



INTEGRATION  
WORKS

Integrated  
Education

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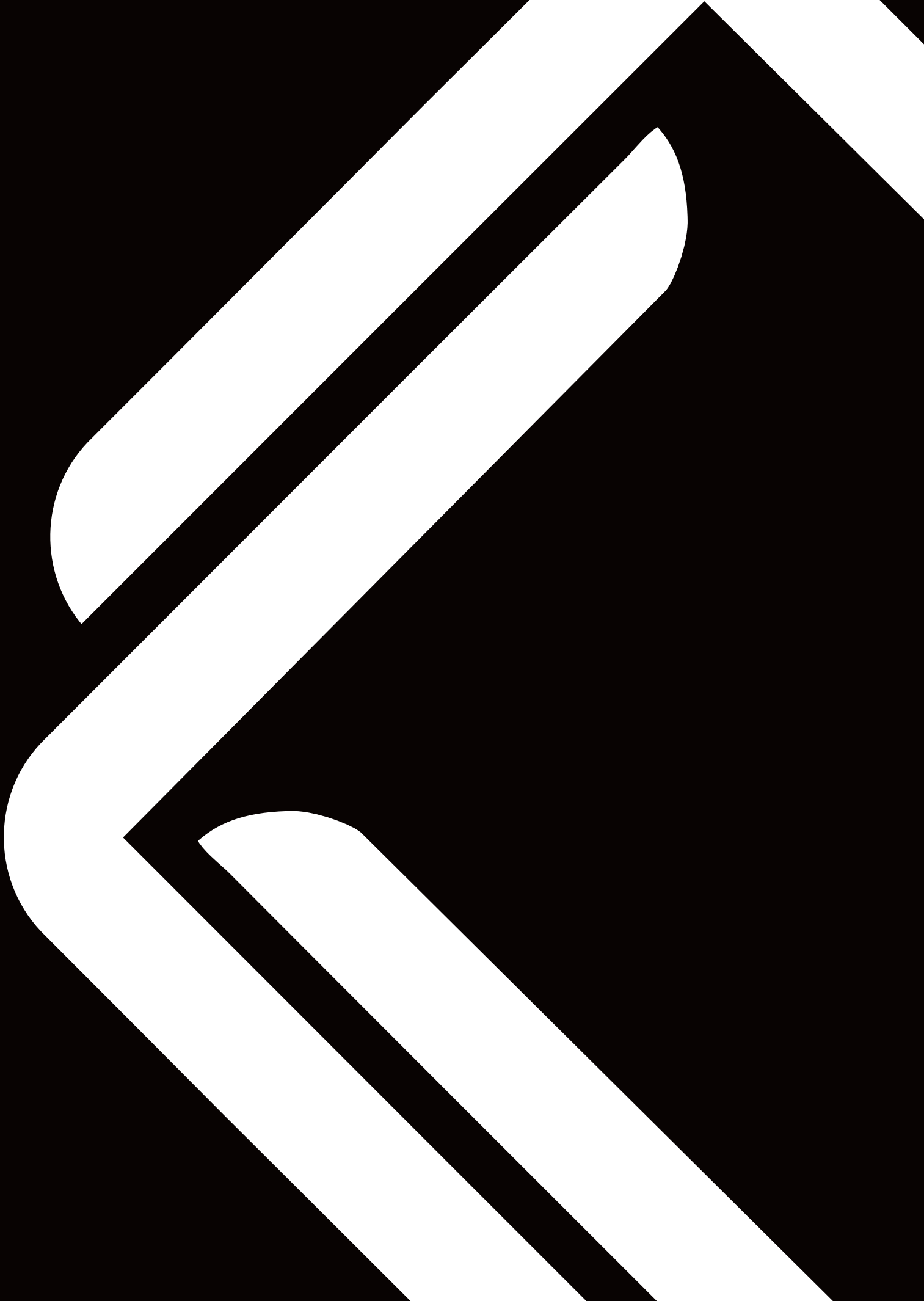
Council for  
Integrated  
Education

Learning Together  
for a Shared Society

# Transformation Toolkit



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**Integration Works -  
What are Integrated  
Education and  
Transformation?**





The end of the world  
You are the best  
I love you  
The end of the world  
You are the best  
I love you



# Integrated Education

Integrated Education brings children, staff and governors from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths and none, together in each integrated school. Integrated schools ensure that children from diverse backgrounds are educated together, side by side in the same classrooms every day.

The education system in Northern Ireland is complex, with a number of different school management types, and although some schools have a good mix of pupils from Catholic, Protestant and Other backgrounds, the large majority of schools tend to have most of their pupil intake from one community. DE statistics from 2020/21 indicate that Controlled schools have 7.6% Catholic pupils enrolled, while in Catholic Maintained schools there are 1.2% Protestant pupils.

Analysis by the Council for Integrated Education of the statistics for the 2020/21 school year shows that out of 996 primary and post-primary schools only 143 reached a base criterion of 10% mixing i.e. a minimum of 10% of pupils from the 'minority' tradition, either Protestant or Catholic, are currently enrolled in the school. If we remove Integrated schools from the calculation, only 83 schools reach this level. There are 287 schools that have no pupils from the other main tradition within their enrolment.

Integrated Education is supported in legislation through the Education Reform (NI) Order of 1989, the 1998 Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement, the 2020 New Decade, New Approach Agreement and the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 which sets out the Department of Education's duty to 'encourage, facilitate and support the growth of integrated education'.

Integrated Education plays a key part in addressing the separation within our education system and broader society by ensuring that our children are educated together, regardless of background and identity.

**“As children and young people prepare to live and work in a global, multicultural and pluralistic society, the benefits of educating them together are becoming increasingly recognised. As we aim to become a shared society that respects diversity, integrated education has much to offer the school system and society as a whole.”**

(Department of Education, *Integration Works*, 2017)

Integrated Education is not simply about a mix of pupils, it is also importantly about the ethos and the everyday practice in a school, for example the approaches taken to delivering the NI Curriculum and the range of subjects and topics included. An Integrated school will consider, and plan for, the activities taking place within the school, such as the sports played and the holidays celebrated, to ensure that it is inclusive and reflective of the diversity within its school community. It will also have a Board of Governors which is structured in a way that includes representation from both main traditions and enhances parental participation through extra parent governor spaces.

The Integrated ethos is underpinned by the NICIE *Statement of Principles*. The *Statement of Principles* was first created in 1991 and revised in 2007, led by NICIE in consultation with Integrated schools and other partners. It was created to provide Integrated schools with a set of principles that could guide the development and maintenance of an Integrated ethos in greater detail than was provided by the 1989 Education Reform Order (NI).

The four core principles are:

- **Equality**
- **Faith and Values**
- **Parental Involvement**
- **Social Responsibility**

The full *Statement of Principles* is available from [nicie.org](https://www.nicie.org)

Parents are at the heart of Integrated Education, with groups of parents establishing Integrated schools, or parents voting for existing schools to become Integrated through the legal process of Transformation. As of March 2022 there were 68 Integrated schools – 1 stand-alone nursery, 47 primaries and 20 post-primaries. While 40 of the 68 were set up as Integrated schools, 28 have transformed to Integrated status from a different school type, with more schools currently exploring this route to integration.

# Transformation to Integrated Status

If your school would like to become Integrated, it must go through a legal process called Transformation. This legal process can be initiated in two ways. Most commonly a school's Board of Governors decides to initiate the process by passing a resolution to explore Transformation by holding a ballot of all parents. The second option is that a written request from the parents of at least 20% of pupils in the school is submitted to the Board of Governors which would initiate a parental ballot – parents can use the [integratemyschool.com](http://integratemyschool.com) website to do this. Whichever option is chosen, the process of Transformation must be underpinned by engagement with parents.

**“When a school legally transforms to become an Integrated school, it makes a range of changes over time to how it is organised, operated and managed so it can become a fully integrated community. The extent and nature of the changes required will vary depending on the school’s existing circumstances. To enhance integration, changes might be required to the: ethos; culture; curriculum; governance; pupil intake; and staffing profile.”**

(Department of Education, *Integration Works*, 2017)



For the school to progress on the journey towards Integrated status, an independent ballot has to be held (conducted by CIVICA) among all parents in the school. The result is only valid if more than 50% of parents vote and more than 50% of those voting need to vote in favour of integration for the school's ballot to be considered a Yes vote. Once a positive ballot has been carried out, the school must then produce and submit a Development Proposal, accompanied by a Case for Change document, to the Education Authority for verification and consultation. The final decision on whether or not the school will transform to Integrated status is made by the Minister of Education based on a range of criteria, including unmet demand for Integrated Education, sustainability, the area planning context, religious balance and the extent of planning and engagement in the Transformation process.

# Department of Education *Integration Works* Guidance

## Why do schools decide to Transform?

The DE 2017 *Integration Works* document is a useful tool for schools who are exploring Transformation to Integrated status. This can be accessed on the DE website:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/integration-works-transforming-your-school-guidance>

More details on the parental ballot and the Transformation process are also outlined in the other sections of this Toolkit.

In our experience there are a variety of factors that a school considers when exploring Transformation including:

### 1) The current mix of pupil/staff backgrounds

While some schools may already have a mix of pupils from different backgrounds, becoming an Integrated school means that the school is making a clear statement that it is intentionally open and welcoming to everyone in the community through its policies and practices.

### 2) Educational benefits for pupils

Since the first Integrated school opened in 1981, Integrated Education has demonstrated that it can help break down barriers and develop more positive social attitudes as well as nurture and improve community relations among young people. Educational benefits are derived from pupils having access to learning environments where assumptions are challenged, problems without obvious solutions are tackled and opposing viewpoints and interpretations of events are considered.

**“At its core, integrated education is about encouraging children and young people to recognise what they share in common, as well as understanding and respecting differences. This helps them to develop a positive attitude towards others and become aware of bias.”**

(Department of Education, *Integration Works*, 2017)

### 3) Joining the wider movement of Integrated Education

Integrated Education is broadly supported by many advocates and patrons, who often visit Integrated schools and promote Integrated Education where possible. School principals will be able to join a professional network of principals from other Integrated schools, the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS). There is also a wider network of schools and staff to reach out to for support, advice and the sharing of good practice and ideas.

### 4) Positive experiences of Integrated settings

Many teachers and principals have had positive experiences within an Integrated setting either as pupils or members of staff and so this is something they want their own pupils to experience as they can see the benefit it has had on their lives.

Continued 

## 5) Support and guidance

With increasing demands placed on schools and teachers, the additional support and resources available from the IEF and the Council for Integrated Education have been greatly appreciated by schools exploring Transformation, and they have passed this information on to their wider school networks.



## 6) Strategic Development

For some schools, Integrated status may help consolidate their position within a local community by opening up the school to pupils who might not traditionally have enrolled there. This may result in increased enrolments especially where schools have worked hard to embrace and promote Integrated Education and demonstrate an obvious Integrated ethos. In our experience several transformed schools have seen an increase in their enrolments as a result of Transformation.

## 7) Financial Support for Transformation Costs

The IEF and DE offer small one-off or time-bound grants to support a school's Transformation. The IEF can also offer Integrated schools financial support through their grant programmes, details of which can be found in Section 04.

## 8) "Because it is the right thing to do"

We often hear this when schools are considering Transformation, as more school communities than ever recognise that there is a moral, social and economic argument to educating our children together within the same classrooms, every day. Many schools exploring Transformation would like to contribute to the wider peace and reconciliation process within Northern Ireland, with many of them recognising that it is the logical next step to recognising and celebrating the already diverse community within their school in an intentional way. They also realise that an Integrated school can have wider benefits for the local community, helping the school become a place where the whole community feels safe and welcome.







# 01

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## **Transforming My School Stage 1: Exploration**



A school that would like to become Integrated is required to go through a legal process called Transformation in order to achieve Integrated status. In this section we will discuss the first stage of this process – the exploration stage.

**“Transformation is the legal process in which a non-integrated school becomes integrated.”**

(Department of Education, *Integration Works*, 2017)

## Who decides if a school should consider Transformation?

Conversations about becoming an Integrated school can be initiated by anyone who is associated with a school. Often they are led by:

- **A principal**
- **A governor**
- **A teacher**
- **A parent or group of parents**
- **The local community**

However it is important to note that the only two legal routes to initiating a parental ballot are:

**1.**

**The Board of Governors passes a resolution to ballot the parent body.**

**2.**

**The Board of Governors receives a written request from parents of more than 20% of children at the school for the school to become Integrated.**

# What support is available for a school exploring Transformation?

Support is available at all phases of the Transformation process from the IEF, the Council for Integrated Education and the Education Authority (Sectoral Support) but schools may find that different organisations take the lead at different stages. The approach taken by all the bodies involved is one of partnership and cooperation.

## Meetings with the Principal and Board of Governors

The IEF and Council for Integrated Education regularly give presentations to school principals and Boards of Governors, in order to provide key information and to answer any questions about Integrated Education and the Transformation process. They are also able to meet with principals to discuss the Transformation process. The Education Authority can also provide support and information.

## Staff Engagement

The Council for Integrated Education offers a bespoke training programme for staff in schools exploring Transformation. These sessions are also available for the Board of Governors and parents. School staff are a huge asset when it comes to helping promote the positive message of Transformation and the parental ballot so it is important to consider how you can engage with staff about this. For example, could your weekly staff meeting include an update on the Transformation process, or could there be a staff briefing sheet to help answer questions from pupils and members of the community? It is important to remember to include all school staff in the process, not just the teaching staff as everyone has a part to play in Transformation.

The IEF Transformation Support Grant allows for sub cover for staff to visit and see best practice in schools which have already transformed.

## Parental Engagement

Information about the Integrate My School website ([integratedmyschool.com](http://integratedmyschool.com)) can be circulated among parents to let them know that they can register their support for their school's Transformation. This can be done at an information meeting for parents, or by text, email, through the school app or by letter depending on each school's preference.

The IEF and Council for Integrated Education can attend appropriate school and community events to provide information and answer questions from parents and the local community regarding the process of Transformation and what it would mean for the school.

We can also help support or attend events for parents which are specifically about exploring Transformation.

## Wider engagement

The IEF can offer public outreach in the local area to raise awareness of Integrated Education amongst the local community and parents. This outreach can take the form of information stands in venues such as shopping centres or leisure centres as well as at local events and festivals.

The IEF is also available to organise local events and to meet up with parents or community groups to provide more details and answer questions outside the school setting. Presentations to local community organisations and networks about integration may also be possible at this stage.



## If the process is initiated by parents



Parents can register their individual support on the Integrate My School website to show their support for their child's school becoming integrated. Once registrations reach over 20% the IEF will write to the school to inform them of the level of support. A group of parents can also write to the school to let them know of their support for the school to become integrated, this letter must be signed by 20% of parents.

Once the school receives either of these letters, they will be required, as outlined in legislation, to verify that each signature is from a parent of a child in the school and, if so, arrange for a parental ballot to take place after 28 days and within 3 months of the date of the letter.

If parents feel comfortable, they can, even at this initial stage, personally approach their school principal to discuss the potential of the school becoming Integrated.

Talking to other parents is also recommended to gauge the level of support and to identify other parent champions for integration. The IEF is happy to meet up with individual parents and groups of parents as well as community groups to discuss the potential of their school becoming Integrated.

The IEF will continuously monitor the level of parent support for schools registered on the Integrate My School website and once registrations reach 10% we will contact the school to let them know that parents are supportive of Transformation. The IEF will also contact parents directly, depending on the level of support, to help grow support for integration.

Although the parent-led process is backed by legislation, we advocate that it is preferable to link the parent-led process with a school-led one as early as possible.

In order for integration to be successful, it is recommended that the school works with its parents and that a whole-school approach is applied to ensure the best possible outcome for the school. For instance, the DE (*Integration Works*, 2017) notes that "where a group of parents is interested in the idea of Transformation, the Department would encourage the Board of Governors and school leaders to respond positively and proactively."



## How long does the process take?

This really depends on each individual school as Transformation is a school-led process. It is recommended that schools give very careful consideration to the idea of Integrated status and fully understand the implications of any decision to move ahead with Transformation. If this is done thoroughly and in full consultation with stakeholders it can take up to a year but experience has demonstrated that schools which take this considered approach are able to produce a much more robust case for Transformation.

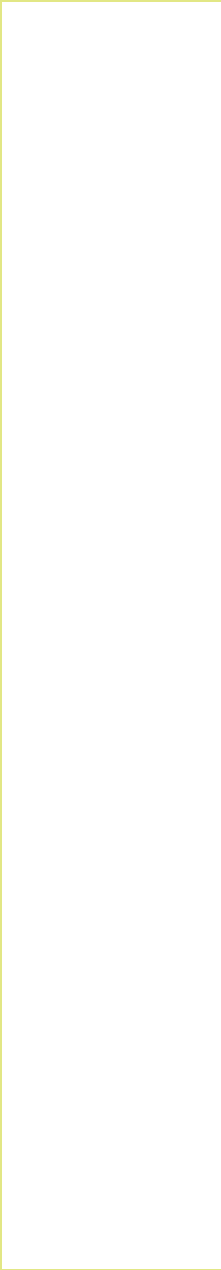
It is important that all school stakeholders are involved in the engagement process, and some schools may quickly engage their staff, governors, pupils and parents, whilst others may require a longer lead-in time.

## What are the timeline and tasks for Transformation?

On the following pages we have provided a rough guide to the steps which schools will follow when considering Transformation. It is important to note that this is only a guide as each school approaches Transformation differently and some schools may need to change the order in which they complete the process.

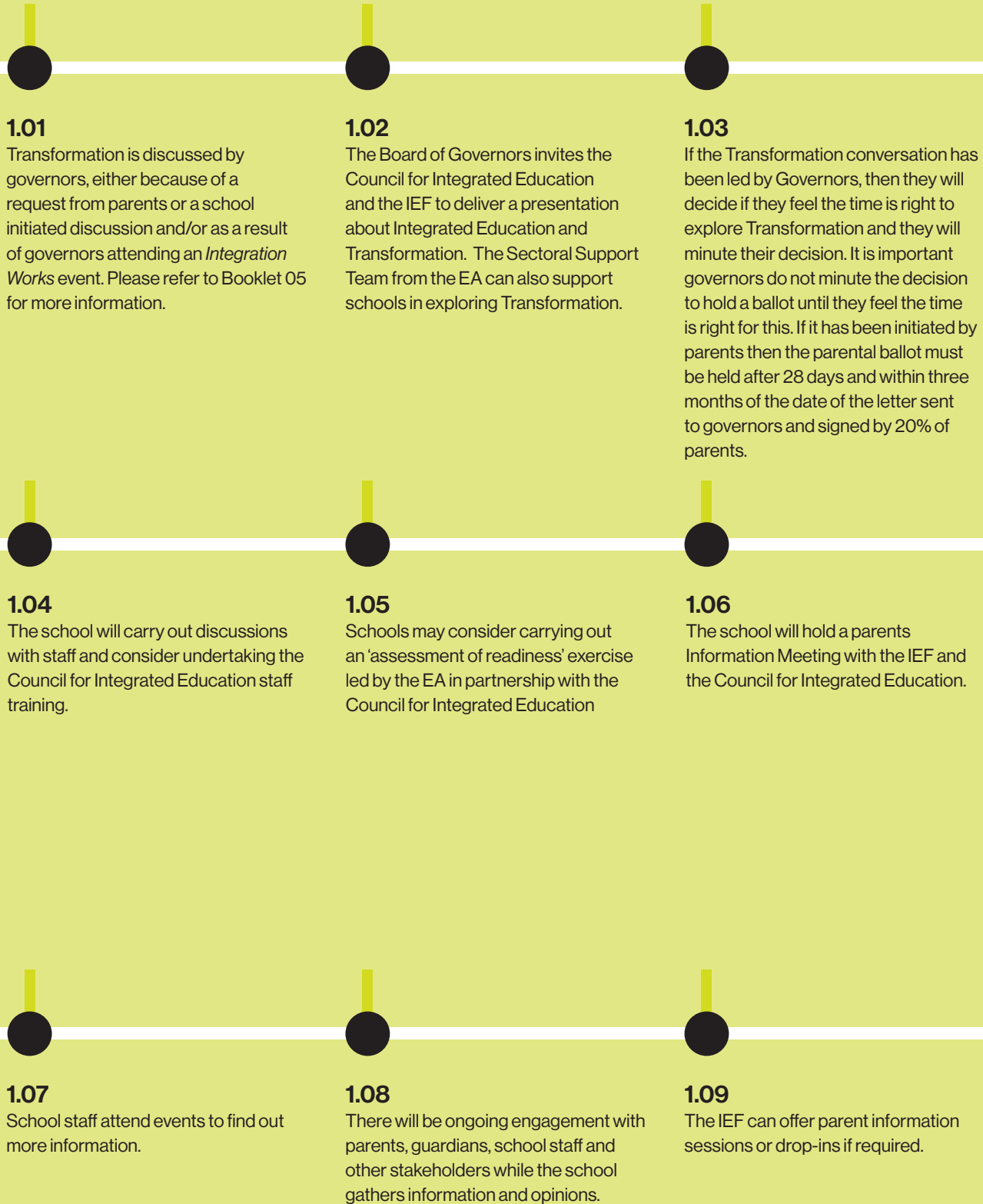
Sections 02, 03, 04 and 05 provide more details on each of the stages.





# Transformation Timeline

## 1. Exploration Stage





**1.10**

The school can apply for an Exploring Transformation Grant from the IEF.

**1.11**

The school may consider forming a Transformation Action Group (TAG) made up of staff, parents and governors who can jointly explore what Transformation might look like in their school.

## 2. Ballot Stage

**2.01**

The Board of Governors will inform the parents and the EA of the school's intention to ballot. They will also contact CIVICA to arrange a date for their ballot.

*(If the school has received a written request from 20% of parents then this will become the first stage of the process.)*

**2.02**

Schools will compile their lists of eligible parents/guardians.

**2.03**

An information leaflet explaining Transformation and how the vote works will be designed by the school and distributed to all eligible parents/guardians along with the official ballot papers.

**2.04**

Drop-in sessions take place hosted by the IEF for anyone who has further questions.

**2.05**

The Parental Ballot takes place.

# Transformation Timeline

## 3. Results Stage

### 3.01

The results of the ballot are released and announced by the school.

### 3.02

The IEF and the Council for Integrated Education will support schools in promoting their ballot results.

### 3.03

If the vote is in favour of Transformation, the Board of Governors will form a Transformation Action Group (TAG) to oversee the Transformation if one has not already been formed. If the vote is not in favour of Transformation then this will be the end of the process.

### 3.04

Staff and Governors will undergo training with the Council for Integrated Education.

### 3.05

The Board of Governors along with the TAG will work on the Case for Change document and Transformation Action Plan that form part of the school's Development Proposal. The Council for Integrated Education and the EA Sectoral Support team will provide support with this.

### 3.06

The school will host a parent update meeting and consider how else they can keep parents informed.





### 3.07

The Council for Integrated Education and the IEF will advise schools on how to gather Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from the parents of potential pupils and Community Support Forms that show the levels of support from the wider local community for the school's Transformation.



### 3.08

The school's Development Proposal along with their Case for Change and Transformation Action Plan will be submitted to the Education Authority.



### 3.09

The EA will consult local affected schools and their Strategic Policy and Planning Committee will pass comment on the Development Proposal. Once published, the DE will consult the wider public about the Development Proposal before forwarding to the Minister for Education.



### 3.10

The Minister for Education will approve or reject the Development Proposal and Case for Change. For full details on the Results Stage see Booklet 03.

## Things to consider

### Timing

The Board of Governors should carefully time the resolution to hold a parental ballot until they feel they have completed sufficient parental engagement. Once the decision to ballot is minuted, and circulated to the relevant organisations, then the ballot must take place no earlier than 28 days and no more than 3 months from the date of the minute.

### Who will be on your TAG?

Consider what parents/guardians and staff could help support the process, and include them as early as possible.

### Communication

Communication is very important throughout the process. Take time to consider your key messages and ensure staff and governors are also involved and in agreement.



# 02

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## **Transforming My School Stage 2: Ballot**

The second stage in the Transformation process is the parental ballot. In this section we have outlined how a parental ballot works and some of the things you should consider before, during and after your parental ballot.

Each school's journey is different throughout Transformation, and the communication of the process, and the timing, will be unique to your school setting. However, staff at the Council for Integrated Education and the IEF will be able to support and advise you at each step of the way. There is also support available from the Department of Education and the Sectoral Support Team within the EA.



## Holding a parental ballot

For a school to begin the legal process of Transformation, a ballot needs to be held amongst all parents/legal guardians in the school.

The ballot can either be initiated through a resolution passed by the school's Board of Governors (BoG) or through a signed request from parents of at least 20% of the pupils in the school. To initiate the parental ballot, the school's BoG will notify the school's management authority (EA, Trustees or CCMS) as well as the Department of Education in writing of the intention to hold a parental ballot. The ballot must be held "no earlier than 28 days and no later than three months from the date of the [BoG] resolution". (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017).

The confidential postal ballot is carried out independently by CIVICA (formerly Electoral Reform Services). All parents and legal guardians of pupils in the school get a vote and the BoG must provide CIVICA with their details ahead of the ballot. It is essential that the ballot question is correctly phrased to comply with the legislation: the Council for Integrated Education or the Education Authority can provide advice on this.

The ballot results are valid if more than 50% of parents vote and the school's Transformation journey will move to the next stage if more than 50% of those voting say "Yes" to the school becoming Integrated.



## Parental Engagement

Effective parental engagement is a core fundamental principle of the Transformation process. Schools are required, through legislation, to ensure parents are informed about the Transformation process and how it will affect the school moving forward. The IEF Parental Engagement (PEC) Team can support schools with this. The PEC team will meet with school principals to discuss how they can effectively engage with parents, helping to provide initial information sessions for parents regarding the Transformation process and drop-in sessions to allow parents to ask questions outside of the group environment. The team can also attend school open days and fairs to offer support for the school and to provide more information to parents.

When planning your parental engagement it is important to consider what time you will hold a meeting to ensure you are reaching as wide a range of parents as possible. A number of schools have also offered childcare during parent information sessions to enable parents to attend.

The IEF's Parental Engagement Officer, Andrew Norrie, is happy to meet with schools to discuss the school's parental engagement plan. You can contact him via email, [Andrew@ief.org.uk](mailto:Andrew@ief.org.uk)

## Leaflet for Parents

If a school intends to carry out a ballot of parents, then legally they must send a leaflet to parents detailing the process. The Department of Education (DE) states that the school's BoG must ensure that all parents/guardians who are entitled to vote receive sufficient information about the ballot process. This information details the implications of their vote and how the voting process works, what becoming an Integrated school may mean for the school and what the new management type of the school will be.

## Timing of a parental ballot



The chosen month in which a parental ballot has been held has varied across transforming schools, but the ballot must avoid any school holidays. It is recommended that the ballot also avoids any public elections. Each school decides when to ballot parents based on their own circumstances, making the timing of the resolution important.

Some schools have, for instance, successfully linked the ballot process with parent/teacher interviews, which gives the school the opportunity to remind parents to vote in the ballot and answer any questions they may have.

During the time of a ballot, many schools have found informal information drop-in sessions, hosted by the IEF and the Council for Integrated Education, useful. It is important to note however, that the school or staff from the IEF or the Council for Integrated Education cannot help a parent/guardian complete their ballot paper or post these for them. It is also useful to consider if any of your parents will require their ballot papers in an additional format, or language, and inform CIVICA of this. CIVICA will work with the school to determine how long the Parental Ballot should be open for, this is usually two to three weeks.

## How to pay for the ballot



Schools can apply for funding from the DE to cover expenses related to the ballot process. In addition to this, schools can also apply to the IEF for small grants to support them in terms of outreach and promotion during this period. More details on Transformation Support Grants can be found in Section 04.

## What if the ballot isn't successful?



If the ballot returns a 'No' vote then the school cannot proceed with their plan to transform to Integrated status. However they can hold another vote at a later date after they have completed further community and parental engagement. It is worth noting that the DE highlights that only one balloting process can be initiated in any school year, unless the DE gives written consent otherwise.

If turnout for the vote is less than 50% of the eligible parents/guardians, another ballot must be held within 14 days. This time the result will be valid regardless of the turnout. However at least 50% +1 of those voting must be in favour of Transformation for the vote to be a 'Yes' vote.



## Collating the data for and publicising a ballot



Each school will need to have up to date contact details for all those with parental responsibility for pupils in their school, including details of those who may have moved house. Some schools that have gone through the process have reported that it would be a good idea to ensure collection of email addresses for parents/guardians and that it may be worth completing this exercise early on in the exploration stage.

The IEF have a pop-up banner for the school foyer and a PVC Banner for outside that schools can display during the ballot period to remind parents to vote. We would recommend that schools consider how they will advertise their ballot on social media and prepare these posts in advance. It would also be useful to use social media, a school's text service, or any apps used to remind parents/guardians to update their contact details.

Keeping in contact with eligible parents/guardians during the ballot period to remind them to vote is very important. We recommend considering how to do this using text messages and emails to remind them to submit their vote.

Some schools have also phoned parents to ensure they are aware that they have the opportunity to have their say in the process.

## Monitoring the progress of a parental ballot



During the ballot process, we would encourage schools to consider the following:

- How to communicate with parents and guardians at this time, for example to remind them to vote.
- How to check who has, and who has not, received their ballot papers.
- Parents/guardians should be reminded that this is a **postal vote** and therefore they need to allow time for the vote to reach CIVICA, noting that 1st class often does not mean 'next day delivery'.
- It will be important for schools to ensure that everyone understands the process; this includes those who are not supportive of Transformation, advising who to contact if they have a concern or query.
- Communicate frequently with CIVICA, organising how many updates will be received on the response rate, and what steps may need to be taken if the rate is lower than hoped. Please note that CIVICA will not indicate the results before the total results are collated, just the number of ballot papers returned.

## How best to handle adversity

As with any proposal for change, discussions of Transformation to Integrated status may be met with a variety of different viewpoints. Each school's experience has been different in this regard with some schools experiencing challenges from within their school setting and others from within the wider community.

It is important to have an understanding of the broad range of viewpoints, so that communication is clear and informed regarding integration. It would also be helpful for a school to decide what their key messages are for why they are exploring Transformation and what this will mean for them as a school.

Each school manages adversity differently, and there are staff available from the Council for Integrated Education and IEF to help with this. The IEF could also potentially fund Media Training workshops for school principals, or senior staff, on how to engage with the media. It is important for all school staff to be aware of who the designated staff member/s are for interacting with the media and also promoting your messages on social media channels.

## The Results

When CIVICA has the results, who is the staff member that they should call/email? If it will be a phone call, make sure that person is free to take it or have a plan in place for who could take the call in their absence.

Once the ballot results are through from CIVICA to the school, it is up to each school to decide how they would like to publicise the outcome. Schools should prepare two different statements for parents, one for a Yes and one for a No ballot result. It is important to think about how the information will be shared and who will share it, perhaps creating a communication plan or allocating a member of staff to oversee the promotion, so that the result can be promoted in a timely manner and so that it has the biggest impact.

Schools should ensure that their parents, pupils and staff are informed first. Immediately after that, some schools may find it appropriate to put out a press release to local media, as well as publicise the result on their social media.

Below are some key groups to inform of the result:

- 1. Governors**
- 2. Parents**
- 3. Pupils**
- 4. Staff**
- 5. The Council for Integrated Education and the IEF**
- 6. The managing authority of the school**
- 7. The wider community, local media and social media channels**

The IEF and the Council for Integrated Education will promote the result on their social media channels and will ask the schools for a quote beforehand. Assistance is also available from both organisations in terms of media engagement, publicity and communication with the wider school community about the ballot result and the next steps for the school.





# 03

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**Transforming My School  
Stage 3: The results are in**

**After a successful parental ballot for Transformation, there are four things that will be important to put in place or develop, if they aren't already in existence.**

## A Transformation Plan

**“The Transformation Plan will provide a roadmap for the way ahead. The aim is to plan to embed integrated education throughout the school’s governance, curriculum, planning, learning and teaching.”**

(DE, *Integration Works*, 2017)

Designing a vision of what the transformed school should look like is a key step in the Transformation process. This usually takes place following the initial exploration phase and when positive feedback has been received from the school community regarding Transformation.

The development of the school's 3-year Transformation Plan involves a detailed baseline assessment of where the school is currently and where it would like to be, what steps and actions need to be put in place, and who can assist the school to achieve its vision. It will include outlining key priorities, actions and resources needed, as well as key outcomes, focusing on areas such as management and organisation, ethos, curriculum and public relations.

The Transformation Plan is aligned with the DE policy *Every School a Good School* (2008) and will provide an opportunity for the school to demonstrate how Transformation will result in enhanced outcomes for pupils, support the professional development of staff and leadership and create stronger links between the school and its community.

Annual review and evaluation, supported by EA Sectoral Support, will ensure that the Transformation Plan remains fit for purpose and, as soon as is practicable, the Plan should be incorporated into the full School Development Plan. In creating a Transformation Plan, schools should explore how it reflects and embeds the Council for Integrated Education *Statement of Principles*.

## Transformation Action Group

One of the initial steps of the Transformation process is the formation of a Transformation Action Group (TAG) “to support, manage and monitor the progress” of the school's Transformation. (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017) The school's TAG should consist of representatives of the key stakeholders within the school community, including the principal, governors, parents and staff. The TAG will function as a subcommittee of the Board of Governors (BoG) and its members will be agreed by the BoG. The TAG chair (usually a governor) is responsible for briefing the BoG on progress regarding the school's Transformation. The TAG will be in operation for the duration of the 3-year Transformation Plan that the school has developed.

Some of the key tasks of the TAG include the development of a vision for the school becoming Integrated; monitoring progress regarding the school's Transformation Plan; and liaising with the governing body, principal and DE regarding business cases for funding etc. More details on the responsibilities of the TAG can be found in DE's *Integration Works* guidance document (2017).

# Development Proposal

Following a successful ballot of parents, the school is required to prepare a Development Proposal (DP) for Transformation and submit this to the Education Authority.

**“A Development Proposal is the statutory means of proposing significant changes to education provision. The Development Proposal is published in one or more newspapers, consulted on and then the Education Minister or Permanent Secretary of the Department makes a decision.”**

(DE, *Integration Works*, 2017)

According to DE guidelines (*Integration Works*, 2017), the Development Proposal should be published no later than 18 months before the “proposed 1 September implementation date”. Although the DP is submitted to the EA by the Board of Governors, the school’s principal can write the document alongside senior school staff, the Council for Integrated Education and the EA.

All schools transforming to Integrated status have the choice of becoming either Controlled Integrated (with EA as Management Authority) or Grant Maintained Integrated (managed by the Boards of Governors) and this is determined by the question asked in the parental ballot. To date, most transformed schools have become Controlled Integrated.

Following submission of the school’s DP to the EA, several steps will be taken, including consultation with local schools, public consultation and gathering of facts and evidence, as well as comments from relevant statutory stakeholders. The final decision is made by the Minister of Education and this “can only be challenged through the judicial review process.” (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017) The final decision on the DP is anticipated to be made by the autumn term of the year before the “proposed legal implementation date.” (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017)

## The Case for Change

As part of their DP submission to the EA, the school also prepares a Case for Change (CfC) document which will provide evidence to support the school’s Transformation, covering factors such as viability and sustainability of the school, and demand in the local area for Integrated Education. For instance, the school will have to demonstrate that it meets the criteria set out in the Sustainable Schools Policy regarding “educational experience of pupils, enrolment trends, financial position, school leadership and management, accessibility, and strength of links to the community”. (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017) The DP submission will also include evidence such as the school’s Transformation Plan and Expressions of Interest forms from prospective parents, as well as Community Support Forms that show the levels of support from the wider community for the school’s Transformation.

Although each school context is different, the school should be able to provide evidence in its CfC that it will be able to attract reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Catholic pupils. There is no statutory definition of what is ‘reasonable’ but the Council for Integrated Education ‘Statement of Principles’ suggests a school should aspire to an annual intake that is at least 40% of pupils from a perceived Protestant background and at least 40% from a perceived Catholic background; the same balance is suggested for the Board of Governors. As DE highlights however, each school’s proposal will be considered in line with the local context and demographics.

Once a school receives Ministerial approval to become an Integrated school, the DE emphasises that “[t]he religious balance within a school does not affect its legal position as a grant-maintained or controlled integrated school.” On the other hand, the DE confirms that it will monitor “the religious balance of the pupil cohort within integrated schools” and that in cases where there are “low enrolments from the minority community, the Department will ask the EA and the Council for Integrated Education to help the school refresh its Transformation Plan with a specific emphasis on attracting more pupils from the minority community.” (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017) In other words, there is a recognition that a reasonable balance of pupils is important for successful integration within a school but that other factors, such as the ethos and practice within the school, are also important.

# Implementing Integration in Your School

Once the DP process has been completed and the Minister of Education has approved your school's Transformation, the implementation stage of the integration journey can fully begin.

The school will already have begun the implementation of aspects of the Transformation Plan by this stage to demonstrate its commitment to becoming Integrated and ensuring that integration is embedded in the school gradually and thoroughly. However, the school will now begin formal implementation of integration throughout its policies and practices.

The main change in terms of school management is the reconstitution of the Board of Governors to ensure that there is a balance of community representation as well as more parent representatives.

The table below shows the most common changes in governance that schools will undergo if they transform to Integrated status. In the vast majority of cases the move will be to Controlled Integrated status and the EA will have responsibility for managing the reconstitution process. Support and training for governors new to Integrated Education is available from the Council for Integrated Education in partnership with EA Sectoral Support.

## School Boards of Governors Membership

Controlled schools in public ownership	No. of governors on the board	Foundation Governors	EA Governors	DE Governors	Parent Governors	Teacher Governors
Primary & Post-primary	9	4	2	None except for model schools	2	1
Integrated Primary & Post-primary	14	2 transferors	4	0	4	2
		2 trustees				

\*Integration Works, Department of Education, 2017, page 37

Voluntary Maintained (100% capital grant)	No. of governors on the board	Foundation Governors	EA Governors	DE Governors	Parent Governors	Teacher Governors
Primary & Post-primary	9	4	2	1	1	1
Primary & Post-primary (Grant Maintained Integrated)	16	6	0	4	4	2

\*Integration Works, Department of Education, 2017, page 37





## Governance

The school will consider whether or not its admissions criteria will need to change in order for the school to attract a balance of pupils from Catholic, Protestant and Other backgrounds. It may also want to consider “staff secondment from another school to improve the religious balance in the teaching staff”. (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017) Recognising the importance of school staff to the school’s Transformation, the school should ensure that a “bespoke professional learning programme” is provided as part of implementing the school’s Transformation Plan. Funding is available from the DE for this aspect of the Transformation process and the Council for Integrated Education can also offer tailored training for school staff.

## Considerations

In developing a Transformation Plan schools will consider how their ethos, activities and practice will support integration. This might involve consideration of the sports that are offered, the events and holidays that are celebrated, its assemblies, charities supported etc. The DE recommends that the school should “explicitly consider how the school can develop its existing ethos to take account of its growing minority community.” (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017)

## Curriculum

While Integrated schools follow the same curriculum as all other publicly funded schools in Northern Ireland, the DE notes that schools should consider how integration can be embedded throughout this curriculum to reflect the diversity within the school community. In particular, the DE recommends that schools “consider how each area of study can contribute to this by reviewing and revising curricular provision in key areas such as Religious Education, Physical Education and Music; the World Around Us, PDMU and Language and Literacy at primary; and at post-primary History, Local and Global Citizenship, and English.” (DE, *Integration Works*, 2017)



## Moving forward



Transforming to Integrated status is only the first step on a school's integration journey. To ensure that the school delivers integration efficiently and effectively, it will continuously need to review its policies and practices. Integration is an ongoing process and schools need to ensure that their whole school community remains onboard, including parents, pupils, staff (teaching and non-teaching), BOGs and the local community.

Financial as well as practical support are available from the DE during the Transformation process as well as for up to five years after the school has formally transformed. This funding process is aligned to the Transformation Plan and the monitoring and evaluation of spend is carried out by the EA Sectoral Support/ Council for Integrated Education partnership.

In addition, schools can apply to the IEF for grants to cover relevant expenses related to the process of becoming an Integrated school. Please refer to Section 04 for more information.

## Branding of Transformation

Branding of the new Integrated school is a key consideration to ensure that the parents, staff and pupils as well as the local community are aware of what becoming Integrated will mean for the school. This could involve changes to the school's logo, colours, signage, motto and the school website and social media. Please consider any cost implications for parents regarding any changes to the uniform. The DE also suggests that the school update its prospectus to include messages regarding the school becoming Integrated and the positive impact that this will have, the school's admissions criteria (amended to reflect Integrated status), statements regarding the curriculum and in particular religious education and extra-curricular activities offered by the school, as well as an update on the changes made to the Board of Governors.





# 04

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## **Events and Support on the Journey**

The Integrated Education Fund organises and funds a number of support events for school staff who are interested in finding out more about Transformation for their school. These events are run in partnership with the Council for Integrated Education, and events are scheduled throughout Northern Ireland, with financial support for sub cover often available. To find out when the next event is being held, please contact the IEF's Parental Engagement Campaign Manager Jill Caskey, by emailing [jill@ief.org.uk](mailto:jill@ief.org.uk)



## Current events include:

### Integration Works Conference

*Full Day Event / Run Annually*

Our annual Integration Works event is for school staff and governors who are interested in finding out more about integration, what it would mean for their school and what is involved in the Transformation process. The day is relaxed and allows plenty of time for conversation and discussion. Presentations are made by staff from schools that have gone through the Transformation process to help share their experience. Representatives from the IEF and the Council for Integrated Education also discuss the Transformation process and what support is available to schools.

### Transformation Support Programme: Governors

*Evening Event / Run twice a year*

This evening event is specifically aimed at governors of schools. It outlines the Transformation process for governors, and discusses the development proposal process, as well as answering specific questions from school governors. A representative from a transformed school discusses their experiences of the Transformation process.

### Transformation Support Programme: School Staff

*Day time / Evening Event / Run twice a year*

Similar to the governors' event, this event aims to provide school staff with information about the process of Transformation, for example what changes may take place in their school and what support and training are available. This event allows the staff to ask questions that they may have, or questions they anticipate from parents and stakeholders. We also cover what being an Integrated school entails and how schools can achieve best practice in integration.

Other events will also be organised as appropriate. For example, we have previously organised an event for nursery schools and a media training course at the request of transforming schools.



# Nursery, Primary and Post-Primary School Grants

The IEF can offer financial support to schools through Transformation Support Grants. These grants must be applied for and, as with any grant making process, applications will be assessed and grants awarded according to the criteria for the programme.

Please see below for an overview of the grants available specifically for transforming schools. For details of current grants, amounts available and how to apply, email [Claire@ief.org.uk](mailto:Claire@ief.org.uk) to contact Claire Carlin, the IEF's Grants Officer.

## Exploration Grant

This grant can be awarded to schools that want to explore integration. This is the initial grant a school can apply for and is for pre-ballot work, eg early engagement with parents, staff and other stakeholders and exploration events.

## Pre-Parental Ballot Grant

Schools that have decided to ballot may require support to 'build their case for Transformation'. This grant will be available once the Board of Governors has agreed to ballot, and up until the ballot is held. The funding aims to help a school engage with parents through parents' evenings or similar events and to allow staff to take part in training, distribute leaflets or visit Integrated schools to observe best practice.

## Post-Parental Ballot

If required, a school can also apply for a grant to support their Transformation journey after the parental ballot. This could help schools to continue to build support for the school's Transformation.

## Post-Development Proposal Approval

This stage of funding is available to support a school after their Development Proposal has received Ministerial approval, in order to help with rebranding, promoting the Transformation of the school to Integrated status or for any other supportive measures that need to be taken to help promote and facilitate the school's Transformation.

Nursery, primary and post-primary schools can apply under each phase of the grant programme as they move through the Transformation process, but they need not apply for funds from each phase (or may underspend on their grant) and the underspend can be rolled over from one phase to the next if necessary.





# 05



## Post-Transformation Support

## Welcome to the Integrated Family

**Congratulations, your school is now an Integrated school as a result of the hard work and commitment of those involved. As an Integrated school, a range of grant programmes and support are now available to you – please read on to find out more.**

## Department of Education Transformation Grant

The Department of Education offers up to 5 years post-Transformation funding to support schools to implement their Transformation Plan. A school will receive correspondence from DE as they approach their first year of opening as an Integrated school inviting them to apply and outlining what level of funds may be available. Schools then apply on an annual basis. The monitoring of the grant is supported by the Council for Integrated Education and the Education Authority who will provide dedicated support to enable a school to implement, review and revise their Transformation Plan.

## IEF Grants

The IEF has a range of grants available to support the development of schools' Integrated ethos, for growth or for other integration-specific requirements. The amounts available and the application process may vary, so please contact us for the most up to date information. More information on grants can be found in Section 04.



## Carson Awards

The IEF's Carson Awards are an exciting opportunity for young people from Integrated schools to express themselves creatively under the project theme 'What Integrated Education Means to Me'. The project can take many creative forms such as photography, music, short film, dance, stories, sculptures etc. The Carson Awards programme was founded by the legendary comedian, the late Frank Carson and his son Tony Carson and reflects their long standing support for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Creativity is the key and we receive a wide range of entries each year reflecting a variety of mediums, for example artwork, photography, collage, music, dance, stories, poems, sculpture, short films, comedy sketches, drama or any other medium of your choice.

The Awards have two elements – Carson Bursaries and the Carson Prize.

### Carson Bursaries

The Carson Bursaries are open to Year 11, 12, 13 and 14 pupils at Integrated colleges and, if applicable, to their collaborative partners. The Bursaries, of up to £1,000 each provide resources to carry out and complete a creative project under the theme 'What Integrated Education Means to Me'.

### Carson Prize

The Carson Prize is open to all pupils of Integrated primary and post-primary schools and, if applicable, their collaborative partners. Completed creative projects, under the theme 'What Integrated Education Means to Me', may be entered for The Carson Prize. For example, pupils may wish to enter a poem, song or piece of artwork they have already created or which does not require any financial assistance. These entries will be judged under key stage categories and winners will receive £500 for their school together with a school trophy. All those who take part will receive a certificate.

For more information about the Carson Awards, application deadlines or if you have a project you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact the IEF's Events and Projects Officer Gemma Hill, by emailing [gemma@ief.org.uk](mailto:gemma@ief.org.uk) or phoning 028 9069 4099.

## Support from other schools



Recently transformed schools are likely to have provided guidance throughout a Transformation journey - one of the great things about the Integrated family is that close-knit community that aims to encourage and support us as we learn from each other and seek to do the best for our pupils.

There are a variety of networks now available to join, to share resources and support each other. The Council for Integrated Education will provide details of what support is available through Integrated school networks. The Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS) will also invite principals of newly Integrated schools to join their network.

The IEF and Council for Integrated Education are also always available for advice and support – just get in touch.

## Support for other schools



Schools that successfully transform often join our panel of 'experts'. This network helps to encourage more transformations and wider support for Integrated Education in our society. Their contribution of speaking at events, or being available for schools that are considering Transformation, encourages more schools to consider this process.

We hope that you find learning from others' experiences to be beneficial and that you will also be able to share your experience with the next schools to pursue the journey of Transformation to Integrated status.

## Promoting your new status



Each school works hard to achieve Integrated status and this is something to be proud of. So make sure local papers are aware of this change, post on social media and remember to keep the engagement with parents going so they continue to feel part of this new school that they have helped campaign for.

Use open nights and community events to continue to reinforce the Integrated ethos with those who come through your doors, and continue to strive for excellence.

## And finally....

We hope this resource has been of benefit; we are continually learning and developing our practice and therefore would love to hear your feedback - please send it through to [Jill@ief.org.uk](mailto:Jill@ief.org.uk)



INTEGRATION  
WORKS

# Integrated Education

# Transformation Toolkit



Learning Together  
for a Shared Society

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