

Integrated Education Fund

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

Year ended 31 March 2023

1. OPERATING CONTEXT FOR THE YEAR

The year 2022/23 was a very significant year in the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland.

However, the year began with the collapse of the Northern Ireland Executive following the resignation of the First Minister, Paul Givan of the DUP, in February and the subsequent failure to restore an Executive following the Assembly elections in May. This meant there would be no Minister of Education in place from June 2022 onwards.

This development followed the passing of the Integrated Education Bill in March 2022 by the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 received Royal Assent in April. The Act placed a new and further statutory duty on the Department of Education to "support" as well as "encourage and facilitate" Integrated Education. This new legislation presents a tremendous opportunity to see increased government support for the growth and development of Integrated Education.

However, the absence of an Education Minister presented a number of new challenges during the year as responsibilities passed to the Permanent Secretary for the Department of Education, Dr Mark Browne. One impact of this is the delay in the planned publication of the final report from the Independent Review of Education chaired by Sir Keir Bloomer. Whilst an interim report was produced in October 2022, it contained little in terms of detail on recommendations and delivery. With this in mind, the IEF has continued to support the work of the Ulster University's Transforming Education research project which has produced several new research Briefing Papers examining aspects of our divided education system.

Despite the ongoing political impasse, in June 2022 the IEF launched its new three-year *Strategic Vision 2022-2025: Towards 100 Integrated Schools*. Central to this strategy is developing the work to empower parents, local communities and schools who want Integrated Education and to inform them as to how they can become involved in making such positive change a reality. The strategy also seeks to challenge the segregated nature of our education system through evidence-based research, as well as support schools to deliver integration in both policy and practice.

The aim within the next three years is to create the conditions where we can reach 100 Integrated schools. This was the dream of the IEF's former Campaign Chair, Baroness May Blood, who sadly passed away in October 2022 and who is sorely missed by staff, Directors and supporters. As our Campaign Chair, Baroness Blood led the fundraising drive for Integrated Education for over two decades. May was so pleased that support for more Integrated Education from parents and schools continued to grow significantly.

In September 2022, two more Integrated schools successfully opened following their successful Transformation to Integrated status: Integrated College Glengormley and Bangor Integrated Nursery School. Throughout the year several positive parental ballots took place: St. Eugene's Primary School (Tircur); St. Eugene's Primary School (Strabane); Sion Mills Primary School; Magherafelt Nursery School; Lurgan Model Primary School; Cairnshill Primary School in Belfast and Ballymena Nursery School.

Some schools are in small rural communities, looking to see if Integrated status could bring a more sustainable future - for some it might be too late but many of the schools that have chosen to move forward with Transformation are strong sustainable schools and in some cases schools that are already oversubscribed.

However, it is not just the increased activity and support at a school and local community level that gave the IEF optimism throughout the year but also the developments at a national government level too. The UK Government, through HM Treasury, continues to support the capital needs of several existing Integrated schools through the Fresh Start Programme which has resulted in the opening of

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new school buildings for Braidside Integrated Primary School in Ballymena and Enniskillen Integrated Primary School. The Northern Ireland Office has also committed £1.465 million to the IEF to support its work with Transformation, the Future Schools Programme and research. Meanwhile, the IEF, together with NICIE, continues to benefit from the support of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs' Reconciliation Fund as a Strategic Partner.

Momentum continues to build for Integrated Education. The IEF and NICIE are working with more schools, parents and local communities than ever before and, combined with the new Integrated Education Act, there will be many opportunities (and no doubt challenges) to look forward to.

The IEF really appreciates that none of this success could have been achieved without the help of our supporters and donors.

Thank you.

2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

2.1 MANDATE

The mandate of the IEF is derived from the expressed demand of parents and individual schools who seek Integrated Education for their children and pupils.

2.2 GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The IEF was established in 1992 as a charitable trust to provide a financial foundation for the development and growth of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Until April 2016 it was governed by its Deed of Trust, dated 17 February 1992. In early 2016 the IEF completed the process of incorporation in order to give the Fund a stronger, more secure legal identity, and has been operating as a charitable company limited by guarantee since 01 April 2016. The IEF is registered with Companies House (NI636289) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC104886) and is recognised as a charity for tax purposes under HMRC reference NI00545.

2.3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Fund is managed by a Board of Directors; at 31 March 2023 there were 14 Directors and the maximum number is 15. Each Director may serve for three years after which period they may put themselves forward for re-appointment for a second or further term, however no member may serve longer than six years or, if so resolved by all the then Directors in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, nine years continuously.

The Board meets on an annual basis to agree the broad strategy and areas of work for the Fund, and meets regularly (at least 4 times per year) for the consideration of the Fund's activities including grant making; advocacy work; fundraising; parental engagement; investment; reserves; risk management and other policies and procedures; and performance.

The Board keeps the skills requirement for Directors under review and in the event of a vacancy arising on the Board, or if any additional new Directors are required, methods such as advertising (for example via the IEF website or by direct mailing to all Integrated schools), or personal referral are used to recruit new members. The ultimate decision on appointments is a matter for the Board.

In 2022/23 one member retired from the Board (Richard Lemon), and one new member joined (Ken Cathcart). Richard Lemon had been IEF Chair and Peter Osborne took on this role in August 2022.

The IEF works closely with NICIE at all levels, for example, the two Chairs meet on a quarterly basis, and the Chief Executive Officers also meet every month for updating and discussion of current issues.

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2.4 DIRECTOR INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The induction process for any newly-appointed Director comprises an initial meeting with the Chair and the Chief Executive, followed by a series of briefing meetings with key members of staff. The strategic vision, the Board and decision making processes, policies and procedures, and the financial structure and performance of the Fund are discussed in detail. Any training needs are also discussed.

2.5 ORGANISATION AND COMMITTEES

The Board of Directors administers the charity; the day-to-day operations of the IEF are managed by the Chief Executive (appointed by the Board) and her staff. To facilitate effective operations the Board has delegated authority to the Chief Executive for operational matters including finance and human resources.

The Board has also delegated specific powers to a small number of Director-led committees:

- The Grants Committee has been delegated powers to consider in detail applications to the IEF for funding and to make recommendations to the full IEF Board. The Committee also develops new grant programmes, as funding becomes available, to ensure that the most critical needs of schools and groups are addressed, and that the programmes have maximum impact and deliver maximum value for money.
- The Public Affairs and Advocacy Group has been set up by the Board to drive forward the IEF's work to bring about structural and policy change in education. The group oversees public affairs and advocacy.
- The Staffing Committee has been delegated responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of employment law and IEF policies and procedures with regard to staffing, and to make recommendations to the Board as appropriate. The day-to-day management of Human Resources is delegated to the Head of Operations.
- The Risk Management Committee, on behalf of the Board, identifies and assesses risks to the IEF, and regularly reviews the controls which are in place, to ensure they continue to meet the IEF's needs.
- The Parental Engagement Working Group has been tasked by the Board with overseeing the IEF's work to empower parents to grow more Integrated Education through the process of Transformation and work alongside NICIE to support any school in Northern Ireland embarking on the journey to Integrated Education.
- The Strategic Funding Oversight Group is a consultative forum to provide strategic direction to ensure effective implementation of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to external funding received by the Integrated Education Fund from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (IDoFA) and the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). The group's first meeting took place in December 2022, and subsequent meetings will be held twice per year. All issues/proposals/recommendations are referred to the full IEF Board of Directors for discussion/decisions.

Each of these six committees has their own Terms of Reference, reviewed every two years by the Board, which details their remit, schedule of meetings and membership.

In addition to the Board of Directors and its committees, the IEF also has a Campaign Council to provide advice and guidance for its major gift fundraising campaign. David Montgomery is President

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of the campaign, and the Council was chaired by Baroness May Blood until the very sad event of her death in October 2022. The Campaign Council is serviced executively by the Fund's Chief Executive and Head of Campaign. The campaign is further supported by volunteers in London and Belfast.

2.6 PAY POLICY FOR STAFF

The IEF Board considers Directors and the Senior Management Team to be the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the IEF on a day-to-day basis. All Directors give of their time freely and no Director received remuneration in the year. Details of Director expenses are disclosed in Note 20 to the accounts.

In view of the nature of the charity and its economy of operations, the Directors benchmark staff salaries both against National Joint Council (NJC) payscales and other charities of a similar size and activity, to ensure that the remuneration set is fair and not out of line with that generally paid for similar roles. NJC payscales are local government payscales extensively used in the voluntary and community sector. They result from negotiations between trade unions and Local Government Employers and any agreed increase in the rates of pay are reflected in IEF salaries. Staff also receive annual increments, subject to a satisfactory annual appraisal, until they reach the top of their particular pay band. Four new staff members joined the IEF during the year, and three existing staff members left, bringing the total number of staff at 31 March 2023 to 15 (13 full time equivalent).

2.7 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board of Directors is responsible for the management of risks faced by the Integrated Education Fund. Detailed consideration of risk is delegated to the Risk Management Committee.

Risks are identified and assessed, and controls are established throughout the year. A formal review of the charity's risk management processes, including the risk register, is undertaken annually.

The key controls used by the IEF include:

- established organisational and governance structure and lines of reporting
- detailed terms of reference for all committees
- comprehensive financial planning, budgeting and management accounting
- formal written policies and hierarchical authorisation and approval levels
- regular review of current risks to the Fund

Through the risk management processes established by the Fund, Directors are satisfied that the major risks identified are being adequately managed. It is recognised that systems can provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

As part of ongoing risk management, and as important aspects of best practice, the IEF monitors and evaluates internal policies, procedures and controls, as well as key areas of the Fund's work.

The firm of Finegan Gibson, responsible for the annual financial audit of the IEF, also reports to the IEF Board on, for example, any issues relating to the Audit, Financial Reporting and Internal Controls in order to meet the mandatory requirements of International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

3.1 PURPOSES OF THE CHARITY

The purposes of the IEF are the furtherance of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland whether directly or indirectly and by any lawful and charitable means.

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The Directors confirm that they have referred to the guidance on public benefit provided by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) when implementing the Fund's strategic plan, reviewing its objectives and planning future activities.

3.2 STRATEGIC VISION

The Integrated Education Fund (IEF) shares the vision held by an overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland that more integration and mixing between communities is essential to building a better and more reconciled society.

The IEF sees the development of more Integrated Education in a reformed education system as an essential ingredient of Northern Ireland's future – a system which also ensures that young people, including newcomer pupils, LGBTQ+ pupils, and pupils with additional needs, feel confident and welcome in the school environment. The IEF wants an education system which fully prepares its young people to contribute positively to a modern democracy and be successful citizens in an increasingly complex global society.

A Northern Ireland wide attitudinal poll carried out by LucidTalk in March 2023 found that 66% of those surveyed believe that "*Integrated schools, which intentionally educate together children every day in the same classrooms, inclusive of different religions, gender, and race, should be the main model for our education system*".

The current level of available places within Integrated schools does not meet the levels of parental demand. For example, the *Northern Ireland Good Relations Indicators* show that in 2020, 24% of first preference applications to post-primary Integrated schools did not result in admission to that particular school.

In June 2022 the IEF launched its new three-year *Strategic Vision 2022-2025: Towards 100 Integrated Schools*. The aim within the next three years is to create the conditions where we can reach 100 Integrated schools.

There are four key elements to the strategy which will be progressed through grant programmes, research, parental and community engagement and advocacy. (For further details, please see Section 6: Plans for Future Periods)

4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

4.1 EMPOWERING PARENTS - PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

The Parental Engagement Campaign continues to grow support for the legal process of Transformation, in which a non-integrated school becomes Integrated. In particular, the Integrate My School (IMS) website, continues to enable parents across Northern Ireland to support Transformation specifically for their school.

Since the start of the campaign in 2017, twenty schools have been supported to hold successful parental ballots about Transformation to Integrated status. The ballot results have ranged from 71% to 100% of parents saying "yes" to Integration. One further school is also currently balloting their parents, Downshire Nursery School in Banbridge.

In September 2022 two schools transformed to Integrated status following their successful parental ballots and development proposals:

- Glengormley High School became Integrated College Glengormley
- Bangor Central Nursery School became Bangor Integrated Nursery School

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The following schools have submitted a Development Proposal (DP) for Transformation, and the Permanent Secretary or a Minister of Education will make a decision in relation to these:

- Gillygooley Primary School, Omagh
- Sion Mills Primary School
- St.Anne's Primary School, Donaghadee
- St.Eugene's Primary School, Tircur
- St.Eugene's Primary School, Victoria Bridge
- Straid Primary School
- Lurgan Model Primary School
- Magherafelt Nursery School

There are also a number of schools that will move towards submitting a DP after successful parental ballots this year:

- Cairnshill Primary School, SE Belfast
- Ballymena Nursery School
- Rathmore Primary School, Bangor
- Bangor Academy and 6th Form College.

4.1.1 Community Outreach

Informative events continue to be held for local communities and organisations to discuss Integrated Education and broader issues in relation to the education system. For example, these have been held as part of the Community Relations Council's Good Relations Week, and the Féile an Phobail.

The IEF continues to work in partnership with the Ulster University to deliver the Future Schools project. The aim of this project is to include more school and community input into the Area Planning Process. The toolkit that was created as part of this project has been disseminated to schools and communities to help them consider the sustainability of their school and to ensure that any potential pathways for working together with other schools are considered, including exploring an Integrated option.

The team is also involved in a cross border partnership between the IEF, Ulster University and Educate Together to gather the views of border communities on education – this work is funded through the IFI's Communities in Partnership Programme.

4.1.2 Wider Promotion

The IEF has continued to hold outreach stands a variety of events and festivals to promote the IMS campaign. There have been a number of articles featured in local and national newspapers highlighting the team's work and the positive parental ballots and transformations.

4.1.3 Empowering Schools - Integration Works

The IEF, working alongside NICIE, continues to support schools that are exploring Transformation through our annual Integration Works event for school principals and staff, our governors event and our Transformation Support Programme (TSP) events.

The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Reconciliation Fund has supported this project called *Integration Works*, through their Strategic Partnership Grant for a period of three years. This collaborative project supports early engagement with schools in relation to Transformation, as well as development and leadership programmes for recently transformed schools, and the two organisations continue to meet monthly to develop their joint strategy for engaging with schools.

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4.2 EMPOWERING SCHOOLS - EFFECTIVE FUNDING PROGRAMMES

Grant making is aligned to the IEF's *Strategic Vision 2022-2025* and aims to empower schools to support the growth of Integrated Education to 100 schools by 2025. The IEF promotes and manages a number of grant streams, each with programmes which have their own criteria against which applications are assessed and grants made. There are four main grant streams:

- Integration Works: Transforming Schools Support Programme (Exploring Transformation; Building the Case for Transformation; and Newly Transformed Schools, (post DE approval)
- Going for Growth: Existing Integrated Schools Support Programme (Marketing; Impact of Growth Grants)
- Strengthening Integrated Education (Trust Programmes, the Carson Awards, Lincoln Awards, Integration Through Sport, Uniform Grants, Local Heritage Grants, Early Intervention/Additional Needs Support and the Integrated AlumNI)
- Restricted and Other Grants (Working with donors to administer restricted donations)

4.2.1 Integration Works: Transforming Schools Support Programme

The IEF has been working with a number of schools which are exploring the Transformation process. Each school will take whatever length of time is appropriate for their particular circumstances to consider what integration would mean for them. Once parents or governors of a school formally initiate Transformation, Civica Election Services conducts a confidential ballot of parents. If a simple majority of those who vote in the ballot is in favour of Transformation, and at least 50% of those eligible to vote have done so, the Board of Governors must submit a Development Proposal (DP) supported by a Case for Change to the Education Authority (EA). The school must provide pertinent background and robust and verifiable information relating to the DP to support their Case for Change and to enable those affected by the proposal to understand the educational and other merits of the proposed change.

In 2022/23, five grants were awarded to schools which have enabled the teachers, governors, parents and the wider school community to explore what Transformation could mean for their school, to prepare for, and carry out ballots of parents to determine if the work toward Transformation should continue, and to support schools which have received approval from the Education Minister to transform and are seeking to develop their schools' Integrated ethos. Currently, there are 4 DPs awaiting a DE decision.

Funding for schools which have transformed also enables the schools to publicise their new status and encourage enrolments from the wider community.

4.2.2 Going for Growth: Existing Integrated Schools Support Programme

The number of Integrated standalone nursery pupils is 104 (two Nursery schools), with 11,956 primary and 15,123 post primary pupils from September 2022, totalling 27,183 across 70 schools. These figures have increased from 25,794 pupils across 68 schools in 2021 i.e. an additional 1,389 pupils.

There are 5 published Development Proposals for growth relating to existing Integrated schools which were awaiting a decision by DE as of 31 March 2022 and these include Spires, Drumlins, Rowandale, Enniskillen and Omagh Integrated Primary Schools for new or additional nursery units.

A Development Proposal for a new College in the Mid Down area which would incorporate Blackwater IC has been submitted to DE and has been awaiting a Ministerial decision since September 2021. An IEF joint grant between Blackwater IC and the Mid Down Parents Group is continuing to support the project.

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A Development Proposal for a schools' amalgamation called The Causeway Project, which involves North Coast Integrated College, Dunluce College and Coleraine College, is currently with the Department for consideration. A joint grant involving the related parties is continuing to help with growth and awareness raising.

Whilst growth in Integrated schools and school places is what the IEF and its donors and supporters continually work towards, achieving this growth also brings with it challenges. Schools which are growing, for example through double enrolment, must provide the necessary additional accommodation and teaching staff ahead of any increases to the funding they receive from DE. This year the IEF was pleased to be able to help a number of Integrated schools with these issues, including Carhill IPS, Parkhall IC and Malone IC.

The Impact of Growth grant programme is generously funded by Hagan Homes.

A marketing grant was awarded to Crumlin IPS to support community engagement activities within their area.

4.2.3 Strengthening Integrated Education

An Integrated ethos does not happen by simply having a mix of pupils. Schools need to continually consider ways to deliver integration in practice. They need to not only reflect on but also develop their practice to ensure all pupils, staff and governors feel welcome and their identity is celebrated, irrespective of their cultural or religious background. The IEF offers a number of funding streams to help strengthen ethos by supporting work in Integrated schools that celebrates diversity.

The Trust Programme

The Trust Programme supports Integrated schools wishing to further develop and embed the ethos and practice of integration within their own school. In some cases, Integrated schools located close to each other have worked together, with their parents and governors, to renew their integration. Round 7 of the programme, for projects within the 2022/23 academic year, has been generously supported by the Pears Foundation (£40,000) and Ulster Garden Villages (£10,000). This has enabled the IEF to award grants totalling £51,082 to 14 projects. These projects, involving 17 schools, are due to be completed by June 2023.

Round 8 of the programme, will commence in academic year 2023/24 and has been generously supported by the Pears Foundation (£40,000) and Hagan Homes (£25,000).

The Carson Awards

The Carson Awards, founded by legendary Northern Ireland comedian the late Frank Carson, and his son Tony, reflect their long-standing support for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland as well as their commitment to celebrating the creative talents of young people. Now in their fifteenth year, the Awards offer pupils at Integrated schools the opportunity to develop and display their creative skills through bursaries and a prize competition by demonstrating 'what Integrated Education means to me'. The IEF was delighted to be able to award 13 Carson Bursaries in December 2022 totalling £11,946.

Lincoln Awards

The Lincoln Awards were founded by Geraldine Hughes and Conor Allen, who also provide generous sponsorship for the programme. The Awards are designed to support Integrated College students who have been accepted for a University or Higher Education place but who are experiencing financial hardship. Each award is for £1,000. In 2022/23, 8 awards totalling £8,000 were allocated to former students.

Integration Through Sport

The Integration Through Sport programme was initially established thanks to the generous support of the Mitzi Gillespie Family Fund and has now continued in 2022/23 due to the support of Hagan Homes. The core purpose of the programme is to help introduce new sports to a school in order to

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provide opportunities for pupils to experience sports normally associated with just one cultural tradition in Northern Ireland. The sports considered eligible included Hockey, Hurling, Camogie, Cricket, GAA Football and Rugby. Consideration is also given to supporting schools which have recently started on the 'integrated' sport journey and would benefit from further investment. The programme supports coaching, apparel and equipment costs. Twenty-four schools benefited from grants awarded, totalling £44,427.

School Uniforms

This programme was initially offered through donations from long standing donor, Dr Terry Cross, through the David Cross Foundation, and has continued in 2022/23 due to the generous support of Hagan Homes. This programme was designed to help support the needs of families who struggle financially to provide regulation uniform and PE kits for their children. Seventeen schools received a School Uniform Assistance Grant totalling £12,098.

Early Intervention/Additional Needs Support

This new programme is generously supported by Hagan Homes and the primary aim was to make a positive difference for children within nursery/playgroups, Foundation stage and/or Key Stage 1. This programme was heavily oversubscribed. The IEF was able to support nine schools with grants totalling £58,770.

Integration Through Local Heritage

Former IEF Director, Roderick Downer, has kindly provided a donation to support this programme to encourage greater understanding and respect for diversity in children and young people, through exploring and experiencing their local heritage. Nine schools benefitted from a total of £13,629.

4.2.4 Other Grants

Integrated AlumNI

The Integrated Schools Alumni Association, known as the Integrated AlumNI, is now a charity in its own right, with a network of past pupils from Integrated and other schools, and active individuals in Northern Ireland as well as London, Edinburgh and Liverpool. The Integrated AlumNI is still in receipt of an IEF grant to support their development. The group has continued to provide online campaigning and successful lobbying of politicians.

The group's website integratedalumni.org and its active social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, as well as regular online events, help to keep members engaged as well as promote Integrated AlumNI activities.

4.2.5 Restricted Grants

As well as providing financial support to schools and projects through its various grant making programmes, the IEF also administers restricted donations received for specific purposes.

The IEF is in receipt of funding from the NIO towards Transformation grants to schools for Exploration, Pre- and Post-Ballot activities, and Post Development Proposal grants, as well as the Future Schools project.

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4.3 EFFECTING POLICY CHANGE: ENGAGING AT A POLITICAL, EDUCATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

4.3.1 Political Advocacy and Engagement, Stormont

Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

The Integrated Education Bill, a private members' Bill from Alliance Party MLA Kellie Armstrong passed Final Stage at the Northern Ireland Assembly on 09 March 2022 and received Royal Assent on 26 April 2022. To mark the passing of this historic legislation, and the significant contribution by the Integrated AlumNI, there was a special celebration event at Parliament Buildings on 15 June sponsored by Kellie Armstrong. At the event both Kellie and the late Baroness May Blood spoke about the significance of the Bill and the contribution made by the AlumNI.

The Act became law on 26 October 2022 and there is now a legal requirement for the Department of Education (DE) to produce an Integrated Education Strategy by 26 April 2023. The DE set up a steering group and a working group, which started meeting in November 2022, to assist with the implementation of the Act. The IEF are represented on both groups along with NICIE, the Association of Principal Teachers of Integrated Schools (APTIS) and the Integrated AlumNI as well as other education bodies. In addition, the IEF has been working with Kellie Armstrong MLA (the Act Sponsor) and other politicians to ensure the Act is fully implemented.

Fair Employment (School Teachers) Act 2022

This Act received Royal Assent in May 2022 and will become law on 12 May 2024. The IEF will work to ensure the Act is fully implemented.

The Independent Review of Education (IRE)

The IRE Panel published an Interim Report with limited detail on 12 October with the Final Report due in September 2023. However, despite respondents to the consultation listing 'the future of integrated education' as their second most critical issue, there was very little attention given to Integrated Education and no detail or specific recommendations in the Interim Report. Sir Keir Bloomer (Chair of the IRE Panel) met representatives of the IEF and Ulster University (UU) on 09 January. At the meeting, the IEF outlined the growing demand for Integrated Education as evidenced by the passing of the two Acts, successful parental ballots and engagement with additional schools. The IEF continues to provide evidence to the panel including new Transforming Education Briefing Papers as they are published.

Further engagement with elected representatives

On 26 September a presentation to 30 Sinn Féin (SF) MLAs and policymakers was given by Dr Matt Milliken (UU) and Paul Collins at Parliament Buildings. In October, a round-table discussion with the Alliance Party took place and later that month Michelle O'Neill MLA (First Minister Designate, SF) visited Lagan College – the first visit by a SF Leader to this, the first Integrated, school. Doug Beattie (Leader UUP) visited Lurgan Model PS (which has voted to become Integrated) on 08 December.

The IEF ran a successful Fringe event at the Alliance Conference on 04 March with Dr Stephen Roulston (UU) entitled '*The Future of Education*' followed by responses from a panel of invited guests. There was a lively question and answer session with the 40 attendees.

The IEF Inter-Faith Engagement Group

The group organised a half day event at Stranmillis University College, Belfast on 06 October (supported by the Community Relations Council). The event was facilitated by Shona Bell (Corrymeela) and included a key-note speech by Koulla Yiasouma (NI Commissioner for Children and Young People). Representatives from all the main faiths in Northern Ireland attended and there were presentations on the results of a school survey and the teaching of Religious Education (RE) and celebration of faith in Integrated schools, followed by lively discussion and debate.

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4.3.2 Political Advocacy and Engagement, Westminster

The IEF continued to engage and follow-up with Westminster MPs and Peers throughout 2022/23, and a Westminster round-table discussion took place in London on 22 June attended by Tonia Antoniazzi MP (Shadow Minister Northern Ireland), John McFall (Baron McFall of Alcluith) and a number of Northern Ireland MPs. Following on from this, Claire Hanna MP visited Lagan College on 05 October and Tonia Antoniazzi MP visited Oakgrove IC, Derry on 02 February. In addition, there was an IEF/UU presentation to DUP MPs on 01 March about the Future Schools Programme who were interested and supportive of the programme.

4.3.3 Research Based Advocacy

The Fund's continuing collaboration with UU through the Transforming Education (TE) research project and the Future Schools Programme have been central to developing the Fund's evidence base.

The Ulster University Transforming Education Briefing Paper (16) '*School Ethos in Northern Ireland*' was published on 30 August. '*A Vision for our Education System: Change Starts with Us*' Briefing Paper (17) generated considerable media coverage including BBC NI (online / morning and evening TV and radio news), first item on Talkback, Q105, Irish News, Belfast Telegraph and four separate pieces in the News Letter. The paper was launched by IEF's PEC team at a Good Relations Week event at Malone House on 20 September with a panel discussion chaired by Hugh Odling-Smee with representatives of all the main political parties.

Briefing Paper (18) '*Social cost of division of Division in Northern Ireland*' was published on 04 March and generated considerable media coverage with the headline of '*Educational Division in Northern Ireland estimated to cost more than £600,000 every day / £226 million each year*'. The paper was covered on TV and radio as well as print media including Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, and Irish Times. It also generated news releases from Alliance, the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC), the Department of Education and the UU. In addition, CSSC wrote to all Controlled schools taking issue with the figures.

The UU has agreed to produce two further Briefing Papers in 2023 in the run-up to the publication of the IRE Final Report.

4.4 MAJOR GIFT FUNDRAISING: SUPPORTING THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION

Fundraising continues to underpin all aspects of the IEF's work as it is solely reliant on the generosity of its donors.

Whilst 2022/23 was a very successful year in terms of fundraising, with £1,627,476 being raised to support the growth and development of Integrated Education, it was also a very sad year for the IEF as it mourned the passing of its champion and Campaign Chair, Baroness May Blood. May successfully led the IEF's fundraising efforts for over two decades and will be sorely missed by Directors, staff and donors alike. She was hugely respected by all that knew her and made an enormous contribution to Integrated Education and indeed to the IEF as an organisation. The IEF plans to hold a major event in her memory in May 2023.

The need for the IEF remains because government still does not yet plan effectively to meet the demand for Integrated Education. Financial support is needed to enable the IEF to work with parents, local communities and schools wanting to access Integrated Education. Parents need to know how they can create an Integrated choice for their child and be supported with information and guidance. Communities need to know how their opinions can be considered when planning is taking place for education in their local area. Schools need help to explore the benefits of Transformation and, for those schools who do begin the journey to Integrated status, additional support is needed for

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marketing and communications within their local community. The IEF also needs to advocate successfully to challenge ongoing segregation within the education system and for policy change so that one day the need for the Fund will be diminished or even removed. All this work requires financial and practical support from the IEF, through the generous support of its donors.

The IEF Campaign Council which comprises several of the Fund's key donors and supporters, continues to meet twice per year. The Council provides invaluable advice and guidance to our fundraising and advocacy campaign. The Council's meetings during 2022/23 all took place online and video conferencing will continue to be used for meetings of the Council as required. Regular updates are provided to members by email, video calls, by phone and in person.

4.4.1 Planned events

During the year the IEF was able to organise and benefit from several fundraising events following the lifting of the restrictions which had resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic. On 15 June an event to celebrate newly Transformed schools took place at Clondeboye Estate in Bangor funded by private donations and the Dufferin Foundation. On 23 June, the IEF was able to hold an in-person launch of its new *Strategic Vision: Towards 100 Schools* at the Hinch Distillery in Ballynahinch. The 'Stand Up for Integrated Education' Comedy Gala returned to the Ulster Hall on 13 October with Tim McGarry, Colin Murphy, Jake O'Kane and Wendy Wason all providing their talents for free. The IEF was also delighted to see a return of its Carson Awards Showcase event on 25 October where it could highlight some of the creative works on the theme of 'Integrated Education' undertaken by students, and which was attended by Tony and Edna Carson, Dan Gordon and Lady Mary Peters. The House of Lords Supporters Dinner, generously sponsored by the Carson family, took place on 15 November with Ricky Massey of Integrated College Glengormley as special guest speaker. The IEF was also involved in a number of events to celebrate 40 years of Integrated Education and the opening of Lagan College, the first planned Integrated school in Northern Ireland. Another welcome return for fundraising was the partnership with the band 'Stiff Little Fingers' which included fundraising collections and a special quiz organised by their loyal fans before their Custom House Square concert in Belfast in August.

4.4.2 New prospect development

Over the past year there has been a gradual return to in person prospect meetings which is an essential part of the major gift fundraising process. This has been assisted by the return of new prospect events such as an evening at London's Bentleys Bar and Grill with actor and producer Adrian Dunbar, which was generously organised and sponsored by Kevin and Elaine O'Byrne.

4.4.3 Existing supporter development

The IEF benefits from a high level of support from its existing donor base. Throughout 2022/23 the Fundraising and Communications Team continued to build relationships with existing supporters, and used regular ezines, update reports, email updates, phone calls, the Learning Together newsletter and social media to keep supporters and donors updated on key developments. Many donors continued to be extremely generous in their support of the Fund. The IEF appreciates any support it receives and in all its forms, including from the many individuals who contribute regularly through the Ten Club.

4.4.4 Other trusts and foundations

Developing relationships with other trusts and foundations is a very important part of the Fund's work and this year the IEF was delighted to be able to support specific projects through its work with foundations such as the Magheramourne Foundation (for Strangford IC and Hazelwood IC), the Irish American Partnership (for Malone IC), The International Fund for Ireland (Communities in Partnership Programme), the ARN Foundation (Strangford IC and Omagh IPS) and the Ireland Funds (for many individual projects) to name but a few.

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A number of other trusts and foundations have also generously supported the work of the Parental Engagement and Integrate My School Campaign including the Eighty Eight Foundation, the George and Angela Moore Charitable Trust with the Ireland Fund America and the Reconciliation Fund of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Fund also continues to work closely with the Pears Foundation who provided a further major contribution to support the IEF's Trust Programme, with additional funding generously provided by the local foundation Ulster Garden Villages, and by Hagan Homes.

The IEF is indebted to Sir Harvey and Lady Allison (of the McGrath Trust) and Hagan Homes whose continued unrestricted financial support underpins much of our work. In addition, Hagan Homes have ensured the IEF can run a series of significant grant programmes to benefit the growth and development of Integrated Education.

A major development in 2022/23 has been the support of the Northern Ireland Office who have agreed to provide £1.465 million to the IEF over three years to support Transformation, the Future Schools Project as well as specific research and attitudinal polling.

4.4.5 Gifts in kind

The IEF is thankful to the many people and organisations who provide support 'in kind' including CME Group, who generously donated laptops and monitors, and Johnstone's Leyland for donations of paint, to Integrated schools. In addition, there are many examples of individuals who volunteer, or give their time freely to speak and perform at IEF events. There are too many people and organisations to list here but rest assured we are extremely grateful for such support.

4.4.6 Communications

The IEF was able to appoint Emma Hassard as its new Communications Officer in February following the departure of Shane Horan in September.

Thanks to the incredibly generous support and expertise of the digital design company Big Motive, the IEF now has a new website which also incorporates 'Integrate My School'.

The Fund's social media platforms continue to be important channels of communication. Almost 7,000 individuals and organisations follow the IEF's Facebook page and Twitter feed, both of which are updated regularly.

The IEF continues to work with many media organisations and is grateful for the extensive coverage secured throughout the year.

Regular digital ezines and the Learning Together newsletter ensured supporters and contacts were kept informed of key developments.

5. FINANCIAL REVIEW

5.1 PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

The Integrated Education Fund continues to work from its capital base which is supported by its major gift fundraising campaign, (receiving donations from individuals, businesses and other trusts and foundations), and investment income. The Fund also benefits from the fundraising team's income generating events which are returning to normal following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.

In addition, the Fund acts as an intermediary body to administer grants and donations on behalf of other outside funding bodies and individuals.

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Total expenditure in 2022/23 was £1,245,123 compared with £988,248 in the previous year. Total income was £1,648,362 compared with £679,755 in the previous year. Charitable activities accounted for 87% of all expenditure, and the cost of generating funds accounted for 13% (in 2021/22 the comparative figures were 85%, and 15%). This year, after recognised gains and losses were considered and transfers between funds had taken place, there was a net gain of £373,417 compared to a net loss of £282,212 in the previous year. The net gain is made up of £407,630 in restricted funds and net loss of £34,213 in unrestricted funds.

5.2 INVESTMENT POWERS AND POLICY

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in whatever ways the Directors think appropriate. The Directors, having regard to the liquidity requirements of the current grant making programmes, the financial requirements of potential independent schools and to the reserves policy, have determined that available funds are kept in interest bearing deposit accounts, spreading the risk across a number of banks.

During 2022/23, IEF funds were deposited with Bank of Ireland, Danske Bank, Lloyds Bank, Progressive Building Society, and Ulster Bank. The level of funds held as cash in these banks i.e. £1.806 million in total (£1.439 million in the previous year), will be reduced when outstanding grant commitments are paid out during 2023/24. In addition, since 2013/14 the IEF has had funds invested in the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities (NICIFC) with the aim of securing a better return than that offered by fixed term deposit accounts. NICIFC is administered by the Department for Communities and is classified in the IEF accounts as an investment.

The IEF's day to day banking is conducted through the Ulster Bank.

5.3 RESERVES POLICY

5.3.1 Unrestricted reserves

At the end of March 2023 the IEF had £1,384,894 in unrestricted reserves (£1,419,107 in the previous year) (see Note 26).

Key Principles

It is the aim of the IEF to match unrestricted expenditure with unrestricted income on an annual basis. Unrestricted expenditure includes budgeted core costs and unrestricted grants expenditure.

If expenditure is higher than income the IEF Board need to be advised and agree any deficit which would come from unrestricted reserves. If expenditure is lower than income the IEF Board need to be advised and agree what should be done with the surplus i.e. plan to spend it in the next year or simply add it to unrestricted reserves. During the year any additional expenditure not included in budgets and that needs to be funded by unrestricted reserves should be agreed by the Board.

The unrestricted reserves should be sufficient to cover at least one and a half years' of IEF running costs, grant making and potential fluctuations in unrestricted donations. Currently that is approximately £1m, unless a significant funding stream stops.

Projections regarding the utilisation of unrestricted reserves, based on estimates of income and expenditure for the current financial year and following two years, are brought to the Risk Management Committee every six months for discussion, and then to the subsequent Board of Directors meeting as part of forward financial planning.

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5.3.2 Restricted funds

At the end of March 2023, the balance of restricted reserves was £774,563 (£366,933 in the previous year). This balance will fluctuate during the coming year as other restricted donations are received and/or as the funds are used in accordance with the donors' wishes and IEF grant making policy.

Key Principles

Restricted funds should be used for the purpose the donors have specified.

Any restricted reserves that can no longer be traced back to the original funder/donor, despite every effort being made by the IEF, should be brought to the IEF Board's attention and, subject to legal advice and the advice of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, be transferred to unrestricted reserves.

The reserves policy will be reviewed by the Risk Management Committee on an annual basis (after the presentation of the accounts) and recommendations will be made to the Board as necessary.

5.4 GRANT MAKING POWERS AND POLICY

The Board of Directors has delegated powers to a Grants Committee to carry out the IEF's Grant Making Policy which includes:

- i. To ensure that the grant making process is fair and equitable at all times and to establish and agree criteria for grant programmes.
- ii. To ensure that grants meet the terms and objectives of the original funders.
- iii. To uphold the reputation of the Fund as a grant making organisation that is clearly focused, fair, accountable and consistent.
- iv. To be the link between the schools (grantees) and the Board (grantors).
- v. To consider in detail applications to the IEF for funding and to make recommendations to the full IEF Board. The Board ultimately has executive power over grant allocations, the Grants Committee has executive power at an operational level for anomalies arising within existing live grants.
- vi. To ensure on-going financial and operational monitoring of programmes, measuring the outcomes of projects against stated aims and objectives.

5.5 NEW FINANCIAL SOFTWARE SYSTEM

In October 2022 the IEF employed an Accounting Systems Manager to assess and recommend an accounting system to automate financial records previously maintained through spreadsheets. Following the establishment of business requirements across the IEF, three potential solutions were identified which were all analysed according to their ability to meet those business requirements. In January 2023 Liberty Accounts was recommended and agreed by the Board of Directors as the most appropriate solution, being not just cost effective but also providing the closest match of system functionality to the IEF's requirements. As of 31 March 2023 work has been undertaken in customising the system to align with the Fund's working processes, initial training for all staff has been completed and the new system coded and structured to facilitate its use in a period of parallel running in the 2023/24 financial year. Following a period of testing the Fund's auditors will carry out a quality assurance exercise in early autumn 2023 to identify any further adjustments necessary to ensure the system's successful implementation.

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5.6 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS THAT HAVE AFFECTED FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The IEF has secured NIO funding of £1.465m over three financial years, of which £385,000 was received in restricted funds in 2022/23 to support the IEF work on three key objectives: the growth of Transformation, Future Schools and Research. Funding from Hagan Homes has provided significant support for a number of grant programmes and funding from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade Reconciliation Fund has helped the IEF's Parental Engagement team to support the number of schools seeking to transform to Integrated status.

6. PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

In June 2022, the IEF launched its new three-year *Strategic Vision 2022-2025: Towards 100 Integrated Schools*.

The strategy has four key focus areas.

First, to empower communities to access an Integrated Education.

This will incorporate the IEF's innovative 'Integrate My School' campaign led by the IEF's dedicated 'Engagement Team' who will work with interested parents, schools and the wider community. The IEF will also be planning a major advertising, marketing and promotional campaign aimed at parents, prospective parents, schools, young people and local communities. The IEF will continue to organise information events for school leaders and governors working in partnership with the NICIE. This key focus area will also include the 'Future Schools' programme to encourage local communities to engage with area planning of education to ensure more sustainable school solutions for the future. This will see the IEF continue to work with other educational stakeholders to disseminate, promote and utilise the new 'Future Schools Tool-kit', a pathway resource developed by the Ulster University.

Second, supporting the growth of Integrated Education through grant making.

The IEF will continue to assist the growth of Integrated Education by supporting existing Integrated schools, the Transformation of schools to Integrated status, cross sector solutions for schools as well as new parents' groups who want Integrated Education. The IEF will provide Transformation Support Grants, Impact of Growth Grants, New Model Support Grants and grants to new Parents' Groups. The aim is to support growth in existing Integrated schools, support around 30 schools progressing through the Transformation process and assist four single school solutions to be developed by 2025.

Third, challenging the segregated nature of our education system.

The IEF is working towards the day when it is no longer needed. That will only happen when Integrated Education is adequately planned for by government and when parental demand for it is being met. To bring this day closer we need to continually work with policy makers, influencers, politicians and government. The IEF will continue to undertake major Northern Ireland wide attitudinal surveys, micro polling and other market research whilst also working with academic partners such as the Ulster University to examine issues within the current education system and the need for change. This key focus area will also include supporting the development of the Integrated AlumNI and engagement with young people. The voices of young people must be listened to given that they have had the most recent experience of our education system. Young people can be important advocates for how schools can deliver a more inclusive education.

Fourth, supporting schools to deliver 'Integration in Action'.

An Integrated ethos does not develop by simply having a religious and cultural mix of pupils in a school. Schools need to regularly think about how they deliver integration in both policy and practice. They need to ensure all pupils, staff and governors feel welcome and their identity is celebrated, irrespective of their cultural or religious background. The IEF will assist this through its Trust Programme which supports activities that encourage schools to develop and enhance their Integrated ethos. It will also continue to organise the Carson Awards to celebrate the creative talents of young

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people under the theme of 'What Integrated Education Means To Me'. The 'Integration Through Sport' programme will help introduce new sports to a school in order to provide opportunities for pupils to experience sports normally associated with just one cultural tradition in Northern Ireland.

None of these plans can be achieved without the generosity and support of so many individuals and organisations.

The IEF is forever grateful to all those who help us in so many ways.

7. TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply both with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.



Peter Osborne
Chair, Integrated Education Fund

16 August 2023

