



Parental Demand Leads the Way



Pupils at Cliftonville Primary School (photo courtesy of Irish News).

The Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) welcomed the decision by Education Minister, Caitríona Ruane, to approve the development proposal for a new integrated college in the mid-Down area.

The new Blackwater Integrated College will be an amalgamation of two existing integrated colleges, Down Academy and Rowallane IC. The new college will cater for 400 pupils.

The new Principal of Blackwater IC, Dr Olwen Griffith said, "This marks the beginning of a new era for education in mid-Down. We will build on the strengths of Down Academy and Rowallane IC to offer students the highest standards of teaching combined with an exceptional cultural and pastoral experience." (See full story inside)

Equally good news for the Integrated Education movement, is that parents of children at Cliftonville PS, Belfast and Straidhavern PS, Nutts Corner, have voted to transform their respective schools to integrated status.

Cliftonville PS in North Belfast has historically attracted pupils from both Protestant and Catholic traditions. Mr Haddock, the Chairman

of the Board of Governors said, "The school's Governors are aware that North Belfast is increasingly becoming an area of ethnic diversity and they hope that this trend will eventually be reflected in the makeup of the pupil population. The Governors believe that all of the pupils will continue to benefit from an inclusive education with children from different religions and cultures. I am personally delighted with the parents' decision to move towards integration."

Ruth Clarke, the Principal of Straidhavern PS said, "We are delighted at the positive outcome of the parental ballot which was conducted in December 2007. There was a very strong turnout of parents and 94% voted in favour of transforming to integrated status. The Governors, staff, parents and children are very excited about the prospect of change that the school will undertake to achieve full integrated status."

Both schools have submitted development proposals to their respective Education and Library Boards and after a two month period of public consultation to ascertain the views of the wider local community, a Ministerial decision will be made on whether or not to approve the development proposal to transform to integrated status.

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If you have any stories that you would like included in future Integrated Education newsletters then please contact Kyra Smyth at NICIE or Olivia Martin at IEF.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Disappointment for Conlig Primary School

Education Minister, Caitriona Ruane, has turned down a development proposal for Conlig PS, Newtownards to acquire integrated status. She outlined the long term viability of the school and the potential impact on other schools as the reasons.

Chief Executive of NICIE, Michael Wardlow said, "We cannot understand the rationale behind this decision considering the nearest integrated schools are oversubscribed, there is increased demand for Integrated Education and huge housing growth predicted in the North Down area."

Jenny Hull, acting Principal of Conlig PS said, "The parents, governors and teachers of Conlig have demonstrated a strong commitment towards the process of transforming their school to integrated status and this decision is a major blow to the whole school community. The school is currently considering how to respond to the Minister's decision."

BC Plant Scoops Top Charity Award



Philip Chick (BC Plant JCB Ltd), Coronation Street star Alan Halsall, Brian Small (IEF Fundraising Manager NI) and Adrian Toner (Allianz) celebrate NICVA Link award.

BC Plant JCB Ltd scooped top prize at the prestigious NICVA Link Awards for their sterling work in raising over £100,000 for the IEF. The money was raised during an 18th century themed 'Le Grand Bal', a corporate dinner, which was hosted by former World Featherweight champion, Barry McGuigan.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, Brian Small, Northern Ireland Fundraising Manager for the IEF said, "On behalf of everyone in the Integrated Education movement, I would like to congratulate Alison and Philip Chick and all their staff at BC Plant JCB Ltd on winning such a prestigious award.

The 18th century themed *Le Grand Bal*, organised by Philip and Alison Chick, welcomed over 400 guests including leading business figures, civic leaders, politicians and representatives from Integrated Education, who responded phenomenally to a series of unique auction items which helped to ensure the event was a fundraising triumph."

Philip Chick, who received the award on behalf of BC Plant JCB Ltd said, "It was a great honour for us to host Le Grand Bal in support of the work of the IEF. The Integrated Education movement has had such a positive impact on Northern Ireland and we felt we had a duty to contribute. The event was spectacular and we are thrilled to have raised £100,000 for the future of integrated schools."

Green Light for Blackwater



Baroness Blood, Dr Olwen Griffith, Christopher Ritchie and Erin Wilkinson, celebrate the Minister's announcement.

The Education Minister Caitriona Ruane's decision to approve the new Blackwater IC in mid-Down has been warmly welcomed by everyone in the Integrated Education movement.

IEF Campaign Chair, Baroness Blood commented, "On behalf of the parents, teachers and pupils of Down Academy and Rowallane IC, we congratulate the Minister on her decision to give Blackwater the green light. Parents and supporters have campaigned hard for a number of years. This is a positive step for parents in Northern Ireland. However, there is disappointment as to the time it has taken to arrive at this point; and the delay has imposed enormous stress on the pupils, parents and staff of both schools."

John Hagan, Chair of the Interim Board of Governors of the new College, said "We are delighted that the Minister has finally made this decision, paving the way for a new integrated college to be built in the mid-Down area. The Minister's decision to approve Blackwater will benefit the whole community."

The decision by the Minister vindicates the generous support of all the funders who have contributed to this campaign for integrated provision in mid-Down.

Dennis Taylor Launches Integrated Education Week

Former world champion snooker player, commentator and 'Strictly Come Dancing' contestant, Dennis Taylor, officially launched Integrated Education Week at Glencraig IPS, Holywood.

In preparation for his visit, the pupils made 'wacky glasses' to greet Mr Taylor when he arrived at the school. Deborah Girvan, NICIE/IEF Communications Manager explained, "The reason for this 'spectacle' event was that 'Eyes' had been chosen as the theme for Integrated Education Week which ran from 3 - 7 March. He was the

perfect person to launch the week as he wears glasses himself."

During his visit he met pupils and teachers from Glencraig and was treated to singing by the children and answered their questions about his career.

Dennis Taylor said, "I am delighted to give my support to Integrated Education. It has always been my belief that by educating all children together we are building a better future for Northern Ireland."



Glencraig IPS pupil, Caroline Deness wearing her 'wacky glasses,' with Dennis Taylor.

Back to school for VIPs



Hollyoaks Star Gerard McCarthy with pupils from Newbridge IC.



Pupils attending Clogher Valley IPS welcome Baroness May Blood and Owen Paterson MP.



Brian Kennedy at the opening of Enniskillen IPS.

Special visits were paid to a number of our integrated schools over the past few months by some high profile guests who took time out of their busy schedules to support Integrated Education.

Barry McGuigan joined local clergy, civic leaders and politicians to officially open Rowandale IPS and NI Football Manager Nigel Worthington attended the Priory IC football tournament.

The US Consul General, Susan Elliott officially opened Drumlins IPS at Ballynahinch, while Brian Kennedy, one of Ireland's foremost singer songwriters and best-selling author officially opened the new facilities at Enniskillen IPS.

Belfast born Hollyoaks actor, Gerard McCarthy gave an acting Master Class to A level students at Newbridge IC.

Pupils at Clogher Valley IPS and Drumragh IC hosted Baroness May Blood and Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Owen Paterson MP.



US Consul General Susan Elliott and children from Drumlins IPS jump for joy at the opening of their new school.



Barry McGuigan officially opens Rowandale IPS.



Nigel Worthington, Northern Ireland Football Manager presents 1st prize to the captain of St Patrick's PS at the Priory IC, 5-a-side football tournament.



Baroness May Blood catches the right note with pupils at Drumlins IPS.

New School for Priory Integrated College



Priory IC Acting Principal, Peter McCreadie, with pupils James McCullough, Lauren Allen, Pierce Clarke and Courtney Thompson presenting a St Patrick's Day Thank You card to Caitriona Ruane at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, for giving approval for their new school build.

Education Minister Caitriona Ruane has given the go-ahead for a new school build for Priory IC, Holywood, after a long campaign by the school.

Acting Principal, Peter McCreadie said, "We are absolutely delighted that the Minister has given approval for our new building. This will give our pupils and teachers access to the 21st century educational facility they deserve so that our learning environment will match the quality of teaching on offer.

I would like to pay tribute to my local MLAs, my Governors, staff, parents and pupils who have all worked together to ensure the Minister made the right decision. This is wonderful news for all children in the Greater Holywood area."

NICIE Chief Executive, Michael Wardlow, commented, "NICIE warmly welcomes this decision, which is long overdue. As well as endorsing Priory's success and securing its long term future, this announcement sends a strong message of support to the thousands of parents throughout Northern Ireland who have chosen Integrated Education for their children. It confirms that integrated schools remain a central building block of our shared and better future."

Hazelwood Pioneers 'Forest School' Project



Pupils from Hazelwood IPS, Martina McCabe, Rebecca Caghey and Anthony Cunnin searching for worms during a Forest School session.

Hazelwood IPS, is piloting an innovative 'Forest School' project, the first school in Northern Ireland to adopt the scheme.

Jim McDaid, Teacher and Coordinator of the project said, "In the Forest School Project, the children go out to the woods, use full sized tools, play, learn boundaries of behaviour, grow in confidence and become more self motivated. Many areas of the curriculum are covered without the programme needing to be curriculum led.

It has been highly successful within the school and many children said their first session was the 'best day of school ever.' We have seen a real improvement in the work produced in the classroom after the sessions."

This is a unique and exciting opportunity for Hazelwood and for other schools in Northern Ireland to become involved with the project and become a 'Forest School'.

Cedar Integrated Primary School Hosts International Visitors



International Principals, who were guests of Cedar IPS as part of the Comenius European Schools Partnership Programme, with Michael McKnight, Principal of Cedar IPS (right), Deborah Girvan, NICIE / IEF Communications Manager and Frances Donnelly, NICIE Senior Development Officer (front) during a visit to NICIE's Offices in Belfast.

Mr Michael McKnight, Principal of Cedar IPS said, "The project represents a wonderful opportunity to broaden the understanding of our staff and pupils. Given how rapidly Northern Ireland is changing, particularly with the arrival of many migrant workers, developing positive European links is very worthwhile."

Erne Integrated College fundraise for Erne Hospital



Erne Hospital Cardiac Staff, Professor Varma, Sister Valerie McNiffe and Staff Nurse Ivy McCutcheon pictured with Year 12 pupils from Erne IC who raised money for the hospital's Cardiac Unit by painting and selling cups. £200 was also donated to the Neonatal Unit by staff who raised money instead of sending Christmas cards.

Playwright Martin Lynch presents Integrated Education Week Writing Competition Prizes



Martin Lynch with all the winners of Integrated Education Week Writing Competition.

Slemish IC pupil, David Gilkinson and Corran IPS pupil, Rhiannon Finn, have won first prizes respectively in the post primary and primary categories of the Integrated Education Week Letter Writing Competition. Pupils from integrated primaries and colleges were invited to write a letter to the First and Deputy First Ministers outlining their vision for the future of Northern Ireland.

The winning pupils were presented with their prizes by leading playwright, Martin Lynch, at a special awards ceremony attended by both parents and teachers.

Martin Lynch said, "I was very impressed with the standard and quality of the letters and it was very difficult to choose the best. Writing is a skill that needs to be nurtured in children and this competition demonstrates that when children are inspired by great teachers they can express their opinions in a structured and succinct style."

The issues which concerned the pupils included recycling, 11+, pollution, hospital bugs, global warming, housing, working for peace, diet, drugs, price of energy and alcohol.

Dungannon and Armagh Integrated Colleges Strengthen Educational Collaboration

Armagh Integrated College (AIC) and Integrated College Dungannon (ICD) have entered into a new collaborative arrangement to enhance the comprehensive GCSE programme for students attending both colleges. Initially this arrangement will see AIC students, currently in Year 10, travelling to ICD for the delivery of all their GCSE subjects in 2008/2009. The new partnership agreement between the two colleges will enable students to choose from a broader, more balanced, varied and challenging curriculum.

Andrew Sleeth, Principal of ICD said, "I am delighted to have this opportunity to work closely with the Board of Governors, Principal, staff and students from AIC with regard to our GCSE programme. ICD is already working in partnership with other local schools to increase the range of subjects offered to sixth form students."



Mr Andrew Sleeth (Principal, ICD), Mrs Pat Carville (Chairperson, Board of Governors, AIC), Mrs Ann Tate (Chairperson, Board of Governors, ICD) and Mr Dominic Clarke (Principal Acting, AIC).

During the coming months, both colleges will work together on a range of future options with NICIE and the Department of Education, to ensure that integrated educational provision goes from strength to strength in the area.

NEWS IN BRIEF

National Recognition for Integrated School Staff



Mrs Cassells (Vice Principal), pupils and Jane Gregg, Secretary at Mill Strand IPS, Portrush, who has been awarded runner up 'Administrator of the Year' out of 75 finalists at 'The National Bursar's Association Awards for School Support Staff'. Jane already holds the title of Northern Ireland Administrator of the Year.



Mrs Audrey Rosier, who has worked voluntarily as a Classroom Assistant at Cedar IPS, Crossgar, for 5 years, who has been awarded an MBE on the Queen's New Year Honours List, with pupils from the school.



Reach for Another Year

We are delighted that James Nicholson Wine Merchants have generously agreed to continue their support of the IEF through their Charity of the Year Wines for a further year

For every bottle of wine sold 20p will go to the IEF. The limited edition 'Reach' Shiraz and Chardonnay wines are currently available at www.jnwine.com.

£250,000 Invested in Promoting Trust



Will Haire (Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education), Pamela Montgomery (IEF Trustee) and Scott Thompson from Loughshore Education Resource Centre launch the £250,000 PACT IX programme.

A £250,000 grant programme for school projects that promote a culture of trust and develop paths of reconciliation through education has been launched by the IEF. The Promoting A Culture of Trust (PACT) programme, which is open to all schools in Northern Ireland, was launched by Will Haire, Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education and Dr Pamela Montgomery, Chair of the IEF Grants Committee at Loughshore Educational Resource Centre.

Dr Montgomery said "The aim of the programme is to promote the development of skills and relationships that enable schools, pupils, staff, governors and the wider community to increase their understanding, acceptance and respect for political, cultural and religious differences.

The programme is open to all Primary and Post Primary schools, and Early Years Education Providers in Northern Ireland and we would encourage applications that involve partnerships of two or more schools and represent at least two of the main traditions in Northern Ireland."

The PACT programme was established in 2000 by Senator George Mitchell, with support from the Northern Ireland Fund for Reconciliation and to date has awarded over £475,000 to 143 projects involving 321 schools and organisations across Northern Ireland.

The new programme will operate a three level grant structure:

- up to £5,000 – projects which begin during the academic year 2008/09 and complete no later than May 2009
- up to £10,000 – projects which begin during the academic year 2008/09 and complete no later than May 2010
- up to £25,000 – projects which begin during the academic year 2008/09 and complete no later than May 2011

The IEF has been supported in funding the new round of PACT by the Department of Education and BT.

Priory Integrated College Pupils Visit HMS Belfast



Priory IC pupils Craig Johnston, Dean Keane, Andrea Stevenson and Cortney Rowan on board HMS Belfast.

Four pupils from Priory IC, Holywood, won a trip of a lifetime to celebrate the 70th anniversary of HMS Belfast, a Second World War Cruiser which is now moored on the River Thames, London. The lucky winners were VIP guests aboard the ship at a prestigious ceremony which was attended by many veterans and dignitaries on Saturday 15th March 2008.

The competition, sponsored by HMS Belfast and NICIE, invited pupils to design a birthday card or a newsletter to commemorate the 70th birthday of the historic battleship which was built in Harland and Wolff shipyard, Belfast.

Philip Stanley Berridge, HMS Belfast Learning and Access Officer, said, "We were very keen that the ship's 70th birthday celebration should involve pupils from the Belfast area. We were delighted that the pupils from Priory could attend and that Cortney Rowan, a Year 11 pupil, could read out her winning poem. It really summed up the flavour of the event and touched the hearts of those attending."

Happy Birthday HMS Belfast!

At the sunrise of your time you were a sight to see

When launched into the ocean for a life of duty
You have been around the world, helping friends
and fighting for

You've seen so much action you are now a hero
Alas, your service has downed and your time
is done

A floating museum ship for everyone to come

GOD BLESS YOU HMS BELFAST

Cortney Rowan, Priory IC



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