



Department of
Education
www.education-ni.gov.uk

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION

“A Summary Analysis
of Responses to the Independent
Review of Integrated Education
Call for Evidence”

Summary

Independent Review of Integrated Education

“A Summary Analysis of Responses to the Independent Review of Integrated Education Call for Evidence”

Summary

There were 275 individual responses to the Call for Evidence, of which 247 consisted of answers to the questions asked by the panel in the booklet issued in March 2016. 15 written responses were received which were not directly related to the panel questionnaire and a further 13 blank questionnaires were submitted.

118 (43%) questionnaire responses came from school staff, with 24 (9%) from school governors and 53 (19%) of the responses were sent by parents. A further 52 responses were received from a range of organisations and members of the public (approximately 9% from each).

Of the responses received from school staff, the vast majority (of those where the school was identified) were received from integrated schools. Only 3 responses were identified as from staff at non-integrated schools. The majority of responses from parents were also from those with children attending an integrated school.

A number of respondents did not answer all questions, or, in the case of questions asking for an order of preference, did not rank the options in numerical order. Certain questions, therefore, have a lower response rate.

Overall percentages of respondents for each question have been expressed as a percentage of the valid responses for each question. Where a particularly high number of missing, or void responses were given to any question, this is noted.

Q.1. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- A. Integrated Education is important in promoting respect and understanding between communities here.**
- B. Integrated Education is a vital part of creating a shared future in Northern Ireland.**
- C. Integrated Education is vital in breaking down barriers between Catholics and Protestants.**
- D. There should be more integrated schools in Northern Ireland.**
- E. All schools in Northern Ireland should be integrated.**

The vast majority of responses (between 86 and 89%) strongly agreed with statements A to D, with a further 5-7% agreeing with the statements.

75% of responses indicated either strongly agreement or agreement with statement E, with 15% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Q.2. Should integrated education continue to be primarily about educating young people from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds together?

The significant majority (71%) of responses agreed that integrated education should continue to be primarily about educating young people from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds together, with 22% feeling it should not and 7% being unsure.

Q.3a Is the current requirement for integrated schools to enrol a minimum 30% of all pupils from the minority community still appropriate?

Notably, the valid response rate to this question was 202 (or 81%) of the total 247 responses.

Views on this question were mixed. 38% of responses indicated that they no longer thought the current requirement was appropriate, 32% were unsure and 30% thought the current level was appropriate.

Q.3b If No, what should the minimum percentage of pupils from the minority community be?

67 responses indicated that the quota should be revised. A slight majority (54%) of these responses indicated there should be no minimum requirement set.

Q.4. When measuring religious balance, should all pupils be included or only those pupils designated Catholic and Protestant?

Notably, the valid response rate to this question was 215 out of 247 (or 87%).

The majority (69%) of responses indicated that all pupils should be included when measuring religious balance.

Q.5. What type of overarching ethos, or character should integrated schools have?

Views on this question were mixed. 47% of responses were in favour of a Christian ethos, with 31% indicating a preference for a multi-faith ethos and 15% opting for a secular model.

Q.6. What do you think is currently the key feature of integrated education?

(Please indicate a preference order 1-5)

Mix of Protestant and Catholic pupils

Integrated Ethos

High Quality Education

Mix of pupils from a wide range of social, cultural and racial backgrounds

Other

A significant number of responses (77, or 31% of responses) gave a first preference to all of the four options specifically listed. The vast majority of these responses were from staff at integrated schools.

Only 140 out of 247, or 56% gave an ascending preference order as requested. Views amongst these responses were mixed. 41% indicated that the primary key feature of integrated education was a mix of Protestant and Catholic pupils, with only slightly fewer believing it was the integrated ethos (39%). Only 11% of responses felt high quality education was the primary key feature and only 4% opted for a mix of pupils from a wide range of backgrounds.

Q.7. What do you think should be the key feature of integrated education?

(Please indicate a preference order 1-5)

Mix of Protestant and Catholic pupils

Integrated Ethos

High Quality Education

Mix of pupils from a wide range of social, cultural and racial backgrounds

Other

A significant number of responses (77, or 31% of responses) gave a first preference to all of the four options specifically listed. The vast majority of these responses were from staff at integrated schools.

Only 130 out of 247 (52%) gave an ascending preference order as requested. Views amongst these responses were mixed. 42% indicated that the key feature for integrated education should be a high quality education, with only slightly fewer (37%) suggesting the key feature should be the integrated ethos. Only 8% and 10% of responses indicated that the key feature should be a mix of Protestant and Catholic pupils and a mix of pupils from a wide range of backgrounds respectively.

Q.8. Has government been pro-active enough in supporting the development of integrated education?

The vast majority of responses (87%) felt that government has not been sufficiently pro-active in supporting development of integrated education.

Q.9. Should government set targets to increase the number of pupils enrolled in integrated education?

The vast majority of responses (86%) indicated that government should set targets to increase pupil numbers in integrated schools.

Q.10. Should the Department of Education continue to have a statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate' integrated education?

The vast majority of responses (93%) indicated that the Department should continue to have a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education.

Q.11. Should integrated schools receive additional annual funding to support the development and delivery of an integrated ethos throughout the curriculum?

The significant majority of responses (76%) indicated that integrated schools should receive additional funding to support development and delivery of an integrated ethos throughout the curriculum.

Q.12. Is there a continuing need for an organisation such as NICIE to promote, develop and support integrated education?

The vast majority of responses (89%) indicated that there was a continuing need for an organisation such as NICIE to promote, develop and support integrated education.

Q.13. Has NICIE been effective in promoting, developing and supporting integrated education?

The majority of responses (67%) indicated that NICIE has been effective in their role, with 25% being unsure.

Q14. What should be the key priorities for NICIE going forward?

(Please indicate a preference order 1-5)

Area Planning

Advice and support for existing integrated schools

Advice and support for schools wishing to transform

Advocacy of integrated education

Shared Education

A significant number of responses (68, or 27% of responses) gave a first preference to each of the first four options listed only. The vast majority of these responses were from staff at integrated schools.

Only 138 out of 247 (56%) gave an ascending preference order as requested. Views amongst these responses were mixed. 39% indicated that the key priority for NICIE going forward should be advocacy of integrated education. A large majority of responses (74%) were of the view that Shared Education should not be a priority for NICIE with this featuring as the fifth preference.

Q.15. Has the Area Planning process to date been effective in developing the integrated sector?

The majority of responses (64%) indicated that the Area Planning process has not been effective in developing the integrated sector. Only a small percentage (8%) of responses indicated that the process had been effective.

Q.16. Do you know who represents the integrated sector in the area planning process?

The vast majority of responses (83%) indicated that they were either unsure or did not know who represented the integrated sector in the area planning process.

Q.17. Do you know how to influence the development of an area plan?

The vast majority of responses (89%) indicated that they were either unsure or did not know how to influence the development of an area plan.

Q.18. Can the area planning process be improved to better support the development of integrated schools?

The significant majority of responses (73%) indicated that the area planning process could be improved to better support the development of integrated schools.

Q.19. Why do you think only a small number of schools have chosen to transform in the past decade? (Please indicate preference order 1-6)

Lack of knowledge or awareness of process amongst Boards of Governors

Lack of knowledge or awareness amongst parents

Cumbersome process

Insufficient financial incentives

Opposition from other managing authorities or Boards of Governors

Other

A significant number of responses (71, or 29% of all responses) gave a first preference to all of the five options specifically listed. The vast majority of these responses were from staff at integrated schools.

Only 136 out of 247 (55%) gave an ascending preference order as requested. The largest group amongst these responses (39%) indicated that the main reason for the small number of schools transforming in the last 10 years was opposition from other managing authorities or Boards of Governors, with 13% believing the most important reason was the cumbersome process and 10% there being insufficient financial incentives.

Q.20. What should be the main method of future growth for the integrated sector? (Please indicate preference order 1-4)

Expansion/growth of current integrated schools

Establishment of new integrated schools

Transformation of existing schools

Other

A significant number of responses (75, or 30% of all responses) gave a first preference to all of the five options specifically listed. The vast majority of these responses were from staff at integrated schools.

Only 145 out of 247 (58%) gave an ascending preference order as requested. Views of those giving an order of preference were mixed. 48% suggested that the main method for future growth in the integrated sector should be expansion and growth of existing integrated schools, with 36% indicating that the main method should be transformation of schools to integrated status. Only 9% were in favour of establishing new integrated schools as the main method.

Q.21. What should be the priority for capital investment from the Fresh Start funding? *(Please indicate a preference order 1-7)*

Expansion/growth of current integrated schools

Replacement of sub-standard accommodation at existing integrated schools

Schools transforming to integrated status

Establishment of new integrated schools

Shared campuses

All schools with religiously mixed enrolments

Other

A significant number of responses (58, or 23% of all responses) gave a first preference to each of the first four options specifically listed. The vast majority of these responses were from staff at integrated schools.

Only 152 out of 247 (61%) gave an ascending preference order as requested. The largest group of these responses (43%) suggested that the first priority for capital investment should be the replacement of sub-standard accommodation at existing integrated schools, with 23% indicating that the first priority should be expansion/growth of integrated schools.

The Shared campus option was the least favoured option, with this featuring as either preference 5, 6 or 7 for 66% of responses.

