

28 January 2020

**The Secretary
School Board of Governors and School Trustees**

Dear Sir/Madam

Development Proposal No 644 – Ballyhackett Primary School

The Education Authority has been requested by the Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School to publish the undernoted proposal in accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986:

Ballyhackett Primary School will transform to Controlled Integrated Status, with effect from 1 September 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Under the above legislation, the Education Authority is obliged to consult the trustees and managers of any school or schools which would, in the opinion of the Education Authority, be affected by the proposal.

I am writing to ask you to draw the matter to the attention of the Board of Governors and Trustees of your school and to let me have any comments they may wish to make **not later than Monday 2 March 2020**. Any responses which the Board of Governors/Trustees wish to make in relation to this proposal should be returned to the address below or by email to areaplanning1@eani.org.uk. The Authority will consider all written responses received during the consultation process.

Please note that any letters of objection or support may be published on the Department of Education's website, with appropriate redactions, if they are included in full in the submission on which the outcome of the proposal is decided.

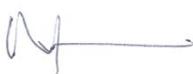
A draft Development Proposal and Case for Change document are available on the Education Authority's website on the link below:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/area-planning/pre-publication-consultations>

Comments on the proposal will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours faithfully
Area Planning Officer



**Nigel Freeburn
Area Planning Officer**

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

Education Authority

17 Lough Road, Antrim, BT41 4DH T: +44 (0)28 9448 2200 W: www.eani.org.uk

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 644

BALLYHACKETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Notice is hereby given that a Proposal under Article 92 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 has been submitted to the Education Authority by the Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School to the effect that:

Ballyhackett Primary School will transform to Controlled Integrated Status, with effect from 1 September 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter.

A copy of the Proposal and Case for Change may be inspected at the offices of the Education Authority, 17 Lough Road, Antrim, BT41 4DH between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm and www.eani.org.uk (Area Planning).

Any objections or support to this Proposal should be lodged with the Area Planning Policy Team, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT19 7PR or emailed to dps@education-ni.gov.uk within two months of the date of publication of this notice. Any letters of objection or support may be published on the Department of Education's website, with appropriate redactions, if they are included in full in the submission on which the outcome of the proposal is decided.

The Department of Education and the Education Authority operate a regime of openness under the Freedom of Information Act. Letters of objection and information supplied to the Department of Education and the Education Authority may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, if requested. (A fee may be charged for supplying this information).

Sara Long
Chief Executive



The Case for Change
Ballyhackett Primary School, Castlerock
(303-2104)
Transformation to Controlled Integrated Status
29th November 2019

Submitted by The Board of Governors of:
Ballyhackett Primary School
50, Altikeeragh Road
Castlerock
BT51 4SR

Development Proposal
Education Reform Order (1989)

Application to transform Ballyhackett Primary School to Controlled Integrated Status.

Proposal Number:

Notice is hereby given that following a ballot of parents held in accordance with Article 70 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (as applied by Article 91 of that order), the Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School, Castlerock has submitted a proposal to the Education Authority as follows:

The Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School proposes to transform to Controlled Integrated Status from 1st September 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

CASE FOR CHANGE – Supporting Information

SUMMARY/OVERVIEW

AREA PLANNING DISTRICT	Causeway Coast and Glens
DP NUMBER	
PROPOSER	Contact: Mrs Rowena Simpson (Chairperson of The Board of Governors) Mrs Grainne McIlvar (Principal) Email: info@ballyhackettps.castlerock.ni.sch.uk School Telephone Number: 028 70848476
SCHOOL(S) NAME	Ballyhackett Primary School
SCHOOL REFERENCE	303-2104
TYPE	Maintained Primary School
MANAGEMENT	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
DP PUBLICATION DATE	Date:----- <i>(Note: Proof of publication should be submitted without delay)</i>
PROPOSAL	The Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School proposes to transform to Controlled Integrated Status from 1 st September 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Note: It may be necessary for documentary evidence to be provided to show that the statutory procedures have been followed. It is essential that relevant parties retain this information.

The following is to be completed by the Proposer and signed off by them.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION

<p>PROPOSER</p> <p>Provide detail of consultation with the BOGs, teachers and parents of the affected school(s) dates of meetings/letters. Good practice suggests all staff (including nonteaching) should be consulted as well as pupils.</p> <p>Summary and assessment of views received – how were these taken into account before publication of the DP?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information/Consultation on the Transformation process was provided to all staff on 7th February 2019. • The Board of Governors met with parents at a Transformation meeting on 11th February 2019. • On 26th February the Board of Governors agree to ballot parents based on the positive response of staff and parents. • TAG Group founded to represent teacher, Board of Governors and parents. • On 12th March 2019 Principal and two Governors attend an Integration Works Event in March 2019. • On 20th March the Principal and member of the Board of Governors met Mr. D. Baker. (DENI) • The Parental Ballot was held in April 2019. Ballot result: 69% response rate, 69% in favour of Transformation. • A Parents’ meeting on transformation was held on 8th May 2019. • TAG met with NICIE representative on 18th June. • TAG met with IEF and networked at the Dalriada Festival (July 2019) • Banners and posters were commissioned and put up in key local locations. • CCMS and NICIE met with Board of Governors about the Transformation process on 21st August 2019. • Board of Governors held a stand at The Jet Centre on Transformation. Local politicians visited to show support. • Royal Mail Distribution of EOI forms. • Funding was granted by the IEF to support Post Parental Ballot work. • Local MLA and councillor visited school to show support. • The Principal attended NICIE and EA workshop on writing a Case For Change and the DP process. • October 2019: EOI forms delivered to local playgroups. • NICIE presentation to parents. (3/10/19) • Staff Development Day. (4/10/19) • Principal attended Media training for schools involved in the Transformation process. (21/10 19) • NICIE presented Ethos Training for Staff and Board of Governors. (23/10/19) • Member of TAG attended IEF presentation on results of Coleraine Micro Poll in Coleraine Area. (6/11/19) • Principal and Advisor to work with NICIE on Case For Change • Parental and pupil Questionnaires on the Transformation process. Many positive returns. • Community Support signatures collected at local church. (23/11/19) • Case for Change to be sent to EA (29/11/19)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Morning attended by NICIE (4/12/19) • Parents kept informed of developments through newsletters and Social Media. • Discussions with pupils at class and School Council Meetings from September 2019 to present. • Ballyhackett PS has the support of a local MLA, John Dallat who has written a supporting letter. See Appendix 9.
<p>CONFIRMATION BY THE PROPOSER</p>	<p>I confirm that the school(s) BOGs, Staff and Parents of pupils were consulted on and Equality Screening of the proposal has been carried out and the statutory requirements of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (where appropriate) have been considered.</p> <p>NAME: Rowena Simpson SIGNED: <u> R. Simpson </u></p> <p>OFFICE HELD: Chairperson of BOG:</p> <p>DATE: 28/11/19</p>

The following is to be completed and signed off by the EA.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION

<p>THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY</p>	<p>I confirm that the schools which the EA consider might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on</p> <p>NAME:</p> <p>SIGNED:</p> <p>OFFICE HELD:</p> <p>DATE:</p>
<p>Provide detail of consultation with schools that may, in the EA's opinion, be affected by the proposal - list of schools, dates of letters issued to schools/meetings.</p> <p>Summary of views received (number of responses, recurring themes, petitions, community support or opposition).</p> <p>_____ Responses/Assurances in respect of issues raised during consultation.</p> <p>_____ Dates of EA meetings e.g. Education Committee/ Board etc.</p> <p><u>Details of issues raised by members of EA Board</u></p>	
<p>EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTS</p> <p>In the context of planning on an area basis - what is the EA's view of the proposal, taking into account any prepublication consultation. Does the EA support the proposal?</p> <p>SIGNATURE:</p> <p>PRINT NAME:</p> <p>POSITION:</p> <p>DATE:</p>	

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INTEGRATION WORKS



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

**INTEGRATION
WORKS**
TRANSFORMING
YOUR SCHOOL

QUOTES FROM THE STUDENT COUNCIL ON WHAT INTEGRATION MEANS TO THEM:

“it means changing and working together in a community.”

“it means different people could come to the school.”

“it means working together in a community.”

“it will make the school happier by everyone being kind to everyone.”

“You know the way our motto is TEAM- if we had more people then it would have to be TEAM WORK or CO-OPERATION.”

“If we had different people we could learn lots of new things- understand culture better.”

“We would meet more cultures and see what their lives are like.”

“WIN: WIN”

“I have said that Ballyhackett is integrating and it is very welcoming.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- No current provision for integration at primary level in the wider Coleraine, Castlerock and Magilligan area. Approval for Ballyhackett PS to become integrated would support the department in its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education as outlined in the 1989 Education Reform Order NI.
- Independent evidence of strong appetite in our area for integration based on recent survey and community feedback.
- Ballyhackett parental vote for integrated status. 69% of parents (37 of a potential 54) responded to the ballot. The result was a unanimous Yes vote.
- Ballyhackett is strategically located to deliver on this strong growing demand for integrated education at primary level.
- Ballyhackett would continue to be the only school in the area that delivers on the Government's Programme for Shared Society.
- Integrated status for Ballyhackett would clearly deliver on maintaining a balanced community in our area.
- The existing Ethos within the school would enable a smooth transition to integrated status.
- Even with reduced timeframe of five months, current level of Expressions of Interest confirms sustainable growth in student numbers with full intake quota achieved in year two.
- Ballyhackett would continue to operate within satisfactory financial parameters.
- Current demand for places in integrated primary education outstrips availability.
- Ballyhackett has robust and innovative leadership team in place which will be further enhanced under the requirement for increased numbers on the Board of Governors.
- Ballyhackett currently delivers a high quality level of educational and pastoral care.
- The Board of Governors, staff and parents are fully committed to integration and the transformation process.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Description of School

Ballyhackett PS (then national school) was built in 1870 by the Clothworkers' Company of London who owned the land and several adjoining town lands. In 1880 the nearby Altikeeragh School closed and its staff and pupils were incorporated into Ballyhackett PS. The school was founded in 1870 as a national school and has served the local community ever since. Although Ballyhackett Primary School is a Catholic Maintained School, it has retained the multi denominational characteristic of the first school and has a long tradition of educating children from different faiths. There has always been a close partnership between pupils, parents, governors, the parish and local community. Ballyhackett Primary School is an inclusive welcoming school.

The school is constructed on a site of 2.47 acres. The school has had ongoing refurbishment and in 2008 had a major refurbishment with extension. In 2011 an additional porch was added to the school entrance. In the summer of 2018 an investment of over £50,000 was made in the school, with the installation of security lighting, fob entry system and CCTV.

The current staffing consists of a Teaching Principal, two Assistant Teachers (one is part time) and one Principal Release Teacher. The support staff team consists of a part time School Secretary, Caretaker, Cleaner and Dinner Lady. There are three Special Educational Needs Assistants and one Classroom Assistant. The staff and indeed the Board of Governors are from a mix of faith backgrounds.

The current Principal took up her post in December 2017. CCMS held a consultation on the school's future in November 2018. Ballyhackett's ethos respects the beliefs, values and traditions of the whole community. Ballyhackett Primary School has a long tradition of working for reconciliation aims. This can be seen in its long involvement in programmes such as EMU, PíEE and Shared Education. The School already works tirelessly to incorporate the four principles of Integrated Education: Equality, Faith and Values, Parental Involvement and Social Responsibility.

At 'The Families First Awards', in September 2019, Ballyhackett won the, 'Raising Standards in Literacy Award'. This was in recognition of our very successful, "Read2Dogs" programme.

The Board of Governors and Staff have worked to promote the welcoming, inclusive nature of Ballyhackett and the school is used by the community in the evenings. The move to Controlled Integrated Status is a natural step in Ballyhackett's evolution as the work for social inclusion and cooperation has been ongoing quietly and successfully for many years. Indeed, the Shared Education work between Ballyhackett and Castleroe Primaries is seen as an, "exemplar of good practice." (ETI, 2014)

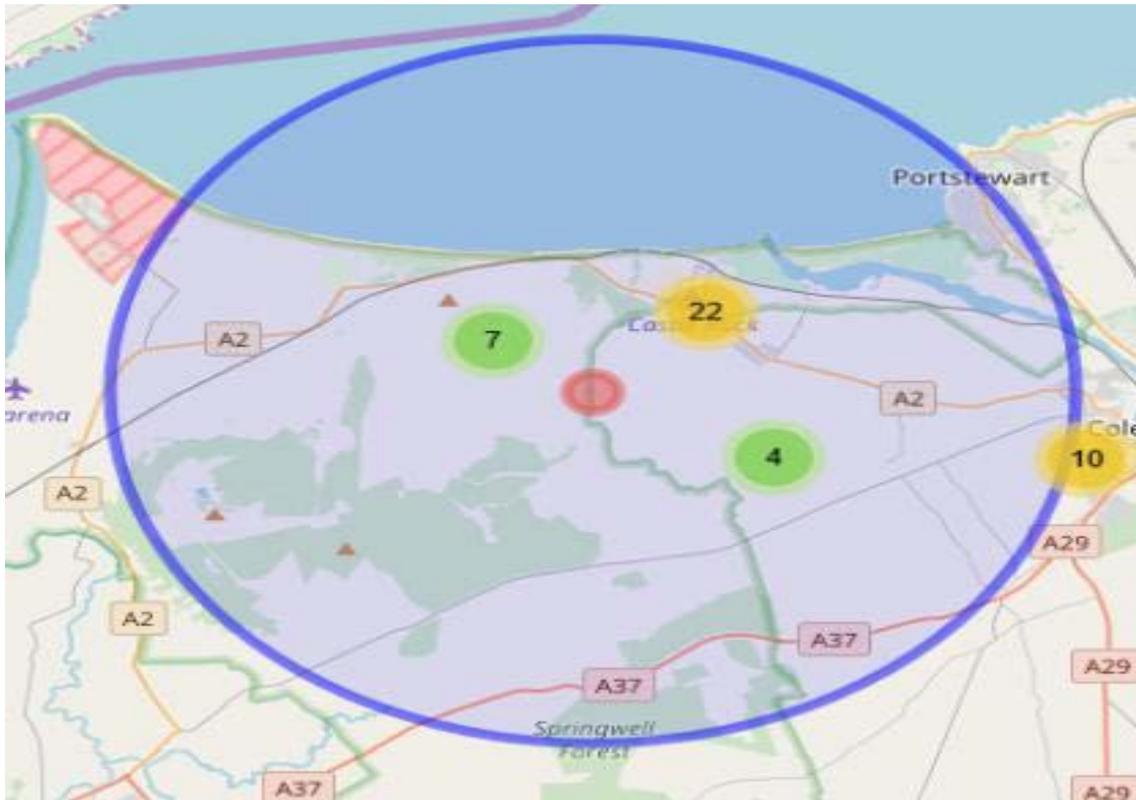
1.2 Location

Ballyhackett Primary School is situated on Altikeeragh Road, Castlerock, approximately six miles west of Coleraine. It is in the parish of St John's, Coleraine which comprises: Dunboe, Macosquin and Aghadowey.

The school is located in the Castlerock ward (see Map 1 below). The school is situated in the Castlerock_1 SOA (Super Output Area) which has a multiple deprivation measure of 373 and an education, skills and training deprivation measure of 320. The rank for the proportion of pupils attending special schools or attending primary schools with Special Educational Needs Stages 3-5 is 349. In total there are 890 SOAs in Northern Ireland where 1 is the most deprived score and 890 the least deprived.

Map 1 below displays that the majority of the children who attend the school come from the villages of Castlerock and Articlave and the surrounding rural area. The majority of the children travel to school by a bus provided by the Education Authority.

Map 1:



Source: SIB/QUB Area Planning Modeller

1.3 Population and Growth

The estimated population of Causeway Coast and Glens LGD at 30 June 2018 was 144,246 of which 71,497 (49.6%) were male and 72,749 (50.4%) were female.

This was made up of:

- 28,372 children aged 0-15 years;
- 41,909 people aged 16-39 years;
- 47,863 people aged 40-64 years; and
- 26,102 people 65 years and older.

Between 2008 and 2018 the population of Causeway Coast and Glens LGD increased by 5,242 people or 3.8%.

(NISRA).

By extrapolating the data in our catchment area the population of children aged 0-4 years is circa 1923.

Ward

Whilst the children enrolled at Ballyhackett School come from a range of wards, 8 in total, the school is located in the Castlerock ward.

Super Output Area – Castlerock Ward in which the school is located

The school is situated in the Castlerock_1 SOA (Super Output Area) which has a multiple deprivation measure of 373 and an education, skills and training deprivation measure of 320. The rank for the proportion of pupils attending special schools or attending primary schools with Special Educational Needs Stages 3-5 is 349. The SOA rank for employment deprivation is 518 and 13 pupils (36%) in the school are entitled to free school meals in the current academic year. Ballyhackett PS is situated in the Castlerock ward which is ranked at 428 out of 590.

1.4 Housing and economic regeneration

In 2019, Causeway Coast and Glens published a Housing Investment Plan 2019-2023 within the context of the Northern Ireland policy framework. The vision was for,

“Everyone to live in an affordable and decent home, appropriate to their needs, in a safe and attractive place.”

The strategy states that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) has long recognised that in rural areas:

“... housing needs can be hidden or dispersed and that a different approach is often required to ensure that we deliver our statutory housing functions.”

The Rural Strategy and Action Plan 2016-20 identifies the need to increase the provision of affordable housing in rural areas in order to help protect and sustain rural communities.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council comprises 1,969 square kilometres which is about 14% of the total Northern Ireland land area. It stretches from the River Roe, near Bellarena on the shores of Lough Foyle to the Glens of Antrim.

The five-year housing assessment for 2018-23 shows that Coleraine is one of the areas of greatest need. Housing associations compete on the open market against the private sector and this can make it difficult to obtain sites to build social housing in areas of housing need:

“This is more acute in coastal villages where land is relatively expensive.”

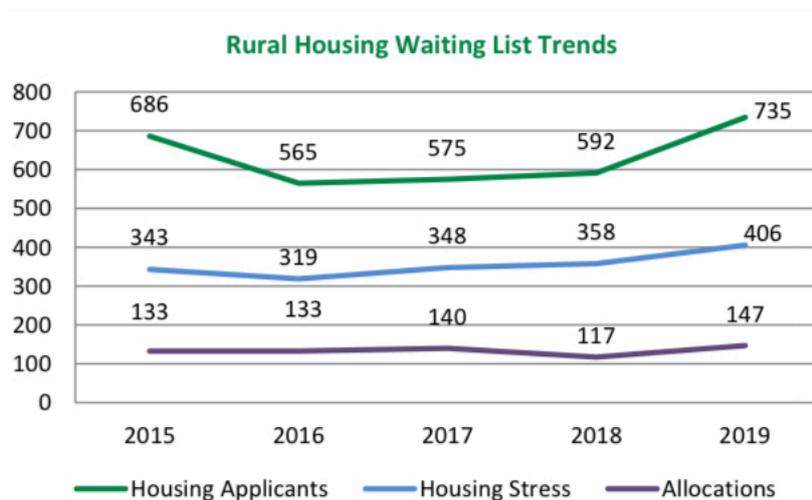
The natural beauty of the: “... north coastline dominating views over the North Atlantic Ocean and the picturesque Binevenagh mountains promote rural settlements as desirable places to live.”

NIHE Causeway Coast and Glens Investment Plan 2019-2023

For this reason, demand for rural households exceeds the number of allocations.

Figure One exemplifies this fact.

Figure 1



Source: NIHE Causeway Coast and Glens Investment Plan 2019-2023

However, there are currently explorations under way by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and The Rural Housing Association to determine demand for new housing in our area.

The Housing Plans and services have four outcomes. These are:

-helping people find housing support and solutions

-delivering better homes

-fostering vibrant sustainable communities

-delivering quality public services.

If the current explorations by NIHE and RHA were to be successful we would expect to see more families moving into the area. Our proposal would therefore give these families the choice of an integrated education.

The Guide to Rural Needs Act NI (2019) discusses drive times to a large service centre. Ballyhackett PS would appear to be within 30 minutes' drive time of a large service centre. However, the pupils come from a range of postcodes, some of which are quite rural and may be more distant from centres than the school itself. It would be important therefore that the possible closure of this school should be considered in conjunction with the Rural Needs Act NI and the fact that two school closures have already occurred in the area. It is well understood that schools are the centre of their community and the removal of educational services from an area would be detrimental to the long-term sustainability of the community itself. It should also be noted that a number of pupils enrolled in Ballyhackett PS come from the significantly deprived wards of Churchlands and Cross Glebe.

There is a compelling argument that the proposed closure of Ballyhackett (as well as the actual closure of two other local primary schools in recent years) deprives this area from the public services which help maintain a sustainable rural (some might say remote) community. It would also be argued that the threatened closure of a third Primary School in this area is not in keeping with the Programme of Government, the aim of which was:

“improving wellbeing for all by tackling disadvantage and driving economic growth.”

Draft programme for Government Framework 2016-21

Northern Ireland Executive

1.5 Diversity within the area

On Census Day, 27th March 2011, in Castlerock Ward, considering the resident population:

- 98.84% were from the white (including Irish Traveller) ethnic group;
- 16.88% belong to or were brought up in the Catholic religion; and
- 77.72% belong to or were brought up in a 'Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion

This area is comprised of prominently Protestant and other Christian religions. If Ballyhackett were to close, this area would be deprived of a school for Catholic children as well as the support services that the school provides to the local parish, effectively driving young catholic families out of the community.

We feel that the closure of this school would lead to a "balkanisation" of this area resulting in fragmentation and division within this community. The proposed closure of this school would undo the exemplary work carried out to date by Ballyhackett in promoting good relations and community cohesion. In addition, we have concerns about the long-term effect this decision would have on the politics of the area.

If Ballyhackett were to Transform into an Integrated School, it would offer Catholic and Protestant children in this area an education which would allow a freedom of expression and religion.

It would appear that rural provision has been particularly affected by Area Planning and the Board of Governors of Ballyhackett see this as a worrying development.

Another matter that the Governors would like to highlight is that this school has attracted a number of children from the Protestant background over many years. With reference to the NICIE statistics only 151 Schools in Northern Ireland have a mix greater than 10% of Protestant children in a Catholic school or Catholic children in a Controlled school. The Governors would have hoped that this unusual composition would have been cherished and nurtured by the planning authorities.

There is a feeling that Ballyhackett has not been treated fairly in this decision making process. We feel that other schools have been treated more favourably than us and have

been given extensions in order to find solutions to their issues. Ballyhackett has not been offered this opportunity.

Ballyhackett has had to complete its Transformation work in less time than that afforded other schools. Effectively a five-month timeframe (ballot result end of April, Case of Change due end of November, equates to seven months, less the two summer months, effectively giving us an unreasonable five-month timeline).

That said, the Board of Governors feel compelled to make the best submission possible by the required deadline of 29 November 2019. The most obvious issue is that this five-month period did not allow us to properly promote our ambition for integrated status and sufficiently garner Expression of Interests.

The fact that we have been able to complete this submission is testament to the existing culture of integration embedded in Ballyhackett and also displays the total commitment of the Board of Governors, staff and all stakeholders.

It should be noted that CCMS cancelled our first meeting with it and other agencies and did not meet with the Board of Governors until late August 2019, four months after the parental ballot and two weeks before the publication of the Development Proposal.

1.6 Current accommodation and site

The school is constructed on a site of 2.47 acres. There are 3 classrooms housed in a two storey building. There is a mix of other rooms and all classrooms have an interactive Whiteboard.

Externally there are two large outside playing areas, which are also used for Outdoor Learning Activities. There is a tarmac area, which is also used for PE. There is also wooden play equipment. There is a Wildlife Area, which includes a pond and raised beds in which fruit and vegetables are grown. There are also planters. The school recently had security work completed. CCTV, security lighting and a fob entry system were installed.

At present there are two minor works applications listed on the 2017 call for minor works for Ballyhackett PS. They are for an upgrade to goalposts and pitch drainage.

1.7 Summary of consultation and progress to date

On 20th November 2018, CCMS led a Consultation on the future of education at Ballyhackett Primary School, which included consultation with staff, Board of Governors and parents. CCMS highlighted that they believed long-term sustainability was an issue. CCMS outlined what they believed were the potential options regarding the future of Ballyhackett PS. There was a very limited opportunity for the school community to put forward their own ideas as solutions for the future. Following the Consultation evening, the Board of governors met to discuss the issues highlighted by CCMS and it was felt that Integrated Education would be a logical step for the Ballyhackett Community. The timeline is set out below in Table One.

Table One (overleaf) is a record of Transformation work to date:

DATE	EVENT
20 Sep 2018	Board of Governors Meeting. At this meeting it was decided the Transformation Route would be explored.
7 Feb 2019	Full Staff Meeting. Presentation to Staff on Integration.
11 Feb 2019	Board of Governors presentation to Parents on Integration.
6 Mar 2019	Board of Governors Meeting
12 Mar 2019	Mrs McIlvar and two members of The Board of Governors attended an Integration Works Event in Belfast.
20 Mar 2019	Principal and member of BOG met Mr. D. Baker.
Mar 2019	Preparation for Parental Ballots.
10 Apr 2019	Parental Ballot to be completed & returns made.
15 Apr 2019	Board of Governors Meeting
8 May 2019	Parents Meeting re. Transformation (attended by BOG & TAG)
29 May 2019	BOG Meeting
18 Jun 2019	TAG Action Group Meeting with NICIE rep.
13-14 Jul 2019	TAG TEAM networked with IEF at The Dalriada Festival
25 Jul 2019	Proposed Date for meeting with NICIE, CCMS, EA and BOG CANCELLED BY CCMS
21 Aug 2019	Meeting with NICIE) and two CCMS representatives and BOG
Aug 2019	Letter Drop in Castlerock & Articlave.
Aug 2018	Stand in The Jet Centre, Coleraine to promote EOIs
06/09/19	IEF visited the school to discuss Grants for Integration.
08/09/19	Ballyhackett Integration stand at Castlerock Walk Fest
11/09/19	TAG meeting with NICIE
12/09/19	School interview with Causeway Community News
12/09/19	SDLP MLA & local councillor visit the school to offer support.
13/09/19	Feel Good Friday message
16/09/19	Royal Mail delivery of EOIs
20/09/19	Feel Good Friday message
24/09/19	PFTA AGM
27/09/19	Feel Good Friday message
25/09/19	Board of Governors meeting
26/09/19	NICIE Integrated Education Principals' Workshop on Principles and Processes of Integrated Education

DATE	EVENT
27/09/19	IEF Grant £2,500 (Post Parental Ballot) allocated to BPS
30/09/19	Principal attended an Information session organised by NICIE and Frances Donnelly (EA) on writing DPS and the Case For Change Process
02/10/19	Principal & Representative From The Good Relations Council (Good Relations Council)
03/10/19	Prospective parents visited the school.
03/10/19	Coleraine Chronicle came to take photographs for next week's Advertorial.
03/10/19	Two members of BOG delivered EOI forms to many playgroups in Coleraine & Castlerock areas.
03/10/19	Parents Information Evening Representative from NICIE came to make a parental presentation on Integration.
04/01/19	Staff Development Day
04/10/19	Feel Good Friday message
07/10/10	The Irish Times Reporter will visit the school to interview parents and staff.
09/10/19	TAG Meeting at 7pm
11/10/19	Feel Good Friday message
18/10/19	Feel Good Friday message
21/10/19	Principal attended Media Training for schools involved in the Transformation process
23/10/19	Harvest Assembly in School.
23/10/19	Ethos training for BOG and Staff
25/10/19	Feel Good Friday message
01/11/19	Feel Good Friday message
02/11/19	Car Boot Sale at The Vineyard
05/11/19	PFTA Meeting
06/11/19	Results of Micro poll on Shared Education in Coleraine Area.
08/11/19	Feel Good Friday message
10/11/19	Remembrance Sunday
14/11/19	Design and place an Ad for Open Morning in local paper.
14/11/19	BOG Rep in contact with Irish News and News Letter re. advertising Ballyhackett.
15/11/19	Feel Good Friday message
15/11/19	Principal to work with Student Council gain an understanding of pupil voice Integration

DATE	EVENT
18/11/19	Principal to work on DP with Advisor and NICIE
19/11/19	Marketing Support Session (Representative of TAG attended)
22/11/19	Feel Good Friday message
29/11/19	Feel Good Friday message
29/11/19	DP to be submitted to EA
04/12/19	Open Morning and Evening. NICIE to attend Morning Session.
06/12/19	Feel Good Friday message
13/12/19	Feel Good Friday message
20/12/19	Feel Good Friday message

2 SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

“Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools” (Sustainable Schools Policy or SSP) which was published in 2009, underpins all area planning work. The aim of area planning is to facilitate the development of a network of viable and sustainable schools that can deliver the NI Curriculum effectively and provide access to a range of education provision that is appropriate to the needs of pupils.

In striving to realise this aspiration, the area planning process aims to ensure that every pupil has:

- access to a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities to realise his or her potential;
- an education in which the learning outcomes are appropriate to their needs;
- access to quality teaching delivered in a caring and supportive environment; and
- education delivered in modern, well-resourced facilities, suitable for the delivery of education in the twenty-first century.

In relation to achieving these aims the school makes the following contributions:

2.1 Quality Educational Experience

The school was fully inspected in 2014. In October 2018 ETI was unable to carry out a full inspection owing to Industrial Action.

The report can be viewed on [ETI's website](#).

The previous Inspection had been held in October 2014 and can be viewed [here](#).

At the time of the last full Inspection in 2014 the ETI report indicated:

Overall Performance Level	Good
Achievements and Standards	Good
Provision	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

The ETI report stated that (p5):

‘In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address’.

‘The school’s internal performance data shows that most of the children, including those who require additional support with aspects of their learning, make good progress in English and Mathematics in line with their ability or above expectation’.

Ballyhackett Primary School has very strong pastoral care and nurtures every pupil who attends. The school motto is:

“Together Everyone Achieves More!”

This is an acronym of the word TEAM and encompasses the true nature of Ballyhackett’s ethos.

“The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. There is an inclusive and respectful ethos” and

“There are excellent working relationships at all levels and a clear commitment by the staff, governors, parents and volunteers to work collaboratively in the best interests of the school.” (ETI 2014)

2.2 Shared Education

Following a number of discussions and examinations of options for the way forward at Ballyhackett (see Transformation Action Plan, Appendix 3). The school agreed to exploring integrated education in greater depth and decided to ballot parents.

This proposed way forward is building on our depth of experience and strength within shared education.

Ballyhackett has been working with Castleroe Primary School in the Shared Education Programme. These schools have also been involved in the Primary Integrating and Enriching Education Project (PIEE) which was a very early Shared Education programme.

In 2014, ETI stated that:

'The shared education programme is an exemplar of best practice. The rich range of experiences provided extend and enhance the shared learning experiences and development opportunities of the children, parents, governors and staff. The leadership and management have worked collaboratively with their partner school to plan for future sustainability of this work which is essential for broadening the children's experiences.'

It is important to note that Ballyhackett Primary School was involved in one of the earliest Shared Education Projects, the Programme for Primary Integrating/Enriching Education (PIEE) which preceded the legislation for Shared Education and demonstrated the long-standing interest which Ballyhackett had in engaging in sharing and promoting reconciliation aims. The PIEE project targeted small rural schools to encourage them to work across management types in order to share resources and good practice. The major element of this project was aimed at building good relationships to enhance peace and reconciliation across the communities.

The PIEE model was seen as a way of keeping small rural schools viable and contributing to improved community relations. It enhanced pupils' educational experiences and helped them build normal, positive, social relationships with pupils from their partner school. The PIEE aimed to enable schools to develop genuine and meaningful relationships which would lead to a rippling effect into the wider community. Another aim of PIEE was to strengthen community links as geographically demarcated space were becoming more open with cross-community events being developed across schools leading to a positive impact on wider interaction within the community.

This continued and Ballyhackett became involved in the Shared Education project. This has been a great partnership and it should be noted that Ballyhackett Primary School provides an excellent example of how shared education can be beneficial in promoting peace and reconciliation.

In the Sharing Works Policy, Shared Education is described as a,

“Crucial way to break down barriers, nurture and improve community relations.”

Best practice shows that vibrant, self-improving Shared Education partnerships are those who are,

“delivering educational benefits to learners, encouraging the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.”

Sharing Works: A Policy for Shared Education, Department of Education, 2015

The 2014 ETI Inspection (p4) also noted: The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the school is very good. There is an inclusive and respectful ethos where children and families from a diverse range of backgrounds are welcomed and valued. There are excellent working relationships at all levels and a clear commitment by the staff, governors, parents and volunteers to work collaboratively in the best interests of the school.

The work which Ballyhackett has engaged in since 2008 could provide the Department with an important case study and it may be worth further investing in Ballyhackett to allow the school to explore Integrated Education in greater depth.

Following a number of discussions and examinations of options for the way forward at Ballyhackett (see Transformation Action Plan, Appendix Three) the school agreed to look at exploring Integrated Education in greater depth and decided to ballot parents

There have been long standing efforts by the staff of Ballyhackett to promote good relations. Prior to 2008 the school participated in the EMU project.

Ballyhackett PS has a long history of engagement across the community as well as a diverse intake of pupils, amongst staff and governors. Ballyhackett Primary School would be ideally placed to Transform into a Controlled Integrated Primary School.

A recent Lucid Talks Micro Poll of parents in the Coleraine area (Appendix 7) has shown that the vast majority would like a school for their children which is openly welcoming to pupils from all sections of the community and of all faiths. In addition, 81.82% of the parents questioned in this Poll indicated that they would be supportive of their local school becoming integrated. This shows a strong demand for integrated Education in this area.

2.3 Stable Enrolment Trends

The approved enrolment number of Ballyhackett Primary School is 67 with an admissions number of 10. By working to achieve integrated status, the school is hoping to reach a wider catchment. Throughout the transformation exploration to date, the school has maintained its pupil enrolment.

Using extrapolated data from NISRA there are approximately 1923 children in the 0-4 years of age group in our catchment area. Just attracting 1% of this population would substantially exceed our annual intake requirement.

2.4 Enrolment at Ballyhackett PS

Table Two shows the Total Applications and Admissions for the last three years. It also includes projected numbers gathered to date through Expression of Interest gathered during awareness raising of the school's aim to achieve Integrated status.

Year	Total Applications	Total Admissions
2016/2017	8	8
2017/2018	4	4
2018/2019	2	2
2019/2020	4	4
2020/21	5	*
2021/22	9	*
2022/23	5	*
2023/24	5	*
2025/	1	*

Table Two shows Total Applications and Admissions since 2016

Source: DE/Ballyhackett Primary School

Table Three below shows the enrolment numbers since 2007

Year	Enrolment No
2007/08	47
2008/09	54
2009/10	49
2010/11	43
2011/12	45
2012/13	42
2013/14	42
2014/15	40
2015/16	40
2016/17	44
2017/18	44
2018/19	36
2019/20	36

Source: DE /Ballyhackett PS

The school has been impacted by Area Planning and seen a decline in enrolment since the early days of the process. In fact, the P1 intake for September 2019 has shown an increase due to the school seeking integrated status. In addition, a recent poll carried out in the Coleraine area by Lucid Talk indicated that over 81% of parents would support their child's school if it were to become integrated. Within the local area there has been support for Ballyhackett PS transforming to become integrated. Expression of Interest projections indicate that there is an unmet demand in the area for integrated education with projected enrolment for 2021/22 showing a marked increase in potential admissions with full intake quota achieved in year two,

Table 4 Religious balance of potential primary one pupils

Religion	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Protestant	40%	80%	40%	33%
Catholic	40%	10%	40%	33%
Other	20%	10%	20%	33%

Expressions of Interest forms were gathered during awareness raising of the school's aim to achieve integrated status. Table 4 above shows the religious balance of potential primary one pupils.

It should be noted that it would appear that the Ballyhackett PS has not been given the same opportunity as other schools in a similar position, to explore a market that it hopes to achieve integrated status. The Board of Governors would question why CCMS has not given Ballyhackett PS the same opportunity as Seaview PS to promote the change in status. The two schools are being put forward for discontinuation, however the proposed closure date for Ballyhackett PS is August 2020 and the proposed closure date for Seaview PS is August 2021. The Consultation period for Ballyhackett Primary School was very short. The Ballot ran in April 2019 and the deadline for The Case for Change is November 2019. This included the summer months where CCMS cancelled our first multi-agency meeting. Therefore, it is felt that the figures do not show the full impact that Transforming to Integrated Status would have on the Admissions Numbers and therefore the enrolment of this school. We believe when Ballyhackett transforms to Integrated Status then the admissions numbers would increase. It should be noted that over 80% of parents in our area who participated in the Lucid Talks Micro Poll would like a school which is welcoming to all sections of the Community.

2.5 Sound Financial Position

The Principal is responsible for the day to day running of school finances and is supported by the Board of Governors and Finance Committee to ensure that there is prudent financial management. This year the school is not in deficit and has been placed in Category 4. It should be noted that the financial figures used in the CCMS Development Proposal No 588 have been updated since the submission. This update took place on 17th July 2019. The revised figures show that the school is in a financially better position than that outlined in the Case for Change projected by CCMS in DP No588. (Appendix 4)

2.6 Strong Leadership and Management

Ballyhackett Primary School has a strong leadership team led by the Principal, Grainne McIlvar. The Principal has a strong commitment to Integrated Education and has ably led the transformation process within the school. This has included engagement with the school stakeholders, the community, churches, political representatives and other agencies such as NICIE and the IEF.

The school benefits from a Board of Governors who have a wide range of skills and includes representation from parents, teachers, Trustees, school Principal and the Department of Education.

The school staff has a wide range of skills and experiences which benefit the children of Ballyhackett Primary School.

The school is well placed to become integrated with such a broad balance within the staff and governance of Ballyhackett PS already in place.

The Leadership Team meets regularly to monitor, evaluate and review the standards of teaching and learning in the school. There is a strong sense of leadership at all levels with each teacher having responsibility for curriculum development in specific subjects.

The Board of Governors provide both support and challenge to ensure that the Principal and staff are discharging their duties appropriately and that the standards of learning and teaching remain high. In 2018 the Board of Governors was reconstituted. Several experienced Governors remained in place to welcome and help new Governors. The Reconstituted Board of Governors has a skill set appropriate to the challenges and opportunities that the transformation process brings to the school. In addition, the Principal and Board of Governors have led the way in exploring the school's ethos and planning the Transformation process. They have also planned for promotion and embedding of the integrated ethos within the school.

With integrated status comes the need to expand and diversify the Board of Governors further. In order to meet our statutory requirements, the current Board of Governors are formulating recruitment plans for new governors.

This effective leadership is now being brought to bear in the proposal to provide Integrated Primary provision at Ballyhackett and the Principal and staff have engaged fully in the Transformation Process. The quality of education at Ballyhackett PS is good as outlined in the most recent ETI inspection which was carried out in 2014.

Below are a sample of the comments made by parents during the parental survey on the Transformation Consultation process.

“The staff, Board and parents/children are working extremely hard to make integrated Primary provision a reality for our Community.”

“Ballyhackett is the Heart of our Community and a great wee school.”

“Ballyhackett has provided a service to the community for almost 150 years. Locals from all denominations continue to support the school.”

2.7 Management of staff attendance and absenteeism.

There are no issues to be addressed with staff attendance and absenteeism.

2.8 Accessibility

Families attending Ballyhackett Primary School come from a wide catchment area. The majority of children live within the Castlerock and Articlave areas. There are no issues with access to Ballyhackett School, children can travel to school by bus or car. If Ballyhackett closed children would have to travel longer distances to school. We have included a letter in support of our Case for Change from, ‘Farmers For Action’ (Appendix 5) which highlights concerns relating to children travelling longer distances to school and the implications on their health and on the environment.

2.9 Community Links

The ETI report (2014) notes the school has strong links with parents and the local community:

‘The high level of involvement from parents and community volunteers in the life and work of the school is a key feature. The volunteers bring a wide range of skills and experience which contribute to the effective organisation of the school and the quality of the children’s

learning experiences. There is an inclusive and respectful ethos from children and families from a diverse range of backgrounds are welcomed and valued.'

The school has embraced many forms of communication, including the use of technology, to inform parents and the local community about Ballyhackett. The school has a website, two Facebook pages and a twitter account. The Principal also prepares a weekly newsletter.

The school has strong links with other schools in the area, with the local community and a variety of agencies.

There is a multi-functional use of the school building after school hours. For example, for sport, voluntary and community use. The following are some examples of classes which have been held in the hall in the recent past.

- A Trail Quest, cycling event
- Zumba
- Fitness classes
- Gaelic Games
- Soccer
- Tin whistle
- Church events (due to lack of Church Hall)
- Bodhran
- Fiddle
- Language classes
- Archaeology

Ballyhackett provides excellent extended provision. The school has received an award for its Read2dogs programme. There are Spanish and traditional music lessons. The School also participates in the Extended Schools programme. This initiative has enabled us to fund a Breakfast Club, an Art Club and a Beach Schools NI project. Money has been allocated from this year's funding to develop a Forest School project. The extracurricular Art and Beach Schools projects were very beneficial to the pupils as they were jointly attended by pupils from Ballyhackett and Castleroe Primary Schools and hence cemented friendships already formed during Shared Education. Extended Schools money has been used to fund the traditional music and Spanish clubs. Multi sports, Hockey and knitting have also been offered as extracurricular activities.

The school has a good relationship with Castlerock Playgroup, which visit Ballyhackett at Hallowe'en.

The school has good links with the local Controlled Primary School and both have worked together on a number of activities, such as The Game of Three Halves Event and trip to The Kingspan Stadium, a visit to the Scripture Union Bus, sharing the NI Water's Bus and participating in a joint Art project.

3 AREA PLANNING IMPACT

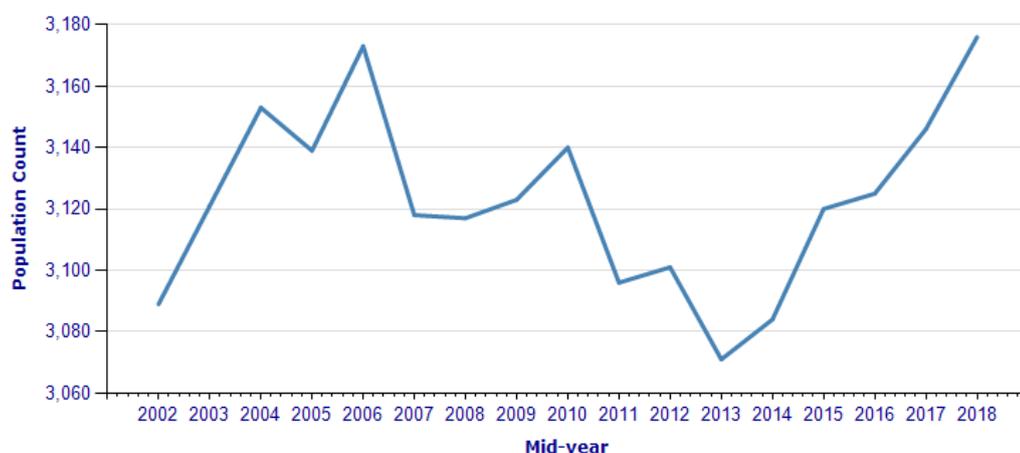
3.1 Population

At the end of April 2017, on behalf of all educational bodies, the EA published the first regional Area Plan for Northern Ireland – Providing Pathways: Strategic Area Plan Strategic Area Plan for School Provision (2017-2020). The focus of the Area Plan is to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs within a diverse system of education through a network of sustainable schools. The addition of Integrated Primary provision to cater for the needs of the Castlerock and Articlave area would be a welcome addition and would support the continued sustainability of Ballyhackett PS.

Population Change – 0 – 15 Year Olds

Over the period 2014-2024, the population of Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 5.3% (98,200 people), reaching 1,938,700 by 2024. The number of children in Northern Ireland (0-15 year olds) is projected to grow by 3.9% throughout the decade 2014-2024. Figure 2 (below) using NISRA data on the Castlerock ward, where the school is situated, indicates that there is an upward trend in the population with an increase in population of 0.9% between 2002 and 2017.

Figure 2: Population Trend, 2002 - 2017 (non-zero axis)



Source: [NISRA](#)

3.2 Equality impact and rural needs assessment update

Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (“the Act”) requires public authorities to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or reviewing a policy, strategy or plan and when designing or delivering a public service.

The areas from which Ballyhackett PS attracts pupils are, according to the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group (A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised April 2018, p16) defined as rural. Therefore, any decision made on this Development Proposal must take, “due regard” to the Act.

The Sustainable Schools’ Policy (SSP) states that,

“.....it is important that children in rural communities have access to a quality education.....”

An Integrated Primary School in this area would certainly meet that requirement.

It is not anticipated that any of the section 75 groupings will be adversely affected by this proposal and it is proposed that a full equality impact assessment will not be required.

3.3 Potential Impact on Integrated Schools

There is parental demand for an Integrated Primary School in the Castlerock, Articlave, Macosquin, Coleraine West of Bann, Bellarena and Magilligan area as can be seen from the parental consultations, the return of Expression of Interest Forms and the number of returns of the Community Support Forms (Appendix 2).

Lucid Talk compiled a Micro Poll in the Coleraine Area. This poll highlighted the fact that parents are supportive of integrated education at primary level but can’t access this option due to limited provision nearby.

In the case of Ballyhackett PS, the nearest integrated school is Roe Valley Integrated Primary School at 10.1 miles from the Castlerock area and it is over-subscribed. In addition, the next nearest schools are Mill Strand Integrated PS at 12.1 miles and Ballymoney Model Integrated at 16.5 miles.

Integrated Primary School	Distance from Ballyhackett PS
Roe Valley Integrated PS	10.1 miles
Mill Strand Integrated PS	12.1 miles
Ballymoney Model Integrated PS	16.5 miles

Table Five above shows distance from Ballyhackett to nearest Integrated Primaries.

Source: Google Maps

There is no integrated provision in the Coleraine, Castlerock and Articlave areas. Approval of this proposal would address parental demand for Integrated Primary Education in this area and would accommodate the needs of the whole community. It should be noted that there are currently statutory controlled, maintained and Irish medium provision in the area, but there is no integrated statutory provision available. Ballyhackett PS is well placed to fill the gap in Integrated Education provision in this area.

3.4 Potential impact on other schools

The school has worked hard to develop and promote positive working relationships with local schools, including Hezlett PS, Castleroe PS, St John's PS and Bellarena PS (prior to its closure). It is not envisaged that the Transformation of Ballyhackett PS would have a significant impact on enrolment numbers in any of these schools. In addition, there is currently no integrated provision available in this area and approval of Ballyhackett PS would support the Department in fulfilling its duty under Article 64 of the Education Reform Order (1989). The collection of Expressions of Interest Forms, completion of the Community Support forms and the results of the recent Micro Poll have provided evidence of community support for Ballyhackett Primary School's Transformation to Integrated status.

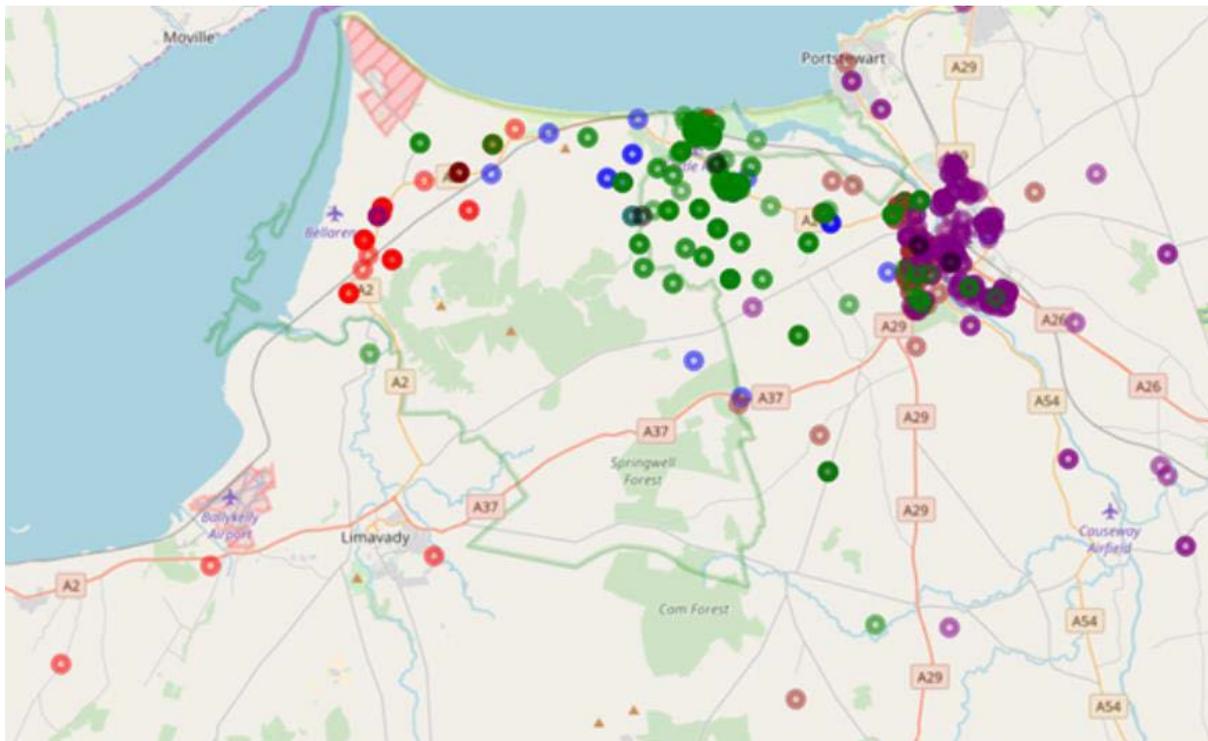
Table Six below shows the distance from Ballyhackett PS to the nearest schools.

Primary School	Distance (miles) from Ballyhackett PS	Sector
St John's PS, Coleraine	6.8 miles	Maintained
St Aidan's PS, Magilligan	6.3 miles	Maintained
St Malachy's PS, Coleraine	9 miles	Maintained
Hezlett PS, Coleraine	2 miles	Controlled
Castleroe PS	9 miles	Controlled

Map Two below shows where pupils travel from to attend Ballyhackett Primary School.

It shows that the children who attend Ballyhackett attend from Bellarena, Magilligan, Macosquin, Castlerock, Articlave, Coleraine and surrounding area. It can be seen that the catchment is quite dispersed and Ballyhackett Primary School is a focus for the families distributed throughout this area.

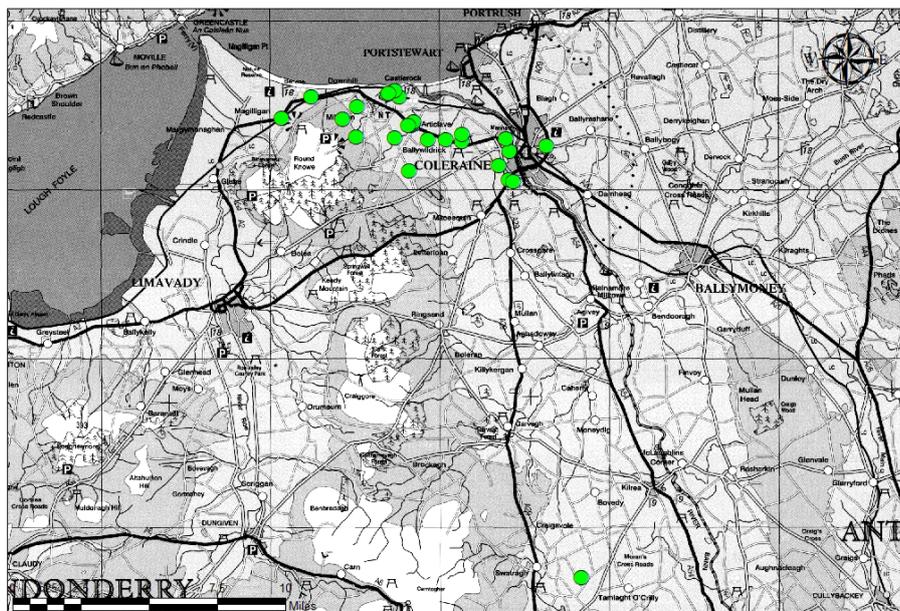
Map Two: Pupils enrolment at Ballyhackett PS and the nearest primary School.



Source: SIB/QUB Area Planning modeller

The above Map shows that pupils attending Ballyhackett PS and the nearest primary schools are not overlapping. Children who attend Ballyhackett PS attend from the villages of Castlerock and Articlave and the surrounding areas. It can be seen that the catchment is quite dispersed and Ballyhackett PS is a focus for the families distributed throughout this area.

Postcodes of pupil enrolment at Ballyhackett PS



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Source: Ballyhackett PS School data- Pupil enrolment by postcode

Map 3 above shows pupil distribution at Ballyhackett PS by postcode (Sept 2019)

It indicates that there is a mixed community across each of the wards for families attending the school which suggests that the school would provide a primary education within the local area to accommodate all families.

Table Seven – Deprivation Statistics for Castlerock Ward

Ward	Pupil intake by ward (shown in percentage (%))	Level of Deprivation (as @ 2010*)
Castlerock	47%	428
Churchland	5%	65
Cross Glebe	2.5%	54
Macosquin	21%	355
Magilligan	5%	321
The Cuts	10.5%	490
Upperlands	2.5%	218
Waterside	5%	535

Source: NISRA

It should be noted that a number of pupils enrolled in Ballyhackett PS come from the significantly deprived wards of Churchlands and Cross Glebe.

Table Eight: Enrolment, Applications and Admissions: Schools in the local area

School	Approved Enrolment Number	Approved admission number	15/16		16/17		17/18		18/19		19/20	
			1 st pref App	Total Admissions								
Ballyhackett Primary School	67	10	7	7	8	8	4	4	2	2	4	4
St John's PS	351	50	23	23	24	23	25	21	21	21	21	21
St Aidan's PS	82	12	11	11	13	13	6	6	7	7	12	12
St Malachy's PS	323	46	35	35	24	24	21	22	27	27	31	30
Hezlett PS	295	42	39	39	38	38	25	25	21	21	24	24
Castleroe PS	98	14	16	14	16	17	13	15	18	20	20	17
Roe Valley IPS	174	25	26	26	30	30	35	31	35	31	31	31
Mill Strand IPS	325	58	27	27	52	52	54	54	49	49	56	55
Ballymoney Model IPS	414	59	65	65	53	53	55	55	64	60	57	57

Table Eight shows that a significant number of both Controlled and CCMS schools are not achieving their admissions numbers and therefore enrolment numbers. However, when this is contrasted with the local Integrated Primaries a difference can be seen. Integrated Primary Schools are performing well in terms of admissions numbers. The Board of Governors believe that this is an indication that many people in this area wish to send their children to an Integrated School and this is further reinforced by the recent Lucid Talk Micro poll in the area.

It would appear that Area Planning has had a negative impact in this area already and the closure of Ballyhackett PS would lead to a greater isolation for the local community.

It is felt that had CCMS and EA worked together, instead of working in a sectoral fashion then an accommodation could have been reached in this area which would not have resulted in the further destruction of the fabric of this rural community. This bi- partisan sectoral approach to Area planning will have long lasting damaging consequences for Castlerock and surrounding areas. Potential issues arising in the future may include a lack of services for families leading to people choosing to either to leave the area or not to move into the area at all.

These arguments have been made in the Board of Governors response to the CCMS Consultation and it can be viewed in Appendix 6.

It should also be noted that the Department of Education's role in closing rural schools is at odds with other Departments which are working together to create vibrant sustainable communities. The Board of Governors feel that Ballyhackett PS should have been given more time to explore Transformation and create a successful integrated School, as we believe is possible.

The Department must be mindful of its role in facilitating and encouraging integrated Education.

4 RATIONALE

4.1 Sustainability

Ballyhackett Primary School is a small rural Primary School. Admission numbers have fallen in recent years, in line with a fall in numbers of pupils in other Maintained Schools in the area as demonstrated in Table 8. However, a recent poll has suggested that there is a strong appetite for integrated education in this area. Through prudent financial planning Ballyhackett has until recently enjoyed a healthy budget. However, it is felt to follow the Development Plan of CCMS would be discriminatory. Area planning states that it aims to develop creative and innovative solutions. If Ballyhackett PS was to close, this would leave Catholic families having to travel long distances in future. A triangle of three schools, St John's PS, At Aidan's PS and Termoncanice PS would be created with each school being a twenty-minute drive from each other.

On the other hand, if Ballyhackett PS was given permission to transform to Integrated Status, then these children would have a viable educational option for the Catholic families in this area as well as being open and welcome to all other families who chose and integrated education for their child. An integrated school would provide parents with a choice which is currently not being met in this area.

Integrated Education would give all parents a choice for their children, particularly in light of the rising demand for Integrated Education, as seen above.

4.2 Parental demand

'Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools' (2009) states that the Department has a 'clear duty to respond to parental demand' for Integrated Education in a given area (page 16).

There are several sources of compelling evidence that indicate a high level of parental demand for Integrated Education in Ballyhackett PS catchment area.

The recent independent Micro Poll conducted by Lucid Talks clearly demonstrates a demand for integrated primary school education. Over 81% of parents with pre or primary school children voted 'Yes' for their support for integrated education.

In April 2019 Ballyhackett PS completed its parental ballot for integration with 100% of parents who responded saying 'Yes'.

In our initial consultation we have almost 500 expressions of support from our wider community including churches, community group and playgroups.

The Transformation Action Group (TAG) has been working since early May and have been supported by NICIE to focus on marketing, engaging with the local community, engagement in ethos workshops for staff, parents and governors as well as gathering Expressions of Interest Forms. Parents, staff and governors spent a significant amount of time including over the summer holiday period profiling the potential for the development of integrated primary provision at Ballyhackett.

It is important to note that Ballyhackett PS balloted parents in April 2019 and the Managing Authority did not engage with the school until 21st August 2019 regarding the process for taking forward the Development Proposal for Transformation even though the Case for Change for Closure had already been lodged in March 2019 and was due for publication on 3rd September 2019. This came as a great shock to the Governors and the school community particularly as the school has a healthy financial situation at present. In addition, the TAG have not had enough time to fully explore the potential Transformation might have for the area.

Table Four outlines the number of parental Expressions of Interest Forms. A copy of the form used is attached as Appendix 1.

To date Ballyhackett PS has received twenty-six Expression of Interest forms. These show a healthy balance of community backgrounds.

The very short timeframe and the fact that our Open Day for parents isn't until next month is reflected in the Expression of Interest forms received to date. The Board of Governors feel that they have not been given adequate time to explore and market the transformation potential. However, the Board of Governors and TAG will continue to work to increase these numbers. It should be noted that the numbers of Expressions of interest rise from Year one.

There is parental demand for an integrated primary school in this Coleraine, Castlerock and Articlave areas as can be seen from the parental consultation and recent Micro Poll. (ref: Appendix Seven).

Based on NISRA data there are 1923 children 0-4 in our catchment area.

For Ballyhackett PS, the nearest integrated school is Roe Valley Integrated Primary School at 10.1 miles from Castlerock area and it is over-subscribed. In addition, the next nearest schools are Mill Strand Integrated PS at 12.1 miles and Ballymoney Model Integrated at 16.5 miles.

We acknowledge the uncertainty that our current status creates for potential parents. However, the above figures clearly indicate that within an academic year Ballyhackett would have sustainable numbers. If we draw the correlation of plus 80% of parents supporting integration and the potential 1923 children, we require less than 1% of this potential 0-4 population.

Obviously the five-month timeline to submit our proposal is not adequate to gather complete evidence but the numbers and parental demand are there to support Ballyhackett as a sustainable integrated primary school in this area.

Whilst the table above refers to future demand, there is strong evidence of existing parental demand for Integrated Education in the area as the pattern of rising over-subscription at the local Roe Valley Integrated School demonstrates.

There are some interesting points to note about the returned forms:

- There would be five Primary Ones starting in September 2020. This is an increase on 2019-20
- There are other parents who would be interested in Ballyhackett as a school for their child but there is uncertainty around the future of the school as CCMS has lodged a parallel Development Proposal.
- In the 2021-22 year the school has nearly reached its admissions number. We are confident that we could reach the admissions number by this time the Application Process opened.

- The numbers remain steady for two years and there is a nominal return for 2024-25. There are several reasons for this including the fact that the parents of new borns are not yet thinking about their child's primary education. We are confident that with the marketing work in which we have engaged, we could promote and increase the admission numbers and be reaching our target of fifteen Primary Ones by 2023.
- Some of the children who are listed above have older siblings. We have been told that parents would move siblings to an integrated School. The Board of Governors would be confident that as well as rising admissions numbers we could have a rising enrolment throughout the school.
- It should be noted that some of the returned Expression of Interest Forms came from the Limavady area. As has been stated before Roe Valley Integrated Primary School is over subscribed. Ballyhackett Primary School would provide a choice for parents.
- A number of Expression of Interest forms showed that the parents were from different faiths or indeed described themselves as Other. In these cases, Integrated Education is an ideal and logical choice for parents. Yet there is no Integrated Primary School in the immediate area. The nearest Integrated Primary School is oversubscribed. The Board of Governors are confident that were Ballyhackett to transform to Integrated status then many more parents would choose us.

The Board of Governors response to the CCMS Consultation can be found in (Appendix 6).

Ballyhackett PS believes that Transforming to Integrated status is a cost effective and appropriate way to respond to the rising parental demand for Integrated Education.

Another important point to note that in recent years there has been a dramatic decline in Religious Observance. Statistical and anecdotal evidence points to declining Church attendance and the decreasing importance of the traditional labels of Catholic and Protestant. This can also be seen in the Micro Poll (Appendix Seven). An increasing number of people are identifying as being, "Other" or "None." An Integrated Primary School, gives people the choice to express their individuality.

Traditionally there have always been good relations between the two main religions in this area. When gathering evidence to highlight parental demand Religious Backgrounds of the submitted Expression of Interest Forms and to see if there are any patterns or significant observations.

Table Nine shows an analysis of the Completed Expression of Interest Forms

Religious Background	Total no of Parents	Child
Protestant	38%	54%
Catholic	42%	23%
Other	17%	23%
None/ Not completed	Not declared 2%	
Total Percentage of Parents /Children	52	26

Table Ten: Religious balance at Ballyhackett and local Primary Schools

Primary School Name	Catholic		Protestant		Other		Total pupils
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Ballyhackett PS	26	72.2	5	13.9	5	13.9	36
St John's PS	149	96.1	*	*	#	#	155
St Aidan's PS	#	#	-	-	*	*	62
St Malachy's PS	192	90.1	*	*	#	#	213
Hezlett PS	*	*	140	60.3	#	#	232
Roe Valley IPS	124	62.6	49	24.7	25	12.6	198
Mills Strand IPS	71	23.7	69	23.1	159	53.2	299
Ballymoney Model IPS	22	5.5	265	66.6	111	27.9	398
Approx. total**	584	37%	528	33%	300	19%	1593

Source: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/school-enrolments-school-level-data>

- Refers to less than 5 cases where data is considered sensitive
- # figure suppressed under rules of disclosure
- ** incomplete stat due to missing cases. The table highlights that apart from Ballyhackett none of the schools in their areas have a level of diversity in religious background that would support the Governments programme for shared society. Ballyhackett already deliver in this regard and integrated status would enhance this position even further.

Table Eleven reinforces the fact that this has been a stable and growing trend.

Table Eleven: Declaration of Religious balance at Ballyhackett since 2015

	Total Enrolment	Roman Catholic	%	Protestant	%	Other	%
2015	43	34	79.1	#	#	*	*
2016	44	31	75.6	6	14.6	4	9.8
2017	44	32	72.7	6	13.6	6	13.6
2018	36	32	71.1	8	17.8	5	11.1
2019	36	26	72.2	5	13.9	5	13.9

Source: DE census data (<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/school-enrolments-school-level-data>)

The school recognises that a balance of pupils from Catholic, Protestant and Other is important within an integrated school. The school is in a predominantly Protestant area. However, in developing this case for change, the school has found evidence which highlights the increasing numbers of inter faith relationships.

According to Paul McLaughlin, (NIMMA) it is now recognised that one in five relationships in Northern Ireland are between people of differing faiths. From Table 10 we can surmise that the percentage of Protestant children at Ballyhackett has remained constant over the last five years. There has been a decrease in the number of children described as Catholics attending Ballyhackett but a noticeable rise in those who describe themselves as other.

The three existing descriptors of Protestant, Catholic and Other are outlined in the legislative framework for Integrated Education. However, these labels do not enable an analysis of these complex identities nor any determination as to what level of community integration is taking place within the families represented in school.

In bringing together the Expressions of Interest forms, the school noted that many indicated a difference in the community background of the mother and father. With their local knowledge, it is the view of the Board of Governors and the TAG that one of the reasons that parents chose Ballyhackett was because of its long standing tradition of educating children from various Christian backgrounds. Hence an appropriate choice for parents who are in an interfaith relationship. This however is only one factor as to why the trend can be seen above in Table Eleven.

4.3 Contribution to reconciliation in the community and in society

The NICIE Statement of Principles is the key document providing guidance on ethos in the Integrated school. The four pillars of Equality, Faith and Values, Parental Involvement and Social Responsibility have clear links to the direction and desired outcomes of the NI Assembly for our people, communities and society. In the absence of an Assembly, approval of this Development Proposal will assist the Department to continue to make a positive contribution and fulfil a number of government legislative and policy agendas, including the following:

4.4 The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989

Article 64 (1) – It shall be the duty of the Department to encourage and facilitate integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils.

NI Programme for Government 2016- 2021:

We are a shared society that respects diversity

We are a confident, welcoming, outward-looking society

We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest

We connect people through our infrastructure

We give our children and young people the best start in life

The Belfast Agreement (1998) stated:

“An essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing.”

It is thus important to providing integrated education provision which ensures that all of the community is served and parental demand is met. This suggests that an integrated primary school will be welcomed and may indeed be a preferred option for many families in the area.”

Together, Building a United Community (published 2013)

The four key priorities each express a shared aim which all government departments are expected to contribute to:

Our Children and Young People

Shared Aim: To continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.

Our Shared Community

Shared Aim: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.

Our Safe Community

Shared Aim: to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety.

Our Cultural Expression

Shared Aim: to create a community, which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced

Schools for The Future: A policy for sustainable schools (2009)

'DE has a clear duty... to respond positively to parental demand for integrated and Irish medium education' (page 16)

Every School a Good School (2008)

The characteristics of a successful school outlined in the policy are: Child-centred provision; High quality teaching and learning; Effective leadership; A school connected to its local community.

Ballyhackett is committed to providing a child centred education and the children have been asked for their views on the journey to integration.

Some of their comments are listed below:

“Integration means mixed religions.”

“I think it is good because we will meet new people.”

“I will meet new people and mixed religions”

“I think it is good because we can learn about different people”

5 EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

If this Development Proposal were to be accepted, it would provide the first Integrated Primary School in our catchment area.

Ballyhackett would be the first CCMS primary school to transform and in line with being the ‘**exemplar**’ in shared education is well placed to be a successful champion of integration.

All the stakeholders have been involved in the transformation process. The parents and Governors have worked tirelessly to successfully fulfil the Department’s timeline. A timeline, which, has been considerably shorter than those offered to other schools.

The ETI Interim Report on the Shared Education Project 2016 (See Appendix 8) showed how the teachers and pupils benefitted from this partnership.

“The partnership has played a key role in bringing together our two school communities as well as deriving many positive educational benefits for all our pupils.”

“Teachers have the opportunity to learn from each other.”

“Pupils have completed evaluations at the end of Thematic units of work which have helped us to understand the skills that they have developed, what they have enjoyed and what they have found challenging.”

It should be noted that this partnership had reached the embedding level of the matrix in all areas, apart from in Community. We are confident that we would have attained it this

year as we had worked extremely hard in this area. This is seen through three successful events which the partnership has hosted:

- A. A Music in March Event in Coleraine Town Hall (2018)
- B. A Health & Wellness Fair in May 2019
- C. The Art and Beach Schools NI Extended Schools Clubs
- D. The school choirs attending The Peace Proms in March 2020.

Ballyhackett has well established links with other schools and community groups in the area.

Integrated schools educate children in an environment where self-esteem and independence are developed as priorities. Self-respect and respect for others are strongly encouraged. The integrated ethos is nurtured to ensure inclusion of people from different religions, cultures, genders, abilities and socio-economic backgrounds.

Integrated education encourages open-minded attitudes among pupils as well as building the confidence and ability to question, observe, listen and make informed decisions.

Ballyhackett will continue to promote the goals of the Northern Ireland Curriculum which aims to,

“empower young people to develop their potential and to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.”

It helps the young people develop as:

- Individuals
- Contributors to Society
- Contributors to the economy and Environment

An Integrated School will provide the parents of the Coleraine & Castlerock areas with a choice. Integrated Education also give parents the opportunity to participate fully in all aspects of school life.

The postcode statistics show that some of the children who are currently attending Ballyhackett Primary School come a range of socio-economic deprived areas. The

Governors believe that an Integrated School in Ballyhackett would benefit the whole community in this area and promote stronger community links.

There is a strong demand for integrated Education in this area, seen through the Micro Poll, School poll and Community Support forms. The school believes that DE should facilitate and support the Transformation process and this Case for Change.

6 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN)

After the successful parental ballot the School Governors came together to plan the Transformation process. The results of this meeting combined with the work of the TAG has been used to develop a Transformation Action Plan. The Plan uses the four pillars of the ISEF Framework as a means of planning and monitoring the Transformation process.

The Transformation Plan provides a guide for Ballyhackett's Transformation. It combines the school's priorities and main actions required to implement Transformation, along with the key outcomes over an initial three-year period. It details the resources necessary to deliver these outcomes. The Plan is based on a comprehensive self-evaluation exercise conducted with stakeholders and aims to develop integrated education throughout the school's governance, curriculum, planning and learning & teaching.

The Transformation Action Plan sets out the priorities for the Transformation process for Ballyhackett. It shows how the Transformation process fits with the School's Development Plan and the main actions required to achieve Transformation. The Transformation Action Plan is attached in Appendix Three.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The approval of this Development Proposal represents a cost effective method to fulfil the Department's statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate' Integrated Education in Northern Ireland.

The school currently has adequate accommodation and is in a stable financial position.

No immediate major works would be required to facilitate the Transformation.

8 APPENDICES (attached as separate file)

- Appendix 1 Expression of Interest Form
- Appendix 2 Community Support Form
- Appendix 3 The Transformation Action Plan
- Appendix 4 Three-year Financial Plan
- Appendix 5 Letter of support from Farmers For Action
- Appendix 6 Board of Governors Collective Response to CCMS Consultation
- Appendix 7 Lucid Talk Coleraine Micro Poll
- Appendix 8 ETI “An Interim Report on the Shared Education Signature Project” 2016
- Appendix 9: Letter in support of Ballyhackett from a local MLA

Appendix 1 - Expression of Interest Form

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM CONFIDENTIAL

This expression of interest form has been produced by NICIE¹ and Ballyhackett Primary School to gather information on parental demand for Integrated Primary Provision in the Castlerock and surrounding areas.

As part of our role, NICIE represents Integrated Education on Area Planning. The key aim of Area Planning is to ensure all pupils have access to high quality education that meets their needs in schools that are educationally and financially viable.²

By completing this form, you will support us to assess the level of parental demand for integrated primary provision in this area. If you would like to discuss this, please contact the NICIE on 028 90972910 or Ballyhackett Primary School on 028 7084 8476.

Please note that this is not an application form.

Your data is subject to GDPR³. The information supplied will be stored by Ballyhackett Primary School and NICIE and used in accordance with the Area planning requirements. It will also be used to inform you of events and progress in the development of any new Integrated school in this area. We are required to share pupils' data with the Department of Education and/or the Education Authority on a statutory basis. This data sharing underpins school establishment and will be shared with any new school.

We will retain your data until such time as any new Integrated School becomes established.

Pupil's Last Name:

First Name(s):

Male/Female: _____ Date of Birth: _____

¹ The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) which is funded by the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the growth and development of Integrated Education

² The purpose of the Area Planning process is to implement the Department of Education's Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools, known as the Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP).

³ GDPR is the General Data Protection Regulation which governs the use of personal data for more information see the Privacy Notice on the NICIE website

Name(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Address:

Email:

Perceived community background: For this purpose, the description is limited to: Roman Catholic, Protestant or Other. Please tick one box only for each person:

Mother:	Protestant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Father:	Protestant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child:	Protestant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roman Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

I/We wish to express our interest in integrated primary school provision in the Castlerock and surrounding areas.

Signature of parent(s)/guardian(s)

Please Return to:

Ballyhackett Primary School, 50 Altikeeragh Road, Castlerock, Co.Derry/ Londonderry, BT51 4SR

For Office Use: Date received: _____

Appendix 2 - Community Support Form

**I want to express my support for Ballyhackett Primary School
in their intention to become an integrated school.**

Your name:

Your post code: BT

Your email address:

Your signature:

Please Tick:

I am happy to be contacted by the school about integrated education in the future

I am NOT happy to be contacted by the school about integrated education in the future

***This community support form has been produced by
Ballyhackett Primary School to gather evidence of community
support for Integrated Education in this area.***

***If you wish to express support for Ballyhackett P.S. to become an integrated school,
please read the following information about how we will use your data and
complete the form overleaf to confirm that you agree to these terms of data use.***

About Your Data:

Your data is subject to General Data Protection Regulations. GDPR governs the use of personal data. We will retain your data according to our school's privacy notice, which is available by contacting the school principal. The information supplied will be stored and used in compiling evidence to support Ballyhackett Primary School to request to transform to become Ballyhackett Controlled Integrated Primary School.

We may be required to share your data with the Department of Education, NICIE (the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education) and/or the Education Authority on a statutory basis. This data sharing underpins the transformation of the school.

**If you have any questions, please contact Ballyhackett Primary
School on 028 7084 8476**

Thank you for your support

Appendix 3 - Three Year Transformation Plan



Ballyhackett Primary School Transformation Action Plan 2019-2022 Learner Centred (Year 1)

<p>Baseline Position/Summary at October 2019. (What?):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCMS Consultation on the Future of Education in Ballyhackett PS. • The stakeholders are aware that Ballyhackett Primary School is proposing to become Integrated. They are informed of the process. • Parents/staff attended information session provided by NICIE on the Transformation process. • There is a commitment to involve the pupils in the decision making process in the school. The school has a School Council. There are two pupils from Year Four to Year Seven represented on the Council. These Student Councillors are chosen by a first past the post voting system. The pupils inform the student body about developments in school. They discuss the child friendly SDP and sign it. The Student Council is used as a means of gathering pupil views on developments and initiatives. • The School Council represent the school at various functions and activities. • The school has an Eco Council. • The school welcomes the diverse identities of all members of the school community. The School has a Shared Education practice, which is an exemplar of best practice. • The pupils have participated in projects with other local Primary Schools. • An IEF grant has been obtained in order that staff visit integrated Primary Schools. • Staff, Governors & Parents have attended NICIE information sessions • Principal has visited other Integrated Primary Schools. 	<p>Evaluation (So What?):</p> <p>Ballyhackett Primary School has been involved in a Shared Education partnership which has been an exemplar of best practice. In 2012/20 the programme is focussing on WAU and ICT. A joint Ballyhackett/Castleroe choir is attending the Peace Proms Event in March 2020. The partnership also carries out extracurricular work. It hosted a very successful, “Music in March” Event in March 2018. It also held joint Art and Beach Schools NI after schools clubs.</p> <p>The school has also completed Educational programmes with Hezlett and Bellarena Primary Schools.</p> <p>The Student Council have been consulted on Transformation and some of the comments have been included in The Case For Change.</p>		
	<p>Future Actions (What Next?):</p> <p>Year 1 (2019/20)</p> <p>See next section</p>	<p>Year 2 (2020/21)</p> <p>1)Through the curricular areas of PDMU/The Arts pupils will be encouraged to explore themes of similarity and difference.</p> <p><i>Actions subject to DE decision</i></p>	<p>Year 3 (2021/22)</p> <p>1)The curricular areas for focus on integration will be extended to include RE and WAU with pupils encourage to explore their local area from a wider perspective</p> <p><i>Actions subject to DE decision</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal & TAG team members have attended NICIE /IEF workshops and events. School explored Whole School Approach to Nurture programme. Ballyhackett's current SDP is in Year Two. Transformation would allow new SDP to have Integrated Education at its core. 					
Learner Centred 2019/20 Target	Actions	Success Criteria (Quantitative & Qualitative)	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring & evaluation
1) All pupils to be introduced to the concept of integration in an age – appropriate manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of circle time, class discussion and group work to explore themes of similarity and difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils able to articulate an understanding of the proposed change in status 	April 18 - June 20	Year group teachers PDMU coordinator CCEA Living Learning Together	Pupil voice – survey School Council to report on views of the classes.
2) School will explore opportunities to consider and celebrate Diversity in our Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School celebrated European Day of Languages Harvest Assembly & Food Donation programme Rhythm Rascals Fundraiser- to include traditional Irish and Scottish music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils understood the European Day of Languages All pupils will participate in Assembly and donated to the Food Bank. 	23 rd September 23 rd October	Elders from local Church Donations from Community	Surveys and parental Feedback

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A concert which will be attended by the whole Community and which will raise funds for the school. 	Jan 2020		
3) All pupils to be involved in the Good Relations Project, supported by CC&GBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will participate in the Good Relations programme. The programme is called, "Exploring Cultural Diversity." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children will participate in the programme which explores Cultural Diversity in the Coleraine Borough. 	Jan 2020	CC&GBC	Completion of 4 sessions Council and pupil Evaluations.
4) Pupils from P4-7 to attend Peace Proms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peace Proms engages children and young people in music. and enriches their lives through exceptional musical experiences and performances. Peace Proms celebrates culture and diversity and promotes peace, unity and tolerance through music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children from P4 to P7 will participate in the Peace Proms concert in March 2020. 	March 2020	Peace proms resources	Enjoyment of Peace proms

Links with ISEF – Outcomes for Learners (The Inspection & Self-Evaluation Framework)

Children have a sense of personal and social responsibility and contribute confidently to the life and work of the school and local community.

Staff enable children to develop insights into society and other cultures.

Children develop dispositions to learning appropriate to their stage of development, for example, commitment, determination, openness to new ideas, respect, curiosity, flexibility and integrity.

Children manage their own emotions, personal conduct and interactions with others.

Children apply their learning and develop team-working and leadership roles in a range of local and global contexts and have an understanding of these roles in future life and employment contexts



Ballyhackett Primary School Transformation Action Plan 2019-2022 High Quality Teaching & Learning (Year 1)

<p>Baseline Position/Summary at October 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad and balanced curriculum • Teachers plan and evaluate their teaching • Differentiated teaching & learning activities • All children have access to the Northern Ireland Curriculum • A Shared Education programme which is an, “Exemplar of best practice.” • A SDP, which is in Year Two. Year One focussed on developing positive behaviours and relationships. New SENDO and Anti Bullying Legislation • Extra-curricular activities • Breakfast Club • Extended Schools Activities • Programmes which extend the children’s learning e.g. Good Relations Programme • The school is working to raise standards in Literacy and Maths. In September 2019, Ballyhackett PS won an award for, Raising Standards in Literacy. • Staff have opportunities to engage in cross community activities. 	<p>Evaluation (So What?):</p> <p>Staff from the Shared Education programme plan and share good practice on a regular basis. Relationships between the staff are very good and this is reflected in the relationships the children share. There is a Shared Education Parental Focus Group and a joint Shared Education Policy. Pupils are involved in a range of after schools activities and some of these are held with both Ballyhackett and Castleroe.</p> <p>Staff attend ICT training led by the local “Apple School.”</p> <p>The school is visited by many volunteers who help provide excellent Teaching & Learning experiences.</p> <p>The School Principal is a member of the North Derry Principals’ Group.</p>		
	<p>Future Actions (What Next?):</p> <p>Year 1 (2019/20)</p> <p>See next section</p>	<p>Year 2 (2020/21)</p> <p>1)Review of delivery of curricular provision across KS 1 and 2 to include provision for RE.</p> <p>2) Staff to engage in building relationships with others with in the Integrated Education Sector.</p> <p>3) Staff to participate in various Integrated Forums: Teachers’ Committee Senior Leadership Forums SENCOs</p>	<p>Year 3 (2021/22)</p> <p>1)CPD strategy implemented for all staff</p> <p><i>Actions subject to DE decision</i></p>

		<p>Early Years</p> <p>4) Consulting with all stakeholders in preparation of new SDP.</p> <p><i>Actions subject to DE decision</i></p>			
High Quality Teaching & Learning 2019/20 Target	Actions	Success Criteria (Quantitative & Qualitative)	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring & evaluation
1) Teachers will be given the opportunity to prepare for the Transformation process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will visit other integrated Schools to gain a deeper insight into the ethos of integrated education. Co-ordinators will review and update policies. Staff, to attend NICIE Anti – bias training. Review of resources- books, music, sporting equipment, cultural symbols Review of the school environment- images, notices etc. How to make the school environment more inclusive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will have a deeper understanding of the ethos of integrated Education. Policies will be reviewed and updated. Staff complete accredited training and plan to implement learning Acquisition of new resources to meet the experiences and backgrounds of a diverse setting 	Jan-Jun 2020	Sub cover cost (post parental ballot grant obtained) TAG Teachers NICIE & EA	Policies amended and updated Resources purchased Staff demonstrating an awareness of bias and stereotyping

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A school that is welcoming to all – where the history of the school is honoured and the new identity is clear. 			
2) Pupils will participate in the Council’s Good Relations Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children will show a greater awareness of similarities and differences between themselves and others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will demonstrate an understanding of Cultural Diversity in the Coleraine Area 	Jan- Feb 2020	CC&GBC Good Relations Project	Pupils will complete evaluations of the programme.
3) Preparing the school environment for Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The staff will complete an audit in preparation for the opening of an Integrated School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NICIE will guide staff through an audit in preparation for opening of a new integrated School. 	June 2020	NICIE Staff	The school environment will be welcoming to all. The School’s History will be reflected but the ethos of Integrated School will be visible.
4) To extend the good practice evident in the Shared Education partnership to the Integrated setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will use A Pupil Pathway: A Resource for Teacher to Support Shared Education to support the experiences which will be offered by Ballyhackett Teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils will demonstrate an ability to reach the Educational outcomes as laid out in the Shared pathways Document 	Sep2020-21	Teaching Staff	Pupils will work together to create a climate where disputes, should they arise be resolved successfully and peacefully. Pupils will retain their identity while celebrating the difference with others.

Links with ISEF (Quality of Provision)

The curriculum is sufficiently broad, balances and flexible, tailored to meet the needs of individual children, and inspires the children to learn, progress and achieve.

The curriculum promotes social inclusivity which ensures participation in education for all children.

The school has an agreed whole- school programme that addresses issues such as bullying, sectarianism, racism and good relations and is an integral part of learning and teaching and the school development plan.

Senior leaders focus on building staff expertise and capacity through career-long professional learning which is aligned to whole-school priorities for improvement.



Ballyhackett Primary School Transformation Plan 2019-2022 Effective Leadership (Year 1)

Baseline Position/Summary at October 2019. (What?):	Evaluation (So What?):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal has received a grant to facilitate staff to visit other Integrated Primary Schools to gain a deeper understanding of Integrated Education • Principal, members of the Board of Governors and TAG have attended training offered by NICIE/IEF • School’s child centred ethos, its high level of pastoral care is promoted by all staff members. Consultation has been on going throughout the Transformation process. • A successful Shared Education partnership which is inclusive in its nature. High quality Teaching and Learning experiences lead to high educational outcomes. The partnership has scored very well across the matrix for evaluating Shared Education. • The Board of Governors and staff have fully supported the Transformation process. Regular meetings have taken place. • Ballyhackett Primary School has always been an inclusive school. Its motto is, “Together Everyone Achieves More!” • Regular meetings with NICIE, parents and Governors. 	Reflection on present position and experience of leadership actions within ABC School and impact on Year 1 targets. e.g. Transformation process to date including engagement with parents, BOG and others, vision for integrated education, participation in SE partnership, participation in local principal groups/clusters		
	Future Actions (What Next?): Year 1 (2019/20) See next section	Year 2 (2020/21) 1) Articulate a shared vision for integrated education within wider Castlerock and Coleraine areas 2) Engage with principal from other Integrated Schools. 3) Principal will become a member of APTIS, attending committee meetings and conferences. <i>Actions subject to DE decision</i>	Year 3 (2021/22) 1. With EA, ensure reconstitution of BOG 2) 3) <i>Actions subject to DE decision</i>

Effective Leadership 2019/20 Target	Actions	Success Criteria (Quantitative & Qualitative)	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring & evaluation
1)All stakeholders to be provided with clear and accurate information regarding transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation/integration as a standing item on agenda for BOG meetings • Staff meeting for all teachers to provide update on progress • Meeting for all support staff to provide information on integration and transformation • Meeting for all parents to provide information on integration and transformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All issues relating to transformation and integration are fully and comprehensively discussed at BOG level • Teaching and support staff understand the transformation process as it applies to their school and have an appreciation of the implications of integration • Parents are able to articulate accurate information relating to the transformation process 	Nov 18 – June 20	NICIE EA	Minutes of meetings, including BOG and TAG Evaluations carried out by NICIE /EA Officers Stakeholder surveys
2)The Principal will evaluate the current ethos and reflect on consultation outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit school vision and ethos with stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a new vision and ethos for Ballyhackett Primary School. • All stakeholders will contribute to the process. 	Third Term 2020		
3)Principal will articulate the vision for Integrated Education with the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wording for new vision agreed with the Board of Governors • Pupil version of new vision to be agreed with The School Council. • New vision will be shared with the parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and Governors will know their vision of the school • All children will know the vision of the school • The vision is displayed throughout the school 		NICIE	

Links with ISEF (Leadership & Management)

Senior leaders have a shared and coherent, regularly reviewed vision which is based on the school's values and aims, is child-centred and enables children to achieve high standards.

Senior leaders promote the key values of equality of opportunity and diversity.

The senior leaders are developing a whole-school approach to shared education, with an emphasis on high quality experiences and improved educational outcomes;

The senior leaders are developing a whole-school approach to shared (integrated) education, with an emphasis on high quality experiences and improved educational outcomes;

			<i>Actions may be subject to DE decision</i>		<i>Actions will be subject to DE decision</i>	
Community Connections	Actions	Success Criteria (Quantitative & Qualitative)	Timescale	Resources	Monitoring & evaluation	
2019/20 Target						
1) Ensure that members of the public have clear and accurate information about school's intention to transform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information related to the school's intention to transform displayed on banners and posters around the local area. Parents and wider community have been invited to hear about the School's proposal to become Integrated Local Councillors have been made aware of the plans to move towards integration. They have been encouraged to support the school in the process. An activity session has been arranged with the local nursery Group. Representative from local churches invited to participate in school assemblies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press releases on the topic of Transformation Parents and wider community provide supportive comments for the Case For Change Councillors provide positive comments for Case For Change EOI and Community Support Forms collected. A rota of events agreed by the local clergy. 	Sep 19 – Jun 20	Principal Chair of Governors TAG Team	<p>Newspaper clippings</p> <p>Community aware of Transformation Process and Supportive</p> <p>Support shown on Facebook and Twitter accounts Contact details provided showing support for Transformation to Integrated Status</p> <p>Letter of Support from local businesses</p> <p>Increased enrolment</p>	
2) Ensure that the school is seen at local, cross community events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas Carol Service participation in the area- both Castlerock and Articlave. Carol Singing in local Sainsbury's store The school will seek appropriate local connections across both main traditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school will be seen at cross community events in the area. The school will actively seek opportunities to work 	Sep 19 – Jun 20			

	where possible and relationships developed.	with cross community groups.			
4) There will be a marketing campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School website will be update and renewed in order to reference integrated education and its ethos. The School will have a new school prospectus with a clear reference to Integrated Education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school website will be updated and renewed. The school will have a new school prospectus with clear emphasis on Integrated Education. 	September 2020 Subject to DE approval		

Links with ISEF (Governance)

Governors communicate widely the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school and ensure strong links between the school and its wider community

Governors access available external support and facilitate clustering with other schools for children, staff and governors

Relationships with other schools, and the wider community, support the holistic development of the children

Transformation Indicators (Defining & Developing)

(adapted from CRED Indicators, CRED Policy Guidance)

Learner Centred

- a. The School Development Plan already features or will feature reference to integrated education.
- b. A whole school approach to integration is being developed. All staff and young people are aware that the school is proposing to become integrated and understand what this means.
- c. The school is sensitive to and welcoming of the diverse identities of all members of the school community and there is evidence of an acceptance of difference and a valuing of diversity.
- d. Staff recognise the importance of modelling appropriate use of language and behaviour and demonstrating this.
- e. There is a commitment to involve young people in discussions and decisions.
- f. Children and young people are actively encouraged to engage with other schools and communities of different backgrounds and traditions.
- g. There is an active school council.

High Quality Teaching & Learning

- a. The Curriculum already reflects both of the main traditions in NI, e.g. language, sport, music, literature.
- b. There is evidence of critical reflection by staff alongside a process of plan, do, review which allows for continuous improvement and development.
- c. All staff have opportunities to engage in cross community activities.

- d. Teachers, are engaged with the more challenging aspects of PDMU/Citizenship.
- e. Teachers are supported to engage with controversial and sensitive issues.
- f. Opportunities are given across the curriculum to promote shared values and to help young people to value differences and to challenge prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping.

Effective Leadership

- a. All staff have access to (or will have access to) appropriate training opportunities which will support the development of integrated education.
- b. Staff have management support to initiate and sustain integrated practice.
- c. There is clear support from the principal and Board of Governors to follow the main principles of integration.
- d. School leadership demonstrates clear vision and commitment to integration in practice.
- e. There is already promotion of an inclusive ethos within the school.
- f. There is a commitment to planning, monitoring and evaluating integrated practice.
- g. There is engagement with external agencies (EA and NICIE) in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of integrated practice.

Community Connections

- a. Parents, carers and the wider local community are fully informed about the school's proposals and commitment to integration.
- b. Parents, carers and the wider community have the opportunity or will have the opportunity to engage with members of a different tradition/community.
- c. Appropriate local connections across both main traditions are sought where possible and relationships developed.
- d. The school uses its involvement in other programmes to further support the aims of integration.
- e. The school prospectus/website already has (or will have) a clear reference to the integrated ethos.

Appendix 4 - Revised Three Year Financial Plan

THREE YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

School: **Ballyhackett Primary**
 EA Office: **Ballymena**

Cost Centre: **20960**

Only complete cells in yellow

Section A: Enrolments and Teaching Complement		YEAR 1 (2019-2020)	YEAR 2 (2020-2021)	YEAR 3 (2021-2022)
	October 2018	October 2019	October 2020	October 2021
1	Full Time Equivalent Enrolment (excluding Spec Unit pupils)	36	34	34
2	Planned Teaching Complement <small>(after amendment to Variables as below)</small>	2.80	2.80	2.80
3	Planned Pupil/Teacher Ratio (September)	12.86	12.14	12.14
Section B: Planned variances in Teaching Staff		YEAR 1 Change in Staff <small>(Enter as Positive Fig's)</small>	Year 2 Change in Staff <small>(Enter as Positive Fig's)</small>	Year 3 Change in Staff <small>(Enter as Positive Fig's)</small>
Variables - Teaching Staff - To assist in budget forecasting				
4	Increase in Permanent Teachers			
5	Increase in Temporary Teachers			
6	Decrease in Permanent Teachers (enter as positive figure)			
7	Decrease in Temporary Teachers (enter as positive figure)			
Section C: Planned Expenditure		YEAR 1 (2019-2020)	YEAR 2* (2020-2021)	YEAR 3* (2021-2022)
	Sector Average*	£ %	£ %	£ %
	%			
Expenditure Summary				
Staff Costs				
8	- Teaching	164,180 76.9%	157,176 75.8%	158,732 75.8%
9	- Non Teaching	37,850 17.7%	38,227 18.4%	38,606 18.4%
10	- Other Costs	0.1% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%
11	Premises, Fixed Plant and Grounds	5,621 2.6%	5,733 2.8%	5,848 2.8%
12	Operating Costs	5,965 2.8%	6,084 2.9%	6,206 3.0%
13	Non Capital Purchases	0.3% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%
14	Capital Expenditure	0.4% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%	0.0% 0.0%
15	Less Income (enter as negative figure)	-1.1%		
16	Total Planned Expenditure before Savings and Additional Expenditure	213,616	207,221	209,392
Estimated Savings (enter as a negative figure)				
17	Reduction in Teaching Staff (as per Variables)			
18	<i>Please specify</i>			
19	<i>Please specify</i>			
20	<i>Please specify</i>			
Estimated Additional Expenditure (enter as a positive figure)				
21	Increase in Teaching Staff (as per Variables)			
22	<i>Please specify</i>			
23	<i>Please specify</i>			
24	<i>Please specify</i>			
25	Total Planned Expenditure after Savings and Additional Expenditure	213,616	207,221	209,392
<small>* Planning assumptions include Cost of Living Pay Award Estimate at 1% each year and estimated rate of inflation for Other Costs as 2% each year</small>				
Section D: Delegated Resources				
26	CFF Budget Share per Capita	£4,909	£5,059	£5,059
Budget Summary Allocation				
27	Common Formula Funding (CFF) Budget Share	176,737	172,001	172,001
28	<i>Other funding - (Please specify)</i>			
29	<i>Other funding - (Please specify)</i>			
30	<i>Other funding - (Please specify)</i>			
31	Total Delegated Resources	176,737	172,001	172,001
Section E: In Year Movement		YEAR 1 (2019-2020) £	YEAR 2 (2020-2021) £	YEAR 3 (2021-2022) £
32	In Year Underspend or Overspend of Delegated Resources	-36,879	-35,220	-37,392
Section F: Cumulative Surplus / Deficit		YEAR 1 (2019-2020) £	YEAR 2 (2020-2021) £	YEAR 3 (2021-2022) £
33	Opening Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) 1 April	43,281	6,402	-28,818
34	In Year Underspend / (Overspend) of delegated resources	-36,879	-35,220	-37,392
35	Closing Cumulative Surplus/(Deficit) 31 March	6,402	-28,818	-66,210
36	% Carry Over	2.9%	-16.2%	-46.2%

Section G: Additional Information

	Sector Average*	YEAR 1 (2019-2020) £	YEAR 2 (2020-2021) £	YEAR 3 (2021-2022) £
37 Pupil/Teacher Ratio	17.5	12.1	12.1	11.8
38 Expenditure per Pupil	£ 4,477	£ 6,283	£ 6,095	£ 6,345
39 Staff Costs per Pupil	£ 4,308	£ 5,942	£ 5,747	£ 5,980

Section H: Financial Plan 2019-2022 Declaration

Declaration

The Board of Governors understand the financial and management responsibilities placed on them with respect to the delegated financial budget of the school, and of the need to ensure compliance with current guidance including "Guidance on Financial and Management Arrangements for Controlled and Maintained Schools funded under the Common Funding Scheme".

The Board of Governors also understand the need to ensure financial competence within its Board and can confirm that at least one Board member has under taken appropriate financial training provided by EA (or appropriate).

The School's Board of Governors have considered each version of Three Year Financial Plan prepared by the school and LMS, in line with the assumptions made in different versions/options. The information contained within this Three Year Financial Plan reflects the Board of Governors final and agreed plan, which has been based on reasonable and realistic assumptions.

Following such consideration, the Three Year Financial Plan has been authorised by the Schools Board of Governors at the meeting held on:

The Board of Governors confirm that finance is a standing agenda item for Board of Governor meetings (or Finance Committee meetings), and will endeavour to regularly monitor (at least quarterly) the schools financial plan, to ensure that actual, committed and projected expenditure is revised accordingly.

Boards of governors are reminded that, while the legislation provides delegated budgets for them to deploy resources to best effect in delivering the highest possible quality of education, it gives them no authority to exceed the limits of the budget delegated to them. Boards of governors cannot spend more than they receive without the express and advance approval of the EA as Funding Authority, and they must not plan to do so. The Board of Governors therefore understand they must have EA's agreement before incurring any expenditure that would exceed that agreed and approved by EA.

Comment:

Authorised by:

Chairman of the Board of Governors

Date

Principal

Date

Authorised by EA:

Education Authority

Date

Note: The Three Year Financial Plan will not be considered for approval if:

- they are not signed by the Principal and Chairperson,
- any of the three years of the Financial Plan are incomplete,
- estimates of expenditure are considered by EA to be unrealistic

Appendix 5 - Farmers for Action Letter

Farmers For Action

56 Cashel Road, Coleraine, N Ireland, BT51 4NU
Tel. 07909744624 Email : taylor.w@btconnect.com

21st November 2019

Keeping Ballyhackett School Open = part of the climate change emergency action

Earlier in 2019 Farmers For Action requested a meeting with the Permanent Secretary Derek Baker on the issue of rural school closures in Northern Ireland and that meeting was attended by the Ballyhackett Primary School's Principal, a member of the Board of Governors, FFA representatives and others.

At the time it was pointed out that the Department for Education has a duty not to flout the UK and EU declaration of a climate change emergency. Therefore, the fossil fuel pollution and health issues that would be created if the school were closed undoubtedly tipped the balance for an already brilliant school needing to remain open in an idyllic teaching setting in rural Northern Ireland.

How therefore could CCMS or the Department for Education be involved in closing such a school to massively increase traffic congestion at another school, add to climate change and the risk to children's health.

Moving Ballyhackett children and the subsequent new pupils that would go to it, to a factory school in the town not only risks their health but additionally increases health risks to existing pupils by the increasing car numbers that would accumulate outside the school morning and evening. This makes no sense on health and wellbeing grounds, it makes no sense to burden larger town schools already stressed-out teachers even further. FFA would remind the Department that primary school children are particularly vulnerable to car and bus emissions because of their stature and therefore massively increasing their risk of becoming asthmatic, which is currently endemic in towns and cities across the world simply due to pollution.

Northern Ireland has a history of well known rural innovators and academics and to be an innovator or an academic one has to have good start in the early years and good rural Northern Ireland commonsense and respect for it. Now is the time for the Department

for Education to have the commonsense not to further destroy the fabric and health of rural Northern Ireland's children of the future and particularly Ballyhackett.

Yours very sincerely

William Taylor

Farmers For Action NI co-ordinator

NI Farm Groups co-ordinator

Fairness for Farmers in Europe co-ordinator

North South Farm Groups co-ordinator

Appendix 6 - BoG Collective Response to CCMS Consultation

Ballyhackett Primary School

50 Altikeeragh Road

Castlerock

Coleraine

Co. Derry

BT51 4SR

(028) 7084 8476

info@ballyhackettps.castlerock.ni.sch.uk



Principal: **Mrs. G McIlvar**

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Board of Governors has written a collective response to the proposed plan to close Ballyhackett Primary School in August 2020.

We would like to state that we totally disagree with the proposal.

From the outset we would like to make it clear that we believe CCMS has failed in its role as an advocate for the trustees, governors and staff in the effective management and control of our school.

Due to the unrealistic timelines set by CCMS and the manner in which this matter has been handled you should not be surprised to learn that we are seeking legal advice, especially in light of recent news that the power of the Permanent Secretary to decide on development proposals is open to challenge and scrutiny.

Indeed, it is our position that this consultation process simply cannot continue until there has been clarity provided on this issue and ample time provided to the school and Board of Governors to seek proper legal advice to mount a challenge.

It is also our position that this process is actively discriminating against catholic families by targeting catholic schools in rural communities. Closure of the school will force catholic faith families to relocate to urban areas to access catholic education and erode the catholic population in our local community.

In the 2011 census the Religious identity of the Castlerock Ward was

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77.72 % Protestant and other Christian.
16.88% Catholic

73.35 % indicated that they had a British national identity
8.42 had an Irish national identity
27.58% had a Northern Irish national identity.

If CCMS is intent on depriving this area of a Catholic school, then at the very least it should be supportive of an alternative option to ensure the future of education in Ballyhackett Primary School. We would suggest that this could be Integrated Education which would allow for the promotion of Catholic education and culture alongside other faiths.

Over half of Northern Ireland's primary schools are situated in rural areas. It is our position that CCMS's decision making process is urban/town centric and unappreciative of the real value that rural primary schools bring to their communities.

One way in which the decision-making process is not predisposed to aid smaller country schools is the definition of rural. This is a definition, with which we, the Board of Governors strongly disagree and would challenge.

Within the Sustainable Schools Policy, the viability audits used the definition of urban areas as comprising Belfast and Derry/Londonderry and all other areas regarded as rural.

The Department of Education's database of schools uses a different definition, based on the 2005 Report of the interdepartmental Urban-Rural Definition Group. Within this definition, settlements of 4,500 are deemed urban and those with less than 4,500 are deemed rural.

The Board of Governors takes exception to the definition of the term "Rural" as used in the Sustainable School's Policy and would challenge the legality of using this categorisation. We believe we should be afforded a better definition of rural needs.

In the updated policy guidance: A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised) April 2018, it states;

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Relationship with Rural Proofing

1.9 The new due regard duty introduced under section 1(1) of the Act imposes an obligation on public authorities that is different to the commitment to rural proof which the Northern Ireland Executive signed up to in 2002. The policy on rural proofing required government departments to identify the potential impact that a policy or strategy would have on a **rural area**, to make a proper assessment of those impacts if they were deemed to be significant and, where appropriate, to make adjustments to the policy or strategy to take account of **rural circumstances**. The scope of the Act is wider than that covered by the previous policy on rural proofing in that it now includes district councils and the other public authorities listed in the Schedule to the Act in addition to government departments.

The Board of Governors would like a copy of the completed Rural Needs Impact Assessment for our area.

The "Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing" states,

"As a policy maker you must explain as part of the rural proofing process the definition that your policy uses and why you are not using the default rural definition of settlement population sizes of less than 4,500 people."

The Board of Governors feel that you cannot compare the area surrounding Ballyhackett to settlements like Newry, Armagh or Lisburn. Rural areas will greatly differ from urban areas due to their geographical isolation, population dispersal, longer distances from key services and limited employment opportunities.

In the publication of DoE's Northern Area Plan, Coleraine is classed as a town and Castlerock as a village. If you look at the table below based on the 2011 census you will see how unfair and discriminatory it is to apply the same label i.e. Rural to these settlements as well as Castlerock.

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Table One shows the population of selected **Rural Towns** in Northern Ireland (as defined by CCMS)

Name of Settlement	Population	Times bigger than Castlerock
Coleraine	24,634	18.5
Newry	12,043	9
Armagh	14,749	11
Lisburn	71,465	54
Ballymena	29,467	22
Castlerock	1,326	

It is our position that due to the rural nature of our school, the fact that we offer catholic education and that we are part of the fabric of community life in the area that we should be given Special Status and that structures should be put in place to keep this area thriving.

The Board of Governors have reviewed the evidence connected with the Sustainable Schools Policy and made comments about each of the indicators.

“There is not a simple correlation between school enrolment and educational attainment. There are many instances where there is a high quality of teaching and learning in both large and small schools which is reflected in favourable Education and Training Inspectorate reports.”

S.S.P 3.1

While the evidence is not strongly conclusive, research does not tend to find significant differences in outcomes.

In fact, there are many gains for pupils in a composite class:

1. Low achieving children benefit through factors such as continuity of education and smaller class sizes
2. Younger children are exposed to more advanced materials, they have role models to emulate and social support from older peers
3. Older children benefit through revising subject content, developing leadership skills and using independent learning skills

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4. High achieving children are extended and stretched through completing more challenging independent learning

The teaching staff in Ballyhackett are very experienced long-serving members of the teaching profession and thus are highly skilled in employing a variety of approaches to accommodate the wide range of abilities from low achievers with special needs to high achievers.

Years spent teaching mixed age ranges and abilities enables them to provide high quality education for all their pupils within composite classes. The Shared Education partnership with Castleroe affords the teachers the opportunities for planning and developing lessons for composite classes. Pupils have extended opportunities for further interaction with their peer groups.

The Sustainable School's Policy questions the merits of more than two classes being taught in one composite class. However, The Department of Education does not hold the assessment data on Key Stages 1 and 2 in composite classes. This raises questions around the evidence base on composite classes and the learning and the assumption that composite classes have a detrimental effect on children's learning.

Another point to be made is with the increasing financial pressures facing schools, a growing numbers of Principals are having to make composite classes in their school to try and remain on budget.

CCMS cannot guarantee that the standard of education which the children would receive in any of the named alternative schools would be better than offered by Ballyhackett Primary School.

When examining the most recent Inspection Reports of proposed schools this can be found:

In 2015 Hezlett Primary School was rated as good.

St Malachy's P.S was last inspected in March 2014 and rated good.

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Ballyhackett Primary School was last fully inspected in 2014.

In the recent ETI Inspection (2018) of Ballyhackett Primary School (which included Action Short of Strike) it was noted,

"A group of year 5, 6 and 7 children, who met with the inspector, spoke confidently and very positively about aspects of the school's provision. In particular, they expressed an enjoyment of reading, talked well about the extra-curricular opportunities they enjoy, which include music, Spanish and sport."

According to a Research and Information Paper of 2013 (Rural Schools: Caroline Perry and Barbara Love) over half of NI's primary schools are situated in rural areas and significantly more likely to face, "enrolment stress."

Other jurisdictions have introduced measures in regard to the sustainability of rural schools, for example in England there is a presumption against rural school closure while in the Republic of Ireland amalgamation of small schools has been recommended.

The Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School met with CCMS representatives on 20th September 2018. At this meeting the Board of Governors made it very clear that they wished to see Education continue in Ballyhackett Primary School.

The Board of Governors stated that they would like both Federation and Integration considered as a possible option for Ballyhackett Primary School but we feel that these potential options were not investigated thoroughly or robustly by CCMS. These options were not presented as alternatives on Consultation Night (20th November 2018). These alternatives could be viable with the will to make them work. We have not been given any reasons as to why they couldn't work.

Integration is also a viable option. There is no integrated Primary School in the Coleraine Area and because Ballyhackett Primary School is integrated in all but name we feel that this option could benefit our pupils. However, we would need to be given time to make this work. We must stress that this option cannot proceed if a Development Plan were to be put in place.

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As CCMS would be aware of this fact we feel that time should be given to allow us to consider this option especially as again this option was not placed before the parents on Consultation night, even though we had stated it as an alternative option at a previous meeting. We would like the time to investigate this further.

We feel that these omissions in the presentation to the parents have flawed the Consultation process. The staff, Board of Governors and parents have been given reassurances that no decision has been made as yet on the future of education provision in Ballyhackett Primary School. However, this is not how the stakeholders of this school feel.

Under the EA's Transformation programme it states its intention to carry out an ambitious and radical programme of change bringing about "significant improvements in **where** and how our children and young people are educated." The Board of Governors feels this indicates a discrimination against Ballyhackett and all other rural schools even before the Consultation Process begins.

The proposal has not paid any regard as to the potential impact upon the lives of children who attend Ballyhackett Primary School. CCMS have been unable to provide any evidence to show that the quality of education for our children would be better in another school. We would ask:

How can a child who receives an education in an area of noise and traffic pollution and without our wonderful outdoor learning facilities be better off than the children who attend Ballyhackett Primary School?

EA are currently promoting a transformation process. Writing about the Transformation process, EA states,

"Through Transformation we have the opportunity to reshape the pattern of school provision."

The Board of Governors feel that the "Transformation Process" is in effect creating an opportunity to make efficiencies without due regard to the impact of such decisions on rural schools and their children. The EA and

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CCMS should be supporting Ballyhackett Primary School as a community and educational space. The impact of closing a unique school such as Ballyhackett takes no account of the long term consequences of these decisions.

“providing access to quality education in rural areas is crucial to meet the needs of rural youth and also to attract young families to settle...”

Organisation For Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

There are many community groups in the local area working to improve and develop the area for everyone living in this region. We have development groups like Binevenagh and Coastal Lowlands Landscape Partnership Scheme, Castlerock Community Association and the Northern Ireland Rural Development Group in this area working progressively to promote the countryside as a viable place for families to live.

It says on the EANI website that the 2018/19 Annual Action Plan is the result of collaboration and sharing across all educational sectors. It is hard to see where the collaboration aspect lies especially in relation to the targeting of schools in the area surrounding Castlerock.

Where was the forward planning in relation to what could be done to keep small local schools open through progressive actions such as federated schools or shared campus schools?

Knowing that St Anthony’s PS (now closed) and Bellarena PS (pending closure) were facing reducing enrolment numbers why was there no proposal to look at what could be done across the three schools (Ballyhackett included) to maintain their essential presence within the community and at the same time address the sustainability issues?

The Board of Governors would like to know why Ballyhackett Primary School was overlooked in the plans regarding Bellarena Primary School.

In the proposal for Bellarena Primary School the names of eight local Primary Schools were given to parents as potential options for their children. We were not named as an option. We feel that we should have been included in the Bellarena proposal and parents from there may have given Ballyhackett

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Primary School some consideration if that school were to close given that it has similar character traits and ethos with Ballyhackett Primary School.

Recognising that St Aidan's PS could potentially be facing a similar prospect down the line why is CCMS not taking a holistic approach to all its primary schools within the geographical area?

At a meeting on 20th September the Board of Governors gave the representatives from CCMS a variety of proposals for the future of Education in Ballyhackett Primary School. The Board feels that some of these suggestions were not given adequate consideration as parents were not informed of these alternative options on Consultation Night.

At the Consultation parents were told that transport to any new school would be provided for their children. However, CCMS failed to mention that the Department of Education is conducting a Review of the current Home to School Transport Policy. A letter from Tommy O'Reilly states,

"in this difficult financial climate, we need to seriously consider whether we can continue to do things in the same way."

The implications of the review could be a reduction in expenditure. For example, there could be a reduction of the number of children in receipt of home school transport or parents could be required to pay charges. **The Board of Governors would ask whether parents, after potentially having to move their child to another school would eventually have to pay for the home to school transport considering their child was forced to move to a school further away?**

It should also be noted that the letter continues,

"Any final decisions on changing the policy will be for a future Minister for Education to decide, and it may also require Executive approval."

We would urge you to read the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's Report on "Consultation on Schools For the Future: A Policy For Sustainable Schools." This describes some of the implications of Sustainable Schools Policy in terms of Human Rights. See Appendix 1

There is no evidence that closing Ballyhackett Primary School will positively improve the outcomes for our children. If anything research would point to stress, trauma and environmental change as having a detrimental effect on the Mental Health of our children. Indeed, a change of school could be seen as comprising an adverse childhood experience with lasting effects on the children of our school. There is no means of measuring and making provision for these children. A number of children who attend Ballyhackett Primary School have Special Educational Needs. The Board of Governors would argue that the impact on children's lives and in particular the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs are not being considered in the proposal.

CCMS has not completed any work to gain the children's views on this proposal. The UNCRC (Article 3) states,

"The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children."

Article 12 of the UNCRC states,

"Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life."

There have been no impact assessments or equality screenings completed with the children. No account has been taken of the views of those who will ultimately be most affected by this decision. This school has an ethos which promotes the child's independence and right to voice their views. The Eco and Student Councils provide the children with a Forum in which to express their views on issues affecting them.

A recent ETI Inspection (2018) in Ballyhackett stated that the children interviewed,

"spoke positively about the developing opportunities the school provides them regarding leadership roles, including those through school council."

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CCMS has not afforded the children in this school the same opportunity. The opinions of the children from P3-7 (gathered by teachers) have been included with the original block submission. This was submitted on 28th December 2018.

A recent Circular by the Catholic Principals Association states that there is still concern about,

“the Mental and Emotional Health issues impinging on children”

Closing a child’s school, removing children from their friends, forcing a child to move school, making a child dependent on public transport and denying children their safety net will certainly impinge on our children’s mental and emotional health.

Yet no consideration was given by CCMS to these facts.

It is the opinion of the Board of Governors that CCMS has not adhered to Equality Legislation. The Board of Governors feel that this proposal does not promote equality of opportunity or good relations between all communities.

We feel this for a number of reasons:

1. The Good Friday / Belfast Agreement contains the following statement in the section entitled Reconciliation and Victims of Violence,

“An essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society, including initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing.”

The current proposal diametrically opposes this by ignoring the initiatives that the teaching staff and Governors have developed in Ballyhackett Primary School, that are totally in accord with what is stated in the agreement. **The children of both Ballyhackett and Castleroe Primary School will suffer if this proposal is successful.**

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2. The school community works well with all of the local churches: The Vineyard, First Dunboe Presbyterian and the Church of Ireland. We believe that the reconciliation work we do in this school promotes the social cohesion and harmony of this area. We feel that the proposal denies the children the opportunities to develop meaningful relationships with those of other faiths in this area.

3. This proposal does not give children of Ballyhackett the Equal Opportunity it offers to those children in towns. If the proposal is successful, children from this rural area who will have to be, "bussed" into towns will have the links with their locality severed. If Ballyhackett Primary School closes the Catholic children of this area and indeed children of other or no faiths who choose to come to this school will be denied activities linked to their area. One example is that through attendance at Ballyhackett Primary School children sing at the Castlerock and Articlave Christmas Tree Light Switch on. This will be an opportunity denied to them if they go to a Coleraine School.

4. If the children go to a town school, they will be denied the chance to learn about and study their local area. We have many Historical and Geographical places of interest in this area. The children in Ballyhackett learn about and study many of these places for example, The Sconce, The 1718 Migration and Downhill. Last year the P6 and & class competed in a First Lego League. The children used this project to learned about the sewage flowing into the sea at Castlerock. The children designed and built a device to clean the effluent. This Spring the pupils are participating in a Beach Schools NI initiative, using Castlerock Beach as an Outdoor Learning space.

5. More than half of primary schools (59% or 488 primary schools) in Northern Ireland had at least one composite class in 2015/16. Most of these (87%) comprised two year groupings in a single class. The

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majority were in rural areas and were spread widely across Northern Ireland.

Catholic Maintained Schools are disproportionately represented among schools that have composite classes with more than two year groups (52% compared to 39% of controlled schools).

NIAR 454-16 Briefing Paper

Providing research and information services to the Northern Ireland Assembly

2

It is the position of the Board of Governors that Ballyhackett Primary School is being discriminated against based on religion as there is a, "higher proportion of Catholic maintained schools in this cohort."

6. The information from the school's three-year financial plan shows that the school is expected to end 2018/19 with a deficit of -£6,157 (3.05%). The financial deficit is projected to grow.

The Board of Governors would like to make the following points:

1. This is the first time in its history that Ballyhackett has had a deficit.
2. Our deficit is small- many schools have much higher deficits. Guidance for Controlled and Maintained schools requires that they should not accumulate surpluses or deficits in excess of 5% of their budget or £75,000, whichever is less. Our deficit is small when compared to this figure.
3. The deficit should be taken in a holistic way. The spending power of education budgets has fallen by £233 million since 2010-11
4. Many schools are dealing with the impact of considerable financial pressures at a time of increased demands in terms of support to pupils.
5. The actual budget given to Ballyhackett Primary School has decreased over the last number of years.

It would also be the position of the Board of Governors that it is difficult to see how this process has been open, transparent and fair. At no time during

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the recruitment process of the New Principal or the subsequent job offer was the issue of the closure of the school highlighted. It is inconceivable that this issue was not known to the authorities at that time. This again highlights how unfair this would be to the children and staff to refuse a reasonable three-year period of time to implement a sustainable development plan.

In 2008 Bishop Donal McKeown stated that,

“Schools must not appear to act only in their own interest or merely in the interest of certain already strong schools. It is not part of the Catholic or Christian vision that the weakest should suffer excessively and feel that their needs are being overlooked.”

It is our position that CCMS has abandoned rural catholic schools. We feel that we are being let down by the organisation that should be advocating for this school. There has not be an equity between Primary Schools. One of the proposed alternatives to Ballyhackett actually has proportionally more empty seats than Ballyhackett. We have 54% of seats filled. The other school has 44% of its seats filled. We would argue, as does the Sustainable Schools Policy that there are other indicators which should be considered when taking the decision to close a rural school.

In the Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools it states that sustainability is wider than issues of enrolments and budgets and that the core issue for sustainability must be the continuing provision of a high quality education for the children. Indeed, the focus of the Providing Pathways (Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020) is on the educational best interests of children and young people and to encourage schools to become closely integrated with their wider community. Ballyhackett is a school that provides a high quality education, a place where our children’s interests are put first, and a school that is very much integrated with the local community.

It is the position of the Board of Governors that CCMS suspends its consultation process at this juncture to give the new Principal and newly reconstituted Board of Governors an opportunity to implement a three year

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strategic and promotional plan with the aim of increasing numbers, which would then have a positive effect on the school budget.

Appendix Three shows that the population of the Castlerock Ward is intended to rise. It would be the hope of The Board of Governors to increase the numbers of children at this school as the population increases.

The Board of Governors also feel that Ballyhackett Primary School is being discriminated upon because of the physical location and political context of Northern Ireland. In other parts of The United Kingdom and in the Republic of Ireland a range of measures and legislation relating to rural schools have been introduced. This does not apply to Northern Ireland and there are no considerations given to small rural schools who are operating in extremely difficult circumstances.

We would appreciate a timely response to our questions to enable us to inform our legal advisors accordingly.

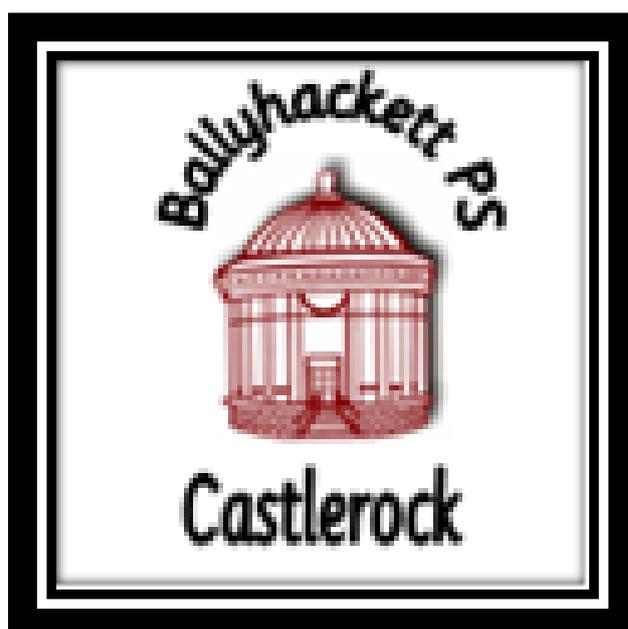
Yours in Hope,

The Board of Governors of Ballyhackett Primary School

Rita Mellon
Diane Galbraith
Rowena Simpson
Kathleen McGinley
Julia Hall
Anne Marie Orr
Ray Robinson
Brian Kelly
Martin Doherty
Grainne McIlvar (Secretary)

Appendix One

**CONSULTATION ON SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE:
A POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS**



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NORTHERN
IRELAND
HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION

**CONSULTATION ON SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE:
A POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS**

1.

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (the Commission) is a statutory body created by the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It has a range of functions including reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of Northern Ireland law and practice relating to the protection of human rights,¹ advising on legislative and other measures which ought to be taken to protect human rights,² advising on whether a Bill is compatible with human rights³ and promoting understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland.⁴ In all of that work the Commission bases its positions on the full range of internationally accepted human rights standards, including the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), other treaty obligations in the Council of Europe and United Nations systems, and the non-binding 'soft law' standards developed by the human rights bodies.

2.

The Commission welcomes the opportunity to comment on the consultation on Schools for the Future which will play a crucial part in shaping future educational opportunities for children and young people. The Commission would appreciate receiving feedback on this response.

3.

Education is a fundamental human right enshrined in a range of human rights treaties to which the UK is a party. **The best interests of the child needs to be at the heart of all decisions taken in formulating a policy for sustainable schools.** In making its response, the Commission draws particular attention to the following human rights standards:

a.

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Article

¹ Northern Ireland Act 1998, s.69(1).

² *Ibid*, s.69(3).

³ *Ibid*, s.69(4).

⁴ *Ibid*, s.69(6).

2, First Protocol (right to education).

b.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): Article 2 (all rights shall apply to all children without discrimination), Article 12 (right to express an opinion), Article 23 (right of disabled children to special care, education, training, employment preparation and recreation opportunities); Article 28 (right to education on the basis of equal opportunity) Article 29 (education should develop each child's personality and talent to the full) and Article 30 (right to learn and use the language and customs of their families).

c.

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) Article 5 (includes the right to education).

d.

With specific reference to linguistic minorities: the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities

e.

The new UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24 (right to education).

f.

The UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (equality of treatment in education).

The proposals

4.

The Commission welcomes the vision for education outlined in the document which states that the challenge is "to educate and develop the young people of Northern Ireland to the highest possible standards, providing equality of access to all". The Commission acknowledges the difficult task of striving to offer schoolchildren a wide curriculum and the difficulties this presents, particularly for smaller schools.

5.

However, the Commission notes that there is scant reference to human rights within the proposals and wishes to emphasise that future decisions regarding educational provision must have full regard to the best interests of the child. Furthermore, the Commission seeks clarification as to whether or how children have been consulted on the

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proposals and decision-making process. Whilst the best use of resources available to education must be ensured, it is important that financial considerations do not override concerns about the potential impact upon local children and their communities, of closing small schools.

6.

The Commission notes that the Government has agreed that the Bain Report recommendations on minimum enrolments should be accepted. **However, during a recent Northern Ireland Assembly debate on the future of rural schools, overwhelming support for such schools and their wider contribution to communities was expressed. The debate concluded with a motion being passed calling upon Government “to recognise the vital role that such schools play in the community; and urges the Government to put in place a strategy, where possible, to protect the viability of these schools”.**⁵

7.

The Commission is tasked by statute with developing advice on the scope for a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, and has addressed educational issues in that context. It is important that thought should be given to the possible future content of such a Bill and how a policy for sustainable schools would sit alongside it.

8.

It is acknowledged that the diverse school system in Northern Ireland comprising controlled and maintained schools, voluntary grammar schools, single sex schools, integrated schools and Irish-medium schools, alongside a small independent sector (which does not receive government funding) poses particular challenges in providing curricula choice alongside sustainable school development.

9.

The diversity of the school system alongside the extensive rural areas within Northern Ireland does create a higher proportion of small schools than is the case in the rest of the United Kingdom. However, in the primary school sector, the percentage of schools with fewer than 100 pupils (37%) is not significantly different to the percentages for Scotland (34%) and Wales (31%).

10.

It is noted that the Department of Education is obliged to encourage and facilitate integrated education. This obligation was introduced by the 1989 Education (NI) Order and reinforced by the 1998 Agreement which refers to “initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing”, with a statutory duty to “encourage and facilitate

⁶ The Independent Strategic Review of Education, Response from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, July 2006.

⁷ Report submitted by Katarina Tomasevski, Special Rapporteur: Commission on Human Rights, January 2003.

⁸ Rural Proofing of Policies Across the Northern Ireland Civil Service: Study on Small Schools.

Irish medium education in line with current provision for integrated education”.

11.

It is important to acknowledge the demographic features of Northern Ireland that impact upon the diverse nature of the educational system. For instance, 70 per cent of public housing is situated in communities that are inhabited by populations which are over 90% of one religious group. Whilst initiatives that encourage increased collaboration and shared campus facilities can be viewed in a positive light, the separateness of communities cannot be ignored.⁶ **Furthermore, 94% of children attend a school that is de facto Catholic or Protestant, with 5% attending integrated schools and 1% private schools.**⁷

12.

A further significant factor in Northern Ireland is the large number of its population living in rural areas. Demographic changes are creating surplus capacity across some schools. This is having a significant impact on smaller schools which are more commonly found in rural areas. A report commissioned by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development states that the “key counter-argument to closure or merger of schools ... is the connection of the school with local communities and its possible role in sustaining the social fabric”.⁸

13.

The report noted that different sections of the population may be affected more by rationalisation in terms of time spent travelling to and from school and accessibility to extra-curricular activities. Children from poorer backgrounds are more likely to be adversely affected by transport difficulties and are more likely to be dependent on the school bus.

14.

With reference to the commitments directly relevant to education contained within the First Triennial Action Plan in support of *A Shared Future*, it is noted that decision making in relation to new schools or re-organisation/rationalisation of schools, proposals will be required to demonstrate that “options for collaboration/sharing on a cross-community basis have been considered and fully explored”. Furthermore, projects are “more likely to justify receipt of financial support if they are shared or operate across the community divide”.

15.

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Whilst this is a positive long-term objective, there is a concern that financial incentives may be the primary motivating factor in driving the agenda for change rather than the readiness of communities to embrace cross-community initiatives. The Commission supports efforts to encourage educational programmes that seek to promote mutual understanding, peace and respect for diversity. However, the voluntary basis for such mergers, with the appropriate support mechanisms fully in place, should take precedence rather than the pressure of financial incentives forcing the pace for change.

16.

It is of paramount importance that issues relating to the safety and wellbeing of children are fully addressed and that the curriculum includes subjects that promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion. This includes the development of knowledge, understanding and skills in recognising diversity, human rights and social responsibility, the cause of conflict and appropriate responses, and valuing and celebrating cultural difference and diversity. The strong implementation of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding provisions set out in the Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (NI) 2007 will constitute a positive step in this direction.

17.

The issue of parental choice must be respected within the formulation of policy for sustainable schools. Again the possible impact of a Bill of Rights should be borne in mind in this context.

18.

School transport policies also have a bearing on enabling full access to extra-curricular activities as provided through the operation of Extended Schools. Activities offered include breakfast clubs, after school clubs and encouraging community use of school facilities. Financial support has been made available to extended schools and has been targeted initially at schools serving disadvantaged areas. This is welcomed and it is important that every effort is made to support the participation of children from low-income households in extra-curricular activities.

19.

Clear anti-bullying strategies need to be in place in all educational establishments that include strategies to deal with bullying that may occur during school journeys, for example, on the school bus. This requirement becomes particularly pressing for children who may have to travel further to schools that are located outside their immediate environs.

⁹ See, for example, Connolly P, Smith A and Kelly B, *Too Young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 Year Olds in Northern Ireland*, UU/CRC, 2002.

20.

With reference to Article 2 and Article 23 of the CRC and Article 24 of the Disability Convention, the access requirements of children having special educational needs must be taken fully into account, not only in terms of early identification of needs, appropriate advice and support for parents, resources required to provide necessary level of support, but also in terms of the particular problems that long school journeys may present to children with special needs and their families/carers.

21.

Furthermore, the specific needs of children falling within the following groups must be addressed: ethnic minority children, migrant children, children of asylum seekers and refugees, traveller children, looked after children, school age parents and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered young people. The expertise and experience that has been built up within schools working with children that face particular vulnerabilities should be acknowledged and inform policies across the school's estate.

22.

In relation to Irish language education, the Commission draws attention to the current consultation by DCAL on the framing of legislation governing the status of, and duties and rights, in respect of the Irish Language. The St Andrews Agreement expressed its commitment to "introduce an Irish Language Act reflecting on the experience of Wales and Ireland and [to] work with the incoming Executive to enhance and protect the development of the Irish Language" (Annex B). It is important that this consultation should take account of the likely impact of such legislation on the provision of Irish-medium education within schools.

Concluding comments

23.

The role of education within the transitional societal process from conflict to peace building is of vital importance. In relation to identification with, for example, predominantly Catholic or Protestant communities, research demonstrates that children develop a tendency to express sectarian statements about the 'other community' at a very early age.⁹ There is a need for all schools to promote cultural diversity and an appreciation of difference in terms of religious affiliation, race, ethnicity, disability, gender and sexual orientation. As part of the process of promoting cultural diversity, support should be given to encouraging voluntary alliances within the educational establishment. Collaborative/sharing arrangements are to be welcomed when achieved through consensual means. However, the fact that public opinion surveys do not support an increase in commitment to inter-religious mixing cannot be ignored. In fact, recent surveys have shown that an initial increase in self-declared commitment to inter-religious mixing in 1989-1996 has been reversed.¹⁰ The reasons for this apparent decline in support must be addressed.

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24.

Whilst there is an unmet need for places at Integrated Schools, there is also unmet need for places at Irish medium schools where a shortage in teacher training has also been highlighted. **There are also indications of strong political support for maintaining small schools particularly in rural areas and an acknowledgement of their wider role within communities.** The promotion of rights and best interests of children along with the right of parents to ensure education and teaching “in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions” must be respected whilst providing a school environment for all children that acknowledges diversity and cultural identity and contributes to the transition from a society in conflict to the peace-building process.

25.

A policy for sustainable schools must be developed alongside housing and **transport policies** that support cross-community collaboration or sharing, and reflect the needs of local communities, particularly in rural areas.

26.

In conclusion, the Commission reiterates the necessity for all decisions relating to the proposed policy to be taken in the best interests of the child and not driven by financial considerations. The Commission fully supports the aim of offering all schoolchildren a high quality education with a wide choice of curriculum. **The Commission has outlined a number of concerns that will have particular relevance in the event of school closures or arrangements that support collaboration or sharing of facilities.** These concerns focus upon issues relating to the safety and well-being of children and include: anti-bullying strategies; school transport; the needs of children that face particular vulnerabilities and the development of education and learning that promotes tolerance and celebrates cultural difference and diversity. Prior to the implementation of any decisions that will result in closure of many schools or other significant reorganisation of the school’s estate, it is vital that these concerns be addressed.

April 2007

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

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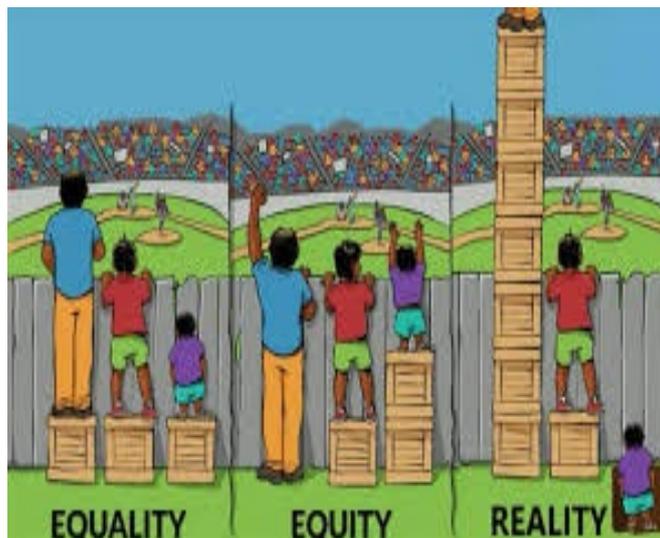
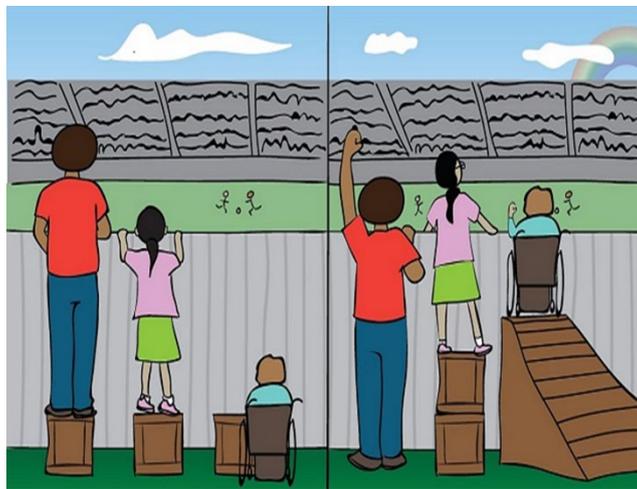
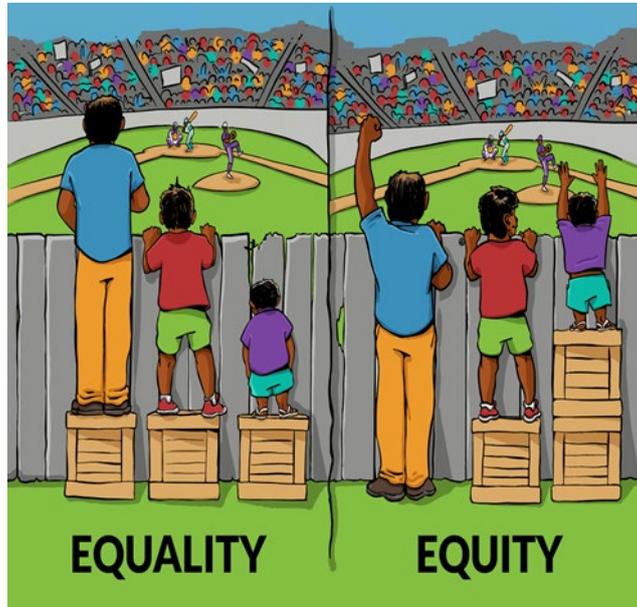
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Appendix Two

The Equality, Equity and Reality Diagrams



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Appendix Three
Projected Population Increase in the Castlerock Ward



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Population Estimates for Castlerock Ward

The estimated population of Castlerock Ward at 30 June 2017 was 3,146, of which 1,563 (49.7%) were male and 1,583 (50.3%) were female.

This was made up of:

- 530 children aged 0-15 years;
- 822 people aged 16-39 years;
- 1,110 people aged 40-64 years; and
- 684 people 65 years and older.

Between 2007 and 2017 the population of Castlerock Ward increased by 28 people or 0.9%.



Table 1: Population Estimates by broad age bands, 2017

	Castlerock Ward	Northern Ireland
Total Population (2017)	3,146	1,870,834
Children (0-15 years)	530	390,684
Young Working Age (16-39 years)	822	579,782
Older Working Age (40-64 years)	1,110	507,393
Older (65+ years)	684	302,975
Population Change % (2007-2017)	0.9%	6.2%

Figure 1: Population Estimates by broad age bands, 2017

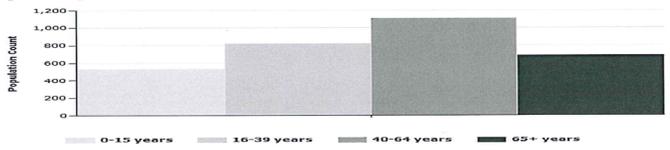
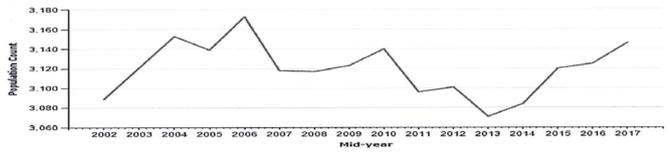


Figure 2: Population Trend, 2002 - 2017 (non-zero axis)



Datasets used: Population Estimates: Broad Age Bands (administrative geographies), NISRA Demographic Statistics

Further Information:

Further information on Population Estimates including reports, methodology etc. can be found on the NISRA website. Information on Components of Population Change and Migration are available on NINIS. Interactive content is also available to view under the Population theme.

Appendix 7 - Lucid Talk-Coleraine Area Micro Poll

Coleraine Area Micro-Poll

Executive Summary Report



October 2019

Report commissioned by the Integrated Education Fund

Supported by a grant from the Foundation Open Society Institute in cooperation with the Education Support Program of the Open Society Foundations

Coleraine Area Micro-Poll Executive Summary Report

The data, results, and commentary enclosed in this report are subject to the provisions of the UK Data Protection Act. Any publication, distribution, or communication, of this report, or parts of this report, should only be with the permission of LucidTalk and the Integrated Education Fund.

Subject: Polling Projects – IEF: Micro Polls – Coleraine area - Executive Summary Report – Audited Results

Date: October 2019

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Methodology	6
Coleraine Area Micro Poll – Results	7

Introduction

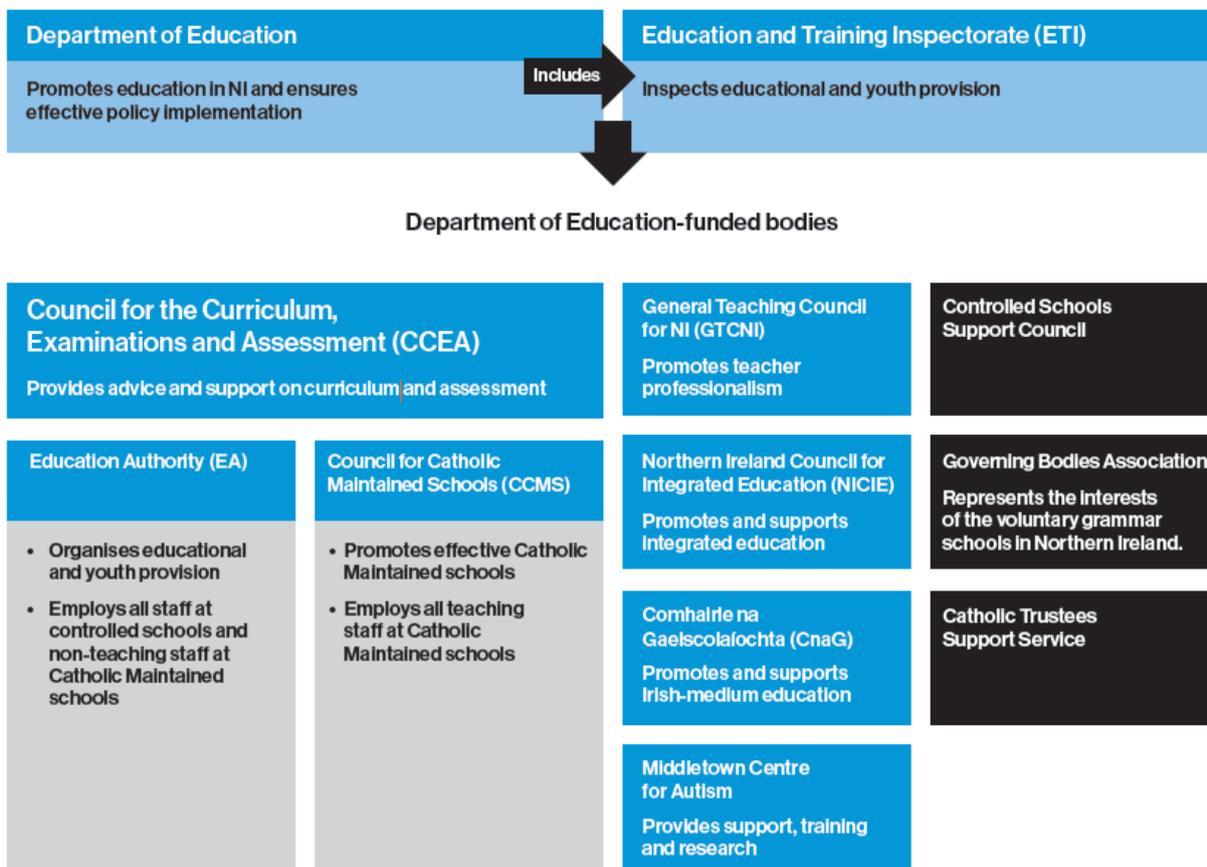
Introduction and Background

The IEF has been engaging with parents across the region to discuss educational provision in their local area. Through our engagement in the Coleraine area it has become clear that some parents are supportive of integrated education for their children at Primary level, but can't access this option due to limited provision nearby. This poll was commissioned to support anecdotal evidence that parents would like to see change, both locally and structurally in our education system.

Educational Provision in Northern Ireland

The education system in Northern Ireland is divided by religion in that most children attend predominantly Protestant ('Controlled') schools or Catholic ('Maintained') schools; by ability (and to a large extent social background) in that a selection system operates at age 11 to decide which children attend grammar schools; and by gender, particularly in second level education where a quarter of the secondary schools and almost half of all grammar schools are single sex.

The Department of Education funds ten other bodies to plan, deliver and manage education in schools in Northern Ireland.



The most recent figures from the Department of Education (Statistical Bulletin, 2/2019) show that it caters for approximately 322,000 pupils in 813 primary schools, 130 secondary schools, 66 grammar schools and 39 special schools. These numbers include 65 integrated schools, with a total enrolment of 23,600 pupils (7% of the total pupil population). Almost 6,500 pupils participate in funded Irish medium education.

At the end of April 2017, on behalf of all educational bodies, the Education Authority (EA) published the first regional Area Plan for Northern Ireland – *Providing Pathways: Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020*. The focus of the Area Plan is to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs within a diverse system of education through a network of sustainable schools.

LucidTalk - Background and Professional Credentials

Lucid Talk is an independent polling and market research company with in-depth experience in the use of polling and general market research for public, private and political organisations.

LucidTalk is a member of all recognised professional Polling and Market Research organisations, including the UK Market Research Society (UK-MRS), the British Polling Council (BPC), and ESOMAR (European Society of Market Research organisations). The BPC are the primary UK professional body ensuring professional Polling and Market Research standards. All polling, research, sampling, methodologies used, market research projects and results and reports production are, and have been, carried out to the professional standards laid down by the BPC and AIMRO (Association of Irish Market Research Organisations).

Methodology

Polling was carried out by Belfast based polling and market research company LucidTalk. The project was carried out online from 11 - 21 October 2019.

367 full responses were received of which 341 passed the 'audit' in terms of qualifying as resident in the target area. Of these 341 responses, 318 qualified as parents, and 240 qualified as parents with children under 12.

Targeted area:

The broad area in and surrounding Coleraine – including Coleraine town and immediate surrounding area i.e. within 1 mile of Coleraine, North and North-East of Coleraine - Portstewart, Portrush, Blagh, West and North-West of Coleraine - Articlave, Castlerock, Downhill (and towards Limavady), South of Coleraine - Macosquin, Castleroe, Macfin (and towards Ballymoney), East of Coleraine - Cloyfin, Ballyrashane, Balybogey.

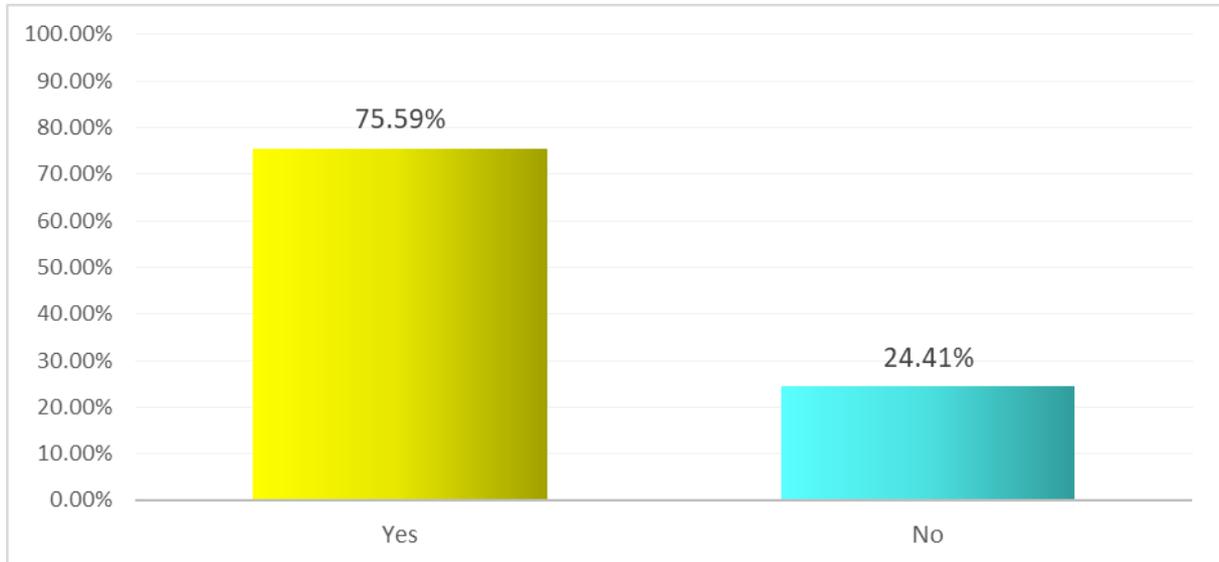
NB These are approximate estimates based on IP (Internet Protocol) address analyses etc.

The results presented below are mathematically representative as representing the views of Parents (with at least 1 child under 12) in the target area to within an error of only +/-2.8%.

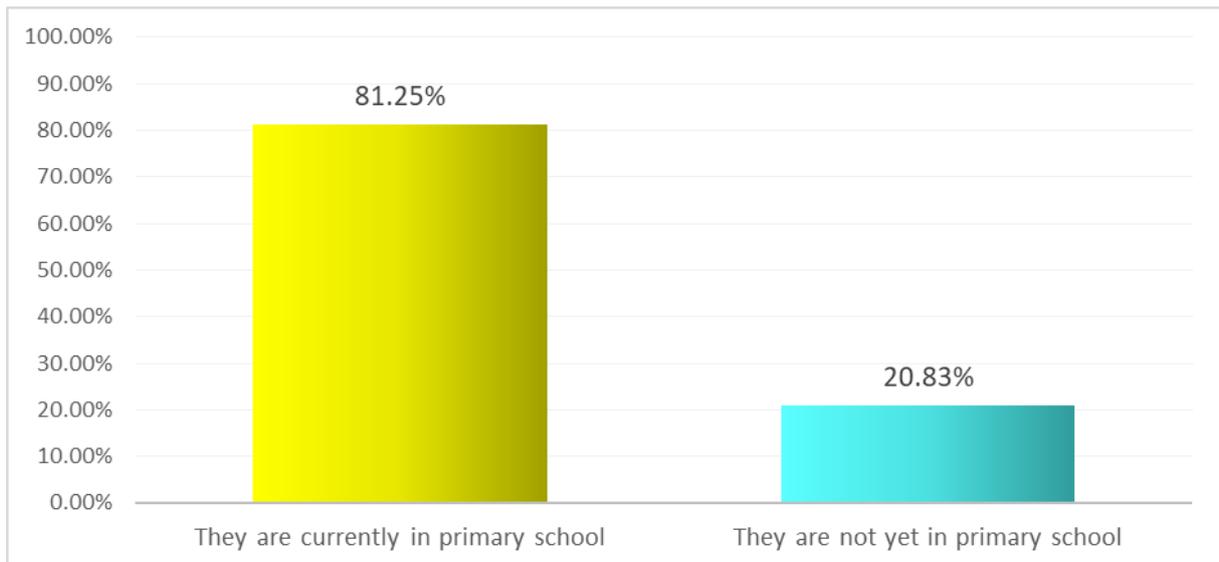
Coleraine Area Micro Poll

Children

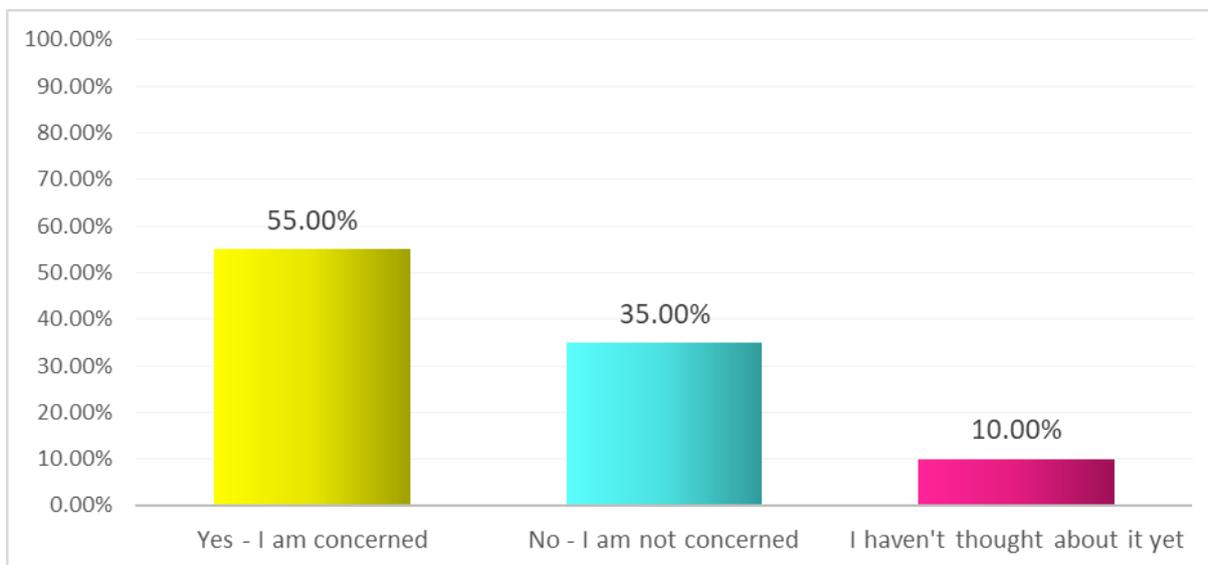
QUESTION 1: Are you a parent of a child aged under 12?



QUESTION 2a: You have said you are a parent. May we ask if your child(ren) are in primary school? (please tick all that apply)



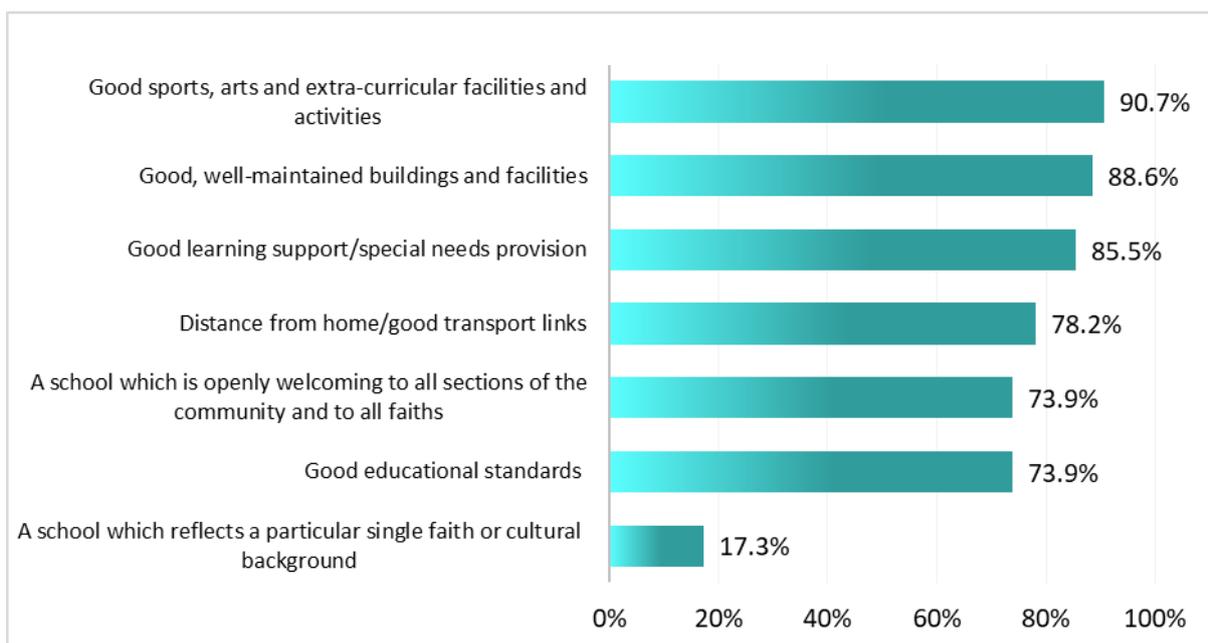
QUESTION 2b: We note that you have child(ren) who are of pre-primary school age. Are you concerned that your child(ren) might not be able to access a place in the school of your choice?



Educational Views

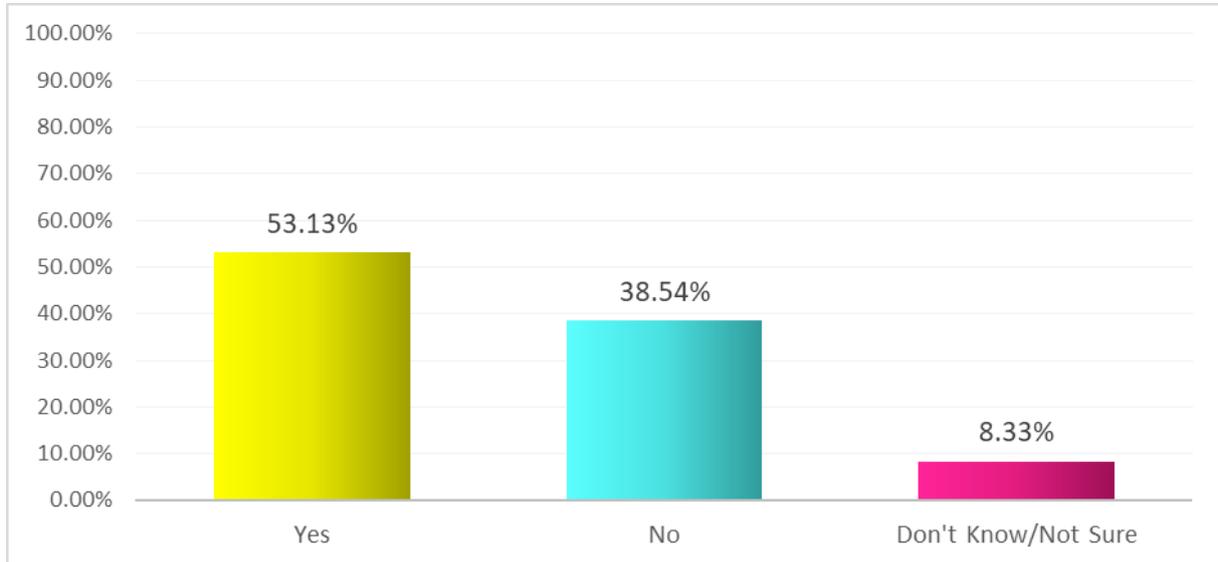
QUESTION 3: As a parent, please rate the aspects below in terms of how important they are or were in choosing a school for your child/ren: Please rate from 'Very Important' - 'Neutral' - 'Very Unimportant'.

Very Important or Important

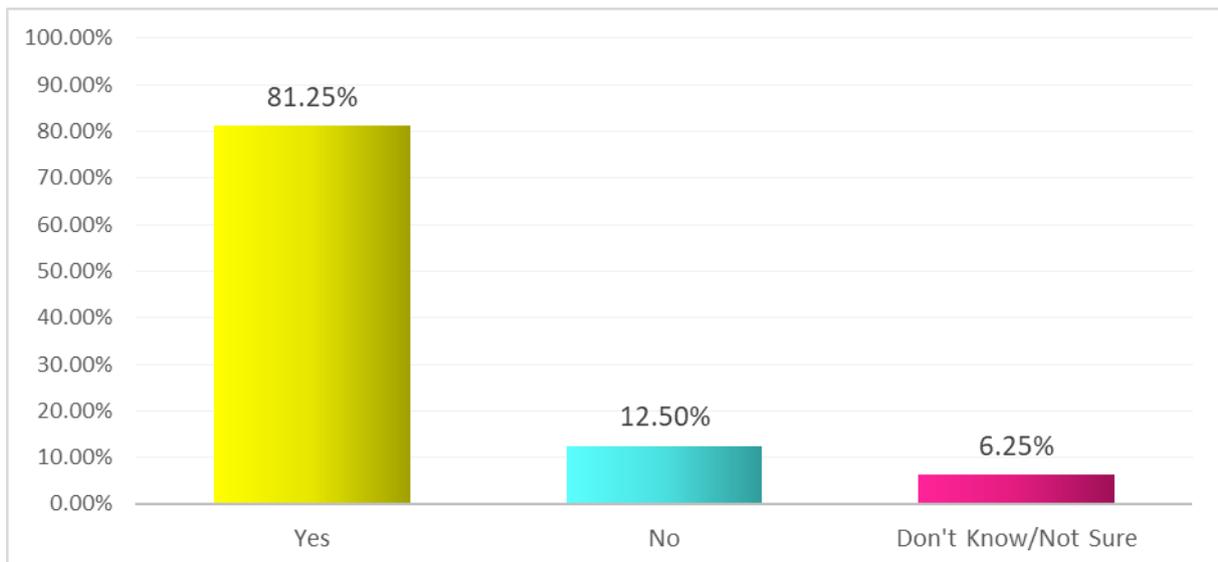


Schools

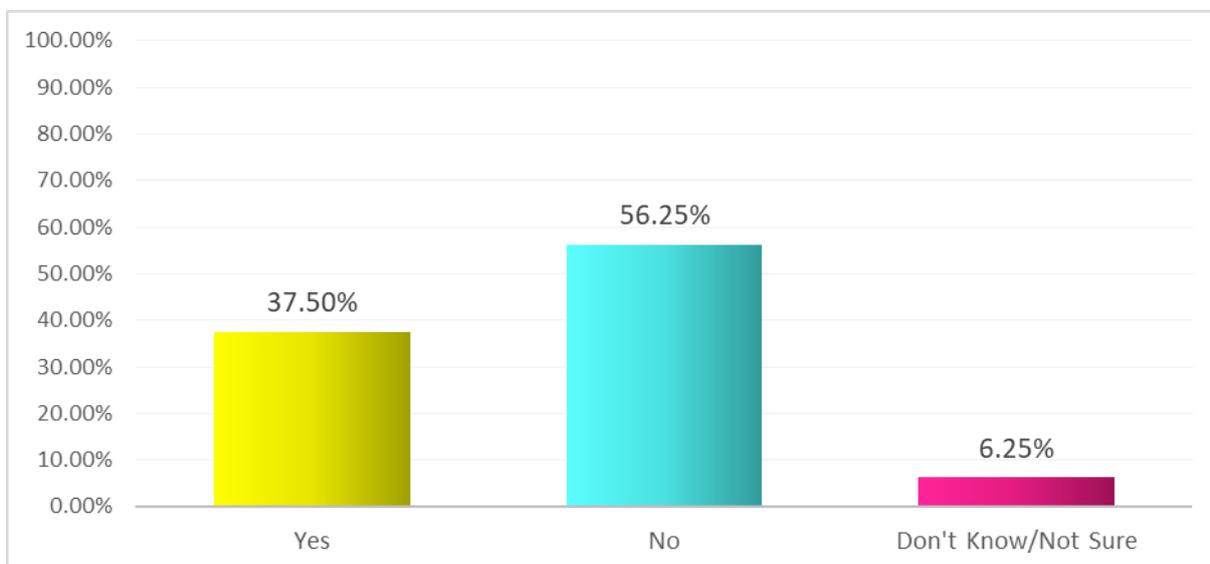
QUESTION 4: Were you aware that almost any school in Northern Ireland can become officially integrated through a process called 'transformation' with the support of parents?



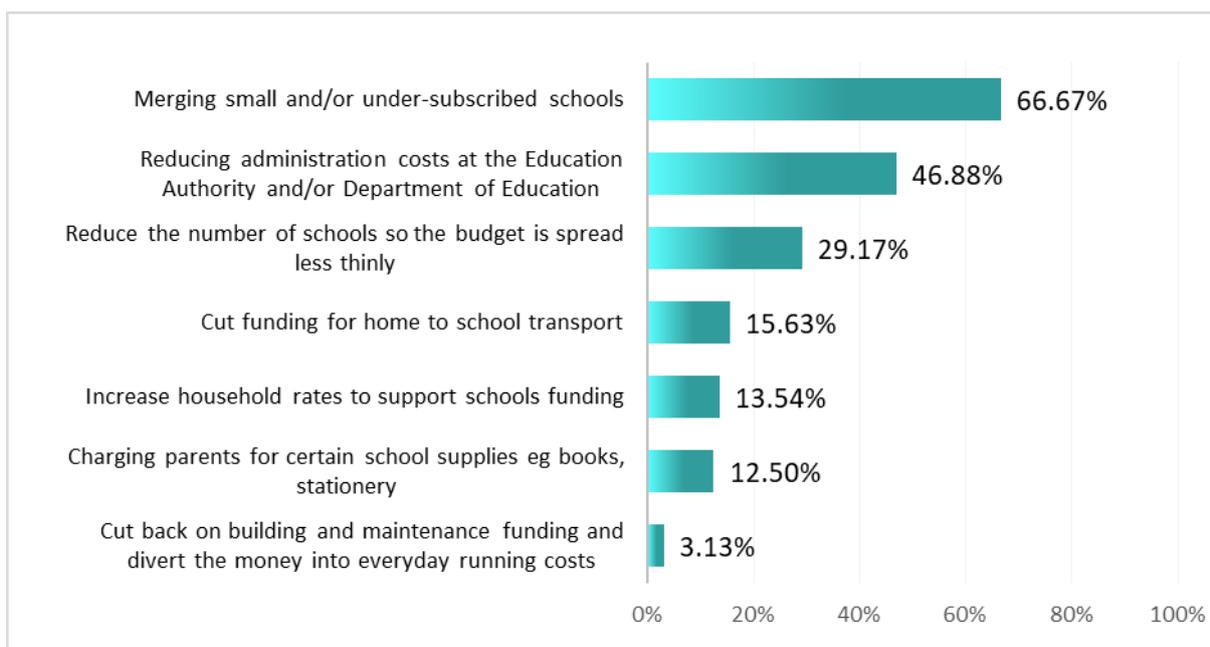
QUESTION 5a: If your child/ren's school, (or - if your child/ren are not at school yet - your local school), was to propose becoming an integrated school, would you support this proposal?



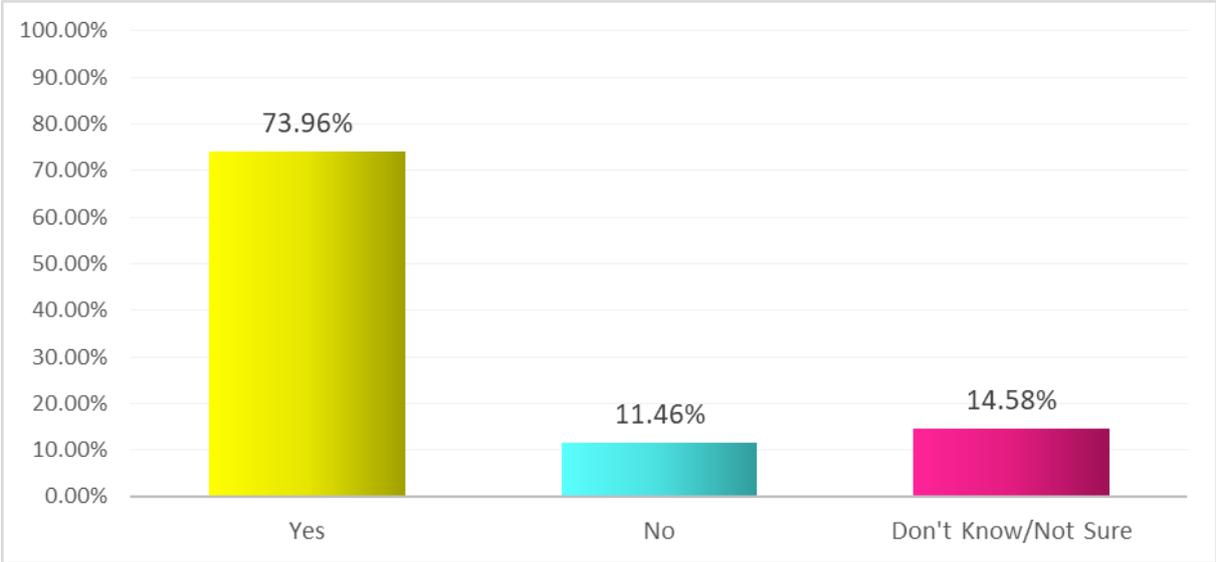
QUESTION 5b: Are you aware of the "Integrate My School" campaign which enables parents to register their support for their child's school to become an integrated school?



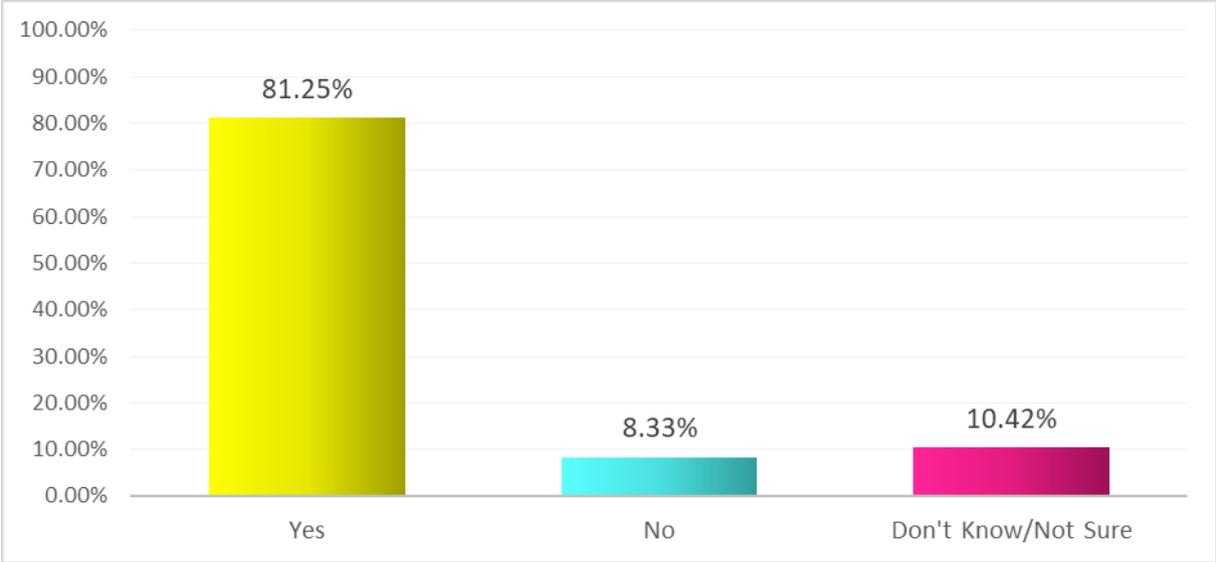
QUESTION 6: You may have heard or read something about schools facing budget pressures. How do you think the Department of Education and Department of Finance should act to ease the pressures? Please pick UP TO 3 choices ie 1,2, or 3 choices



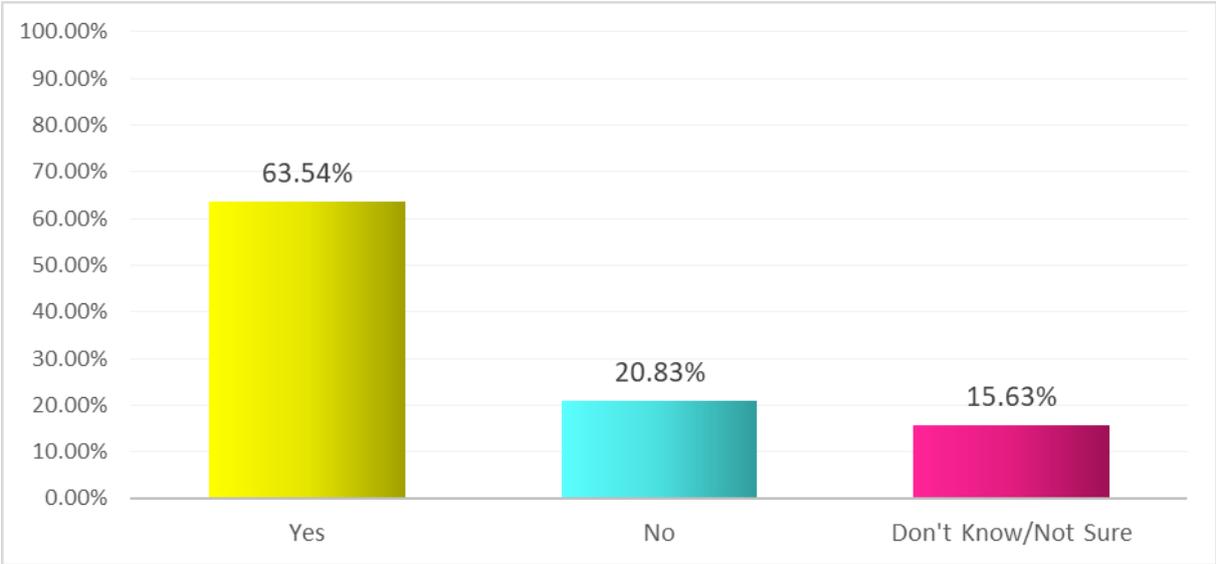
QUESTION 7: Would you support cross-community mergers of schools to rationalise the education system and to save money in Northern Ireland?



QUESTION 8: Should there be an independent, root and branch review of the way that education is planned and delivered in Northern Ireland, to make recommendations for improved efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure the best outcomes for all children?



QUESTION 9: Would you like to be included in any further discussions about educational provision within your area?



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Appendix 8 - ETI Interim Report on the Shared Education 2016

An Interim Report on the Shared Education Signature Project

September 2016

ETI: Promoting Improvement in the Interest of all Learners



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



2. Teachers learning from one another - Castleroe Primary School and Ballyhackett Primary School

Context

From the outset parents and governors in each school were consulted individually and there was overwhelming support for the partnership. The partnership has played a key role in bringing together our two school communities as well as deriving many positive educational benefits for all our pupils.

Action

One particular challenge was the difference in number of pupils at both schools. This has required us to be more creative about the way that we put classes together to allow all of the pupils access to shared education. The distance between the schools is also a factor which we need to consider when arranging shared activities. In order to make best use of transport and time taken to travel between the two schools we meet less regularly but for a greater part of the school day. Video Conferencing has also been used as a means to maintain contact between shared lessons and as opportunity for pupils to engage in discussion and showcase their learning.

As we have continued our journey as a partnership we have sought to evaluate our approach to planning in order to achieve the best educational outcomes for our pupils. We understand that our shared classes and activities work best when planned and delivered in context. In order to achieve this we have set aside two days per term for each teacher to come together with their colleague in the corresponding year group to plan a joint theme.

Outcome

Teachers benefit from a greater pool of expertise and have the opportunity to learn from each other. As a result their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum increases which leads to greater confidence in their own ability.

Pupils have completed evaluations at the end of thematic units of work which have helped us to understand the skills that they have developed, what they have enjoyed and what they have found challenging. Curricular progress is also measured externally through the submission of end of key stage levels.

Appendix 9: Letter in support of Ballyhackett from a local MLA

I fully support Ballyhackett Primary School's request to transform to integrated status.

Ballyhackett ranks amongst the best primary schools in relation to leadership, financial position, links with the community and above all quality educational experience. The school delivers the full curriculum and much more.

The school has a long-standing tradition of welcoming children of all faiths and is involved in very successful shared education programmes.

At Ballyhackett, children of different faiths are taught to the highest standards and pastoral care is outstanding. The school's maintains outstanding links with the surrounding rural community within which it is embedded.

Another important point: Bellarena Primary School nearby closed at the end of the last school year and many parents opted for integrated education but could not get their children placed because of space. This issue would be addressed by agreeing to Ballyhackett Primary School achieving integrated status.

I am fully in favour of the transformation. The location is ideal, the current circumstances are perfect and we need to take the short-term risk to achieve the long-term gains from the outcomes that will benefit this rural community for many many years to come.