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TOWARDS A CULTURE OF TOLERANCE – INTEGRATING EDUCATION

Introduction

1.1 In June 1998, the then Minister for Education, Tony Worthington, established a working group representative of the main education partners to examine the role of schools in helping to create a more tolerant society in Northern Ireland. The group's agreed terms of reference are set out in full in Annex 1 but in essence were:

“..... to examine the present levels of integration within schools and to consider ways of encouraging and promoting further development while taking account of the wishes of parents to send their children to the education system they prefer”.

1.2 The membership of the group is detailed in Annex 2 and in December 1998 it produced a progress report entitled “Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Integrating Education” which was issued for consultation.

1.3 In that report, the group identified the following key principles:

- a. It is a seminal purpose of the Northern Ireland Education Service to promote a culture of tolerance and reconciliation and, for schools, to do so in keeping

with the particular ethos and circumstances within which they operate. These different approaches should be valued and all schools encouraged to provide further opportunities to promote a culture of tolerance.

- b. There should continue to be a pluralist approach to education, expressed in a plurality of structures (ie different types of school) and ethos.
- c. All schools should provide a pluralist curriculum promoting tolerance and mutual understanding.
- d. The present structure for schooling has been determined by parental wishes and, subject to the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils should continue to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.
- e. Education policy, administration, school funding and school support should be fair and equitable to all grant-aided schools, ie controlled, voluntary, integrated, Irish-medium, maintained, denominational, non-denominational, etc.

These principles were widely welcomed and, in particular, were endorsed by all the main education partners, including the Education and Library Boards (ELBs), the Council for

Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Transfer Representatives Council (TRC), the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) and the Integrated Education Fund (IEF).

- 1.4 The group also strongly acknowledged that a strategic approach to the promotion of a culture of tolerance, as set out in the Belfast Agreement, must embrace all schools, both formally integrated and other schools. In elaborating on the key principles and how a strategic approach to promoting a culture of tolerance could be developed, the group identified a wide range of fundamental issues and a range of recommendations for further action.
- 1.5 Its conclusions and recommendations (see Annex 3) attracted a wide range of comment and the later sections of this report focus on the major issues which, it was agreed, needed further discussion amongst the main education partners in the light of the outcomes of the consultation process.
- 1.6 The work of the group also led to the establishment of two further working groups. The first of these reviewed the arrangements for the strategic promotion of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU). The group was chaired by Gerry Kelly, the former Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board and its terms of reference are set out in Annex 4. It reported in September 1999 and its report was issued for consultation under cover of a

commentary from the Department of Education. Reviews have also subsequently been carried out on the Community Relations Core Funding Scheme, the Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme and the School Community Relations Programme.

1.7 The second group established in the wake of the working group's report focused on the process of the transformation of an existing school to integrated status and in November 1999 an information pack based on the group's work was issued to all schools. The group was chaired by Jackie Fitzsimons, Chief executive of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board. It also made recommendations on the way in which transformation should be resourced and these formed the basis of the Department's review of policy in this area, completed in April 2003.

1.8 Following the work of the two additional groups and in response to the issues raised during consultation on the various reports, the original working group was reconvened, with the addition of one representative each from the Irish-medium sector, and from the Governing Bodies Association for the voluntary grammar schools to develop specific recommendations which would help the education system to embody the key principles and respond strategically to the challenge of promoting a culture of tolerance. In particular, the reconvened Working Group focused on:

- (i) the means by which better strategic planning of education provisions can be achieved;
- (ii) the development of a strategic approach to transformation;
- (iii) the statutory framework for transformation;
- (iv) the concept of mixed schools;
- (v) the concepts of neutrality and neutral sites in school planning;
- (vi) the concept of pluralism in relation to the education system; and
- (vii) the viability criteria for new integrated and Irish-medium schools.

The working group's conclusions and recommendations on these issues are set out in this report and it is hoped that they will assist in the development of agreed policies and strategies for the education service which will enable schools to play their full and proper role in creating a tolerant society in which diversity and difference can be celebrated as a source of richness.

The Strategic Planning of Education Provision

2.1 The education system in Northern Ireland is a complex one, perhaps uniquely so. It comprises a range of different school types which reflect both the diversity of society and the range of parental preferences for the type of education they want for their children. Some would see this as a weakness in the system but it was clearly acknowledged by the working group

in the key principles in its original report and widely endorsed in consultation that:

- there should continue to be a pluralist approach to education, expressed in a plurality of structures (ie different types of school) and ethos; and
- the present structure for schooling has been determined by parental wishes and, subject to the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils should continue to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents.

2.2 There are long-established processes by which proposals for the establishment of new schools and the closure or significant change in the character of existing schools can be processed. Moreover within each of the sectors, bodies such as the ELBs, CCMS, NICIE and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG) can review the demand for provision and work with the Department on the associated planning of provision.

2.3 In the main, these processes are effective but in its original report the working group identified the need for a broader, more strategic overview of the planning of school provision than is possible on the basis of bilateral interaction between individual sectors and the Department. One possible way forward was seen as the establishment of a system of area-

based community audits but, while the response to consultation indicated some significant support for a concept of this type, there was also strong opposition to it.

- 2.4 The working group fully acknowledged the difficulties faced by the trustees of maintained and voluntary schools in participating in area-based planning mechanisms but noted that for a range of reasons, there is a pressing need for better strategic planning of school provision.
- 2.5 In this context, it is noteworthy that the school system continues to have significant numbers of surplus places and that in fact the level of such surplus places has increased over the last 5 years from 8.2% to almost 10%. Indicators also show that, while the numbers of surplus places in some areas and sectors continue to grow, in others there is unmet demand for particular types of education. The issue of surplus places is moreover likely to worsen rather than diminish since demographic trends show that overall pupil numbers are likely to decline by more than 11,000 by 2008 and 25,000 by 2013.
- 2.6 Nor is changing demography the only factor relevant to the forward planning of education provision. The development of ICT; the reviews of the curriculum and of post-primary provision; and the need for major investment in the schools estate all combine to reinforce the urgency of more effective strategic planning of school provision.

2.7 On 26 January 2004, the Minister announced acceptance of the recommendations of the Post-Primary Review Working Group (the Costello Report). The main recommendations were

- The establishment of an Entitlement Framework which would guarantee all pupils access to a wider range of academic and vocational courses and which will require greater cooperation and collaboration among schools and between schools and FE colleges;
- the replacement of academic selection by a system of informed pupil and parental choice;
- all existing school types, and new specialist schools, can contribute to the overall tapestry of provision;
- new arrangements would be developed locally to take account of local wishes, needs and circumstances.

2.8 The report agreed with the TACOT:IE Group's assertion that while the current planning processes are well defined and implemented, they do not facilitate a strategic co-ordinated approach involving all the managing authorities. It considered that in the context of the number of surplus places and the continuing impact of demography, a more strategic approach is necessary.

2.9. The Costello Group considered that future planning for local areas should be done in the context of the common good where schools should work together to ensure that all pupils in an area have their needs met. All schools in an area

should take part, to ensure a coherent approach and secure the best use of expertise and facilities available.

- 2.10. The Costello Report recommended an approach which would involve schools in localities working together in local partnerships, supported and guided by area partnerships. It would also involve the Department of Education, advised by a Strategic Advisory Group, providing strategic leadership in implementing the new arrangements.
- 2.11 There has been much common ground in the consideration of both groups in relation to planning processes. While the TACOT:IE Working Group could not reach a consensus of opinion on how the strategic development of the integrated sector should be taken forward, it was generally agreed by the membership that a more structured strategic planning process was required that would involve all sectors of education. The Working Group discussed the establishment of a Strategic Planning Group, with the aim of reviewing existing school provision across all sectors in the light of demographic change, evidence of demand, and evolving educational policy.
- 2.12 While the majority of members supported the recommendation to establish such a group, a small minority voiced concerns that the remit of the proposed group might conflict with the roles of existing bodies.

- 2.13 This requirement for a structured planning process has, however, been reinforced following the publication of the outcome of the Post-Primary Review.
- 2.14 The proposed changes will impact upon all sectors, including integrated education. It is recommended, therefore, that the strategic direction for the integrated sector, rather than be considered in isolation, should form part of the overall planning process that will be established to take forward, and implement the Post-primary proposals.

A Strategic Approach to Transformation

- 3.1 Of the 56 integrated schools currently funded by the Department of Education some 37 are grant-maintained integrated schools, 2 are controlled integrated schools established as such, while 17 are controlled integrated schools, which became integrated using the transformation route. Out of the total pupil population of 16,692 in the integrated sector, 3,289 or 19.7% are in transformed schools (figures taken from 2004 School Census).
- 3.2 From the outset, the working group acknowledged the importance of transformation as a means of delivering the option of integrated education in a cost-effective way using the existing capital stock. Transformation may also be the only means of making integrated education available in certain settings, for example in rural areas where it would not

be feasible to add another school type to the existing local pattern of provision.

- 3.3 The concept of transformation does, however, raise a number of complex issues, not least the statutory framework within which the current provisions for transformation operate and this issue is addressed in the next section of this report. However, the working group also clearly recognised that, in addition to the need to address policy issues related to transformation, there was also a need to consider arrangements within which the process of transformation might be better planned and managed.
- 3.4 The group noted that a number of the ELBs have adopted policy statements on integrated education, including transformation and that there are developing links between ELBs and the integrated sector as represented by NICIE and by the IEF. These links provide the basis on which a co-operative mechanism could be established to facilitate the development of the transformation option and the group agreed that those links should be formalised by the creation of a new Transformation Working Group.
- 3.5 The core of this group should comprise representatives of the Department of Education, the ELB's, the Transferor Churches, NICIE and the IEF. It was the view of the Catholic maintained sector that it was neither necessary nor appropriate for it to be involved in the proposed Group given the concerns which had been expressed about the conflict

between the process of transformation and the concept of trusteeship. The option to participate in the work of the Group should, however, remain open to sectors other than the controlled sector, particularly if statutory changes to the process of transformation are implemented, as suggested in the next section of this report.

3.6 The terms of reference for the group could include the following elements:

- the provision of advice to the Department on the development of the transformation option as a means of facilitating the provision of integrated schooling;
- acting as a forum within which the strategic role of transformation can be explored by the main stakeholders;
- the development of mechanisms by which the overall demand for and potential for transformation might be assessed;
- reviewing the effectiveness of the support provided for transforming schools; and
- acting as a forum for assessing the success of the transformation option in delivering integration and a culture of tolerance in the schools concerned.

The Statutory Framework for Transformation

- 4.1 The provisions which enable existing grant-aided schools to transform to integrated status were incorporated in the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989. These reflected and developed the provisions in the 1988 Education Act taking account of the mechanisms for parental ballots which had been included in the legislation in England and Wales on grant-maintained schools.
- 4.2 In general, the provisions have operated effectively but the Working Group noted the complexity of the current arrangements by which the character of schools can be altered and that there are different roles for parents in different circumstances.
- 4.3 The basic issue is that the option of transformation with the associated arrangements for parental ballots apply only where an existing school is seeking to become an integrated school. However, there are circumstances in which the sectoral character of a school may need to be amended to reflect, for example, emerging changes in the demography of the area which it serves. In such cases, no transformation route is available and changes in status must be handled through the development proposal process involving two separate proposals – one to close the school in its existing form and the second to open a new school with the desired status. In this scenario, while parents have the opportunity to comment on either or both of the development proposals,

their views have no special standing in the way that they do under the mechanism for parental ballots in transformation.

4.4 The Working Group took the view that this was anomalous and potentially open to challenge and concluded that a common process of transformation should be made available by which a school could change its character to any of the full range of available options – controlled integrated; grant-maintained integrated; controlled; Catholic maintained; maintained (including Irish-medium); or voluntary.

4.5 In each case, parental views should have a strong influence but the Group recognised that there was a need to ensure some stability in the status of schools since it would be undesirable to have repeated changes in status, with the inevitable disruption to management and governance which would result. The Group suggested therefore that new legislation to make a process of transformation more generally available should include provisions either to prevent any proposal for a second transformation from being brought forward within a fixed period (say, eight years) after a first transformation or to have a requirement for more than a simple majority in any ballot for a transformation.

4.6 These are complex issues and there is a need to ensure that any broader process of transformation is workable and does not impede the establishment of new integrated schools. The Working Group, however, takes the view that the key need is for a consistent approach across the sectors and that, in

consultation with the main education partners, an effective and fair policy can be devised.

The Concept of Mixed Schools

- 5.1 In its original report, the Working Group commented on the concept of mixed schools and noted the possibility that support might be made available to assist such schools in developing pluralism in their provision for their pupils. This evoked varying responses during the consultation with a number of respondents suggesting that the need for greater pluralism in the way schools catered for the needs of their pupils was a general requirement rather than one which could or should be limited to a new, defined category of 'mixed' schools. It was also argued that, if financial support for activities to promote pluralism were to be made available, it should be open to all schools to bid for such additional resources. There was also some concern expressed about adding yet another category of school to the complex system of provision already in place here.
- 5.2 The Working Group acknowledged the force of these points but did consider the possibility of evolving a set of criteria by which a category of 'mixed schools' might be identified. However, the conclusion was that it was both unnecessary and undesirable to seek to create new forms of schools in some way intermediate between the main established sectors and the integrated sector. Such differentiation would conflict with the key principle in the original report that all

schools should provide a pluralist curriculum promoting tolerance and mutual understanding, which was universally supported during consultation. Moreover, any set of criteria which included some numerical measurement of mixed enrolments as a basis for additional funding would disadvantage those schools which, because of their geographical location, could not reasonably be expected to attract a mixed pupil population.

- 5.3 In these circumstances, while acknowledging the work of those schools which do have mixed enrolments, the Working Group concluded that any measures to support pluralism in schools should be available to all schools. Such measures could include an earmarked fund against which schools could bid for resources to enable them to embed a culture of tolerance through, for example, appropriate in-service provision for teachers, the provision of additional sports facilities and the broadening of cultural activities.

The Concept of Neutrality

- 6.1 In the original report the Working Group referred to the concept of neutral sites in the context of the development of joint provision of pre-school education and in the responses to consultation there was an acknowledgement of the need, at least in certain circumstances, for jointly managed provision which could be perceived as neutral.

- 6.2 The Working Group noted that, while there had been attempts to define what might count as a neutral venue or site, these were difficult issues which were affected not only by the geographical location of a site but by such factors as its former uses or former ownership. In addition, new, greenfield sites are becoming increasingly difficult to find both in rural locations and in towns and cities, not least because of the emphasis on brownfield in preference to other forms of development.
- 6.3 The Group noted too that considerable work had been done in specific situations to evolve management and governance structures for new provision that reflected the full diversity of local communities. It was clear, however, that such responses to local circumstances were inevitably constrained by the existing statutory arrangements for the governance of schools which create the framework within which the governance arrangements for all new developments must be established.
- 6.4 The Working Group is aware that the Department has committed itself to a review of school governance and it would suggest that one issue which that review might address is the need for more flexible models of governance. Such flexibility might allow for the creation of new patterns of community-based governance and also for the organic development or evolution of more broadly-based arrangements in relation to existing schools, where it is appropriate to local circumstances.

6.5 The Group acknowledges that it would be wrong to seek to enforce radical changes in the pattern of governance but it has been encouraged by the willingness of the key stakeholders to work together to implement informally arrangements which meet local needs. This willingness to innovate deserves support through the creation of an appropriately flexible statutory framework.

Viability Criteria

7.1 Early in 2000, the then Minister for Education, Martin McGuinness MP, announced a review of viability criteria for grant-aided status for new schools including Irish-medium and Integrated schools. Following that review and consultation on the outcomes, it was decided that the criteria for the primary sector should be changed. On 18th December 2000, the then Minister, Martin McGuinness announced the reduction of the viability criteria for new primary schools to an initial intake of 15 pupils for new urban schools (Belfast and Londonderry) and an intake of 12 pupils for new schools in rural areas, together with medium term targets of an annual intake of 20 and 15 respectively to receive capital funding.

7.2 During 2001 the Department considered strategically the development of second-level provision, in consultation with CnaG, NICIE and the IEF. On 31st October 2001 Martin McGuinness announced the reduction of the viability criteria

to receive recurrent funding for new post primary integrated and Irish-medium schools to a year 8 intake of 50 pupils. To obtain capital funding the school must demonstrate that its intake is sustainable over a period of time.

- 7.3 The Working Group noted these developments. While it acknowledged the opportunities that the reductions offered all sectors of the Northern Ireland education service, it recognised that such opportunities came with financial consequences affecting the education service as a whole.

Pluralism

- 8.1 Pluralism within the education service is reflected, to differing degrees, at many levels: in the curriculum with the cross-curricular themes of Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage; in practice with the cross community contact scheme; and in structures, with the various types of schools that are available to reflect parental demand and in the administrative structures that have evolved to support the various school sectors. The Northern Ireland education system provides an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of our society, while providing recognition of our differences.
- 8.2 The Group recognised that this is not an issue that is individual to Integrated Schools. It is being addressed throughout the education service at every level and within the Youth Service. It stressed that the development and dissemination of, and support for, a culture of tolerance was the responsibility of all relevant school authorities. The

members acknowledged the contribution to pluralism in the report by the Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland entitled “Building Peace: Shaping The Future”. In particular the Group recognised the Church’s policy of creating a climate of openness, and welcoming children of other denominations into Catholic schools.

8.3 On 23 June 2004, the then Minister with Responsibility for Education announced that he had accepted CCEA’s proposals for a revised Northern Ireland Curriculum. In its consideration, the Working Group endorsed the need for the treatment of pluralism and education for diversity in the new curriculum with an acknowledgement of the importance of Citizenship Education. While events have overtaken the publication of this report, the Group had recommended that the Review consider directly whether the proposed curriculum hinders or supports the development of a culture of tolerance in the education system. The introduction of Citizenship Education as an integral part of the new curriculum and, as a consequence, the higher profile of issues being taught through it, will further the promotion of a culture of tolerance.

8.4 The recognition of the pluralist nature of the education system in current administrative structures is a reflection of the demands from parents for a diverse range of forms of education. While the Group accepted that this diversity was reflected in its administrative structure, it also accepted the need for subsidiarity as a principle, whereby certain universal

functions are retained at a central source, in this case the Department, so as to avoid confusion or duplication. A review of local administrative structures has taken place. The Working Group recommended that the particular pluralist circumstances of the education system are reflected within the future administrative structures for Northern Ireland.

- 8.5 In March 2005, OFMDFM published a policy document entitled “A Shared Future – Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland.”

This document sets out the Government’s vision for a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair society for Northern Ireland.

In the document it was stated that for some, integrated education is seen as the barometer of good relations between and within communities, but that a move towards greater sharing in education, as a whole, is perhaps more important.

“A Shared Future” focuses on promoting sharing in all levels of education. It goes on to explain that while not all schools will be designated as integrated, all educational institutions should demonstrate their organisational commitment to a shared society. This reinforces the recommendations of the original TACOT:IE working group.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- The urgent establishment of a Strategic Planning Group for school provision with the following role:

“to review regularly the existing pattern of school provision across all sectors in the light of demographic changes; evidence of demand; and evolving educational policy and to make recommendations to the Department on the strategic priorities for development of the school system”.¹

- The creation of a Transformation Working Group with terms of reference including:
 - the provision of advice to the Department on the development of the transformation option as a means of facilitating the provision of integrated schooling;
 - acting as a forum within which the strategic role of transformation can be explored by the main stakeholders;

¹ While a majority of members supported this recommendation, it was not possible to achieve overall consensus.

- the development of mechanisms by which the overall demand for and potential for transformation might be assessed;
 - reviewing the effectiveness of the support provided for transforming schools; and
 - acting as a forum for assessing the success of the transformation option in delivering integration and a culture of tolerance in the schools concerned.
- A common process of transformation should be made available by which a school could change its character to any of the full range of available options – controlled integrated; grant-maintained integrated; controlled; Catholic maintained; maintained (including Irish-medium); or voluntary.
 - Any measures to support pluralism in schools should be available to all schools. Such measures could include an earmarked fund against which schools could bid for resources to enable them to embed a culture of tolerance through, for example, appropriate in-service provision for teachers, the provision of additional sports facilities and the broadening of cultural activities.

- The TACOT:IE Group also recommended that the Review of the Northern Ireland Curriculum should consider directly whether the proposed curriculum hinders or supports the development of a culture of tolerance in the education system.

- The particular pluralist circumstances of the education system should continue to be reflected in the future administrative structures for Northern Ireland.

ANNEX 2

Terms Of Reference of original Working Group

The Belfast Agreement states that “an essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing”. There are different ways that schools can contribute further to the promotion of a culture of tolerance:

- formal integration;
- mixed intakes;
- through the curriculum, especially the delivery of cross-curricular themes, including Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage; and
- direct contacts between schools and among groups of schools.

All aspects need to be reviewed, but this stage concentrates on integrated schools and integration within schools through mixed intakes. The purpose of this Working Group is therefore to examine the present levels of integration within schools and to consider ways of encouraging and promoting further development while taking account of the wishes of parents to send their children to the education system they prefer. In particular, the Group will –

- assess whether there is potential for increased mixed attendance of Protestants and Catholics at existing

controlled and Catholic maintained schools and how such potential might be realised;

- consider issues relating to the continuing development of integration within schools;
- review the role of NICIE, IEF, the ELBs and other school interests in assisting and promoting the development of integration within schools;
- assess the scope for expansion of the integrated sector through the transformation of existing schools and consider further ways of facilitating this option where parents and schools are minded to pursue it;
- review the arrangements for capital funding of new integrated schools and consider possible alternatives for financing their capital development; this will involve the potential of PFI based on the experience of existing pathfinder projects;
- examine the arrangements for the development of “grammar streams” in integrated schools;
- review the implications of the policy on post-16 provision on the integrated sector;
- assess the long-term potential for the integrated schools sector in the Province;
- consider, on the basis of these assessments, whether potential areas for development of integration within schools can be prioritised.

ANNEX 3

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ORIGINAL WORKING GROUP ON INTEGRATING EDUCATION.

Chairman:	Tony Worthington	(First two meetings only)
	Don Hill	DE
Members:	Mark Browne	DE
	David Clement	Helm Corporation
	Marie Cowan	GMI schools
	Donal Flanagan	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
	Tony Gallagher	School of Education, Queen's University Belfast
	Houston McKelvey	Transferor Representatives' Council
	Alan Smith	Integrated Education Fund
	Geraldine Tigchelaar	Transformed Schools
	Gordon Topping	North Eastern Education and Library Board
	Michael Wardlow	NICIE

On the reconvened Working Group, Stephen Peover replaced Don Hill and June Ingram replaced Mark Browne. Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta was represented by Sean Ó Coinn and the Governing Bodies Association (GBA) was represented by Dr Evelyn Dermott.

ANNEX 4

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Original Working Group.

1. A Strategic Approach to the Promotion of a Culture of Tolerance.

Recommendation: A strategic and planned approach to school provision should encompass the use of the findings of “Community Audits” which would assess the demand for the type of provision required by parents. This assessment should examine the potential for transformation.

2. Pluralism / Mixed schools

Recommendation: Pluralism should be promoted and supported by additional financial support to existing mixed or other schools for measures which demonstrate a commitment to a culture of tolerance, eg additional teacher training or sports facilities.

3. Formal Integrated schools

Recommendations: A pro-active policy of promotion will accelerate the growth of integrated schools. This can be taken forward through the ten-year development plan launched by the IEF, supported by NICIE. The outcome will be addressed through new collaborative structures in each Board area.

Area Boards, with statutory responsibility for planning school provision, would take lead responsibility for a strategy working through local groups which would include Transferor and NICIE representatives. Transformation is the most cost effective means of expansion and should be actively investigated within a clearly defined timetable before a proposal for a new school.

If more schools are to be encouraged to transform:

- (i) there is a need for an agreed information pack which covers all options and offers clear guidance on what is necessary to qualify for integrated status; this should be drafted centrally by a group representative of all partners using the present DE draft as a starting point and issued by DE;
- (ii) roles and responsibilities of all interested parties should be clarified and co-ordinated; and
- (iii) more resources should be available to support curricular changes, staffing pressures and improved pastoral provision.

No change was suggested to existing criteria for new schools.

4. Pre-school Provision

Joint provision, preferably on a neutral site, is considered a practical and worthwhile alternative.

5. Post 16 Provision

There should be a coherent post 16 policy for all schools which ensures equality of opportunity and access for all children in all sectors. A general review is required.

Terms Of Reference of the Working Group on the Strategic Promotion of Education for Mutual Understanding

Context

The Belfast Agreement states that “an essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing”. This agreement has created a new opportunity to reflect afresh on the role of education as a source of social cohesion within Northern Ireland.

There are different ways that schools can contribute but it is incumbent on all schools to fulfil their obligations in respect of the promotion of a culture of tolerance whether they be:

- formally integrated;
- characterised by mixed intakes; or
- single denomination schools.

This task transcends both the cross-community contact schemes and the cross-curricular themes to embrace the whole of the curriculum and educative processes.

Terms of Reference

There is agreement that a “seminal purpose” of the Northern Ireland Education Service is the promotion of tolerance and reconciliation. All schools have a duty to promote such a culture in keeping with the particular ethos and circumstances within which they operate. The recently prepared report “Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Integrating Education” explored the implications of this for formally integrated schools and those with mixed intakes. This review will consider ways in which the education service, in partnership with all schools, can promote tolerance through the general curriculum and, in particular, by the delivery of the cross-curricular themes of EMU and Cultural Heritage, and through direct contacts between schools and among groups of schools”.

The Working Group is asked to make recommendations as to how future policy can encourage and facilitate the development of a more focused and coherent approach to the promotion of a culture of tolerance in all schools. In particular, the Group is asked to consider:

- The opportunities created through the current CCEA curriculum review, to reinforce a culture of tolerance;
- How to improve the effectiveness and appropriateness of the present structure of the Schools Community Relations Programme and the future role of cross community contact in promoting a culture of tolerance;

- How to encourage schools to demonstrate greater ownership of and commitment to a culture of tolerance;
- How to improve, for teachers, governors and others, training and professional development strategies, which encourage the promotion of a culture of tolerance in schools;
- The contribution which the voluntary reconciliation bodies can make in supporting schools in developing a culture of tolerance; and
- How the recommendations of this Working Group will relate to the recommendations of the Working Group report on integrating education.

GLOSSARY

CCEA	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CCMS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
CnaG	Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (Irish-medium promotional body)
DENI	Department of Education for Northern Ireland (now DE – Department of Education)
ELBs	Education and Library Boards
EMU	Education for Mutual Understanding
GBA	Governing Bodies Association
IEF	Integrated Education Fund
NICIE	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
SCRIP	Schools Community Relations Programme
TACOT:IE	Towards a Culture of Tolerance: Integrating Education
TRC	The Transferor Representatives' Council
YSCRSS	The Youth Service Community Relations Support Scheme