to have that goal.

**Mr Lunn:** You say that, by the time they get to FE and university level, the issues are no longer there. You want to go to Queen's University. I think that you will find that the issues are still there, and they are partly there because of what has gone before.

**Mr Hunter:** Yes, what has gone before.

**Dr Johnston:** Integrated and shared education are tools to get to a specific point, and they are both trying to get to the same outcome. For me, the change in shared education is a very complex one because of the sectoral choice that exists here. You have to manage that change across all those sectors as well as in society. That is what makes it more difficult.

On Mr Roger's earlier point about Kilkeel and Limavady, they started at two very different places, and that is very important. That is part of that change that has to be managed as well. It is at the point now where Limavady High School and St Mary's in Limavady have put in an application for a shared campus, which St Mary's would not have done had it not been for the engagements with Limavady High School.

**Mr Lunn:** They are two separate schools.

**Dr Johnston:** They are two separate schools, but they have brought each other along in shared education.

While I take your point that children at four and five do not need to be taught about reconciliation, studies by Early Years and other organisations have shown that, at that age, prejudice can be very much ingrained in young people. The problem that we have in our society is that, by the time the young people get to the point where reconciliation is required, sectarianism has potentially been ingrained in them from an early age because of the way in which they have been taught. I think that it is very important that, at the age of four or five, they are taught not necessarily about reconciliation but about mutual respect and diversity.

**Mr Lunn:** Would that not be easier under the one roof?

**Dr Johnston:** Ultimately, it might be better under the one roof. The starting point that shared education is at, at this moment in time, is doing some elements of that under the one roof. My point, earlier, was that the complex change has to be managed across all sectors and across society, and we have to realise that that is a real challenge. I think that that is the challenge for shared education. That has been the challenge for integrated education since its inception. What we have now is a tool. The shared education and methodologies that have been developed have been accepted across sectors and across society as a potential movement. What we have here now is movement — cross-sectoral, cross-society movement on getting to shared, integrated or, ultimately, the outcome that we all want.

**Mr Lunn:** I hope that you are right about that. You say that integrated and shared education are on the same journey in wanting to see the same outcomes. I keep saying this, but, beneficial as shared education can be, some of us think that it is prolonging the situation. There is no incentive for schools, except maybe the very enlightened schools, to contemplate coming together or to have a much greater element of sharing. It is a convenience. It is certainly a convenience in educational terms, because you can develop the full curriculum much more easily; in fact, I think that that was the original reason for it. It is also a convenience in that things can stay the way they are. There is no end product here.

**Professor Knox:** With respect, I disagree with that. We cannot force the pace of parental choice. The Drumragh judgement will, hopefully, help to address the situation in some schools.

**Mr Lunn:** I am coming to that.

**Professor Knox:** Some schools, not many, in the integrated movement are oversubscribed. I think that shared education will demonstrate to parents the educational benefits of working collaboratively across sectors and that reconciliation benefits will flow from that. I think that parental choice will become more informed by the experience of shared education and, therefore, will open up opportunities, for those who wish to take them, to move to fully integrated schools. At the moment, my judgement is that parents are making choices based on educational outcomes. Unfortunately, the integrated sector schools do not perform that well in educational outcomes. I think that that is a greater factor for parental choice than reconciliation is.

**Mr Lunn:** I would challenge that, for a start.

**Professor Knox:** I will show you the statistics.

**Mr Lunn:** We will compare statistics some time. Integrated schools have a reasonable performance level. We have been doing a bit of research on this. It is an interesting fact, Chairman, that the much-maligned Protestant working-class boys perform just as well in the integrated setting as the working-class Catholic boys. I will show you that some time when we get it developed.

We could talk around this all day. I do not run down, in any way, what you are doing. It has to be beneficial. The amount of money that is coming in is terrific, and I hope that it continues. But I wonder where it is leading. I cannot see the end of the journey. In addressing our societal problems, various building blocks are referred to, such as Together: Building a United Community, in particular. The most basic building block is to try to stop this generational transfer of prejudice. The way to do that is by letting the kids get to know each other. Are they getting to know each other? Are they getting enough information that might help them to remove their prejudices and preconceptions about the other side in a shared education system? I am not sure about that. Is there a proper reconciliation programme that is specifically devoted to that? I think that you mentioned one in particular.

**Mr Hunter:** There is ample evidence, through the projects, that it is moving all of the participants to think critically and to gain a sense of understanding and a respect of the other side.

It was interesting to find, sitting together in a classroom, youngsters who had never met before and never expected to meet. Communication has to start somewhere. So, we have to start with, as you said, bringing these youngsters together. We have to be real: this society will not say tomorrow that all kids will go to the local school. I wish that it were, but that is not the situation. Therefore, we have to work to break down barriers that could drive us further apart and to show that there is a journey towards respect, understanding and being able to articulate your own feelings, concerns and beliefs. The development of our well-being in our education system has to be vital to that.

As I looked at these projects, one of the things that I enjoyed was that the teaching was different. It was less formal and more innovative. There was greater use of different people and facilitators, and the youngsters began to engage and enjoy it. In that, as they learn, friendships develop. Education has to maintain those friendships and the social integration. I take the point that that may be easily facilitated if they were all to go to the same school tomorrow, but they are not. This is —

**Mr Lunn:** Yes. Sorry, Chairman. I am almost done. The friendship aspect is interesting. There have been programmes galore down the years, not necessarily involving schools. Kids have been to the Giant's Causeway, Corrymeela, Glendalough — you name it. They have been to America. They go and mix, and they come home and do not mix. What happens to 10-year-olds who have formed some kind of a friendship in a shared programme and then go off to different schools? Is there any evidence that those friendships are maintained?

**Professor Knox:** I can give you verbatim the results of a study carried out by social psychologist colleagues at Queen's, specifically on the reconciliation outcomes of the shared education programme. Professor Joanne Hughes and Danielle Blaylock completed the study and the findings state:

*"Researchers have also considered the impact of pupils' participation in the Shared Education Programme on cross-group friendships and intergroup anxiety. The study confirms the value of contact as a mechanism for promoting more harmonious relationships that can help promote social cohesion in a society that remains deeply divided."*

If that is not conclusive evidence of the reconciliation benefits of shared education, and I am sure that those colleagues would share the empirical analysis behind those findings, I am not sure what is.

**Mr Lunn:** I would love to see the evidence that sits behind those findings. I do not doubt the finding at all, but it is not quantified.

**Professor Knox:** Well, they have quantified it.

**Mr Lunn:** But the point is, as I said at the start, that there has to be some benefit from what you are doing. I do not mean to sound critical here, but —

**The Chairperson:** I think that we have to face up to the fact — this point was made before — that we are placing a huge expectation on our schools to answer and to solve all the problems in our society. They play a very important role, but let us include ourselves in this. Politicians by our actions, words and deeds, churches by their actions, words and deeds, and organisations by their actions, words and deeds contribute immensely to perpetuating the division in our society. While I accept the points that are being made about getting the outcome, I think that it is unfair. Society will never be perfect. We live in a fool's paradise if we believe that, if only we all went to one school, somehow when we come home at 3.30 pm, all the problems that we face in our communities would disappear. That will not happen. It would make a huge benefit and maybe a huge contribution, but a balance needs to be struck in these things.

There is one thing before we go to Jo-Anne, and then Chris wants to come back in to bring this to an end. We have talked about the huge amount of money that has been spent. You can see that this is a political point; it is not the Chair's point. You can see the Department, at the minute, using money to change the outlay of schools, as in whether they are grammar schools or non-selective grammar schools. If you want a newbuild, you will get a pound or two if you move away to this new world of a non-selective grammar. That is an attempt to use money to change the dynamic. Given the fact that, with the exception of independent schools, every one of our schools is funded 100% by the state,

does the state not now have a duty to say, "Well, hold on; we are not continuing to perpetuate segregation"? Is there not a contradiction in policy terms? On one hand, the state/Northern Ireland plc/the Executive are saying that they want shared communities. They want us to live together and do all these things. Equally, they will still give you millions and millions of pounds — £2.2 billion — to continue to live apart in terms of education as one element of that overall society. Is there not an argument for the Executive to look at the issue in a more holistic way and not to continue to fund unless you can actually deliver? They have done it in other areas. Why can they not do it in this one? I am playing devil's advocate on that one.

**Mr Hunter:** In some ways, yes. It would be the brave politician who would declare the end product and say that this is where we should be and that is that. You may be a politician today, but maybe not tomorrow. *[Laughter.]* However, there is something important in rewarding schools that achieve. I had an opportunity — not paid for by the Department, I have to add — to look at schools in Germany. I am on the European special educational commission. An interesting aspect of schools that I saw in Germany was that those that get to a high standard are rewarded. Our system rewards schools that fail. They found it extremely difficult to understand why our benchmarks were such. While I could explain until I was blue in the face that we are terribly nice and want to help those that are failing to improve, they were of the view that it is down to you to improve and if you do not improve, you do not get those benefits. So, it was a nice contrast. I was thinking that it actually said something of Northern Ireland. We have no foreign policy. We do not look out enough. We tend to look in. If shared education is doing something in your classroom, in your school and in society, we need to look out more to see how others do it.

We had an example yesterday of the Assembly looking outwards with regard to ETI and saying what we should be like and how we should change. I think that that is equally to be welcomed. We are always in the process of change. It is one step at a time for some. For others, it is a leap of faith. Some are already halfway there. We cannot say that this one is right and that one is wrong; we simply have to evaluate them against the dividends for that school, that community and the process in its longer term. Another day without returning to violence is an important day. That, to me, is society's measure of our improvement. To me, education is the route to goal for all improvement. Why should I not say that? But I think that is how we change attitudes.

There is something about the earlier conversation and getting too focused on outcomes. You were saying that the youngsters have gone away, done something and come back to their separate parts. However, they do not forget. Their experience must be such that it is a quality experience that they do not forget. Each of them may take forward that experience into their life cycle and work. There may be outcomes that are more difficult to measure. There may be case study outcomes that we could look at. Certainly, I think that the outcomes are there. They may be staring us in the face. We need to be quite clear about what we are moving from as well as what we are moving towards.

**The Chairperson:** You make a valid point, John, that every peaceful day is progress. There is no doubt about that. That is not to say that, in bringing two or many different traditions together, somehow, those traditions are inherently wrong. It is a misconception that, somehow, you have to try to dilute or change. It is about how we can accept that there are differences and live together.

Eighteen years ago, I had an experience — I will not bore you all with it — when I went to Corrymeela in my constituency. It was a place that I was never much in, traditionally or historically. It changed my perception. I made a friend whom I have to this very day. He was a former Minister in the Irish Government. He and I have had a long friendship that all started in Corrymeela. It did not change me into an Irish republican — I think that I can say that reasonably conclusively *[Laughter.]* — nor did it change him, who happens to be de Valera's grandson, Éamon Ó Cuív, into an Ulster Prod. I can tell you that we are very close friends. He respects me; I respect him. I know that he would never do anything to cause me harm, and he knows that I would never do anything to cause him harm. That is a lasting, beneficial outcome. If we can translate that into our schools, we will not see it played out on our streets.

**Mr Lunn:** I assume that you were not a seven-year-old when that happened?

**The Chairperson:** No, I was not; I was 10-ish. *[Laughter.]*

**Mr Hunter:** We moved that out from the group of inspectors who were taking the lead on it to the wider inspectorate. It is interesting that we have just completed a one-day staff development in Corrymeela. We did that to make a point and show that there was a history in one place where they

had been working on this long before us and also to say that we were not meeting in a formal educational setting. We are asking the inspectorate to widen its view and its approaches. Yesterday will ask it to do that even further. That was a significant aspect for us.

**Mrs Dobson:** How do you follow that conversation? I apologise for missing the start of your briefing. It is further from Waringstown than I anticipated. I know that a couple of my questions have already been touched upon. Forgive me if they have.

The International Fund, as we know, defined shared education as follows:

*"young people from diverse backgrounds learning together, enabling them to recognise and value diversity and develop higher levels of mutual understanding."*

That is certainly to be admired. Trevor touched on the issue earlier. Does it recognise the integration that has been best practice and promoted in state-controlled schools in Northern Ireland for decades? There are many wonderful best-practice examples of sharing across the education system in Northern Ireland. I commend what you are trying to achieve and what has been achieved already. Were any local examples taken into consideration when planning the 19 projects or were examples from overseas used?

**Mr Hunter:** This is the wrong thing to say, but the widest link was between schools in Northern Ireland and schools in the Republic. That was the width of it; it did not go further in that sense. It also looked across ability and disability and gender. So, there were lots of variables in it that the projects were free to suggest, but the aims that they set for themselves were those that we measured them against. In many ways, those folk came up with aims that were extremely difficult to achieve — as you do when you apply for funding for anything. The core aim of impacting on all the participants remained the same. They did not go out and beyond in that sense.

They used a variety of media, such as film makers, Cinemagic, ICT, youth workers alongside teachers/facilitators and parental involvement. In fact, some lessons were for parents and pupils. There was variety and change; in fact, the multi-aspect of it made it. You have only to look at the titles of projects to see the major impact that they made. They were looking at Classrooms Re-imagined, Facing Our History and Welcoming Schools. I think that all those are ingredients that shared education does not have a right to own; however, it certainly facilitated those key aspects being brought into that setting. It did not look out and beyond, although participants would have had a knowledge and brought expertise from that perspective.

**Professor Knox:** Let me just add to that. You were looking at experiences in Northern Ireland, John, and some of the work from the shared education programme has been disseminated internationally, so that colleagues at Queen's University are working in Macedonia, Bosnia, Israel/Palestine and in Los Angeles with some of the Charter Schools. So, dissemination is going outwards. From my limited knowledge of their work abroad, some of that stuff is now quite advanced in Macedonia.

**Dr Johnston:** That is the point that I was going to make, Colin. The evidence and the practice developed through this programme are being disseminated internationally, because of the best practice that came from it. A key point is that, we, the fund, as an organisation, looked at the project proposals to make sure that they did not come just from education and library boards and that they were not just the historical types of education projects that would come forward. We looked at projects from organisations outside the formal education setting that linked into the education setting and took some of the best-practice lessons that they had learned through their own projects that had international dimensions and brought them into the formal education setting. It was not localised; we were looking at their overseas experience, the international dimensions of their projects and bringing them into an education setting.

**Mrs Dobson:** It is obvious, from reading through the pack that we were given, that the 19 projects cover some very varied and wide topics to do with sharing; it has been very interesting to read. If you were to single out for us two examples of what worked best and an example of what did not work that well, what would you focus on?

**Mr Hunter:** It would be unfair to pick because, between them, there was variety, the audiences were different, and their aims and objectives were slightly different. However, I will answer your question by saying that what made success was that there was a very clear idea that remained throughout the project. Leadership was vital; support was important; support that became ongoing support was

significant; and a willingness to adapt and change. So, in that sense, there were certain ingredients — leadership, ownership and so on — that were important.

If projects are to be successful, they have to be based on a clear understanding of where you wish to go and how you wish to get there. One of the criticisms that we would make is that the projects had too short a lead-in time. You need a wee bit longer to consolidate pupils' thinking, planning and getting to know one another and identify their roles and responsibilities. That, to me, was something that could have been developed further, but that is in hindsight. The other thing is that, if a project is to be successful, it needs to reward itself continuously, see its own celebration, celebrate those who are participating; and the end product really has to measure the journey that all have made, including that of those who planned it. It has to find a sustainable way, out and beyond.

If, for example, in schools, a project is driven through the curriculum, it is cost-effective. One of the things that comes out of this is that schools need to work together. Apart from shared education, it is important that they network. I am thinking of a teacher of one subject in one school needing to link with another. That link across is important. We have a link across history teachers, and, just this week, we have international history teachers here looking at the teaching of history. We need to promote that because, historically, teachers have gone to different training colleges, have not met and have not shared. That, to me, in the Classrooms Reimagined: Education in Diversity and Inclusion for Teachers (CREDIT) programme between St Mary's and Stranmillis, was a vital dividend, because it equipped the teacher and, if the teacher is not equipped with it, it will not develop.

**Professor Knox:** I want to add something about the three shared education projects. It was a very good question, and I was trying to get my thoughts together to answer it specifically. For the three projects that we were involved in — these are not necessarily in order of importance — sustained high-quality contact was a key prerequisite for them to work. As John said, leadership in the school was significant; if we got leadership from the principals, it was more likely to work. The relationship between teachers, often finding some commonality on an individual level, was hugely important. A focus on the curriculum was a key prerequisite, since our projects had a very specific education focus. The sharing of resources between teachers was also hugely important in helping each school to develop.

The other thing that struck us was teachers' pragmatism. Teachers are hugely pragmatic individuals who have to make things work within the very tight confines of their school day. The last point — perhaps this should have been the first — is that there needs to be a willingness to fail and not to be blamed for it. In some cases, trying to be innovative and creative led to things not working. One of the premises that underpin the shared education programme was that it was OK to fail, although not continuously, because you can learn from that.

**Mrs Dobson:** It is very difficult for them to take the chance and put their head above the parapet.

**Professor Knox:** Indeed, particularly in risky areas like that.

**Dr Johnston:** The fund looked at this as a proof of concept; it was work that had not been done in the past, and so it was OK to fail. I do not think that there were any failures in any of the projects that came through either of the programmes. Some projects were done exceptionally well.

I will touch on teacher development. From our experience of talking to teachers individually at events, the journey that teachers have gone on has been exceptional. Some have identified that, through their own teaching methods, they may have been developing prejudice in pupils. Sustainable relationships are built up between teachers and schools.

There is potentially a lack of resources for the teacher support element of curriculum development. Today, we talked about pupils and schools and reconciliation. However, we hardly touched on ensuring that our teachers have enough curriculum resources and having the skills and resources to deal with contentious issues in the classroom. That could be improved in future, certainly as an outworking of this work.

**Mrs Dobson:** I have a couple of final quick points. I was pleased that the final evaluation report recommended that ETI should develop further quality indicators and good practice that can be distributed to schools undertaking shared education. Can you let us know whether those have been developed and how widely they are being circulated? Can you let us know whether you plan to share any of the results of the pilots with schools to encourage sharing and all the aspects of sharing that

can be considered with the neighbouring schools, for example? I am thinking that a legacy for the projects has begun already.

**Mr Hunter:** The process ahead is to take the indicators that we used for the project and develop them further for use by all schools. That work is sitting on my shoulders. It will be developed in consultation with other people who have a hell of a lot to contribute, including the work in Queen's and the people who are part of the project. Whatever is produced will be the result of a lot of ingredients. Our aim is to have it ready in draft form by September. Our second aim is that it should be disseminated to all schools; therefore, it will be open and transparent. It will be there as a benchmark or pilot that can be adapted and changed over time in light of experience. However, it is a work in progress at this stage.

We should never forget that an important ingredient is fun; it has to be pupil-, children-, parent- and community-centred, and there has to be fun and enjoyment in it. That is how they get the true value out of it and how they remember it. That fun element was there in an awful lot of the practices that I have gone to see, and I think that that breaks down barriers more quickly than anything else.

**Professor Knox:** I am not speaking as a funder, but I guess that, from the perspective of IFI and Atlantic, the ultimate legacy of projects such as this is that they become embedded in the system. Through the Delivering Social Change project, we are seeing the Department putting its own resources into something like this for the first time, which is hugely welcome. If an implementation plan comes out of the National Administration Guidelines (NAG) report, there is potential for legislation to come into place behind it. Developments on teacher training and teacher development, which I guess IFI and others will continue to support, will ultimately lead to the embedding of shared education as a concept in the mainstream education system. As I say, I am not talking as a funder, but I suspect that that will be one of the ultimate legacies.

**Dr Johnston:** I suppose that you want me to say yes or no then; do you? *[Laughter.]*

**The Chairperson:** Have you any money with you today? *[Laughter.]*

**Dr Johnston:** Success for us is the fact that this was a proven concept. It is about developing models and ensuring that they are there for dissemination. For us, this is success. It is success for us that we are sitting here today talking about shared education at a legislative level. As Colin rightly says, for us, implementation is the ultimate goal. We would like to see that moving along. There are complexities around area planning, the ESA and everything else, and those will be developed. Ultimately, however, we would like to see the implementation of a shared education ethos as integral to how education is delivered to all our students.

**Mr Hazzard:** I have one final point that is timely following the incident yesterday. Where do racism and the increasing number of people from other parts of the world who are making Ireland their home fit in to shared education?

**Dr Johnston:** That goes back to the point that I raised earlier about early years, four- and five-year-olds and prejudice. A personal belief of mine is that, if you remove sectarianism, something else may fill the void. Over a long period we have been focusing on sectarianism rather than prejudice. All prejudice, whether sectarianism or racism, comes from the same place. It is extremely important for the future that we teach our young people, at a very early age, about mutual respect and diversity. Shared education plays a role in that not just across racist divides but all section 75 divides.

**Mr Hunter:** One of my team is responsible for newcomers. Having visited schools and spoken to key players, she recently produced a short report. It is pleasant to report that newcomer youngsters do not face many difficulties in school. They do well, and schools do a great deal to ensure that they are assimilated and respected. Schools are an oasis, despite what communities are doing. I think that schools are taking a lead on this one.

**The Chairperson:** Thank you very much for a very useful and informative presentation. Adrian, I thank you and ask you to convey to the IFI our appreciation and thanks for the past provision of financial support. We look forward to continued financial support. Colin, thank you for the work that you do and the reports that we have received. The Committee appreciates the value of those. John, in case you are feeling left out and thinking that, after yesterday, we are beating the inspectorate up, that is not the case. We are glad that you were listening. We thank you for the work that you do and ask you to convey that to your colleagues. You are welcome to stay to hear the next presentation.