

NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION

BRYSON HOUSE — 28 BEDFORD STREET — BELFAST BT2 7FE

10 June, 1988

Dear Mr Hills

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) provides a collective forum for existing integrated schools, schools in planning and their supporting organisations. The Council is at an interim stage of development and a draft constitution is currently being scrutinised by all bodies involved in integrated education. Fifteen such bodies are currently operating in Northern Ireland.

I enclose a copy of a paper which gives a brief outline of NICIE's emergence. I have been in touch with Anthony Tomei of the Nuffield Foundation and he has informed me of the meeting of Trust administrators and representatives of the Department of Education for Northern Ireland on 21 June, 1988. I hope the paper will provide useful background for your meeting.

NICIE is forwarding a memorandum to Nuffield which we hope will be included in the agenda of the meeting.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at my home address if you require clarification on any of the issues referred to in the background paper.

Yours sincerely

Alan Smith

Alan Smith
Interim Chairman

circulation:

American Ireland Fund

Buttle Trust

Paul Getty Foundation

Gulbenkian-Foundation

Hambland and Chase Charitable Trust

Hayward Foundation

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Nuffield Foundation

Sir Halley Stewart Trust

Wates Foundation

Mr D. Hills, Department of Education for Northern Ireland

Mr K. Clarke, Department of Education for Northern Ireland

Mr R. Spence, Community Relations Unit, NIO

Mr T. McCusker, Community Relations Unit, NIO

*✓ 1. Helen H
Pl call. receipt & 2
arrange a meeting with them
leave B/f May*

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Bridge Primary, Banbridge
Forge Primary, Belfast
Hazelwood College, Belfast
Hazelwood Primary, Belfast
Lagan College, Belfast
Mill Strand Primary, Portrush

Fermanagh Integrated Schools Project, Enniskillen
North Armagh Group for Integrated Education, Craigavon
Windmill Primary, Dungannon

All Children Together (ACT)
Belfast Trust for Integrated Education (BELTIE)
North Coast Charitable Trust for Integrated Education (NCCTIE)
South Down Trust for Integrated Education (SDTIE)
South Ulster Trust for Integrated Education (SUTIE)

An Outline of the Emergence of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE)

1. Roots

The roots of NICIE's emergence go back to January, 1987. At that time the Secretaries of All Children Together and the Belfast Trust for Integrated Education jointly invited groups operating in the field of integrated education to come together for the purpose of submitting a composite application for financial support from the International Fund for Ireland. All groups responded positively to this invitation and, over the next few months, treasurers and representatives from the constituent groups met regularly. As a result a joint application was submitted to the International Fund on 29 May, 1987 on behalf of all eleven bodies then involved in integrated education. This application is still receiving consideration by the International Fund.

Another important event was a paper written and circulated as a personal initiative by George Hewitt on 23 March, 1987, shortly before retiring as Secretary of All Children Together. This paper acknowledged the pioneering work of the first planned, integrated schools in establishing integrated education as a real choice for parents in Northern Ireland. By then it had become clear that a growing number of parent groups throughout the Province were keen to follow the example of these pioneering schools. Whilst this ground swell was greeted as a welcome and logical development, the growing constituency of planned, integrated schools and supporting organisations brought with it certain difficulties. Not least was a realisation that the growing number of groups in this wider constituency were independently seeking funds from the same sources. This in turn made it difficult for benefactors to gain a clear picture of the needs and priorities of the integrated school movement in Northern Ireland as a whole.

This picture was reinforced by signals from benefactors which requested that "there should be a single body with which we can talk in order to plan the use of grant money".

Alongside this newer groups began to recognise the benefits of having access to the pool of information and experience of schools and groups which had paved the way.

2. Development

Constituent bodies continued to meet as a co-ordinating group and a number of ground rules were established. It was considered important that all constituent bodies should have an equal voice and bodies were asked to name two delegates to attend meetings. By April, 1987 all bodies had named two delegates to attend meetings of the co-ordinating group, although there was a certain difference in interpretation about the kind of decisions delegates were 'mandated' to take.

A Treasurers Working Party was set up and this functioned particularly well in creating a picture of the overall needs of the movement, based on income and expenditure figures proved by constituent bodies. A delegation from the co-ordinating group met in committee with representatives of the Nuffield Foundation and the Wates Foundation in October, 1987. A paper outlining the needs and priorities of the movement was presented at the meeting, based on the principle that the financial survival of schools was the top priority. The outcome secured the running costs of existing schools for 1987 and allowed two new schools to become established with their running costs secure for the same period.

The Nuffield Foundation indicated that there were other benefactors who, like Wates, would be interested in participating in a co-ordinated approach to funding. The Treasurers agreed to update figures on a quarterly basis so as to be in a position to respond to such requests.

Within the co-ordinating group itself a number of issues developed. One such issue was a concern about structure. The group was operating with a minimal set of ground rules and even these were not clear to everyone. A number of delegates were anxious to develop a clearer structure and different options were suggested including a company limited by guarantee, a trust, a federation, an association.

A number of functions were suggested. By July, 1987 delegates had been asked to consult their constituent body for its views on a co-ordinating body taking on the following four functions:

- (a) to provide a co-ordinated approach to funding bodies
- (b) to provide collective representation to government
- (c) to secure support for established and new schools in terms of professional and technical resources
- (d) to respond collectively to mass media on issues of common concern to the integrated school movement

At that stage all groups were prepared to see the need for (a) as a main function and there were diverse opinions on the necessity of the other functions. A Framework Working Party was formed with the remit to create a draft document suggesting a structure for the co-ordinating body. At this stage there was a strong lobby for the structure to be a limited company and this provided difficulties for some bodies who were sending delegates. The situation was compounded by poor lines of communication from the co-ordinating group to constituent bodies and exacerbated by a sense of urgency to work to external deadlines. As a result some bodies felt rushed and pressurised into adopting a framework which, as a limited company, looked like it would be unacceptable to them. Delegates from these bodies withdrew before the Framework Working Party had completed its task.

Meanwhile the Treasurers Working Party continued to meet with the intention of providing an up-to-date picture of the overall needs of integrated education for the calendar year 1988. Anthony Tomei, Assistant Director of Nuffield, indicated that he had been in contact with a number of Trusts and Foundations and was now aware of a number who would be willing to participate in a more co-ordinated approach to funding integrated education.

Members of the Treasurers Working Party met with the Nuffield Assistant Director and Accountant in December, 1987 where a consistent approach to capital needs was discussed. As a result a paper outlining guidelines for capital development was adopted by the treasurers.

A further meeting with Anthony Tomei then took place in April, 1988 where overall needs for the calendar year 1988 were discussed. As a result the running costs of all existing schools were secured until July, 1988, interest charges relating to capital loans and development were secure and plans for the opening of a new school in Dungannon were able to proceed. This came about because the co-ordinated approach allowed each constituent group's need to be matched to the pool of funding available from a number of Trusts and Foundations. The total amount which became available in this way to the integrated school movement in 1988 was approximately £500,000.

The Treasurers Working Party is currently updating figures for a meeting with Nuffield in July with a view to consolidating the running costs of all schools for the second half of 1988. Their next task will be to provide a comprehensive picture of the overall needs of the movement for the calendar year 1989 for presentation at a meeting with Anthony Tomei in August, 1988.

The treasurers' work carried on alongside the difficulties which had been encountered in establishing a more solid framework for NICIE. With the withdrawal of some groups the Framework Working Party was reconstituted with the remit to create a draft constitution which took account of the anxieties which had arisen over structure. A draft constitution for NICIE was produced in May, 1988. The constitution amounts to an association of bodies involved in integrated education (see attached outline).

3. Recent Developments.

From its early emergence NICIE operated with the joint secretaries of ACT and BELTIE servicing and chairing meetings. With the withdrawal of ACT the position of the BELTIE Director as both secretariat and acting chair became increasingly untenable. The nomination of interim officers at the Council meeting of 26 May, 1988 took cognizance of this and moved NICIE quite clearly into a new interim stage of development. It also signifies the wider constituency and geographical distribution of groups committed to the development of integrated education which currently exist in Northern Ireland.

A first step of the interim officers has been the widespread

distribution of a draft constitution for NICIE. All groups have been asked to scrutinise this draft, suggest amendments to it by August, 1988 with a view to ratifying the constitution in the Autumn. We hope this will allow all groups to express a commitment to the evolution of a collective approach to the planning and development of integrated education in Northern Ireland. Whilst we are anxious to sustain the momentum which has been generated towards a collective framework, we are equally concerned that the movement can develop without fragmentation.

During this interim period we have established an interim administrative base with meeting facilities in Bryson House, Belfast. As an interim measure we hope to secure funding to provide support for the servicing of meetings and distribution of information.

The interim officers have made themselves available to any constituent group which wishes to discuss the draft constitution and interim arrangements in detail. Alongside this they have committed themselves to taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure that lines of communication are kept open and pre-emptive decisions are not taken on the draft constitution.

The interim officers have committed themselves to developing closer lines of communication with the Department of Education and other parties concerned about the development of integrated education.

All bodies involved in integrated education have been encouraged to attend meetings of the interim Council so that an open discussion about the rationalisation of support services within the movement can be initiated.

All bodies have been requested to allow their treasurer to attend meetings of the Treasurers Working Party during this interim period in order that requests from external bodies can be handled efficiently.

A number of constituent bodies have used the NICIE framework to submit a detailed response to government's recent reform proposals relating to integrated education in Northern Ireland. Copies of this have been circulated to all constituent groups and further copies are available on request from NICIE's Interim Secretary, Chris Moffat.

4. The Future.

All movements have a history of development peculiar to themselves. Often that history may appear enigmatic to those in the wider community. The integrated school movement in Northern Ireland is no different in that respect.

It is testament to the determination of those who were involved with integrated education from its earliest days that the constituency has grown, widened and developed. Those most recent to the movement have committed their energy, time and talent because they were attracted to an idea. The development of that idea has needed people of vision, people of ambition, people of caution and people of prudence. These

diverse qualities are all available to the integrated school movement today and the emergence of NICIE represents a framework where they can participate fully and equally in the development of integrated education.

The benefits so far have been considerable: funding for existing schools has been secured in such a way that capital development and growth in terms of new schools has taken place; a wider constituency has been developed; resources and experience have been shared between geographically disparate groups. It was always a danger that, in initially setting the schools up as independent schools, the associated sense of autonomy and financial isolation would lead to fragmented development. Yet the initiative which created Lagan College also created an expectation province wide that it was breaking the ground for more to follow.

AS 10/6/88

N.I. COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION

ORGANISATION CHART

COUNCIL OFFICERS

Chairperson; Secretary; Treasurer.

Elected by Full Members

from

Full Members
Associate Members

Council Members

- A. Full Members: 2 Representatives per member
- B. Associate Members: 2 Representatives per member
- C. Affiliate Members: 2 Representatives per member
- Observers may be invited: One nominee per organisation.

Sub Committees

Any number having specific terms of reference convened by a member of the executive committee.

Nominated by Participating Bodies

Executive Committee

Maximum 12 Minimum 9

- 4 Schools
- 4 Supporting Organisations
- 4 Teachers
- 2 Exofficio:- Chairperson of Council
Treasurer of Council

Nominated by Full Members
From Full Members

FUNCTIONAL CHART

Council - Shaping the policy
Providing remits for sub-committees
Receiving reports of executive
committee and sub-committees

Chairperson
Provides a direct link
between the council and
the executive.

Executive Committee

Putting into action the policy of the council
Providing the council with policy papers, information
and research necessary to shape policy.

Sub-Committees

Carrying out the remits given by council.

Both the council and the executive committee may be serviced by a
secretariat on a full-time or part-time basis.

Technical and development services may be employed directly or
provided through a service agreement.

