

Institution: Queen's University, Belfast
Unit of Assessment: 25 (Education)
Title of case study: Shared Education: Building Positive Intergroup Relations in Divided Societies
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The education system in Northern Ireland (NI) is divided on ethno-religious lines, with around 94% of pupils attending predominantly co-religionist (Catholic or Protestant) schools. Research by Hughes and Gallagher on intergroup contact and the role of education in divided societies led to the establishment of the Sharing Education Programme (SEP) at Queen's to test and model cross-denominational school collaboration. The SEP has established 23 collaborative networks involving 130 schools and 16,000 pupils. The programme facilitates sustained encounters between Protestants and Catholics, and has led to more positive intergroup responses amongst participants. Shared Education informed a review of community relations policy in education, and was identified as a priority in the Programme for Government (2012), and a Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) was established. Drawing extensively on the SEP model and associated research, the MAG report recommends that shared education is mainstreamed in Northern Ireland and these recommendations have been fully accepted by the Minister of Education. The shared education model is also being transferred to other divided jurisdictions, including Macedonia and Israel.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Reflecting the history of conflict in NI, the role of schools in promoting social harmony is a major concern of policy makers. Since the late 1970s a raft of initiatives has aimed to promote more positive inter-group relations through schools. However, short-term contact interventions have been largely ineffective and integrated education has had only limited social impact. Against this background, research by Gallagher and Hughes, provided the basis for the establishment of the Shared Education Programme (SEP) at Queen's [E] and an associated research programme ([C], [F]). The specifics of the underpinning research are as follows:</p> <p>(i) A comparative analysis of the role of education in divided societies concluded that no single structural arrangement 'solved' the challenges of diversity, but mechanisms were required to support participative dialogue, perhaps through school collaboration [1]. Influenced by these findings, an ESRC project ([A], [B]) explored multiagency working in Northern Ireland (NI), including a network of five schools. The main findings from the school site were that establishing trust was crucial to the principals' cooperation, but challenges remained in mainstreaming collaboration; although the engagement was cross-denominational, it did not directly deal with contentious issues unless supported to do so. The research predicted that, within the existing divided system, it would be possible to establish curriculum-based collaborative networks of schools.</p> <p>(ii) Research on intergroup relations [2] found that contact between members of different ethno/religious groups is effective in ameliorating negative social attitudes and promoting inter-group perspective-taking. Key findings, that have directly informed the nature of the SEP relate to: the value of sustained, as opposed to short-term, contact opportunities; the potential for indirect contact to reduce contact-related anxiety; the role of non-contentious super-ordinate goals in contact encounters (goals that neither group can achieve without the cooperation of the other); and the facilitation of opportunities to develop 'intimate', as opposed to superficial contact.</p> <p>Between 2005 and 2007 the emerging evidence from research studies relating to the potential for shared education was presented to Atlantic Philanthropies (AP) and the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) to inform their policy deliberations on support for education in NI (see [5.1] for a review of foundational literature). On the basis of this evidence, in 2007 AP agreed to fund a major development programme (SEP) at Queen's and an associated research programme. The latter has provided evidence that sustained, school based inter-group contact is effective in promoting more positive social relations ([3], [4], [5], [6]). Specifically, a comparative study of the SEP participants and non-participants shows that the programme is effective in increasing: out-group trust; behavioural responses towards the out-group; and the ability to 'perspective-take'. Also it shows that the effects of the programme are mediated by increasing the proportion of 'out-group' friends and by reducing inter-group anxiety. In addition, a large scale, longitudinal survey of contact experienced by pupils in post-primary schools across NI shows a clear relationship between opportunity for inter-group encounter and more positive social attitudes.</p> <p>The research referred to above, taken together with evidence from the Programme, has shaped an emerging policy agenda on inter-sectoral school collaboration in NI and is also having an impact</p>

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in other divided jurisdictions, most notably Macedonia and Israel.

Gallagher was appointed to a lecturing post in Queen's in 1992 and a Chair in 1999.

Hughes was appointed to a Chair in Education at Queen's in July 2006.

3. References to the research

[1] Gallagher, T. *Education in divided societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

[2] Hughes, J, Campbell, A, Hewstone, M & Cairns, E 2007, 'Segregation in Northern Ireland – Implications for Community Relations Policy' *Policy Studies*, 28, pp. 35-53.

[3] Hughes, J., Lolliot, S., Hewstone, M., Schmid, K. and Carlise, K. 2012, 'Sharing Classes between Separate Schools: a mechanism for improving inter-group relations in Northern Ireland'. *Policy Futures in Education* 10 (5)

[4] Hughes, J 2013, 'Contact and context: sharing education and building relationships in a divided society', *Research Papers in Education*, DOI:10.1080/02671522.2012.754928

[5] Hughes, J, Donnelly, C, Gallagher, T, Hewstone, M & Carlisle, K 2010, *School Partnerships and Reconciliation: An evaluation of school collaboration in Northern Ireland (Report to Atlantic Philanthropies, 100pp.)*.

[6] Hughes, J, Campbell, A., Lolliot, S., Hewstone, M. & Gallagher, T. 2013 'Inter-Group Contact at school and out-group Attitudes: Evidence From Northern Ireland', *Oxford Review of Education*, 39 (6)

Examples of key **research grants** underpinning the research include the following:

[A] Gallagher, T., & Russell, D. (2007-2008), *Shared education*: Community Relations Commission (£85,698).

[B] Gallagher, T., Daniels, H. (Bath) & Kilpatrick, R. (2005 to 2007) Extension project on multiagency working in Northern Ireland. Funded by ESRC, TLRP NI (£111,110.66) REF: RES-139-25-0159.

[C] Hughes, J., Gallagher, A., Donnelly C, & Hewstone M., (Oxford), (2008-2010) *Review of inter-school contact in Northern Ireland*: Atlantic Philanthropies, (£265,000)

[D] Hughes, J., Cairns E., (Ulster), Hewstone, M., (Oxford) & Jenkins, R. (Sheffield), (2005-2008) *Social identity and tolerance in mixed and separate areas of Northern Ireland*: ESRC 'Identities and Social Action Programme', REF: RES-148-25-0045 (£197,658.12).

[E] Gallagher, T (2007-2013) £7,300,000, Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland, Sharing Education Programme phases 1& 2

[F] Hughes, J., Donnelly, C. & Hewstone, M. (Oxford) *The Longitudinal Impact of Cross-Community Contact on Social Attitudes: A Study of Pupils in Northern Ireland's Integrated and Segregated Schools*: Atlantic Philanthropies 2010-2015 (£470,000)

4. Details of the impact

LOCAL/NATIONAL IMPACT

The Shared Education Programme at Queen's encourages collaborative links between schools so they can run shared classes involving pupils from schools across the denominational divide, providing pupils with access to a wider range of curriculum choice, promoting school improvement through teacher engagement, and providing opportunities for sustained and enduring contact with associated reconciliation benefits. Currently in its second phase, the **SEP has facilitated the development of curricular-based collaborations between 130 Catholic, Protestant and Integrated schools in NI. Around 16,000 pupils have participated and around 50 SEP teachers/principals have undertaken professional development training offered through the Programme.** (see 5:1 below for details) Most SEP participants would have previously had limited or no opportunity for school-based inter-group contact.

The main Protestant Churches in NI have since publically supported shared education, citing the research and programme evidence from Queen's, and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) has encouraged its schools to promote shared relationships with neighbouring Protestant schools (**see 5:2 below for video evidence of the impact of SEP partnerships on teachers; pupils and the wider communities**).

In 2008, the then Education Minister, initiated a review of the Department of Education's (DE) Community Relations policy. Hughes was appointed to the review group and on the basis of research evidence she presented on intergroup contact and SEP, a Community Relations policy, published in 2010, contained a commitment to, '*encouraging greater sharing and collaboration across and between all educational settings on a cross community basis*'. **This policy impacts all children and young people in Northern Ireland.**

A Shared Education Learning Forum (SELF) was established in 2008. The forum, which

comprises Gallagher, Hughes, other members of the research team, administrators involved in the delivery of SEP at Queen's and representatives from 2 other shared education initiatives in NI, plays a major advocacy role. The forum organised 2 conferences to disseminate research and programme activity (see 5:3 below for a conference report) to policy makers and practitioners. Both conferences were opened by the Minister for Education, and the first was attended by members of the Education Committee. **At the second conference in December 2012, the Minister in his opening speech pledged his support for shared education.**

SELF has also engaged directly with all the main political parties in NI to provide information on research findings and programme activity (see 5:4 for details of knowledge transfer seminar held by NI Assembly). The research and programme work at Queen's has informed a number of debates in the NI assembly, and Gallagher was invited to provide evidence on shared education to the NI Education Committee. **As a consequence of this engagement, four of the five main parties included a commitment to support shared education in their manifestos for the 2011 NI Assembly election. After the election a commitment that every pupil should have some experience of shared education by 2015 was included in the Programme for Government and a Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on Shared Education was established** (see 5:5 below for letter to corroborate the influence of SEP and research on policy developments).

The MAG reported in May 2013, and drawing extensively on the research evidence (5:6 p. 41-69) and interviews with key stakeholders, many of whom are participants in Queen's SEP, **the report makes 17 recommendations which support the mainstreaming of shared education in NI to ensure that it is placed at the 'heart of education policy and practice' (ibid, p.111)** through, *inter alia*, amendment to the Education Bill to place a statutory duty on the Department of Education and the new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) to encourage and facilitate shared education, revision of the common funding formula to include a 'shared education premium'; a change in legislation to place a statutory duty on schools to comply with Section 75 of the NI Act, and support for teachers in the delivery of shared education (*ibid*, p.112-124).

Since 2010, a Public Relations firm has been employed to monitor the corpus of media stories on shared education; maintain oversight on questions, debates and discussions on shared education in the NI Assembly, and in the media; and support an SEP presence at the annual party political conferences. There are now **numerous local media references to the shared education programme at Queen's and associated research, including appearances by Gallagher and Hughes on local TV and radio.** A record of media reports can be accessed via Stratagem (5:7). **The national and international media have also reported on SEP and research** (egs 5:8).

As a consequence of the success of the SEP at Queen's and accumulating research evidence, the International Fund for Ireland recast a major part of its philanthropic support towards a wider range of educational activities, all based on the shared education approach. In 2010, IFI allocated £17.5m to a Sharing in Education Programme (SiEP). To date, **around 2000 people have been directly impacted and unquantifiable numbers indirectly affected.**

In May 2013 the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) announced a package of reforms for Northern Ireland. Relating specifically to education and reflecting the MAG recommendations, the package included a commitment to start work within in next 5 years on building 10 'shared education' campuses in Northern Ireland. **This is likely to offer the opportunity for the shared education experience to around 50 schools and 20,000 pupils.**

On Oct 23 2013 **the Minister of Education made a major statement welcoming all recommendations of the MAG and outlining a plan for the operationalisation of them** (see 5:9). **The proposed rollout of shared education will impact all children in Northern Ireland.**

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

In 2009 UNICEF (Macedonia) contacted the researchers to explore the potential for policy transfer of the shared education concept. Gallagher, Hughes and colleagues from Queen's were commissioned to work with NGOs, senior officials from the Ministry of Education in Macedonia and teachers from Albanian and Macedonian schools to develop a National Programme of Intercultural Relations based on the Shared Education model. **This work is ongoing, and the Programme has already impacted pupils in 6 participant schools in ethnically mixed municipalities. There are 150 additional schools involved in a preparatory programme. When completed the programme has the potential to impact primary and post-primary pupils in all schools in such municipalities** (see 5:10 for letter to corroborate the influence of the NI shared education programme and research on the Macedonian initiative).

In 2010, the Tony Blair Faith Foundation contacted the SEP to support its work with Religious Education teachers in Northern Ireland. SEP subsequently helped organise a number of seminars **at which RE teachers from SEP and other schools in NI engage in the international networks of the Faith Foundation**. Gallagher has been commissioned by the Faith Foundation as a consultant for ideas on shared education interventions in Kosovo, and Hughes is a consultant for the Faith Foundation on the development of evaluative tools. In 2011, UNESCO published an 'Education for All Global Monitoring Report' that draws on global evidence to identify aspects of education that may have a positive influence on the dynamics of conflict or make a **contribution to UN peace-building peace building work**. The research of Gallagher and Hughes is referenced extensively in the report, which recommends that initiatives aimed at more inclusive schooling can help mitigate the development of negative stereotypes between groups in conflict (see 5:11).

In 2012 Gallagher delivered a workshop in Nazareth to explore the potential for shared education in Israel, **and two schools, one Jewish, one Arab, in Jaffa have now signed up to run a shared education pilot project**.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[5.1] The Shared Education Programme at Queen's website:

<http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/reports.html>

[5.2] Short videos on shared education programmes involving schools in Derry/Londonderry

<http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/Contested%20Spaces%20Postprimary%20Video.html>

<http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/Contested%20Spaces.html>

[5.3] A Report on the Sharing Education Learning Forum Conference 2012, 'Supporting the Programme for Government Commitments on Shared Education'

<http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk/documents/SELF%20Conference%20Report%20December%202012.pdf>

[5.4] Delivering Shared Education: Knowledge Exchange Seminar

http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/RaISe/knowledge_exchange/KESS-01-11-2012.pdf

[5.5] Letter on file to corroborate influence of research by Gallagher and Hughes and programme work on policy developments in Northern Ireland: Chair of the Education Committee, NI Assembly. *'I can confirm that the research studies and associated SEP activity informed the decision to prioritize shared education in my party's (the Democratic Unionist Party) education policy. The research and shared education activity I observed also led to the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee, of which I am Chair, prioritizing Shared Education as a key focus area'*

[5.6] 'Advancing Shared Education', Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group, March 2013

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/shared_education/shared-education-ministerial-advisory-group.htm

[5.7] Contact to corroborate local media reports on Shared Education and public debates: Public Affairs Media Analyst, Stratagem.

[5.8] Times Education Supplement articles: 'Northern Ireland schools project could unite

communities in Israel' <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6323220> and 'Troubles shared as Macedonia looks to Northern Ireland for ethnic fix'

<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6060285>

[5.9] Minister's statement on shared education <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Reports-13-14/22-October-2013/#1>

[5.10] Letter on file to corroborate work in Macedonia: Co-director, Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution, Skopje. *"Their work has had significant impact on the key education officials' understanding and supporting the need for introducing changes at school and institutional level in order to improve the interethnic relations in the country. It also contributed considerably to the development of a strategy for introducing joint classes within and between schools with different languages of instruction based on the Northern Ireland model on shared education. The research work on intergroup contact undertaken by Hughes et al and Hewstone (Oxford) Gallagher et al on collaboration has been central to the development and operationalisation of the Macedonian project"*

[5.11] UNESCO, Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011 *The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education: The influence of education on conflict and peace building* <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001913/191341e.pdf> (see p.10-11, 13 & 20).