

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education

ADDENDUM



Department of
Education
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy, introduced in March 2011, was subject to a formal review by the Department in late 2014 in keeping with the normal policy cycle process. The review findings confirmed that the policy had been largely effective in addressing barriers to embedding the CRED work within our education system and that it has had a positive impact on attitudes of children and young people to others they perceive as different. While positive steps have been taken, the review indicated a continued need for the policy to fully embed community relations, equality and diversity work.
- 1.2 The review also found that, when given the opportunity through sustained contact with others perceived to be different, children and young people work well collaboratively and develop meaningful relationships with those from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.
- 1.3 Delivery in the majority of schools, pre-school settings and youth work settings visited by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) was deemed very good or better. This was facilitated through effective leadership and management across the various levels of governance from the Department of Education, Education & Library Boards (now Education Authority) and the Youth Council NI, and within schools.
- 1.4 Most educational settings visited by ETI were proactive in consulting with different community groups in order to support children and young people when there are significant tensions within their local community. Additionally, many of the original action commitments have been implemented.
- 1.5 While the review confirmed that the policy is fit for purpose and is achieving its objectives, a number of actions were identified to build on work to date and further embed the policy against the background of a more challenging financial landscape. Earmarked funding for CRED activities was terminated in March 2015. While the core policy remains unchanged, this addendum supplements it with an updated set of action commitments which should be read in conjunction with the policy.

1.6 The following table summarises the updated action commitments:

Key Issue	Key Action	Responsible
1 Align Educational Policies	<p>DE will outline how CRED sits within the context of the suite of educational policies.</p> <p>DE will take into account the potential to impact positively in respect of CRED issues as new policies are developed or existing policies reviewed.</p> <p>ETI will report on how UNCRC underpins practice.</p>	<p>DE</p> <p>ETI</p>
2 Resourcing CRED Work	<p>The EA in its Regional Youth Development Plan will articulate how CRED related issues will be addressed.</p> <p>EA and delivery organisations will take account of the particular needs of those of differing sexual orientation, racial group and disability.</p>	EA School/Youth organisations
3 Professional Workforce Development	<p>The EA, through an annual CRED action plan, will identify priority areas for professional learning for practitioners. Associated professional learning programmes will take particular account of the training needs of voluntary youth organisations.</p> <p>The action plan will identify also approaches to embed CRED through dissemination of good practice, training and mentor support.</p>	DE EA CCEA
4 Support for Practitioners	The EA will ensure that access to support for practitioners is consistent across all sectors and educational settings.	EA
5 Making Community Connections	<p>DE will seek to foster more effective links with other Departments and agencies to ensure local support for delivery of CRED work.</p> <p>Educational settings to engage with parents and the wider community and, where available and appropriate, utilise local expertise in respect of CRED delivery.</p>	DE Schools/ Youth organisations
6 Accreditation and Progression	DE will commission CCEA to consider and report on how best accreditation and progression routes can be developed for formal, non-formal and informal learning.	DE CCEA
7 Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	<p>DE will continue to collect quantitative and qualitative monitoring data regarding CRED implementation.</p> <p>ETI will further embed CRED quality indicators within 'Together towards Improvement' and report on effective practice.</p>	DE DE ETI

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2011, the Department of Education (DE) introduced a Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy which was much broader and more inclusive than previous DE community relations policies. It includes all young people from across the full range of Section 75 groups as set out within the NI Act 1998, viz:
- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - men and women generally;
 - persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - persons with dependents and persons without.
- 2.2 To assist the implementation of the CRED policy, earmarked funding of £1.1m per annum was provided specifically to support capacity building for teachers and youth workers, to provide opportunities for young people to engage in meaningful activities, to develop resources, and to establish a dedicated website to disseminate effective good practice.
- 2.3 In 2014/15, as part of the normal policy cycle, the Department undertook a formal review of the CRED policy to ensure that the policy was meeting its aims and objectives and to inform further development of the policy. The review drew on a number of evidence sources, including an evaluation of the impact of the policy by the Education & Training Inspectorate (ETI) and the findings of the CRED module within the Young Life and Times Survey to assess the impact on attitudes of young people. A series of focus groups with teachers, youth workers, children and young people also provided evidence for the review.
- 2.4 During the course of the review, the then Minister of Education announced his decision to end CRED earmarked funding, effective from the start of the 2015/16 financial year. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) report¹ set out the rationale and impact of this decision.

¹ www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/eqia-proposal-end-earmarked-cred-funding

3. Summary of Review Findings

- 3.1 The review findings confirmed that the policy was fit for purpose and largely effective in improving attitudes of children and young people towards those they perceive as different, helping prepare them to take their place in an increasingly diverse society.
- 3.2 The CRED policy set out a number of key actions which DE committed to take forward and a number of these have been implemented. These include integrating CRED within the suite of educational policies, providing advice and support for initial implementation of the policy (including issuing CRED guidance², making available a self evaluation framework for practitioners, and establishing a dedicated website³ that includes supporting materials and good practice case studies). While the core policy remains unchanged the review enabled identification of further actions and has provided an opportunity to refresh key action commitments.

ETI Evaluation⁴

- 3.3 In the autumn of 2014 the Department commissioned the ETI to carry out a review of the impact of the CRED policy and to make recommendations that would assist in future policy planning.
- 3.4 The evidence base of the review was compiled over the period September 2014 to December 2014. It was developed through visits to schools and youth organisations, and through interviews with children and young people, educators, Education & Library Boards (now Education Authority) and Youth Council NI, DE officials, and representatives of the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). The ETI also made use of a questionnaire and web-based survey, as well as drawing on inspection findings for personal social and emotional (PSE) learning in pre-school settings, personal development and mutual understanding (PDMU) in primary schools and Personal Development (PD) and citizenship education in post-primary schools.
- 3.5 The ETI evaluation of the impact of the CRED policy in School and Youth Organisations was published in February 2015. The ETI review found that the majority of schools and youth organisations demonstrated effective CRED practice in helping children and young people to build relationships with others from different backgrounds and traditions. ETI set out a series of recommendations for further embedding CRED practice. These have been reflected in the updated action commitments as set out in this addendum.

² www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/promoting-community-relations#toc-1

³ www.credni.org

⁴ www.etini.gov.uk/publications/evaluation-impact-community-relations-equality-and-diversity-cred-policy-schools-and

Young Life and Times Survey (YL&T) 2012⁵ and 2014⁶

- 3.6 The YL&T survey collates the views of a sample of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland on a range of issues such as community relations, health, politics, sectarianism and education. To support its monitoring and evaluation of the CRED policy, DE commissioned a module in the YL&T survey in 2012 and again in 2014 to monitor young people's experience of participating in CRED activities and their perception of its effectiveness.
- 3.7 The main findings of both YL&T surveys concluded that the perceived effectiveness of the CRED programme among 16-year olds is high for both youth and school settings.

4. Updated Action Commitments

- 4.1 Building on the positive foundations achieved to date and taking into account the outcomes of the review, the following actions have been identified.

Actions for the Department of Education

- 4.2 To provide clarity for practitioners on the inter-dependencies between CRED and other educational policies, DE will outline how CRED sits within the context of the suite of educational policies. DE will take into account the potential to impact positively in respect of CRED issues as new policies are developed or existing policies reviewed. This will be reflected in the DE Corporate Plan and in on-going work to embed CRED across all policies.
- 4.3 DE will seek to foster more effective links with other departments and agencies to better support education settings in delivering CRED in their local communities. Of particular relevance are those agencies and organisations working in relation to delivery of Together: Building a United Community. The Department will look for opportunities to engage with other Departments and agencies in relation to building a safe community, characterised by respect for others, and a society that respects diversity.
- 4.4 DE will continue to collect quantitative and qualitative monitoring data regarding CRED implementation. This will be closely examined to identify any evidence of adverse impacts on any of the Section 75 groups as a result of the ending of CRED earmarked funding.
- 4.5 Changes to the collection of data used by the Department as part of its quality indicator framework has prompted a need to revise its quality indicators. An updated list of quality indicators is set out in Annex 1 below.

⁵ www.ark.ac.uk/publications/occasional/CREDYLT12.pdf

⁶ www.ark.ac.uk/pdfs/Researchreports/CREDYLT14.pdf

- 4.6 The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides a legal definition of bullying and requires all Boards of Governors to become directly involved in the setting of their schools' anti-bullying policies and establishing procedures for their implementation, monitoring and regular review. All section 75 groups are acknowledged within the Act as representative of communities of young people who may encounter disproportionate levels of bullying. The Act requires grant-aided schools to record all incidents of bullying along with their motivation and information about how the incident was addressed by the school. Over time, this body of data may prove valuable in allowing DE to monitor the ongoing level and changing nature of CRED issues within the overall measurements of bullying in schools.

Actions for the Education Authority (EA) & Other Arms Length Bodies

- 4.7 Those bodies delivering the CRED policy, including the EA, must take account of the particular needs of those of differing sexual orientation, racial group and disability. DE will require the EA to develop an annual action plan outlining how it will support DE in further embedding CRED across school and youth settings. The actions set out below will form the basis of the plan.
- 4.8 The EA will identify priority areas for professional learning for practitioners. Particular account should be taken to ensure voluntary youth organisations have the knowledge and skills to embed CRED through dissemination of good practice, training and mentor support. Professional learning will draw on existing expertise and opportunities for accreditation. Learning should include awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its relevance to CRED related work and be clearly aligned with the principles of Learning Leaders⁷ (teacher professional learning strategy).
- 4.9 The Department recognises the close relationship between the CRED, Shared Education and Priorities for Youth policies. The Department expects that its arms length bodies will assist educational settings in reflecting the aims, objectives and core values of the CRED policy within plans to progress Shared Education and Priorities for Youth in a holistic way. In particular, the Department will expect that the annual EA action plan, as well as the Regional Youth Development Plan, clearly articulate how CRED related issues will be addressed.
- 4.10 In building on the effective work to date, the ETI identified the need for further support for practitioners to embed CRED, including through effective governance and community connections within and beyond the classroom. In supporting CRED work, the EA will ensure that access to support for practitioners is consistent across all sectors and educational settings.

⁷ www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/teacher-professional-learning-strategy

- 4.11 CCEA will consider and report on how best accreditation and progression routes can be developed for formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Actions for Schools and/or Statutory Youth Organisations

- 4.12 During the course of the review, the Minister for Education announced his decision to end CRED earmarked funding, effective from the start of the 2015/16 financial year, with the expectation that implementation of the CRED policy would continue through mainstream budgets.
- 4.13 The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order 2007 requires all schools to address community relations through Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, Local and Global Citizenship and Developing Young People as Contributors to Society. The Curriculum Framework for Youth Work and the Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education contain similar requirements.
- 4.14 The Department is committed to identifying and disseminating good practice with a particular focus on community use of schools to help build stronger links with parents and local communities. In January 2014 the Department launched 'Community Use of School Premises - A Guidance Toolkit for Schools'. This guidance issued to all schools and was designed to assist and encourage more schools in providing for community access to school facilities.
- 4.15 Voluntary youth organisations are encouraged to continue to support CRED through dissemination of good practice, training and mentor support to ensure increased access for young people.
- 4.16 The EQIA on ending the CRED earmarked funding identified the potential to impact on children and young people in building good relations across the two largest religious groups in Northern Ireland and also those identifying as LGB&T, those from different racial groups and those with a disability. Practitioners should be alert to the particular needs of these groups to ensure they are not adversely affected.

Actions for the ETI

- 4.17 As part of their normal inspection activities ETI will report on effective CRED practice, in particular community connections and the degree to which the UNCRC underpins practice.
- 4.18 The ETI has committed to ensuring that inspection activities evaluate more fully the holistic education of children and young people and the added value for them of their CRED-related learning. To facilitate this, ETI will further embed CRED quality indicators within 'Together Towards Improvement'. This will enable the Department to better monitor the degree to which education settings adhere to the curricular requirements as well as identifying on-going needs in relation to achievement of the policy aims.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The review of the CRED policy indicated that the majority of schools and youth organisations have demonstrated that they are embedding CRED in their practice. The review confirmed an on-going need for the policy to underpin and support the delivery of the community relations, equality, diversity and citizenship aspects of the curriculum and to assist in further embedding CRED work across educational settings.
- 5.2 The review findings indicate that the provision of earmarked funding over the four years since the policy was introduced helped in embedding CRED through training for practitioners, activities for schools and youth groups, and reaching out to the wider community. In the absence of earmarked funding, the gains made since the policy was introduced will have to be maintained and developed through mainstream funding. The following updated action commitments aim to build on the established foundations in practical and proportional ways to further embed CRED across all sectors.

Key Issue	Key Action	Responsible
1 Align Educational Policies	<p>DE will outline how CRED sits within the context of the suite of educational policies.</p> <p>DE will take into account the potential to impact positively in respect of CRED issues as new policies are developed or existing policies reviewed.</p> <p>ETI will report on how UNCRC underpins practice.</p>	<p>DE</p> <p>ETI</p>
2 Resourcing CRED Work	<p>The EA in its Regional Youth Development Plan will articulate how CRED related issues will be addressed</p> <p>EA and delivery organisations will take account of the particular needs of those of differing sexual orientation, racial group and disability.</p>	<p>EA</p> <p>School/Youth organisations</p>
3 Professional Workforce Development	<p>The EA, through an annual CRED action plan, will identify priority areas for professional learning for practitioners. Associated professional learning programmes will take particular account of the training needs of voluntary youth organisations.</p> <p>The action plan will identify also approaches to embed CRED through dissemination of good practice, training and mentor support.</p>	<p>DE</p> <p>EA</p> <p>CCEA</p>
4 Support for Practitioners	<p>The EA will ensure that access to support for practitioners is consistent across all sectors and educational settings.</p>	<p>EA</p>
5 Making Community Connections	<p>DE will seek to foster more effective links with other Departments and agencies to ensure local support for delivery of CRED work.</p> <p>Educational settings to engage with parents and the wider community and, where available and appropriate, utilise local expertise in respect of CRED delivery.</p>	<p>DE</p> <p>Schools/ Youth organisations</p>
6 Accreditation and Progression	<p>DE will commission CCEA to consider and report on how best accreditation and progression routes can be developed for formal, non-formal and informal learning.</p>	<p>DE</p> <p>CCEA</p>
7 Effective Monitoring and Evaluation	<p>DE will continue to collect quantitative and qualitative monitoring data regarding CRED implementation.</p> <p>ETI will further embed CRED quality indicators within 'Together towards Improvement' and report on effective practice.</p>	<p>DE</p> <p>DE</p> <p>ETI</p>

CRED Quality Indicators

- % of children and young people (age 16) indicating they have participated in CRED activities in schools and youth projects/clubs¹;
- % change in number of CRED topics (S75) covered in school and youth setting¹;
- % of children and young people (age 16) who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were five years ago²;
- % children and young people (age 16) who think that relationships between Protestant and Catholics will be better in five years time²;
- % children and young people (age 16) indicating positive impact of activities on participants understanding of section 75 groups¹;
- % of children and young people (year 6 & 9) who think it is wrong to bully other pupils because of either race or skin colour, disability or religion³;
- % of children and young people (year 6 & 9) who think it is always wrong to bully other pupils because of their race or colour³;
- % of children and young people (year 6 & 9) who think it is always wrong to bully other pupils because of their disability³;
- % of children and young people (year 6 & 9) who think it is always wrong to bully other pupils because of their religion³;
- % of children and young people (year 9) bullied with mean names, comments or rude gestures with a sexual meaning³;
- % of young people who regularly socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community³.

Source:

¹ ARK Young Life & Times Survey (CRED module - biennial)

² ARK Young Life & Times Survey

³ DE Research into Nature & Extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in Northern Ireland

