

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AND RECONCILIATION: AN EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COLLABORATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND



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Section 1:**Executive Summary**

1.1 Background

Schools are seen as central in the drive to create more cohesive communities in divided societies. Although the nature of proposed action varies, there is a consistent emphasis on enhancing inter-group contact between members of separate faith/ethnic communities. This approach resonates in Northern Ireland where a parallel education system exists for Protestant and Catholic children. For many years, and with only limited success, educationalists have sought to promote community relations through schools. Reflecting a gap in existing provision, a Sharing Education Programme (SEP) was introduced in 2007. The aim of the Programme is to encourage schools to make cross-sectoral collaborations an integral part of school life, creating enhanced educational and personal development opportunities for everyone involved. The first group of three year SEP partnerships (SEP1) commenced in September 2007. SEP2 partnerships started in September 2010. The SEP has involved over 100 schools at Post-Primary and Primary level in cross-sectoral collaboration concentrating on substantive, curriculum based activities. In the first year of operation SEP2 partnerships will involve over 4,000 students across Northern Ireland.

1.2 Research Aims & Objectives

The aim of the project was to undertake an examination of the extent of inter-school collaboration in Northern Ireland, and the contribution collaboration through the SEP initiative can make to reconciliation and the promotion of enhanced inter-group relations. This final report incorporates interim reports on head teacher survey data (Section 4), pupil survey data (Section 5a), qualitative case study data (Section 5b) and overall conclusions (Section 6).

The research objectives of the project as set out in the original proposal were as follows:

- Establish a baseline for examining collaboration through SEP against the contribution it can make to reconciliation and the promotion of enhanced inter-group relations in Northern Ireland
- Explore patterns of collaboration as they develop over time
- Develop a typology of collaborative activity that highlights good practice
- Explore the process/contextual issues that can militate against/enhance effectiveness, as measured by reconciliation and good relations objectives
- Examine the impact of collaboration on the attitudes and perceptions of participants

Fulfilment of these aims allowed us to:

- Provide feedback to AP on the value of its investment in inter-school collaboration
- Contribute to debates on policy and practice for relationship building, not just in education, but more widely in Northern Ireland
- Identify and disseminate information on good practice to collaborating and non-collaborating institutions.

The research was informed by theory emanating primarily from the discipline of social psychology and the indicators for reconciliation developed were underpinned by an established conceptual framework that posits a positive relationship between inter-group contact in ethnically divided contexts and the establishment of trust, prejudice reduction, anxiety attenuation, and a more positive emotional response to the out-group.

1.3 Data Collection

The project comprised two phases of data collection.

1.3.1 Phase One: An Online Survey of all Schools in Northern Ireland¹.

The online survey, sent to all Head teachers in Northern Ireland, aimed to provide a baseline of experiences and perceptions of inter-school collaboration. The framework for the survey was drawn from previous studies on inter-school collaboration and inter-group relations (See Donnelly, 2008; Atkinson et al., 2007).

The survey contained two main sections. Section one sought to explore Head teachers' experiences of collaborative activities in schools including the nature and extent of previous and current collaborative activities, the numbers of staff and pupils participating, and factors which could enhance or potentially inhibit collaboration. Section two included items on: attitudes towards cross-sectoral collaboration, trust and identity when engaged in collaborative activities, and perceptions of the policy and social climate for collaboration.

An e-mail was sent to all schools in Northern Ireland inviting participation in the survey with four follow-up reminders were sent at four weekly intervals. A paper version of the survey was sent to post primary Head teachers who did not respond to the online survey. The survey was followed up by 20 interviews with Head teachers, representing the different school sectors and education and library board areas in Northern Ireland.

1.3.2 Phase Two: In-Depth Case Studies of Collaborative Activity

Six schools were selected for in-depth case study analysis. Schools were chosen based on findings from the online survey, and aimed to reflect the range of collaborative activity, the wider context within which schools operate, and the profile of different school types in Northern Ireland. Two of the case studies were schools involved in phase one of the Sharing Education Programme; three case study schools were involved in collaboration with

¹ See Appendix 1: Paper version of online survey

no/limited external funding, and one case study was a primary school collaboration funded by external sources. Adopting qualitative and quantitative methods, the case studies sought to explore:

- The values, attitudes, assumptions and expectations that participants bring to the collaborative experience
- The dynamic between participating schools as they negotiate their roles
- Contextual factors and process issues that impede or enhance effective collaboration
- The effectiveness of different types of activity in promoting enhanced inter-group relations (i.e. the potential for the collaborative experience to offer 'meaningful contact'. This is reflected by indicators including equal status in the contact environment, a co-operative approach, opportunity for perspective taking and self disclosure amongst participant regarding religious/ethnic identity, and identity salience)
- Experience and learning gained through participation in collaboration

1.33 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods within case study schools included semi-structured interviews with staff/facilitators, analysis of documentary sources, focus groups with participants and observation of collaboration. In each of the case studies pupils involved in collaborative activity also completed a survey aimed at examining the impact of collaboration and contact on social attitudes and responses to the out-group. The same survey was distributed to matched samples of pupils, selected from the same participating schools but who were not involved in collaboration².

1.4 Summary of Findings

Head Teacher Survey

- Analysis of data from the online survey indicated that many schools are engaged in collaborative activities with other schools. The nature and depth of collaborative activities varied substantially however, with those schools involved in the Sharing Education programme reporting significantly more collaborative networks and more frequent contact between pupils and staff.
- Curricular collaboration was the most frequently cited reason for post primary schools becoming involved in collaboration reflecting a wider policy imperative to extend curricular choice (the Entitlement Framework). Respondents were generally supportive of the cross sectoral collaboration concept but for some there were a number of perceived inhibiting factors. These included practical constraints such as: limited availability of funding; the additional burden of work for staff involved in organising and delivering collaboration; different timetabling models applied in different schools and inconsistent school policies. In addition to these practical

² See Appendix 2: Pupil survey

issues, 20% of respondents highlighted a concern that collaboration could generate or contribute to increased sectarianism.

- Factors perceived to enhance the potential for collaboration included: a history of good relations between neighbouring schools and good working relations between school leaders; the availability of funding; a conducive macro-level policy environment and good community relations in the locality. The majority of head teachers from all schools sectors indicated that prior trust was important when they were involved in cross-sectoral collaboration. Alongside this, a small percentage felt that building trust across school sectors was difficult.
- Respondents involved in SEP-funded programmes were generally more positive in their attitudes towards trust building in relation to inter-school collaboration. They were also significantly less anxious about participating in cross sectoral collaboration compared to Non-SEP schools.
- SEP funded and partner schools were significantly more positive towards the idea that schools have an obligation to promote better relations between Protestants and Catholics compared to Non-SEP schools.

In Depth Case Studies: Quantitative Data

Five hundred and seventy seven responses to a pupil survey undertaken in the six case study schools were received. Multiple regression analysis was undertaken to explore whether a number of contact variables (a) positive contact³, (b) participation in collaborative activities, (c) school participation in Sharing Education programme, had an effect on in-group bias, out-group trust, perceived anxiety, perceived comfort and positive action tendencies towards the out-group. Analysis of pupil data also examined differences between the case study schools.

Findings Indicate that:

- The relationship between contact and in-group bias is moderated by school participation in SEP, suggesting that SEP can be effective in reducing in-group bias when pupils report positive contact experiences with the out-group.
- Greater out-group trust is moderated by positive contact and involvement in collaborative activities. However, there was no significant interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme to predict out-group trust.
- Out-group anxiety is moderated by positive contact. Examination of the interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education

³ Positive contact is the standardised score based on mean score for survey items on positive contact (If you have contact with the out-group in the area where you live would you say relations were generally (a) friendly (b) co-operative (c) comfortable)

Programme indicated that the relationship between contact and anxiety is moderated by school participation in SEP.

- Perceived comfort (feeling comfortable with members of the out-group) is moderated by positive contact and involvement in collaborative activities. Examination of the interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme indicated that the relationship between contact and greater perceived comfort is moderated by school participation in SEP.
- Analysis showed that more positive action tendencies (felt a desire to seek contact; help out; to support; to find out more) is moderated by positive contact, school participation in Sharing Education and involvement in collaborative activities.

Pupil Attitudes

In addition to multiple regression analysis, some simple statistical analysis was conducted to examine the attitudes of pupils in each of the case study schools. Findings confirmed that pupils in SEP schools are less anxious, more comfortable and more positive about the other community. However, the data also suggest that the context within which the school is located is a key variable in determining the extent of reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant pupils. Hence, those 'SEP schools' which are located in areas that are recognised as more divided are less likely to indicate that they have friends or are comfortable with the other community than those pupils who attend 'SEP schools' in less divided areas. But what is perhaps more important here is that even where the context may be recognised as 'divided', if pupils have attended an SEP school they are *more* likely than those in non SEP schools in non-divided contexts to view the 'out'-group positively.

In-Depth Case Studies: Qualitative Data

The analysis of case studies highlighted issues relating to the nature and value of inter-group contact in participating schools and contextual and operational issues that can impede or enhance the potential for inter-school collaborative activity

Contact

Most of the contact in the case study schools was curriculum based joint classes. The majority of contact between pupils in SEP funded case study schools was curricular.

- Curricular collaboration in schools not funded by SEP was less developed and involved smaller numbers of pupils moving between schools.
- The curriculum based nature of contact experienced by pupils and staff was important as it provided the contact with value beyond reconciliation objectives i.e. placed it within the context of the Revised Curriculum/Entitlement Framework. Curriculum based cross sectoral contact also ensured that contact was regular and sustained throughout the academic year.
- In terms of the value of contact, the findings support a body of internationally generated literature that asserts a relationship between regular contact and reduced

anxiety/ sense of threat associated with the 'other' religious community. It also points to an association between sustained contact and increased the potential for friendships that in turn, facilitates greater empathy and an enhanced ability to understand the perspective of others.

- The balance of pupils attending the joint classes varied according to subject, in some subjects there were equal numbers from all schools, others had only one or two pupils from other schools.
- Pupils, reflecting on their experiences enjoyed the opportunities to mix with pupils from other schools and saw the value in terms of good community relations. However, in some cases, most notably in schools located in religiously separate neighbourhoods, some pupils reported experiences of intimidation from pupils not involved in joint classes when visiting other schools.
- Interviews and focus groups with pupils indicated that friendships outside of school developed from contact in joint classes. Many pupils considered religion as less important than shared interests when they were making friends.
- For pupils living in segregated areas there were fewer opportunities for them to meet and make friends with children/young adults from the other main religious group. Pupils living in segregated areas also preferred to meet in 'shared' places rather than go into areas where they may experience threat or intimidation.
- There was some evidence of pupils developing friendships with pupils who were not directly involved in joint classes through the sharing of social groups. This was more prevalent in religiously mixed areas where there were less community tensions between the two main religious groups outside the school context.
- The nature/context of the joint classes impacted on the level of engagement with identity issues. In the main, curricular collaboration in the form of collaboration at GCSE or A level meant that issues of difference were not often addressed directly. However, opportunities for addressing divisive issues sometimes arose in relation to specific incidents/events. Generally, teachers dealt with potentially difficult incidents sensitively, though some expressed resistance to tackling problems of division 'head on'.
- Discussion of identity was more likely to occur within the student group as pupils from different schools got to know each other. Pupils reported learning more about the other religion as a result of discussions about identity and difference. In the primary school collaboration where issues of identity were the main focus of collaboration, a proactive approach was adopted and more time was spent considering potential issues and preparing teachers.

Inhibiting and Enabling factors

The wider context within which schools were operating was highly significant in terms of the level of engagement, operationalisation of collaboration, and the impact on enhanced inter-

group relations. Parent and community support was important for schools engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration.

- In general there was a perception of communities being more accepting of cross sectoral collaboration. Findings indicated that the relationship between the school and the local community is an important factor in the promotion of collaboration and may be an important determinant of local community receptiveness to it.
- For pupils living in religiously segregated areas, schools provided a safe context for making friends with the other main religious group. Given the pressures that schools currently face, inter-school collaboration created additional work for school staff.
- School leadership and school ethos were important drivers, particularly during critical points in the collaboration.
- Time and the provision of resources (through funding) to support schools in planning and operational aspects were vital for effective inter-school collaboration.
- Existing relationships between staff from participating schools and staff commitment to collaborative working were also cited as key supporting variables.
- Removal of funding and/or resources was a potential inhibitor to inter-school collaboration and could impact on the level of commitment to collaborative working.
- Issues with schools systems, monitoring, timetabling and location of joint classes could create difficulties in terms of the smooth running of collaborative work.
Furthermore, current educational policy whereby schools operate in a competitive environment could constrain the development of collaborative working.

Conclusion

- The research presented here highlights substantial variation in the experience of contact and its effectiveness in the 6 case study schools with greater evidence of positive outcomes in the SEP funded partnerships, although it is also significant that there was some variation in outcomes *within* the two SEP funded partnerships.
- The survey data suggested that heads and pupils are enthusiastic about school collaboration however the commitment of SEP schools to reconciliation objectives means that pupils involved in SEP funded projects were more likely than those in non SEP schools to display emotions and engage in behaviours that are associated with intergroup reconciliation. The data showed that pupils became less anxious, more comfortable and more positive about the other community when their school participated in the Sharing Education Programme than when it did not. However, the data also suggest that the context within which the school is located is a key variable in determining the extent and depth of reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant pupils.

- The qualitative research focused on the 'lived experience' of contact for pupils in different social, political and historical milieus and as such suggested something of the complex process of relationship building between different groups. Whilst this data similarly confirmed that participation in SEP funded schools generated positive experiences of the out-group, it also revealed how the contact process was mediated by powerful life experiences, group norms and expectations.
- Taken together, the findings pose important challenges for policy makers that move beyond putative issues of how *encounters* should be structured to maximise effectiveness. Thus, in the more segregated contexts, improving the relationship between the school and the local community could provide a key to generating greater harmony between the conflicting value sets that currently inform resistance to contact and impede the potential for contact to extend beyond school-based meeting. In the more integrated social context of Case Study 1 where relationships between the schools and the local community are already strong and where contact is already largely normalized, the priority might be to find ways of laying open to constructive scrutiny the competing world views that underlie contact engagement of the contact encounter
- A model of effective collaboration is presented on page 62

Section 2: Context and Theory

2.1 Introduction

The relationship between education and division has been brought into sharp focus in Britain and beyond, where research has pointed to a dynamic between social fragmentation and separate schooling for different ethnic/faith groups. Sir Herman Ouseley (2001), in a review of race relations in Bradford, argues that 'virtual apartheid' between schools has led to polarisation, racial tension and a failure to prepare children adequately for life in a multi-ethnic society. The Cattle Review Team (2001) highlights how distinct ethnic and religious groups can live in very close proximity to one another without ever developing cultural or social bonds. More recently, a Runnymede Report on faith schools argued that separate schools do little to enhance social cohesion:

"[They] are much more effective at educating for a single vision than they are at opening up dialogue about a shared vision" (Berkeley, 2008, p.4)

Cattle (2001) suggests that schools are seen as central in the drive to create more cohesive communities. Further to this, commentators such as Berkeley (2008) strongly advocate structural change to ensure that separate schools are 'open to all' whilst calling for interventions to promote inter-school engagement (Cattle, 2001). Although the nature of proposed action varies, there is a consistent emphasis on enhancing inter-group contact between members of the separate faith communities. Theory emanating primarily from the discipline of social psychology provides a strong rationale for this approach, and there is now a considerable body of internationally generated evidence that endorses the value of inter-group contact in ameliorating prejudice and promoting mutual understanding. There are also considerable challenges to the practical application of this approach and key among these are the discrepancies that exist between receptiveness towards contact and the effectiveness of contact in different contexts (Dixon et al., 2005).

In Northern Ireland, where separate education is a reality for more than 92% of children, school-based contact initiatives have met with varying degrees of enthusiasm and success. Integrated schools currently account for only 5% of overall provision with the remainder of school age children attending separate schools. In an environment of falling rolls, coupled with what Collins (1992) describes as some opposition to integrated education, there is little to suggest that any considerable growth in the sector is likely. Further to this, research has identified that attempts to establish contact between separate schools has often been tokenistic highlighting that schools tend to adopt a 'light touch' and short-term approach (Smith & Robinson, 1992; Leitch & Kilpatrick, 1999; O'Connor, Hartop & McCully, 2002). Therefore, the reality in post-Agreement Northern Ireland is that the majority of children

have little opportunity to develop friendships with their peer group from the other community during their time at school.

Against this backdrop, it can be argued that the need for relationship building between Protestants and Catholics is as acute as ever. In the wake of political settlement and paramilitary ceasefires, sectarian crime remains high and violence in interface areas has increased. It is reported that the post Agreement period has also seen the erection of more 'peace walls' which are physical barriers designed to separate hostile Protestant and Catholic communities and quell interface violence (Brown, 2002). Moreover, research continues to flag the potentially detrimental effect of separate schooling on social attitudes (Murray, 1985; Brocklehurst, 2006; Hayes 2009; Hughes, 2010). As noted by Brocklehurst (2006):

"The [separate] school is essentially a closed environment where potent sentiments expressed between children can ramify their notions of religious difference and physical bullying and peer pressure can reinforce concepts of identity" (p.92)

In recognition of the limitations of current provision and the ongoing need for the promotion of good relations, a Sharing Education Programme (SEP) was introduced in 2007. Funded by an international Charity and guided by reconciliation principles, SEP was designed to bridge the gap between integrated schools and short-term opportunities for contact. The emphasis is on creating opportunities for schools in the established State (Protestant) and Controlled (Catholic) sectors to work together on a sustained basis. Unlike previous initiatives where reconciliation objectives are fore-grounded, collaborating schools are encouraged to devise projects that reflect other shared educational priorities. The hope is that through sustained contact on curriculum-based activities, more meaningful relations will be achieved. In an environment of fiscal constraint, the SEP intervention affords an opportunity to explore the type of integrated (as opposed to 'add on') contact model that may offer hope in Northern Ireland and other jurisdictions seeking to tackle problems of ethnic, racial and religious difference.

2.2 About the Sharing Education Programme

The Sharing Education Programme (SEP) aims to promote reconciliation by facilitating collaboration and sharing between schools and their partners. The programme is funded by the International Fund for Ireland and Atlantic Philanthropies and is managed by Queen's University, Belfast. Phase 1 of the Programme (SEP1) supported twelve school partnerships comprising almost 60 schools and over 2,500 pupils. Phase 2 of the SEP Programme is currently underway.

The Programme is deliberately non-prescriptive and partnerships are asked only to ensure that collaborative activity involves *'sustainable, high quality engagement by young people from different cultural traditions and backgrounds'* (SEP, 2010). Importantly, partnership

activity should be designed to compliment and therefore enhance schools' existing key priorities:

“Collaborative models allow schools to retain their distinctive ethos, while providing opportunities for their pupils to experience diverse teaching and learning contexts. Young people will gain academic or vocational qualifications as well as invaluable experiences that they can use in their journey into adulthood. Teachers, pupils and in many cases parents will form relationships that cross existing cultural and traditional barriers” (SEP, 2010)

2.3 Summary of Research Aims

The aim of the research was to undertake an examination of the extent of inter-school collaboration in Northern Ireland, promoted both through SEP and independently of it. The research also aimed to explore the contribution collaboration can make to reconciliation and the promotion of enhanced inter-group relations.

2.4 Contact Theory

Gordon Allport (1954) is generally credited with being the first to expound the value of inter-group contact in reducing hostility and improving inter-group relations. He coined the term, 'contact hypothesis' and proposed four interrelated conditions that are deemed important to the efficacy of contact. Firstly, groups involved in contact should have equal status (at least in the contact situation). Secondly, groups should work on a problem/task and share this as a common goal, sometimes called a *super ordinate goal*. Thirdly, the task must be structured so that individual members of both groups are interdependent on each other to achieve this common goal. Finally, contact should be legitimized through institutional support. Recently, contact research has seen a shift in focus from prerequisites for contact towards understanding mediational (how and why contact works) and moderational (when contact works) variables (see Dovidio et al., 2003; Hewstone, 1986; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Voci & Hewstone, 2003).

A range of mediating mechanisms have been identified and these have been categorized by Dovidio et al. (2003) as: functional relations, behavioural factors, affective factors and cognitive factors. Functional relations refer to the nature of the relationship between members of diverse groups in the contact situation. Cooperative interdependence (as opposed to competitive relations) is viewed as a positive mediator of attitudinal change because cooperation towards an agreed goal can have positive, reinforcing outcomes. The rewarding properties of achieving success may then become associated with members of other groups thereby increasing attraction and reducing prejudice. Optimal intergroup contact is also understood as a 'benign form of behaviour modification' (Pettigrew, 1998). Hence, the establishment of positive interaction during contact can lead to new norms of intergroup acceptance by reducing the perception of dissonance and generating more favourable intergroup attitudes, not just towards the group members involved but the 'out' group in general.

Affective factors refer to the critical role played by emotion in intergroup contact. Pettigrew and Tropp (2000), in a recent large scale meta-analysis of contact studies, concluded that intergroup contact can operate to reduce negative affective reactions towards the 'out' group and to enhance positive affective ties. In terms of negative emotion, anxiety typically characterises interactions between groups (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). This anxiety can prime responses to other groups interfering with effective communication, strengthening stereotypes and leading to intergroup distrust (Dovidio et al., 2002). Reducing intergroup anxiety has been shown to have an ameliorating effect on intergroup bias (Islam & Hewstone, 1993). With respect to positive emotion, contact has been demonstrated to enhance intergroup empathy by facilitating perspective taking whereby group members come to understand how others might feel as a member of their particular group. Increased empathy can lead to people feeling more positive about others and can motivate them to behave in a more supportive way (Stephan et al., 2005).

In the consideration of cognitive factors, it has been proposed that learning about others is a critical step in improving intergroup relations (Pettigrew, 1998). This is based on the assumption that ignorance promotes prejudice (Stephan & Stephan, 1984), Increased information acquisition is seen to be effective in at least three ways (Dovidio et al., 2003). First, new knowledge can help promote a more individualised and personalized understanding of others thereby potentially undermining existing stereotypes. Second, greater knowledge about others can help reduce uncertainty about how to positively interact, reducing the likelihood of contact avoidance and discomfort in encounters that do occur. Third, enhanced intercultural understanding and increased historical knowledge can reduce bias by increasing recognition of injustice and discrimination. Recent research highlights that the mechanisms through which new knowledge is gained may be an important determinant of its impact. For example, exchanges between members of opposing groups involve some degree of self disclosure seem to be particularly effective in the development of improved interpersonal relations (Kenworthy et al., 2005). This finding suggests an important dynamic between cognitive and affective processes. Hence, in the case of self-disclosure, prejudice reduction might be explained by increased familiarity and concomitant anxiety reduction. It might also be the case that self disclosure accounts for improved attitudes because the nature of imparting personal information implies that a level of trust, typically reserved for friends, has been established (Petty & Mirels, 1981). Hence, personalised interaction and the development of cross-group friendship are deemed to play a critical role in the way that contact reduces bias (Pettigrew, 1997).

Complementing evidence on mediators of contact, research evidence has accumulated on important *moderators* of contact. This refers to the mechanisms that are important in determining the generalization of positive contact effects from a particular encounter to the 'out' group as a whole. There is a general consensus in the literature that, in order for more

positive responses towards 'out'-group members to extend beyond the contact situation, the salience of group membership must be maintained during a contact situation (Hewstone and Brown, 1986; Hewstone et al., 2008).

The body of evidence in support of contact leaves little doubt as to its efficacy in reducing bias and enhancing intergroup relations. However, much of this evidence has been generated by social psychologists who are unapologetically interested in employing quantitative methodology to explore the distinct psychological processes involved during contact. Hence, whilst we now know that contact works because it reduces anxiety and facilitates the type of relationship that can challenge stereotypes and bias, some key questions remain unanswered. Prime among these questions is that even when optimum conditions are present why can some contact be unsuccessful? It is also worth considering that even in the absence of optimum contact outcomes can be positive. Moreover, why do some contact initiatives seemingly have a longer lasting effect than others and why are some individuals and groups more receptive to contact? Understanding the inhibitors of contact is as critical to the planning and delivery of contact initiatives in divided contexts, as knowing the processes involved in its effectiveness. This is translated into the school context as Berkeley identifies that:

'...All too often, faith schools struggle to engage with neighbouring schools and other social partners, thus limiting the impact they can have' (2008, p.6).

Recent critiques of the contact hypothesis point to the limitations of the theory in addressing contextual questions relating to effectiveness (Connolly, 2000; Dixon et al., 2005) They argue that the positivist inspired approach espoused by social psychologists seeking to measure contact effectiveness exclusively in terms of psychological change, militates against ecological validity. In so doing, it can mask important environmental factors in the interpretive frameworks and practices used by participants to make sense of their social interactions. They argue that these factors can be important determinants of individual and group responses to contact and that an understanding of them may help address some of the questions posed above. In order to access the impediments or facilitators of contact, Dixon et al. (2005) propose a more qualitative approach that proceeds not from a top down imposition of pre-given categories but from a detailed, bottom-up analysis of participants' own frameworks of meaning as they are applied within particular social contexts:

"...contact researchers must pay closer attention to the mundane particulars of everyday interactions between groups, to lay understandings of the significance of such interactions, and to outcomes located beyond the level of personal prejudice." (Dixon et al., 2005, p.704).

Taking account of this critique, the research presented in this report explores the following:

- Attitudes and responses to inter-sectoral collaboration in Northern Ireland
- The nature of the contact experienced by participants engaged in collaboration and their perception of its influence on how they conceptualize the 'other' community and subsequent interaction with that community
- The contextual variables, including the individual and collectives frames of reference and interpretation that are used to negotiate and navigate the contact experience.

Section 3: Methodology

The project was undertaken over two years within two phases and the methodological approach comprised both qualitative and quantitative elements.

3.1 Phase 1: Survey

A questionnaire was sent to all head teachers. The survey included items that aimed to examine the following:

- Perception of the current education system in Northern Ireland and the place of collaboration within it
- The nature (depth) of any collaborative activity undertaken by each school
- The nature and extent of any SEP activity undertaken
- Interpretation and operationalisation of 'reconciliation' and associated concepts (for example, mutual understanding, good relations, respect and diversity)
- Attitudes towards reconciliation and the role of the school in promoting it through collaboration and other methods (including intra-school activity and integrated education)
- Factors that are perceived to inhibit and enhance collaboration
- Where relevant, learning and experience generated by participation in collaborative activity
- Response to the 'out-group' measured by established indicators for emotion, trust, threat, anxiety and prejudice
- The value attributed to collaboration in terms of relationship building and reconciliation

An e-mail was sent to all schools in Northern Ireland inviting participation in the survey, four follow up reminders were sent at four weekly intervals. A paper version of the survey was sent to post primary head teachers who did not respond to the online survey. The survey was followed up by 20 interviews with Head teachers, representing the different school sectors and education and library board areas in Northern Ireland.

An original plan, outlined in the research proposal, to explore patterns of collaboration over time in a follow-up survey (year 3) was abandoned when it became clear that the relatively short time frame involved would undermine the value of data collected. In consultation with the funders it was decided to make a further application for a much longer, and more comprehensive longitudinal analysis of inter-group contact at post-primary level in Northern Ireland.

3.2 Phase 2: Case Studies

Six in-depth case studies of collaborative networks (comprising 22 schools in total), reflecting the range collaborative activity (SEP funded and non-SEP funded) were undertaken. The case studies were identified through analysis of data generated by the first survey and are broadly representative of types of SEP collaboration and non-SEP funded collaborative activity undertaken in Northern Ireland schools. The case studies are also reflective of the range of school types in Northern Ireland, applying criteria relating to sector (controlled, maintained and integrated/grammar and secondary); location (rural and urban); level (primary and post-primary).

The case studies were undertaken with the aim of first-hand observation of the operationalisation of collaboration. The approach was formative and the emphasis was on exploring:

- The values, attitudes, assumptions and expectations that participants bring to the collaborative experience
- The dynamic between participating schools as they negotiate their roles in the collaboration
- Contextual factors and process issues that impede or enhance effective collaboration
- The effectiveness of different types of activity in promoting enhanced inter-group relations. (Drawing on theory, this was measured by the potential for the collaborative experience to offer 'meaningful contact', reflected by indicators that include, *inter alia*, equal status in the contact environment, a co-operative approach, opportunity for perspective taking and self disclosure amongst participant regarding religious/ethnic identity, and identity salience).
- Experience and learning gained through participation in collaboration

Data collection methods included in-depth, semi-structured interviews with staff/facilitators in participating schools; focus groups with participants and non-participant observation of collaboration where appropriate.

The case studies also comprised a quantitative component. All participants in collaborative activity were asked to complete a questionnaire devised to measure indicators of reconciliation (as identified above). The same questionnaire was distributed to samples of pupils, matched by age, religion and gender, selected from the same participating schools but who are not involved in collaboration. The aim of this questionnaire was to examine the impact of collaboration and contact on social attitudes and responses to the out-group. *[Please see overview of case study sites in Appendix 3]*

Section 4: Head Teacher Survey

4.1 Online Survey

This section presents findings from a survey of Head Teachers in Northern Ireland that sought to examine experiences of and attitudes towards inter-school collaboration [see *Appendix 1*]. A survey was sent to all schools in Northern Ireland in November 2008 with subsequent reminders in December 2008 and January 2009. In total, 460 schools responded to the survey (representing 41% of all schools). Examination of responses as a percentage of each school type showed that 36% of all primary schools, 61% of non-selective post primary schools and 68% of grammar schools returned completed surveys (See table 1 below). The breakdown of response by school sector showed that 46% of all State Controlled schools, 33% of Catholic Maintained schools, 67% of Voluntary Grammar schools and 39% of Integrated schools responded. Furthermore twenty respondents indicated that they were part of the Sharing Education Programme.

School Type	Number of schools 2007/08*	Number of responses (%)	% of response by school sector
Controlled	481	221 (49)	46%
Maintained	502	168 (38)	33%
Voluntary Grammar	52	35 (8)	67%
Integrated	59	23 (5)	39%

Table 1: Response rate by school type

4.2 Nature and Extent of Collaborative Activity

The majority of respondents to the survey indicated they were involved in collaboration (91% n=421). The number of collaborative networks schools in which schools were involved ranged from one to more than five with almost a third of all networks established for more than five years. Table 2 shows the reasons for collaboration in each collaborative network by school type. Many schools cited their rationale for becoming involved in collaboration as linked to curriculum provision in terms of extending curricular choice (ranked 1st choice for post primary schools). Establishing links with schools from other communities was also revealed as a common reason for becoming involved in collaboration (ranked 1st choice for primary schools and 2nd for post primary schools).

Reasons for collaboration	Primary	Non-selective secondary	Grammar
Extend curricular choice	5	1	1
Enhanced extra curricular choice	2	5	4
Access funding	4	4	5
Additional resources	3	6	6
Entitlement framework	6	2	2
Establish links with schools from other communities	1	2	3

Table 2: Rank order of reasons for engaging in collaboration

4.3 Range of Engagement & Activities between Pupils and Schools

Pupils across all Key Stages were involved in a wide range of collaborative activities including mixed classes, joint extra-curricular activities, joint projects and school trips. Table 3 shows that the most common activity for post primary pupils was mixed classes and for primary school pupils joint school trips. Respondents also indicated that school staff were involved in many joint activities in relation to the planning and delivery of collaborative activities. Responses shown in Table 4 highlight the range of formal meetings between staff on a variety of levels and informal contact. Interviews with Head teachers, particularly in post primary schools, suggested that it was important that they were involved in strategic planning and management of collaborative activities and that their work was supported through informal networking between staff.

Pupil activities	Primary	Non-selective post primary	Grammar
Mixed classes	3	1	1
Extra curricular activities	2	4	2
Joint time bound activities	4	5	4
School trips	1	2	5

Other	5	3	3
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Table 3: Rank order of pupil activities in collaborative networks

Staff activities	Primary	Non-selective post primary	Grammar
Head teacher meetings	1	1	1
SMT meetings	7	4	4
Meetings between other staff	2	2	2
Joint staff development	5	6	6
Informal contact between staff	3	2	3
Teaching mixed classes	6	5	5
Extra curricular activities	4	7	7
Other	8	8	8

Table 4: Rank order of staff activities in collaborative networks

A comparison of survey responses from SEP-funded and non-SEP funded schools showed a number of significant differences in relation to the nature and extent of collaborative activity. In general, the type of collaborative activity undertaken by SEP schools was more likely to facilitate sustained inter-action between participants. SEP funded and their partner schools were involved in significantly more collaborative networks ($p > .05$) and reported a marginally higher percentage of collaborative networks which involved both Controlled and

Maintained schools (62% SEP schools and 60% Non SEP Schools). A higher percentage of SEP funded and partner schools also reported being engaged in a wider range of staff and pupil activities with more frequent inter-school contact. Examination of the frequency and type of activity showed that 71% of collaborative networks reported by SEP funded and partner schools involved weekly contact between staff, and 76% involved weekly contact between pupils when compared with 31% weekly staff contact and 34% weekly pupil contact reported by non-SEP funded schools.

4.4 Factors Perceived to Support and Inhibit Collaboration

Respondents were asked to select from a pre determined list key facilitators of collaboration and reasons why collaboration may not work effectively. Respondents could select as many reasons as appropriate.

Factors identified as Supporting Collaboration

Table 5a shows that the most commonly cited facilitators of collaboration included relationship between school leaders (85%) and funding (84%). The least commonly cited reason was the political environment.

Key facilitators of collaboration	(%) of respondents
Relationship between school leaders	85
Availability of funding	84
Commitment of other staff	76
Proximity	69
External bodies	27
Political environment	17
Other	6

Table 5a: Key Facilitators of Collaboration

Follow up interviews with 20 Head teachers also highlighted the significance of relationships between staff when working collaboratively.

“I know Sue well and on a professional level we like each other and get on and there is a good professional rapport there”

The availability of funding also provided a key support for collaborative activities, for example, transportation costs and teacher cover. Where collaborative networks were reliant on funding there were concerns regarding the sustainability of the work:

“In some sense there is a truth in that some projects do run out when the money does and then you have to ask the question was it worth doing in the first place”

Factors identified as Inhibiting Collaboration

Table 5b shows the reasons why collaboration may not work effectively. A majority of respondents reported lack of funding (83% of respondents) and additional workload (71% of respondents) as the main reasons why collaboration may not work effectively. Follow up interviews also indicated that collaboration involved a significant investment of time in relation to the planning and delivery of collaborative activities. Operational aspects associated with collaboration also presented significant barriers.

“..when it comes down to the nitty gritty of discipline what it is acceptable in one school might not be acceptable in another school even down to the wearing of uniform. We needed to approach that and identify what are the issues around pupils moving from one school to another”

Sectarianism was considered a problem by around 20% of respondents, and although ranking lower in survey returns than more practical constraints, the problem of constructing relations between Catholics and Protestants was frequently alluded to in interviews with head teachers. Many Head teachers reflected on how best to engage with diversity issues.

“I think if issues like that come up it’s a matter of judgment and the teacher’s judgment-how am I going to deal with this or what is the best way of dealing with this....They’ve got to be tactful and be sensitive and tolerant but at the same time acknowledging that this is a potential area that we ought to look at”.

Key reasons why collaboration may not work effectively	(%) of respondent
Lack of funding	83
Additional workload	71
Competition between schools	53
Inconsistent discipline/pastoral policies	36
Proximity of schools	32
Dilution of school ethos	21
Disputes between pupils from different schools	20
Anxiety that it might generate sectarianism	19
Unsupportive policy environment	19
Lack of independence in decision making	11
Other	9

Table 5b: Reasons Why Collaboration May Not Work Effectively

4.5 Attitudes Towards Reconciliation & the School's Role in its Promotion Through Collaboration

Section 2 of the Head teacher survey explored attitudes towards cross sectoral collaboration including issues of trust and identity when engaged in collaborative activities as well as perceptions of the policy and social climate for collaboration. Responses were categorised by school sector and comparisons were made between respondents from the Controlled, Maintained, Voluntary Grammar and Integrated sectors.

The majority of Head teachers were supportive of cross sectoral collaboration between schools normally associated with the other main religious groups and were confident that their wider school community shared that support. Examination of the statements by school sector showed similar responses across the various school sectors (See Table 6).

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
As a principal I would be supportive of cross sectoral collaboration	91	94	89	87
Most pupils in my school would be supportive of cross-sectoral collaboration	79	84	77	77
Most teachers in my school would be supportive of cross-sectoral collaboration	90	91	83	87
Most parents would be supportive of cross-sectoral collaboration	69	79	83	82

Table 6: Support for cross sectoral collaboration

Follow up interviews with head teachers also reflected support for cross-sectoral collaboration. For many, facilitating pupils' involvement in collaboration was an important part of their educational experience.

"We're trying to educate the whole child and because we are trying to educate the whole child we've got to look at the impact of what happens to them out in the community and look at lifelong learning".

Others questioned whether schools should be collaborating and their role in terms of building community relations:

"I'm all in favour of breaking down sectarian divides, but I disagree with the model that says schools should be cooperating with other ones".

"I'm not quite sure that I necessarily agree with the proposition that schools should necessarily cooperate together or it is of itself a good thing. Politically it is.. As a primary school I'm not quite sure what's in it for me and I mean me and my children".

Table 7 shows respondents' agreement with statements on factors which may make collaboration more difficult. Whilst differences between school sectors were small, a higher percentage of Integrated schools agreed with the statements in contrast to other school sectors. When probed on the potential difficulties associated with inter-sectoral collaboration, 40% of head teachers conceded that external issues related to wider political sensitivities, could impact on cross-sectoral collaboration. A key concern for respondents related to anticipated difficulties around the presentation of cultural, religious and political differences during collaborative activities. The responses suggest that external issues related to wider political sensitivities could have a greater impact on cross-sectoral collaboration compared to differences between schools. Interviews indicated that concerns were not simply limited to political differences. Indeed much greater concerns were raised in terms of dealing with cultural differences during collaborative activities:

"The major challenge...is standing back and recognising that there are cultural differences here and respecting that in the other group".

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
Collaboration with schools outside my sector is more challenging than with schools within my sector because of the political sensitivities in Northern Ireland	42	38	43	44
Schools from other sectors are very different from mine and that makes collaboration difficult	5	9	11	17

Table 7: Receptiveness to cross sectoral collaboration**4.6 Identity Issues In Cross Sectoral Collaboration**

Head teachers were asked to respond to a series of statements related to identity in collaboration involving schools normally associated with one of the main religious groups in NI. The responses in Table 8 indicate that head teachers from integrated schools were less concerned that participants would feel uncomfortable with expressions of identity in cross sectoral collaboration compared with other school sectors. One Head teacher from an integrated school made the point that pupils from her school were regularly exposed to both cultures therefore it would be less of an issue when engaged in collaborative activities:

“We have an Ash Wednesday assembly and the students are given three options, come forward to receive the ashes, receive a blessing from a Protestant minister or sit in your seat and think your own thoughts... that to me is one of the biggest differences between a mixed and an integrated school –we actually address the issues and embrace them.”

Schools across all sectors were most concerned about expressions of political identity when visiting another school. Many primary school Head teachers felt it was not a relevant issue for their younger children.

“It would not be appropriate for our children at that age...I think the children have an awareness of their Protestantism very much so and I think it would be the same for Catholic children, they would be aware. It is how that is brought together and the context...”

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
Participants from my school may feel uncomfortable with the expression of different cultural identity when visiting another school	21	17	20	0
Participants from my school may feel uncomfortable with the expression of different religious identity when visiting another school	26	13	23	0
Participants from my school may feel uncomfortable with the expression of different political identity when visiting another school	32	27	29	5

I am concerned that partners in the collaboration visiting my school may feel uncomfortable with the expression of cultural identity in my school	13	14	17	5
I am concerned that partners in the collaboration visiting my school may feel uncomfortable with the expression of religious identity in my school	9	19	9	10
I am concerned that partners in the collaboration visiting my school may feel uncomfortable with the expression of political identity in my school	14	19	9	10

Table 8: Identity issues in cross sectoral collaboration

Head teachers were probed further on their views on identity in cross-sectoral collaboration. Table 9 shows that most Head teachers felt that collaboration would not threaten their own school's identity. Responses to the survey also indicated that there should be openness around identity issues. Some Head teachers highlighted that it was important that pupils were able to discuss their identity.

“As long as it is done in a dignified manner and in a respectful manner to everybody else and as long as you don't discriminate or upset anybody else. I think that every child and every person in the school has a right to project their own identity”.

However for many Head teachers, particularly in post primary schools, there were some contexts where they advocated a neutral stance on identity.

“We have asked at this point in time that they don't wear football tops of any kind... I would hope that further on down the line it might be less of an issue”.

Furthermore, a majority of Head teachers felt that collaboration should be more focused on what children had in common rather than areas of potential conflict. Their responses suggest that the context of collaborative activity influenced how they approached identity issues.

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
Collaboration with another school outside our sector would threaten my school's identity	2	2	3	0
In the interests of good relations schools should adopt a neutral stance on identity when engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration	38	31	15	14
In the interests of good relations schools involved in cross-sectoral collaboration should encourage openness around identity issues	86	91	91	100
It is important that collaborative activities focus on what children have in common rather than the divisive aspects of identity	82	83	83	78

Table 9: Identity issues in cross sectoral collaboration

Table 10 shows Head teacher responses to statements related to pupils' awareness of different identities during cross-sectoral collaboration. Responses indicate that pupils' awareness of cultural identity was more important than religious or political identity when engaged in cross sectoral collaboration. In addition, Head teachers from other school sectors felt it was less important that pupils were made aware of different identities when engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration compared with head teachers from Integrated schools.

Interviews with Head teachers suggested that an important aspect of cross-sectoral collaboration was providing opportunities to raise awareness of different identities through joint activities.

"...you are promoting in the children an awareness that there are other children from different cultural backgrounds and areas".

"I think what we do is lovely because..it is not false or contrived or superficial because it is real play and they are playing with that child and that child is their friend".

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
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It is important that pupils are made aware of different cultural identities when participating in cross-sectoral collaboration	67	73	66	100
It is important that pupils are made aware of different religious identities when participating in cross-sectoral collaboration	57	60	41	82
It is important that pupils are made aware of different political identities when participating in cross-sectoral collaboration	32	43	52	87

Table 10: Identity issues in cross sectoral collaboration

A small minority of Head teachers expressed anxiety about participating in cross sectoral collaboration (See table 11). Interviews suggested that concerns were related to the community context in which they work. Schools in areas which had a history of violence raised concerns about the potential for sectarian incidents as affecting their ability to engage in collaborative activities.

“...if something happens within the community you may well feel that it wouldn’t be advantageous to run the project the next day. Something that happened to an individual or a family –outside incidents and it might seem insensitive”.

The majority of Head teachers from all schools sectors indicated that prior trust was important when they were involved in cross-sectoral collaboration. Alongside this, a small percentage felt that building trust across school sectors was difficult. Interviews also highlighted the importance of trust between schools and the wider school community when engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration.

“...there is trust between the principals and the teachers involved in the first instance...there’s gotta be... an element of trust within the parent body in both schools, that this venture is not going to damage the identity or beliefs of either”.

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
I would be anxious about participating in cross-sectoral collaboration	8	8	12	9

Prior trust between schools from other sectors is important to promote collaboration	79	80	83	87
Building trust between schools from different sectors is likely to be difficult in a collaborative arrangement	13	10	9	14

Table 11: Trust in cross-sectoral collaboration

Respondents involved in SEP-funded programmes were generally more positive in their attitudes towards trust building in relation to inter-school collaboration. Independent t-tests revealed that SEP funded and partner schools were significantly less anxious about participating in cross sectoral collaboration compared to Non-SEP schools ($P > .0001$). Table 12 shows that whilst both groups felt that prior trust between was important to promote collaboration (95% SEP; 80% Non-SEP), a greater percentage of Non-SEP funded schools felt that building trust between schools from different sectors is likely to be difficult in a collaborative arrangement (15% SEP; 33% Non-SEP).

% of responses agree/strongly agree	SEP school/ Partner Schools	Non-SEP schools
I would be anxious about participating in cross-sectoral collaboration	0	8
Prior trust between schools from other sectors is important to promote collaboration	95	80
Building trust between schools from different sectors is likely to be difficult in a collaborative arrangement	15	33

Table 12: A comparison of SEP and non SEP schools attitudes towards trust in cross sectoral collaboration

4.7 Collaboration & Community Relations

An analysis of responses on the role of collaboration in promoting good relations indicates some differences according to school type (See table 13). Head teachers from Controlled schools were most positive towards the notion that collaboration is the best way to build good community relations (73% of respondents from Controlled schools). Respondents from Integrated and Voluntary Grammar schools showed less consensus and Head teacher comments reflected mixed views on whether it was the 'best' way.

"There are better ways I think it has to start in the community...because we can only do so much in schools".

"I really believe that integrated education is the way forward because we fall onto the middle ground and we allow people to celebrate their traditions but there is also a forum for not being pulled into one kind of religion or the other and it takes away the influence of one or the other".

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
The contact generated through cross-sectoral school collaboration is the best way to promote good community relationships between Protestants and Catholics	73	65	56	48

Table 13: Collaboration and community relations

4.8 Policy Context for School Collaboration

Against a somewhat equivocal approach to collaboration amongst the Voluntary Grammar and Integrated school types, the majority of Head teachers agreed that schools *should* play a role in promoting better relations between Protestant and Catholics. SEP funded and partner schools were significantly more positive towards the idea that schools have an obligation to promote better relations between Protestants and Catholics ($P < .001$) compared to Non-SEP schools.

Table 14 shows responses to statements in relation to the policy context for collaboration. Less than half of respondents from all school sectors felt that current education policy supported cross-sectoral collaboration. A majority of all Head teachers agreed that schools should promote better relations however with the exception of the Integrated schools, respondents did not think the Integrated sector promoted better relationships.

“I don’t want to get into the debate about integrated education I don’t think that is the way forward. There was far too much offered to schools to try and encourage them to be integrated and schools were becoming integrated for the wrong reasons and not working properly”.

There was a mixed response to the role of separate schools in reinforcing divisions. Responses from Head teachers from Maintained schools showed less agreement compared with schools from other sectors. Over half of respondents from Controlled schools felt that separate schools reinforced divisions.

% of responses agree/strongly agree	Controlled	Maintained	Voluntary grammar	Integrated
Current education policy context supports cross-sectoral collaboration	40	47	40	30
Separate schools reinforce divisions between Catholics and Protestants	53	20	43	100
Schools in NI have an obligation to promote better relationships between Protestants and Catholics	76	88	91	83
The integrated school sector promotes better relationships between Catholics and	20	9	9	100

Protestants

Table 14: Policy context for collaboration

4.9 Summary of Online Survey Findings

The findings provide information on schools experiences of and attitudes towards cross sectoral collaboration, patterns of cross-sectoral collaboration, and contextual issues which can influence effectiveness.

Furthermore findings from the survey and interviews show that the majority of schools in Northern Ireland are positive towards cross-sectoral collaboration and are currently engaged in a wide range of collaborative activities.

Section 5a: Pupil Survey

5a.1 Introduction

Quantitative data was collected via a pupil survey which aimed to examine the impact of collaboration and contact on social attitudes and responses to the out-group (see Appendix 2). The survey was distributed in post primary schools only. The pupil survey was completed by pupils participating in collaborative activity and a sample of pupils matched by age, religion and gender, selected from the same participating schools but who are not involved in collaboration. Table 15 provides a breakdown of completed pupil surveys by case study school.

Case study	Number of responses
Case Study 1 (SEP/ Mixed /Rural)	162
Case Study 2 (SEP/Divided Inner City)	79
Case Study 4 (No SEP/Divided Rural/Townland)	145
Case Study 5 (No SEP/Integrated/Mixed Rural)	48
Case Study 6 (No SEP/Mixed/Rural)	143
Total	577

Table 15: Breakdown of pupil survey responses by case study

The following sections present the findings from the pupil survey. Multiple regression analysis was carried out to explore whether a number of contact variables (a) positive contact⁴ (b) participation in collaborative activities (c) school participation in Sharing Education programme had an effect on in-group bias, out-group trust, perceived anxiety, perceived comfort and positive action tendencies towards the out-group. Analysis of pupil data also examined differences between the case study schools.

5a.2 In-group bias

⁴ Positive contact is the standardised score based on mean score for survey items on positive contact. If you have contact with the out-group in the area where you live would you say relations were generally (a) friendly (b) co-operative (c) comfortable.

Pupils were asked to rate how they felt about their own community using a thermometer scale 0-100 (See Appendix 2 for survey questions) and how they felt about the other community using the same scale. A bias score was calculated by subtracting the score for the 'other' community score from the score for own community (In-group thermometer – Out-group-thermometer). A high bias score would indicate a bigger difference between in-group rating and out-group rating, suggesting a higher bias towards a pupil's own community. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the ability of positive contact, involvement in collaborative activities and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme to predict in-group bias whilst controlling for effects of each of the other variables. Analysis showed that reduced in-group bias is moderated by positive contact ($p < .0001$). In addition, an examination of the interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme indicated that the relationship between contact and in-group bias is moderated by school participation in SEP ($p < .01$). This would suggest that SEP can be effective in reducing in-group bias when pupils report positive contact experiences with the out-group. Figure 1 below shows the interaction effects of positive contact and school participation in SEP on in-group bias.

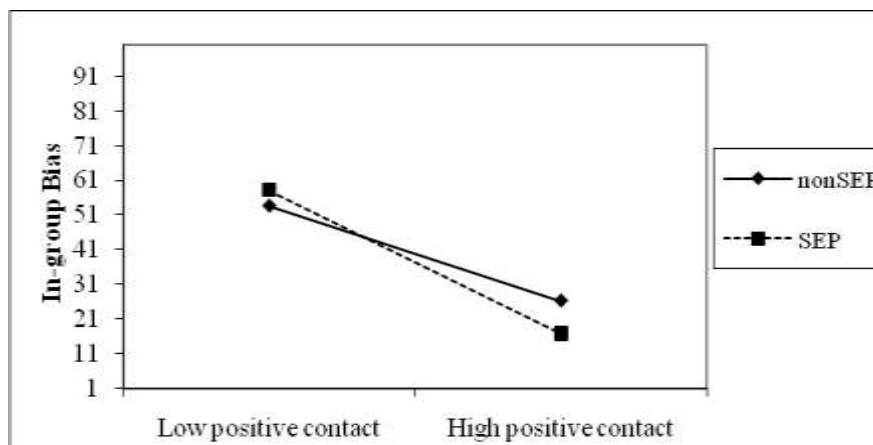


Figure 1: Interaction effects of positive contact and school participation in SEP on in-group bias.

5a.3 Out-group trust

Pupils were asked to respond to a number of items relating to out-group trust, possible scores ranged from 5 (greatest out-group trust) to 1 (least out-group trust). A new scale was created based on their responses (Out-group trust). A high mean score would indicate greater out-group trust. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the ability of positive contact, involvement in collaborative activities and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme to predict out-group trust whilst controlling for effects of each of the other variables. Analysis showed that greater out-group trust is moderated by positive contact ($p < .0001$) and involvement in collaborative activities ($p < .01$). However

there was no significant interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme to predict out-group trust.

5a.4 Perceived Anxiety

An anxiety scale was established to determine pupils' perceived anxiety if they were the only member of their community interacting with the other community. This anxiety scale was calculated from the mean score of two survey items ('If you were the only member of your community interacting with the other community would you feel..(a) nervous (b) anxious). The anxiety scale ranged from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree), thus a higher mean score would indicate greater anxiety. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the ability of positive contact, involvement in collaborative activities and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme to predict anxiety whilst controlling for the effects of each of the other variables. Analysis showed that greater out-group anxiety is moderated by positive contact ($p < .0001$). Examination of the interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme indicated that the relationship between contact and anxiety is moderated by school participation in SEP ($p < .01$). Figure 2 shows the interaction effects of positive contact and school participation in SEP on anxiety.

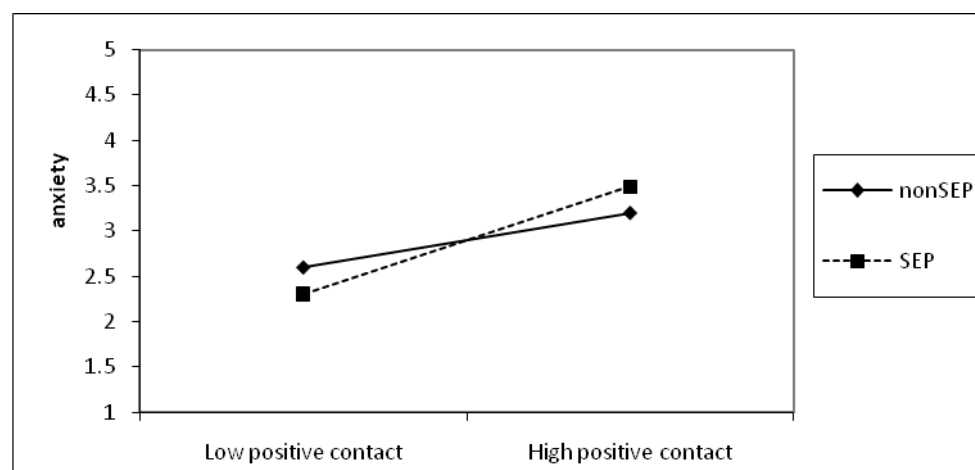


Figure 2: Interaction effects of positive contact and school participation in SEP on anxiety

5a.5 Perceived Comfort

Pupils' perceived comfort if they were the only member of their community interacting with the other community was calculated from the mean score of three survey items ('If you were the only member of your community interacting with the other community would you feel..(a) comfortable (b) safe (c) at ease. The comfort scale ranged from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree), thus a higher mean score would indicate greater comfort. Multiple

regression analysis was used to assess the ability of positive contact, involvement in collaborative activities and school participation in Sharing Education Programme to predict comfort whilst controlling for effects of each of the other variables. Analysis showed that greater perceived comfort is moderated by positive contact ($p < .0001$) and involvement in collaborative activities ($p < .05$). Examination of the interaction effect of positive contact and school participation in the Sharing Education Programme indicated that the relationship between contact and greater perceived comfort is moderated by school participation in SEP ($p < .0001$). Figure 3 shows the interaction effects of positive contact and school participation in SEP on perceived comfort.

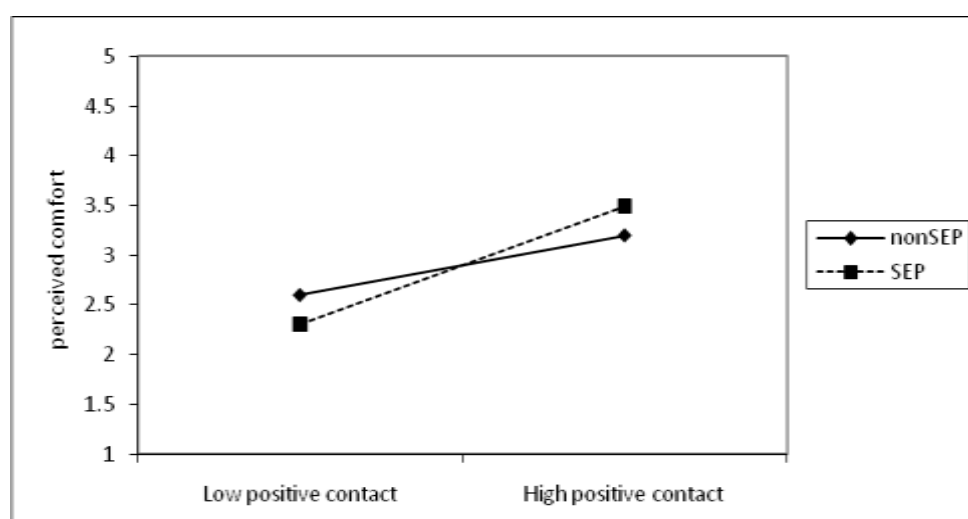


Figure 3: Interaction effects of positive contact and school participation in SEP on perceived comfort.

5a.6 Positive action tendencies

Pupils were asked to consider how often they felt positive emotions towards the out group (felt a desire to seek contact; help out; to support; to find out more). A score for positive action tendencies was calculated from the mean responses to the items which ranged from 5 (very often) to 1 (never), thus a higher mean score would indicate pupils reporting more positive action tendencies. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the ability of positive contact, involvement in collaborative activities and school participation in Sharing Education Programme to predict positive action tendencies whilst controlling for effects of each of the other variables. Analysis showed that more positive action tendencies is moderated by positive contact ($p < .0001$), school participation in Sharing Education ($p < .0001$) and involvement in collaborative activities ($p < .0001$).

5a.7 Comparison of pupil attitudes in case study schools

In addition to multiple regression analysis some simple statistical analysis was conducted to examine the attitudes of pupils in each of the case study schools. Mean scores were calculated for each of the items in the survey and independent t-tests carried out to

compare responses. Our analysis highlighted a number of differences between responses of pupils from schools involved in the Sharing Education Programme and non Sharing Education schools from comparable community contexts

5a.7 In-Group Bias

Table 16 shows the mean bias scores calculated for each case study school (A high bias score indicates a bigger higher bias towards the in-group). The bias scores indicate that pupils surveyed in the case study involving an integrated school showed the least bias towards their own community. The greatest bias towards their own community was reported among pupils in case study 4 which was not involved in Sharing Education and was situated in a divided community with limited joint pupil activity. Independent t-tests revealed that the mean bias score for all pupils who completed the survey in case study 4 was significantly higher than the mean score for all pupils who completed the survey in case study 2 ($p < .0001$). Both case study schools were located in divided communities however case study 2 was involved in the Sharing Education Programme.

Bias*	Case Study 1 (SEP Mixed Rural)	Case Study 2 (SEP Divided Inner City)	Case Study 4 (Divided Rural/Townland)	Case Study 5 (Integrated/Mixed Rural)	Case Study 6 (Mixed Rural)
Bias Thermometer	28.64	29.31	43.11***	24.57	28.65

*A higher mean score indicates a bigger difference between own rating and other rating

*Statistically significant differences in responses between case study 2 and case study 4

Table 16: Mean scores in-group bias scores by case study

5a.8 'Out'-Group Self-Disclosure and Friendships

Table 17 shows the mean scores in each case study school for out-group self disclosure and out-group friends. A higher mean score indicates greater out-group self disclosure and more out-group friends. The mean scores indicate that pupils surveyed in the case study 1 (involved in Sharing Education and in a mixed community) reported the highest out-group self disclosure. The lowest out-group self disclosure was reported by pupils in case study four which was not involved in Sharing Education and situated in a divided community with limited joint pupil activity. Independent t-tests revealed that the mean out-group self disclosure score for all pupils who completed the survey in case study 1 was significantly higher than the mean score for all pupils who completed the survey in case study 6 ($p < .0001$). Both case study schools were located in mixed communities however case study 1 was involved in Sharing Education. Similarly, mean out-group self disclosure for all pupils who completed the survey in case study 2 was significantly higher than the mean score for all pupils who completed the survey in case study 4 ($p < .0001$). Mean scores for a number

of out-group friends showed that pupils in case study 1 reported having the most out-group friends when compared with the other case study schools. Furthermore, pupils in case study 1 reported having significantly more friends from the out-group when compared with pupils from case study 6 ($p < .0001$).

Category (Mean Score)*	Case Study 1 (SEP Mixed Rural)	Case Study 2 (SEP Divided Inner City)	Case Study 4 (Divided Rural/Townland)	Case Study 5 (Integrated/Mixed Rural)	Case Study 6 (Mixed Rural)
Out-group self disclosure	3.31***	2.86***	2.40	3.20	2.67
Out - group friends	2.19***	1.82	1.64	2.15	1.78

*Higher Mean Score = greater engagement with other community

*Statistically significant differences in responses between case study 2 and case study 4

*Statistically significant differences in responses between case study 1 and case study 6

Table 17: Mean scores for outgroup self disclosure and friends by case study

5a.9 Positive Action Tendencies

Table 18 shows the mean scores calculated for positive action tendencies each case study school (A high mean score indicates pupils reporting more positive action tendencies). Mean scores related to positive action tendencies show that pupils surveyed in case study 5 involving an integrated school reported feeling more positive action tendencies. Conversely pupils in case study 4 which was not involved in Sharing Education and situated in a divided community with limited joint pupil activity were less likely to report feeling positive action tendencies. Independent t-tests revealed that pupils who completed the survey in case study 2 recorded more positive action tendencies towards the out-group compared to pupils who completed the survey in case study 4 ($p < .001$). In addition, pupils in case study 1 recorded more positive action tendencies when compared with pupils from case study 6 ($p < .0001$).

Category (Mean Score)*	Case Study 1 (SEP Mixed Rural)	Case Study 2 (SEP Divided Inner City)	Case Study 4 (Divided Rural/Townland)	Case Study 5 (Integrated School/Mixed Rural)	Case Study 6 (Mixed Rural)
Action tendencies (positive)	2.50**	2.31**	1.93	2.53	2.20

Table 18: Mean scores for positive action tendencies by case study**5a.10 Summary of Quantitative Findings**

Taken together, these findings clearly indicate the extent to which the Sharing Education Programme promotes reconciliation amongst Catholic and Protestant pupils in Northern Ireland. Factors such as trust, anxiety, self disclosure, comfort and positive emotions towards the 'Out'-group are recognised as critical components of reconciliation and are key elements of effective intergroup contact. The data presented above suggests that pupils become less anxious, more comfortable and more positive about the other community when their school participates in the Sharing Education Programme than when it does not. However, the data also suggest that the context within which the school is located is a key variable in determining the extent of reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant pupils. Hence those 'SEP schools' that are located in areas recognised as more divided are less likely to indicate that they have friends or are comfortable with the other community than those pupils who attend 'SEP schools' in less divided areas. But what is perhaps more important here is that even where the context may be recognised as 'divided', when pupils have attended an SEP school they are *more* likely than those in non SEP schools in less divided contexts to view the out-group positively .

**Section 5b: Interim Report on Qualitative Case Study Data:
An Analysis of Teacher and Pupil Perspectives on Intergroup Contact**

5b.1 Data collection

In each case, collaborative activity taking place at the time of data collection was examined, and connections between the schools in the collaboration were explored. In all cases, in-depth interviews were undertaken with head teachers and/or teachers with responsibility for the promotion of collaboration. In total, 40 teacher interviews were completed. Focus groups were also undertaken with pupils from each of the participating schools involved in collaboration at the time of data collection. Only students attending the same schools were grouped together for focus groups. The rationale for this was to reduce the possibility that pupils might feel pressurised to respond according to social norms regarding 'acceptable responses' if they were in mixed groups. In total, 24 focus groups were undertaken with pupils engaged in a range of collaborative activity (including: shared GCSE 'O' and 'A' level classes; P7 project work). Post-primary school focus groups usually had 6-8 participants. Focus groups involving 'visiting' pupils to a school were usually smaller (typically 2-4 pupils). In one case, where there was only one pupil participating in a class offered by the receiving school, a face-to-face interview was undertaken. In the primary school, the 3 focus groups were with larger numbers of pupils, there were around 10 in each case. In addition to interviews and focus groups, the researchers engaged in a series of non-participant observation activities with a view to exploring the nature of the interaction between pupils from the different schools involved in collaboration. Six such observations were undertaken, these included observations of shared classes, and of performances and presentations by pupils from different schools working together.

5b.2 Findings

The following section presents qualitative findings from the case studies. A number of themes relating to the experience of inter-school collaboration and its impact on building intergroup relations emerged and each is explored below:

Preparing for Inter-Group Contact

Given the depth of political division in Northern Ireland and the tradition of educating Catholic and Protestant children separately, many of the teachers we interviewed suggested that they were nervous or concerned about teaching across the sectoral divide. Teachers specifically suggested that they were worried about pupil sectarianism or general hostility between pupils. Despite their concerns, it was notable that head teachers in non-SEP schools quickly dismissed the need for preparation or training in this regard. Indeed there was a general feeling amongst the senior teachers in Case Study 4 and Case Study 5 that any such preparation was irrelevant

as teaching staff were required only to teach their subjects and that teaching joint classes was essentially no different than teaching one group:

“No the teachers wouldn’t have asked for any preparation in teaching the children from the other school. I think all our teachers are very professional so it wouldn’t be something that our school would actually worry about” (Vice Principal, Case Study 4)

“No we didn’t get prepared or anything before we went to the other school. I was kind of nervous about it but we were told we didn’t need anything ...no we just kind of got on with it” (Teacher, Case Study 4)

However, in SEP funded post primary schools a slightly different attitude to pupil preparation and teacher training prevailed. In contrast to those above, the teachers in case study 1 and 2 tended to recognise teaching mixed groups of children as a ‘complex task’ [interview data] although it was apparent that teachers did not always believe that they had received the kind of support that would assist them in effectively achieving their objectives:

“When we went to the SEP training before all of this started it kind of made us think as a school and as a partnership about how we might go about this. I kind of didn’t think it would be so hard at the beginning but it actually is very difficult and sensitive and I don’t feel equipped a lot of the time even with the training” (Head Teacher, Case Study 1)

“I tried to go at it as if it was normal and ‘it wasn’t an issue’ kind of attitude. I felt that if I were to go in worried then the students will probably pick up on that so I thought I will teach it like I teach any class and see how it goes and if issues arise then we’ll deal with it” (Teacher, Case Study 2)

The value of training for intergroup relations can be difficult to fully quantify but the comments from the primary schools, where significant investments had been made in training programmes specifically designed to enhance teachers’ capacity to deal with difficult issues, clearly emphasised its importance within the school context. Teachers in these schools were similarly concerned about the challenges of dealing with potentially sensitive and controversial issues within class but in contrast to the post primary teachers, they reported very positive experiences and argued that the preparation had assisted them in understanding their own issues as well as being able to allay the anxieties of children prior to the intergroup contact:

“We started from the point of view...that ‘We are all different’, it is tempting for some people to say ‘Ach don’t worry because once we take the Rangers shirt off sure we’re all the same’ –No we’re not and we started very clearly from the point of view of we’re different but our differences fit together and we looked at it from the point of view of our children growing up in a different society which was transforming where tolerance of a whole lot of things, not just Protestant and Catholic issues but a whole lot of others, race issues, disability issues, ethnic issues that children will face a different world that we as adults now didn’t face in our upbringing so trying to touch on a whole lot of issues”.

(Head teacher, Case Study 3)

“The workshops that we facilitated, [teachers] had to explore their own identity...more intensively through the training that they experienced. Some of the activities for example we asked the staff on the second or third day to bring along something from home that would represent them and in one of the workshop sessions they had to sit in mixed groups and basically talk about what they brought in. It might have just been something like a photograph of their family or it could have been their cross” (Teacher, Case Study 3)

HT: *They did move onto items from their religious point of view and social point of view as well...*

T: *That was difficult for some people, very difficult*

HT: *This is not training that teachers get, this is not something that teachers do. Teachers deal with a third party curriculum. It’s more or less laid down...*

T: *This is personal to them...*

HT: *This is personal and it is the first time that these teachers have been asked to open up their own personal feelings and quite rightly some of them would say that it’s ‘nothing to do with my job’ but we try to push them along ‘yeah it is’. It is to do with the job and how you interact*

(Head teacher, Case Study 3)

Affording teachers the space to grapple with their own perspectives and feelings on the conflict seems to be fundamental to the process of intergroup relationship building. In essence, such space allows teachers to establish the classroom conditions that are likely to prove conducive to the development of good relations between Catholics and Protestants.

5b.21 Factors that Facilitate Effective Intergroup Contact in Partnership Schools

During interviews participants identified a range of factors that seemed to be conducive to the development of ‘good relations’ amongst pupils.

Super-ordinate Goals

It has been argued that providing divided groups with super-ordinate and shared goals can be particularly effective in persuading such groups to engage in intergroup contact when they might not otherwise do so (Sheriff, 1966). The data here offer further support to this analysis. It was clear that most of the intergroup contact reported in the case study schools was driven by the revised curriculum and the Entitlement Framework and many of the teachers explained that they would not be involved in collaboration had they not been required to work with other schools to extend curricular choice. Interviews with school staff suggested that because contact was driven by educational priorities (i.e. the Entitlement Framework and the Revised Curriculum), rather than any specific community relations agenda, pupils were more inclined to attend classes in a school of a different management type to their own. Indeed, a small number of teachers in SEP schools indicated that had the intergroup contact been explicitly ‘sold’ to pupils as a mechanism to promote community relations, it is unlikely that the students would have participated to the same extent. Rather, they argued, that working towards an academic

or vocational qualification allowed the students to really engage with each other without the added burden of having to overtly discuss community relations issues. In this way intergroup relationships tended to develop more organically than they might otherwise have done. This is something that a number of teachers in the SEP schools recognised as a key attribute of the Sharing Education Programme:

“We’ve put together structures for educational reasons rather than for social or cultural types reasons...The collaborative timetable wasn’t put together for people to like each other, not necessarily even to make them understand each other. It was put together as the logical educational necessity of the Entitlement Framework and giving the kids a proper choice” (Vice Principal, Case Study 1)

“We felt that they were accessible and there was something that naturally allowed a lot of integration, talking and communication. They weren’t the type of courses where you would be sitting and listening to a lecture, they were group work, and activity based courses. Also because they led to a qualification because I think that has been one of the problems. If you’re just going out doing things that are just talking shops then the girls would be saying there is no value in it and they don’t want to go” (Teacher, Case Study 2)

In addition to and related to this, it was also clear that where pupils from different schools were involved in shared projects explicitly focused on achieving shared goals, they were more likely to be motivated to engage in contact. Significantly, their experiences of contact were also likely to be more positive (Allport, 1954; Sheriff, 1966; Gaertner and Dovidio 1996). Interestingly, this was a particular theme in interviews in both SEP case study sites where pupils and teachers reported how a sense of common purpose and shared identity had emerged from their involvement in joint projects:

“There was a sense of XXXX Belfast identity, that they are all XXXX Belfast girls together – working together on the magazine was useful from that point of view” (Teacher, Case study 1).

“There was [sic] people at the Rock Challenge from every school and it really made you feel like a proper group rather than just from the one school” (Dance student focus group, Case Study 2).

Importantly, the cross-cutting identity referents that evolved from the interactions did not appear to pose any threat to the distinctiveness of ‘own group’ identity. Difference (very evident in the uniforms worn by children from the different schools) was salient, whilst at the same time intergroup interaction was facilitated on the strength of mutual interests (for example, beauty and make-up in the case of the Case Study 2 and performing arts in Case Study 1 (Pettigrew, 1997; Pettigrew 2008).

Efforts to Reduce Anxiety

Despite their willingness to participate in joint classes, pupils were anxious about visiting a school associated with the 'other' community. This anxiety was reported to be particularly acute during the early stages of collaborative working and somewhat importantly, given the theoretical debates on intergroup contact and anxiety rehearsed earlier [Pettigrew, 2008], it was argued that the sustained nature of the contact facilitated through SEP had an important effect on lessening pupils' initial sense of fear and apprehension. This was well captured by the pupils below:

"At the start I was thinking 'I'm coming in here they are all Protestant and I'm coming in as a Catholic and they are going to chant at me or something' but when I came in I met [the VP] and he just brought me in and made me feel just very secure. He showed us the way round...and then we caught on to the routine. But I never had no bother coming in, nobody said anything to you. If anyone did they were being friendly with you and just talking away to you and stuff like that but there was no whole religious thing-oh you're a Catholic what are you doing here, none of that..". (Pupil, Case Study 1)

R: *How did you feel about going to the other school?*

Pupil: *I think not a lot of girls from our school would have been in [the other collaborating school] and would have felt uncomfortable because we didn't know how the other pupils would react -but once we were there and going all the time then it became fine.*

(Pupil, Case Study 2)

It was suggested earlier that where anxiety is reduced, there is likely to be an ameliorating effect on out group hostility (Stephan and Stephan, 1985). The comments from the pupils above suggest that their experiences of inter-sectoral collaboration was particularly effective in reducing pupil anxiety and it was clear from later interviews [see below] that where anxiety was reduced participants were more likely to develop friendships and foster deeper relations with those from another school types.

Preserving Numerical Balance

For pupils living in religiously segregated areas where there is a history of community tension, numerical balance was seen as a particularly important factor in persuading students to attend joint classes in a school of different management type. This was also the case for pupils in schools that were in the early stages of curricular collaboration where mixed classes were less established:

"It was good that we weren't going on our own and there was a good few of us Catholics going up there... that certainly helped especially in the earlier stages – I don't think I would mind now but that is like after a year 'cos you get more settled" (Pupil, Case Study 1)

“I wouldn’t have went on my own at the start but now I would because I feel more comfortable” (Pupil, Case Study 2)

It is well recognised that for intergroup contact to lead to good relations, participants will need to relate as equal partners (Allport, 1954). However, it is clear from these interviews that the need for equality seemed to be most critical when participants were uncertain and unsure about the contact situation. As they became more familiar with their classmates in the ‘other’ school, the need for equal status seemed to become much less significant and a small number of pupils who had been involved in cross sectoral collaboration over a number of months reported that they would now feel unconcerned if they were the only person moving to a school of different management type.

Experiences of Intergroup Relationships

In an effort to gauge the extent to which the relationships constructed by participants had the potential to address intergroup tensions, pupils and teachers were asked to comment on the factors that encouraged or hindered relationships from developing between Catholic and Protestants. Interviews suggested that joint classes were providing a critical foundation for the development of important intergroup relationships and friendships. Interestingly, it was clear that the extent to which relations evolved depended on a variety of factors which are detailed below.

Opportunities to Socialise

Having an opportunity to informally engage with classmates was recognised as a key factor in promoting relationships. It was clear that when participating pupils enrolled in the less traditional subjects such as drama and dance, there were more opportunities for pupils to actually get to know each other. This is compared to the more traditional subjects, where classroom interaction was much more limited and the approach to teaching more traditional. During the observational exercise in Case Study 1 researchers noted that in biology class, pupils from the different schools sat apart whereas in the dance and drama classes the interactions were more fluid. It was clear that some pupils had formed firm friendships. The more traditional teaching methods and the nature of the subject being taught seemed to either promote or limit the ‘downtime’ that children had to actually engage in informal chat:

R: *Were there opportunities for getting to know the girls from the other two schools?*

S: *Very little chance but when we did have a chance we just took it and we would talk and talk then usually it would be right you lot get your heads down (Student, Case Study 2)*

Time for developing friendships was also limited in schools that are located in highly segregated areas. Thus many students in these case study sites indicated that they felt unsafe going to other areas to meet their friends (the impact of the community context on relationship building is discussed in greater detail below). However, in a positive demonstration of the impact of the Sharing Education Programme, it was notable that the students in Case study 2 seemed to be more motivated to overcome these obstacles than in Case Study 4. Reflecting the growing impact of online social networking, it was significant that many pupils in Case Study 2 reported using technologies such as BEBO, MSN, e-mail and texting in an effort to keep in touch with friends from the other community. There was also a discernible effort to find 'neutral' spaces to meet their peers from the other community:

"I live in a mixed area but most of my Catholic friends live in a Catholic area so I wouldn't go down, they wouldn't invite me down because I think they think it would make me feel uncomfortable and I probably would if I was the only Protestant going down. We would just meet up in town and go to the cinema and stuff like that but wouldn't really go to their house".(Pupil, Case Study 2)

In communities where even superficial engagements with the 'other community' are problematic, it is perhaps an important mark of social progress that children are volunteering to attend mixed religion classes and are keen to develop cross group friendships. Despite this progressive step, these children are also engaging in behaviours which are at odds with the prevailing social and community norms surrounding them. It is therefore unsurprising that some indicated that they felt stressed by the evolving dissonance between the values promoted by the school, as manifest in the commitment to SEP (mutual respect, friendship, tolerance, understanding, reconciliation etc) and those that permeated the local community. This was made clear in the following quotation, where a Catholic pupil describes her experience of walking through the Protestant area on her way to school:

"I was walking to school a couple of months ago and walking through Glenbrook and it was all women standing and they had their kids and all and they were going [saying], 'look at that slut' and all - 'you're walking up here; who do youse think you are? And 'we'll be waiting here for you next time you come up'. And they had their kids in the pram and all and then because my friend said something back to them they got the peelers and they said we were intimidating them ones"
(Pupil, Case Study 2).

Importantly, the positive association between contact and relationship building promoted by schools is at odds with community norms and this dilemma presents separation as the preferred and 'safer' option to pupils. In this context, special efforts are likely to be required by schools to support children in sustaining the cross group friends that had began to develop within their joint classes.

Depth of Relationships

Given the importance of self disclosure for maintaining and sustaining intergroup relations, pupils were also asked to comment on the extent to which they talked about sensitive issues related to the conflict with their intergroup friends. Once again the responses to these questions revealed quite different perceptions and experiences amongst the young people in the SEP and non-SEP schools, with pupils in the SEP schools reporting a greater willingness to discuss issues related to the conflict than those in the non-SEP schools. Hence it was significant that pupils within Case Study 1 reported that they were able to discuss religious differences with individuals drawn from the other community and, importantly, they suggested that the kinds of discussions which took place sometimes had the effect of challenging their preconceived notions of the 'other' community:

"It was funny, XXXX from [other collaborating school], we were talking about a funeral and she was all 'You sing hymns and stuff!' And she couldn't understand that and that we do our weddings differently and funerals differently and Christmas differently. So we had a discussion about that"
(Pupil, Case Study 1)

The discussions reported by pupils in the Case Study 2 schools that were located in more segregated areas seemed to veer into more politically sensitive areas:

".....[in reference to a discussion about the Troubles] I think it was and he was saying... 'oh nothing affected me' and I said 'How did it not?' and then we were sort of standing there but then it was ok, it was a heated discussion and I was a bit uncomfortable and kind of didn't want to continue."
(Pupil, Case Study2)

Given the general pre-disposition towards avoiding controversial issues in Northern Ireland, it was interesting that pupils did at least attempt to engage each other in conversing about these sensitive subjects. Unfortunately, it is also clear that the somewhat stilted and uncomfortable experiences reported above may hinder students in tackling the more divisive issues in future unless they are adequately supported by their schools in this regard. Indeed, the apparent discomfort reported by the student in Case Study 2 may explain why the majority of pupils who reported successful relationships with members of the other community in non-school contexts indicated that their religious, cultural and political beliefs were often back-grounded rather than fore-grounded during interaction with the 'out'- group:

"I don't know I don't think it's a real big thing when you are actually socialising with people and you don't ask are you a I before I'd be a friend with you. It's just the personality of the person and whether you have similar personality traits to them. Sometimes it is easier at the start if you don't know...." (Pupil, Case Study 1)

“ By referring to football team he played for] it’s weird because I am not sure if they were Protestants but I was guessing ... it was good that we become good friends and I didn’t know what religion they were. That’s how it should be like but I would have been more cautious if I knew to begin with” (Pupil, Case Study 6)

Previous research has cast doubt on the value of such inter-personal contact for encouraging participants to really understand and empathise with the political perspectives and identity of the other group from (Hewstone, 1996). Hence, it is argued that where individuals conceal or underplay their identity, they are unlikely to foster the more positive responses towards ‘out’-group members that will lead to their understanding and empathising with the perspective of the ‘out’-group. However, the examples above suggest that in the initial phase of friendship it may be more important that individuals are *not* aware of the friend’s identity as this has the potential to hinder rather than facilitate the initiation of relations (Hewstone and Brown, 1986; Hewstone et al., 2008).

Ripple Effect

In the SEP schools pupils generally reported that as they became more familiar with members of the ‘other’ group, initial feelings of anxiety and sense of threat reduced. In almost all cases, same religion pupils also reported feeling more positively predisposed towards pupils from the other schools as a result of contact. There is little doubt, though, that the depth and extent of friendships forged by pupils in collaborating schools (and beyond) was deeper and wider in the SEP schools than in the non SEP schools. In the former, pupils and teachers frequently commented on the strength of relationships that had developed between pupils in shared classes, and between children who were not directly involved in the SEP initiative:

“A mother said to me, ‘It’s not just that she’s made friends with people like XXX but she’s made friends with their circle of friends’. I hadn’t thought of that, and it’s that whole ripple effect. The girl you were talking to there now, XXX: she’s not in a mixed class but one of her best friends is XXX who’s a Catholic from XXX that XXX has gotten to know through the girls in XXX class. Do you see what I mean, so there’s a whole web thing that teachers have no control over and no way of, apart from being invitational teachers, they’ve no way of developing it or stopping the development of that-it just happens it’s a natural thing” (Vice Principal, Case Study 1).

In most cases, pupils reported same sex friendships; however, there were a number of examples of pupils having struck up relationships with members of the opposite sex through indirect opportunities presented by the collaboration. Indeed, with a note of irony, the principal of one school reported that the collaboration had recently produced its first mixed religion offspring – a reference to the outcome of a liaison between a Protestant boy attending his school and a Catholic girl attending the neighbouring school.

Interpretive Framework

Although the factors discussed above seemed conducive to the promotion of friendships, the data also provide evidence that the contact experience for children in all case study contexts is filtered through a lens of prior knowledge, experience and associated inter-group expectations. As indicated by the following examples, these filters may lead to an interpretation of incidents and exchanges that are sometimes misrepresentative of the other group's position or perspective. In one such incident, an irate parent contacted the school when her daughter (a visitor to the school) was reprimanded by a teacher for the late submission of her assignment. The parent associated the 'humiliation' suffered by her daughter during the reprimand with the collaboration arguing that the girl had been 'scapegoated' because she was a Catholic in a Protestant school. The teacher in question denied this, arguing that the girl had received exactly the same treatment as would be the case if she was a 'home' student. The tension that can result from potentially conflicting interpretative frameworks was also apparent when Catholic students spoke of their feelings on entering the Protestant school during Ash Wednesday, having had the sign of the cross marked on their forehead at Mass in their own school earlier the same day:

*"It was awful coming over with the ashes, Oh my God that was awful and they were staring and, 'what's that on your head?'.....You've got a bit of doo doo on your head! **Nobody actually said that** [researcher's emphasis] but we came into the classroom and the stares that we got, and I think we were more aware of it and focusing on it because we expected it to happen [agreement from other two] We looked about for the reactions more because we were more aware of it"*
(Biology Student, Focus Group, Pupil Case Study 1).

In the above exchange it is clear that the pupils were interpreting the responses (or lack of) of pupils in the receiving school according to the expectation that the reaction to overt expression of Catholic identity would be negative. This expectation seemingly became self-fulfilling, to the point that the pupils were articulating the negative thoughts of the Protestant pupils even though such thoughts had not been vocalised. Interestingly, the Catholic pupils also demonstrated some capacity to reflect on this process, acknowledging their focus on reaction from their Protestant classmates. Underpinning both incidents is a conceptualization of relations between the two communities that is shaped by historical, political and social referents. In the first case, the mother's expectation is that the Protestant authority figure (the teacher) will seek to discriminate against and disadvantage her child. It is likely that her analysis of the incident and her consequent response is situated with a wider Catholic/Nationalist interpretation of the dominant/subordinate relationship that exists between Protestants and Catholics. In the second case, students appeared to anticipate a hostile reaction from Protestants which unveils an assumption of prejudice and hostility towards Catholics as the default position of Protestants. In both cases, the behaviour of the Catholic participants can also

be interpreted as an act of protest embedded in a wider cultural framework of assumed power and status relations between the two communities. The mother, in expressing resistance to the treatment of her daughter by a Protestant teacher, is at one level challenging a perceived imbalance of power between the two communities.

In the latter case, pupils wearing ‘the Ashes’ understand themselves to be engaging in a potentially provocative act. That they decide to proceed in wearing the Ashes in the particular context described above suggests some level of defiance towards the well documented ‘avoidance’ norms that tend to govern mixed encounters in Northern Ireland. Avoidance in this context refers to the avowal of potentially conflict-inducing behaviour in inter-group situations, and is associated with a range of sophisticated ‘telling’ procedures that participants in mixed company draw on to determine the ethno/religious identities of previously unknown others in an encounter (Harris, 1973; Gallagher, 2006). The possibility that Catholics are challenging normative relationships is consistent with some recent research which suggests that in the post-Agreement period, Catholics have a greater sense of equality in Northern Ireland and are more comfortable expressing their identity (Blackbourn & Rekawek, 2008). Further to this, the ‘peace’ years have also been defined as a period of greater insecurity in the Protestant community (Aughey, 2001). Conflicting norms may also help elucidate the greater resistance to contact in Case Study 2, where the advocacy of contact and relationship building by the schools contrasts with the preferred separation norms that are manifest in virtually all other areas of social life. The representation of the Case Study 2 schools by teachers as ‘oases of calm’ during the conflict years may help explain the disconnection. Unlike Case Study 1, where the schools have always maintained a strong association with the wider community (evident in the participation of local politicians, civic and religious leaders in some school events and the engagement of the schools in civic events), Case Study 2 schools have deliberately maintained a greater distance from the communities they serve. When asked about this, one principal intimated that the local ‘notaries’ were not considered good role models for pupils, and that the school needed to set a better example, particularly during the conflict years.

Parental and Community Support for Inter-Sectoral Collaboration

Parental support is clearly important if schools are to establish and maintain inter-sectoral links. Hence teachers were asked about whether collaborative working was supported by parents. In general, teachers reported that communities were much more accepting of cross-sectoral collaboration than they may have been in the past, citing current political settlement as a critical factor in promoting such inter-school contact. Teachers also reported that most parents were supportive of their links with schools in different management capacities. However, teachers in one of the SEP funded partnerships did indicate that they had to deal with some hostility from parents who were anxious that their child would not be taught within a different type of school.

Whilst these concerns were not widespread, they are important to note because they demonstrate the fear and negativity that persists between the communities in Northern Ireland:

“I’ve had a parent approach me from my own community and said ‘How dare you get my child involved in this project because if I wanted my child to go to an integrated school I would have sent him there’. I said to her well listen ‘it’s only to benefit your child that he will achieve 2 GCSEs at a grade level B and we’re doing our best so why not take advantage of it’. But no she couldn’t see sense so he was removed from the course... this was outside of school and I was shocked and at the end of the day I’m only trying to do my best for the children and if a parent ...I’m not saying all parents because most parents are very supportive but it just takes the odd one to up heave the situation who can’t see through or past the religion or their upbringing” (Teacher, Case Study 1)

It is interesting to note that such behaviours did not dissuade teachers from pursuing the goals of reconciliation; instead it seemed to only strengthen their commitment to building intergroup relationships. This became clear in an interview with the head teacher in a school in the same partnership as that above. This teacher had similarly explained his problems with parents ‘not buying into SEP’ but in an effort to offset further negativity with parents and in an attempt to garner support amongst the broader community support he sought to directly engage with political representatives from the other community. His comments below illustrate something of his dedication to relationship building but they also reveal the delicate micro-political manoeuvrings which are sometimes required to preserve inter-community relations.

“The mayor [here] is [SF councillor] and he was planning to go to the opening of [a] protestant Primary school.... which is in a very hardline Prod are. The principal of that school rang me and said- ‘I have had parents phoning me saying they are going to remove their children...and I don’t want this to happen’ So... I phoned [the mayor]... and I said ‘... if you are going to go to the opening tomorrow you will set us back years. Please re-consider this’. And after a fairly hard discussion he said, ‘because you’re asking me and because I know that this is important and ...I know where you stand’. In other words he was saying to me I know you’re doing this for honourable reasons and that was terribly important, he said ‘I’ll not go’... all the work we’ve been doing with those youngsters...had that mayor gone last Friday to that opening it would have been all over the local press... even have hit the provincial news and would have set our work back by months” (Head teacher, Case Study 1)

Despite the political progress in Northern Ireland, political and cultural sensitivities continue to lurk beneath the surface. The challenge for teachers and school authorities is therefore to attempt to understand and overcome such sensitivities whilst creating an educational context that is conducive to relationship building amongst pupils. While the teacher above seems to have acquired the capital to negotiate with the community representatives, these skills are unlikely to be resonant throughout the teaching profession and the data in this report suggest that teachers will require considerable support if they are to ensure that their efforts in relationship building are not lost within a sectarian hinterland.

5b.22 Factors That Influence School Collaboration

Inter-school Relationships

Interviews with teachers suggested that there were a number of factors that enabled the development of effective collaborative relationships. At the outset of collaboration these included leaders' commitment to collaborative working and the existence of previous relationships between school leaders and staff. However, for collaborative working to become more embedded in school practice it is clear that leaders had to ensure that staff were kept fully informed of the nature and purpose of collaborative work, and were provided with access to joint training programmes as early as possible. All of these strategies were employed by schools to varying degrees and, as the head teachers below acknowledge, they were critical in building trust between the partners, particularly when these partners were drawn from Catholic and Protestant schools:

"I suppose you build the project on trust as well and working together and wanting this to succeed and that's where teachers met each other too. Once teachers met each other got to know each other and all of a sudden the friendships that have been built up in the staff have been brilliant"
(Head teacher, Case Study 3)

"Staff who would have met through sport, football always brought people together and where we have tried to develop staff development programmes particularly through the foci that we've identified this year....it is not unknown for say my head of modern languages to work closely with the counterpart in the high school or the grammar school, that's quite normal. There is certainly no resistance from staff" (Head teacher, Case Study 1)

"I worked with [teacher in a collaborating school of a different management type] for 1/1/2 years, we were completing a professional qualification for headship and I got to know her through that, it was a small group only 10 of us and I met for 3 weeks for 4/5 hours and then we were out on training days and so on. So over that time I got to know [teacher] well and I knew her background and the school she was involved in and she knew my background and the type of school I was involved in. So I came into this and I knew all about [teacher] and her background and instantly we were able to get working on it immediately (Vice Principal, Case Study 5)

These informal relations are a critical plank in the collaborative process not least because they allow teachers to develop the trust and sense of shared collegiality that appears to be fundamental to the success of partnership working.

Funding

It was clear that sustaining good inter-group relations were often dependent on funding, particularly that which was available to schools through the SEP initiative. This was regarded by

all in Case Study 1 and 2 as essential for sustaining effective partnerships between the schools as the teacher below clearly acknowledges:

“Without the funding they can’t cover me to go and three other teachers time, that’s three Wednesday afternoons and then you have the transport costs going to the –we’ve falling roll numbers so there’s less money for the transport, we can’t afford to pay for it and that is genuine so that is where the SEP comes in to help” (Teacher, Case Study 2)

Despite the clear identification of funding as a vital enabling factor of collaborative working, it is difficult to underestimate the positive effects of the SEP funding on the development of intergroup relations between schools. Interestingly, it became clear that the way that funding was allocated could also undermine relations between schools. This was a particular problem if one school was accorded ‘lead’ status in terms of distributing the finances to other schools as is the case in the SEP funded partnerships as the teachers below explain: .

“I think where you are trying to achieve greater equity and when you’ve got one school holding the purse strings and maybe let’s say insufficient discussion of how the money is to be used or one school to be seen as driving it. I think there is a really challenge for schools to collaboratively reach a decision and making sure that the dialogue and communication is absolutely clear, above board and transparent” (Head teacher, Case Study 1)

VP: *One of the issues with this is that the other schools sometimes regard us as the school in charge of it all.*

R: *Yes that’s the problem.*

VP: *That is the problem and the burden of work and so on falls on us. ... It has improved in some ways although if there are issues they tend to fall back on [us] to sort out.*

(Teacher, Case Study 2)

Participants in Case Studies 4 and 5 regularly cited a lack of funding as a key obstacle to collaborative working. However, those in Case Studies 1, 2 and 3 were also concerned about future funding suggesting that any uncertainty about the sources of funding in the long term can place limits on what teachers are likely to be able to do in the longer term.

Logistical /Operational Issues

Participants explained that there were a number of logistical issues hindering the process of relationship building between schools. Predictably, teachers explained that transport to and from schools as well as the geographical location of schools and the alignment of school policies were all presenting key obstacles to effective collaboration. However, in a reflection of the importance of the funding allocated through SEP, these factors appeared to present much less of a problem for teachers in Case Study 1 and 2 than in the other post primary case studies as the data below illustrate:

“Transport between schools is costing a fortune for us and we get a bit of help from the Department for this but our schools are not close by so that is a huge problem; getting the timetable sorted was a total headache too and it would nearly have put us off only we have a very good time-table” (Teacher, Case Study 5)

“Transport has been covered by the SEP but there are other thingsGetting the timetable aligned is very fundamental but I’m trying to work in next year’s timetable with the time tabler and I’m seeing that the collaboration is creating significant challenges for us in terms of the flexibility that we can have. I don’t know to what extent what’s set in stone but we’re having trouble for next year, we’re going to have difficulty accommodating a significant proportion of our 6th formers subject choices because I’m told that the collaborative blocks have to happen when they have to happen. So, in other words, to accommodate some children to be able to access the applied courses we’re compromising the choices of the majority, you would be amazed at the significant number whose choices are being compromised at the minute.” (Head teacher, Case Study 1)

Although teachers generally overcame such logistical impediments successfully, the impact on the collaborative process cannot be disregarded. Indeed it is worth noting that one of the Head teachers in case study 5 indicated that he had abandoned plans for collaboration with one school because of the difficulties of aligning timetables.

Competing/Incoherent Educational Policy Frameworks

Whilst current educational policy frameworks were generally considered to be important for promoting collaboration, interviews revealed a number of tensions in current policy agendas that seemed to undermine rather than facilitate collaborative working. Thus, whilst it was clear that the Entitlement Framework had motivated teachers to develop partnerships across school sectors the policy to allocate funding on the basis of pupils enrolment seemed to exert a powerful constraint on the evolution of effective collaborative working. This point was rehearsed by a number of teachers and is well captured in the extract below:

“The principal of the partner school approached us and gave us a brief reason why he wanted us as a group of schools to work together. He said that he wanted to bring the other two schools on board with him. But..there were a lot of tensions between the schools..... Our school was haemorrhaging pupils and [the other partner] school was filling up with ‘our’ pupils and I would say it was hard for us to work with them and we are still a bit sore about things like that and we aren’t necessarily going to stick it out” (Head teacher, Case Study 3)

Further to this, and despite the fact that the Entitlement Framework and the new curriculum had motivated teachers to engage across school sectors, the simple presence of a new curricular framework was not necessarily deemed to be conducive to the promotion of intergroup relations. Indeed, a number of teachers explained that the absence of a clear policy imperative with regard to relationship building means that schools are not compelled to engage in activities

which aim to enhance community relations. This point was raised by one of the SEP funded schools who feared that at the end of this funding stream the partners would lose the momentum for relationship building that had been built up over the previous 2 years:

“We are concerned that we are going to lose that funding like it has been really, really important for us to develop relations with the Catholic school but it will come to an end and then what? I mean the government have not been pushing this and so all the work we have done will come to nothing because there is no funding” (Vice Principal, Case Study 2)

In conclusion, whilst allocating funding to assist schools to collaborate has clearly been critical for encouraging better relationships between Catholic and Protestant pupils there is a danger that intergroup relationships that have been carefully constructed by teachers will not be sustainable when funding is withdrawn.

5b.3 Summary of In-Depth Case Studies: Qualitative Findings

The purpose of this section was to examine the experiences of teachers and pupils as they adjust to the new collaborative working arrangements. The data principally focused on exploring the nature of relations between Catholics and Protestants in the SEP and non SEP schools. Echoing the quantitative data presented in the early part of this report, the qualitative data similarly revealed that the contact afforded through curricular collaboration and joint classes can have a positive effect on intergroup relationships. However, it was clear from this data that the contact taking place in SEP funded partnerships appeared to be more effective in reducing anxiety, promoting positive emotions about the ‘out’-group and allowing for the development of friendships than those in the non SEP funded partnerships. There was plenty of evidence from the SEP funded schools to suggest that friendships between Catholics and Protestant pupils (particularly in Case Study 1) were well developed and that even where the context was not conducive to forging intergroup relations (as in Case Study 2) pupils were nonetheless motivated to find ways to meet young people drawn from the other community. It was also significant that friendships between some pupils in joint classes in Case study 1 extended to wider friendship groups, and there was also some evidence of pupils not involved in collaborative activities becoming part of cross-group friendship networks.

It was also clear, however, that a number of factors persisted in preventing intergroup relations from evolving to the stage of addressing the negativities that underpin intergroup tensions. Hence it was clear that pupils living in religiously segregated areas or areas of community tensions experienced greater challenges in meeting with and sustaining friendships with the other main religious group outside school. There was also only limited evidence that teachers and pupils were adequately prepared for teaching and participating in joint classes. It was significant that where efforts were made by schools to address the training needs of teachers

(as in the primary school case study), teachers seemed to be less anxious and more confident in developing a proactive strategy to deal with controversial issues as they arose within the classrooms.

Finally, and perhaps more fundamentally, the qualitative data reveal the true complexity of forging and sustaining intergroup relations in a society where historical and political tensions are omnipresent and where the groups engaging in contact impose their own frameworks of meaning on the perspectives, traditions and customs of the 'out' - group. In these situations, it is apparent that encouraging Catholics and Protestants to empathise and take the perspective of the 'other' is a much more intricate and delicate process than is often appreciated, particularly within current debates in contact research (Connolly, 2000). In terms of this research, the findings signpost further consideration of the contact literature where the focus is on inter-group prejudice as opposed to the context and the frameworks of meaning which groups will inevitably bring to the contact situation (Dixon et al, 2005).

Section 6

Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This project sought to examine the extent of inter-school collaboration in Northern Ireland and the contribution that collaboration can make to reconciliation and the promotion of enhanced inter-group relations. The report has established a baseline for examining collaboration through SEP against the contribution it can make to reconciliation and the promotion of enhanced inter-group relations in Northern Ireland. It has also examined the patterns of collaboration as they develop over time, explored the process/contextual issues that can militate against/enhance effectiveness as measured by reconciliation and good relations objectives and examined the impact of collaboration on the attitudes and perceptions of participants.

The report employed theories of intergroup contact as a conceptual framework for the study and further to a burgeoning body of international empirical work, research findings has placed increased emphasis upon the relationship between contact and enhanced positive responses to the 'other' community (Allport, 1954; Hewstone, 1996; Pettigrew 1997; 2006; 2008). It also endorses the observation in existing literature, that mediators of successful outcomes are likely to include the development of intimate, as opposed to superficial relations that ultimately facilitate self disclosure and perspective taking (Pettigrew, 2008). The value of these mediators in terms of relationship building is that participants are able to communicate both with and for the other without surrendering their own identity. However, the research presented here highlights substantial variation in the experience of contact and its effectiveness in the 6 case study schools with greater evidence of positive outcomes in the SEP funded partnerships, although it is also significant that there was some variation in outcomes *within* the two SEP funded partnerships. Employing quantitative and qualitative methodologies, these differences were explored in relation to the dynamic between the contact intervention and the wider socio-political context.

6.2 Reconciliation

The findings from the online survey and interviews with teachers revealed that the majority of schools in Northern Ireland are predisposed to building collaborative networks with schools within their locality. It was also clear that Head teachers are keen to engage in a wide range of collaborative activities as a vehicle for promoting and enhancing curricular choice for students at post 14 and post 16. Although the majority of schools did not engage in collaboration primarily to build relationships between Catholics and Protestants, there was only limited evidence that teachers avoided contact with schools from the 'other' sector. Evidence from the pupil survey also revealed an appetite for intergroup contact amongst the majority of pupils but it also suggested that pupils involved in SEP funded projects were more likely than those in non

SEP schools to display emotions and engage in behaviours that are associated with intergroup reconciliation. Indeed it is significant that this data suggests that pupils become less anxious, more comfortable and more positive about the other community when their school participates in the Sharing Education Programme than when it does not. However, the data also suggest that the context within which the school is located is a key variable in determining the extent of reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant pupils. Hence those 'SEP schools' located in areas that are recognised as more segregated are less likely to indicate that they have friends or are comfortable with the 'other' community than those pupils who attend 'SEP schools' in less divided areas. But what is perhaps more important is that even where the context is segregated, if pupils have attended a SEP school they are *more* likely than those in non SEP schools in non-divided contexts, to view the 'out'-group positively

6.3 The Complexity of Contact

Whilst the qualitative data similarly revealed that participation in SEP funded schools generated positive experiences of the out-group, the experiences of contact rehearsed during interviews revealed the process of intergroup relationship building to be more complex than is perhaps captured by the survey data above. Hence, it was clear that the contact process was mediated by life experience, group norms and expectations, and the representation of the contact encounter. In some cases, power and status differentials between Protestants and Catholics provided a lens through which 'own' and 'other' actions during contact are filtered and interpreted. In other instances, the culturally embedded norms of suspicion and separation that have served well to protect group members from the very real threat of physical harm, acted to thwart meaningful contact. These inhibitors suggest the possibility that meaningful intimate contact will not only be largely resisted (as happened to some extent in Case study 2 and to a greater extent in Case Study 4), but that even the prospect of contact could exacerbate tensions in an area. These findings draw attention to a limitation of contact theory as currently conceived in much of the literature: namely its persistent focus on prejudice as the cause of inter-group hostility, and the attendant emphasis on contact as a mechanism through which the prejudiced individual can be rehabilitated (see Dixon et al., 2005). According to this *prejudice based* analysis, the variable impact of contact in different circumstances can be explained either by ideal conditions not having been achieved or, in situation of self-segregation when 'ideal' conditions *have* been met, by countervailing psychological processes – e.g. the desire to retain positive distinctiveness.

The qualitative research begins with the 'lived experience' of contact for pupils in different social, political and historical circumstances. The research subsequently contributes to contact literature by offering alternative explanations for contact effectiveness or lack thereof that are grounded in the reality of social relations *beyond* the contact encounter. In so doing it raises

important challenges for policy makers that move beyond putative issues of how *encounters* should be structured to maximise effectiveness. Thus, in the urban context, improving the relationship between the school and the local community could provide a key to generating greater harmony between the conflicting value sets that currently inform resistance to contact and impede the potential for contact to extend beyond school-based meeting. Engaging the support of locally elected representatives and local clergy from both communities for SEP activity might be one way of reducing anxiety by modelling inter-group contact in a variety of locally based contexts. In the post-Agreement period and in the context of a power-Sharing executive in Northern Ireland, this is arguably easier to do now than might have been the case during the conflict years. Involving parents in intergroup relations might also help tackle community based suspicion – open nights to explain the rationale of the initiative might help allay the fears of those who are most resistant. Other possibilities that could enhance opportunities for greater social interaction might include a presentation evening, where students could exhibit/present their work to parents/representatives from the local community, and/or social events to promote team building amongst participants.

In the rural context of Case Study 1 where relationships between the schools and the local community are already strong and where contact is already largely normalized, the priority might be to find ways of laying open to constructive scrutiny the competing world views that underlie contact engagement. In a society that is characterised by a social grammar of avoidance this is clearly a challenge. However, there are encouraging signs in the research data that contact participants are more open to discussion about difference than might have been the case in the pre-cease fire generation. The salience of group identity in collaborating schools, particularly when children are identified as Catholic and Protestant by their different uniforms makes avoidance more difficult. Indeed there are specific opportunities presented by for example, culturally specific events/celebrations (Remembrance Day; Ash Wednesday; local Elections etc.) to explore the alternative perspectives held by contact participants. The resistance of some teachers is likely to remain an impediment to the facilitation of such discussion, pointing perhaps to the need for greater preparation and training. In this respect a needs analysis and bespoke training programme for teachers involved in teaching mixed groups would seem rational.

While these suggestions are not cost neutral, evidence generated by this study indicates that these relatively low level interventions offer guidance as to how the benefits of contact currently taking place can be further developed and ultimately maximized. Moreover, the benefits to be accrued by enhanced inter-group relations in communities that continue to struggle with the legacy of Northern Ireland's history cannot be underestimated. The contact generated by the SEP schools in this project is seemingly effective, at the very least in reducing

inter-group anxiety and at best in promoting friendships and deeper understanding of 'out'-group perspective. However, the constraining variables are unique to the local context and underpin the need for locally consistent responses.

Section 7: Collaboration Model

On the basis of our findings and an examination of contact literature, we present below a collaboration model that could be applied either as a measurement tool to assess the potential effectiveness of an existing collaboration initiative, or to assess the merits of funding applications.

The model is presented on a timeline and there are three elements to it: minimum conditions for effective contact; expected outcomes; and facilitating variables.

Timeline

Our observations highlighted clear distinctions between early stage collaboration and more embedded collaboration in terms of potential contact outcomes such as, out-group trust; perspective taking; empathy and willingness to self-disclose. We also noted differential impacts of contact in respect of the context within which the collaboration occurred. Hence, in divided communities, where relations between communities are generally hostile and where relations between schools and community tend to be weaker, the potential of contact is likely to be more limited than in situations where there are strong school/local community relations and where the local area is more mixed. There are a number of indicators that can be used to explore the extent to which attitudes, values and behaviour have changed as a consequence of collaboration induced social contact (these are included in our pupil questionnaire)

Minimum conditions for all collaboration

Irrespective of the stage at which collaboration occurs, there are five conditions that are important determinants of effectiveness. Derived from the literature, but also apparent in our analysis, these include:

- non-competitive environment – where the collaboration undertaken promotes cooperation between participants
- super-ordinate goals – these are goals that are not achievable by either group working alone – cooperation is a pre-requisite (extending curricular choice is a clear example in school collaborations). The value of super-ordinate goals is that they can facilitate cross-cutting identities. These are identities that all members of participating groups relate to, and they are relevant to the nature of the shared activity (we noted for example, that

the collaborative network can become a point of common reference for participants). Such identities do not subjugate or undermine important ethno/religious identities, rather they exist alongside them.

- Equal status – this refers to the need for all collaboration participants to have equal status. Equal status is important at both participating school level and at the level of individual encounter. Action may be needed to identify and tackle perceived inequity. Where one group is accorded a more significant role than other or is allocated more resources, the potential for perceived inequality increases.
- Sustained contact – in order to promote relationship building, contact should occur over a sustained time period, and should facilitate the development of friendships. We observed that the opportunity for regular interaction between the same pupil groups, and the availability of ‘down time’ are important characteristics of effective sustained contact. It is worth noting that these good practice points could be applied at all levels of collaboration, including staff encounters.
- Institutional support – commitment to collaboration objectives at individual school level and at wider community and political levels are important indicators of effectiveness. Although it would be unrealistic to expect schools to take responsibility for promoting institutional support beyond the school gate, there are actions that can be taken to promote greater engagement with communities, particularly where relations between school and local community are weak. As mentioned in our report, possibilities might include drawing in local community elites (clergy, local councillors, community leaders etc) to champion collaboration work.

Expected outcomes

On the basis of our analysis, we identify collaboration outcomes that are seemingly consistent with different stages of collaboration. At earlier stage collaboration and/or where the context within which collaboration takes place is very divided (defined by local demography and generally hostile inter-group relations), expected outcomes include: anxiety reduction (the amelioration of fear and sense of threat at the prospect of intergroup encounter); increased commitment to reconciliation objectives; evidence of greater

engagement between schools and the local community; the development of sustained interaction between participants. At later stage collaboration and/or collaboration in conducive environments, additional expected outcomes are likely to include: friendships between participating individuals and networks of extended contact (where friends of collaboration participants have met and are in regular contact); evidence of culturally embedded contact – where the presence of pupils from ‘visiting’ schools is routine and normalized; community participation/ support, including evidence of engagement by local community leaders in supportive activity.

Facilitating variables

As above, facilitating variables are somewhat context dependent. Hence, at earlier stage/divided context collaboration, the range of facilitating variables is likely to include:

- The establishment of structures, policy and procedures for collaboration;
- Single identity work – to prepare pupils, teachers and whole school populations for collaboration. The emphasis of such work should be on identifying and allaying fears;
- Staff training – focusing on values underpinning collaboration, including reconciliation objectives
- Social contact – the creation of opportunities for participants to get to know each other socially. Possibilities for social contact should be explored at both curricular and extra-curricular levels
- Numerical balance – where participants are very apprehensive about contact, it is important that they have the security of knowing that equal or similar sized groups will be involved.
- School rotation – where practicable, it is important to rotate the location of the collaborative activity, so that participants will have experience of both receiving visitors from other schools, and of being a visitor to another school
- Opportunities for wider engagement and ‘buy in’ to collaboration objectives
- Collaboration champions and leaders– it is important that in areas where there is likely to be apathy towards or resistance to collaboration that there are individuals

who are committed to collaboration objectives and who are tasked with driving the initiative forward.

In more established collaboration networks, the importance of some of the above facilitators may diminish, and others can be added. Hence, whilst numerical balance and school rotation may become less important and the promotion of social time may be less relevant (as there are ample opportunities for socialising outside of school) as relations between schools become embedded in everyday practice, it is important not to become complacent. Developing relationships are likely to remain fragile, and it is clear from our data that misrepresentation of other beliefs, values and practices, and/or competing interpretative frameworks have considerable potential to damage relationships. Accepting this, it is important to ensure mechanisms are in place to facilitate the exploration of difference and diversity, and within which tensions/concerns can be raised and addressed. It is also vitally important that communication channels with the local community remain open and are encouraged.

It is important to note that a key facilitating variable at all levels is the availability of funding. Collaboration work in Northern Ireland is not cost neutral, nor is it likely to be for some considerable time (if ever). Costs will include at least some of the following: staff relief; transport; materials; engagement of external organizations /agencies to deliver more focused 'reconciliation' work; training and development; related curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Based on the above, we present below a model for collaboration work.

Early stages collaboration / collaboration in divided contexts

- Minimum conditions for effective contact**
- Non competitive environment
 - Super-ordinate goals
 - Equal status
 - sustained contact
 - Institutional support -

Later stages collaboration /collaboration in 'conducive' contexts

Relationship Building

Mediators: Out-group trust; Perspective taking; Empathy; Self disclosure - FRIENDSHIP



Expected outcomes

- Anxiety reduction
- Increased commitment to collaboration objectives
- some engagement between school and community
- sustained interaction between participants

- Friendships between collaboration participants
- Extended friendships (between friends of friends involved in contact)
- Culturally embedded contact (mainstreamed)
- Community participation/ support

Expected outcomes

Facilitating variables

- Funding**
- Establishment of structures, policy and procedures for collaboration
 - staff training
 - single identity work
 - Opportunity for social contact
 - Numerical balance
 - School rotation
 - opportunity for wider community engagement
 - collaboration champions

- Numerical balance, school rotation and social time may be less - important
- Communication channels to keep local community on board
- Mechanisms in place to address issues of difference and diversity
- Forum for identifying and addressing tensions/concerns as they arise
- Ongoing channels of communication with local community
- Staff development training, based on ongoing needs analysis

Facilitating variables

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1 Head Teacher Survey



This survey is part of a study on collaboration in schools in Northern Ireland. The survey consists of a number of sections which concern **your school's experiences** of collaboration and factors which are perceived to inhibit and enhance collaboration. The information you will provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Section 1: Inter-school collaboration

1. Has your school ever engaged in any form of inter-school/FE college collaboration?

Yes **If yes, please go to question 3**

No

2. If your school has never been involved in any collaborative arrangements please indicate why not

If you have never been involved in any collaborative arrangements please go to section 2 page 3

3. How many collaborative networks have you been involved in?

One

Four

Two

Five

Three

4. For each network please specify each school/college type involved in the collaboration, including your own

Collab. Network	Cont. Primary	Inte. Primary	Maint. Primary	Inte. Post Primary	Maint. Post Primary	Cont. Post Primary	Maint. Grammar	Cont. Grammar	Vol. Grammar	Irish Medium	FE
One											
Two											
Three											
Four											
Five											

5. Please indicate duration of collaboration

Collab. Network	Start Date	End Date	Ongoing
One			
Two			
Three			
Four			
Five			

6. Please indicate reasons for engaging in collaboration

Collab. Network	To extend curricular choice	Enhanced extra curricular activities	To access funding	Additional facilities and resources	Entitlement Framework	Establish links with schools from other communities
One						
Two						
Three						
Four						
Five						

7. What proportion of your teaching staff is involved in the collaboration?

Collab. Network	Up to 10%	11-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%
One					
Two					

Three					
Four					
Five					

8. Please indicate which staff from your school are involved in each collaborative network

Collab. Network	Head teacher	SMT	School Governors	Heads of Year/Key Stage	Class teachers	Support Staff	EMU Co-ord	Not Applicable
One								
Two								
Three								
Four								
Five								

9. Please indicate frequency of staff activities undertaken by the collaborative network i.e. yearly, termly, monthly or weekly

Collab. Network	Head teacher meetings	Meetings between SMT	Meetings between other staff	Joint Staff Development	Informal contact between staff	Teaching mixed classes	Extra curricular activities	Other
One								
Two								
Three								
Four								
Five								

10. For each collaborative network, please indicate the profile of pupils involved

Collab. Network	Foundation	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Post 16
One						
Two						
Three						

Four						
Five						

12. For each collaborative network, please indicate the frequency of activities pupils from your school were/are engaged in i.e. yearly, termly, monthly, weekly

Collab. Network	Mixed classes	Extra curricular activities e.g. joint sport	Joint time bound activities e.g. school production	School trips/residential activities	Other	Not applicable
One						
Two						
Three						
Four						
Five						

Section 2: Factors that enable or inhibit collaboration

1. What do you see as the key facilitators of collaboration?

Role of external bodies Relationship between school leaders

Proximity of collaborating schools Availability of funding

Commitment of other school staff Political environment

Other _____

2. What do you see as the key reasons why collaboration may not work effectively?

Competition between schools Lack of independence in decision making

Proximity of schools Additional workload

Dilution of school ethos Disputes between pupils from different schools

Anxiety that it might generation sectarianism Unsupportive policy environment

Inconsistent discipline/pastoral care policies Lack of funding

Other _____

Section 3: Attitudes to cross sectoral collaboration

This section related to cross-sectoral collaboration between schools normally associated with one of the main religious groups in Northern Ireland (i.e. schools attended by either predominantly Protestant or Catholic school children). In general, thinking about collaboration I would say that:

Statement	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
As a principal I would be supportive of cross-sectoral collaboration.					
Most pupils in my school would be supportive of cross sectoral collaboration					
Most teachers in my school would be supportive of cross sectoral collaboration					
Most parents would be supportive of cross sectoral collaboration					
Collaboration with schools outside my sector is more challenging than with schools within my sector					
Schools from other sectors are very different from mine and that makes collaboration difficult					

Section 4: Identity in cross-sectoral collaboration

In general, thinking about collaboration between predominately Protestant and Catholic schools I would say that:

Statement	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
Participants from my school may feel uncomfortable with expressions of different cultural identity when visiting another school					
Participants from my school would feel uncomfortable with expressions of different religious identity when visiting another school					
Participants from my school would feel uncomfortable with expressions of different political identity when visiting another school					
I am concerned that partners in the collaboration visiting my school may feel uncomfortable with expressions of cultural identity in my school					
I am concerned that partners in the collaboration visiting my school may feel uncomfortable with expressions of religious identity in my school					
I am concerned that participants in the collaboration visiting my school would feel uncomfortable with expressions of political identity in my school					
Collaboration with another school outside our sector would threaten my school's identity					

Section 4: Identity in cross-sectoral collaboration contd.

In general, thinking about collaboration between predominately Protestant and Catholic schools I would say that:

Statement	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
In the interests of good relations school should adopt a neutral stance on identity when engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration					
In the interests of good relations schools involved in cross-sectoral collaboration should encourage openness around identity issues					
Differences between pupils from participating schools should not be highlighted when engaged in cross-sectoral collaboration					
It is important that collaborative activities focus on what children have in common rather than divisive aspects of identity					

It is important that pupils are made aware of different cultural identities when participating in cross-sectoral collaboration					
It is important that pupils are made aware of different religious identities when participating in cross-sectoral collaboration					
It is important that pupils are made aware of different political identities when participating in cross-sectoral collaboration					
I would prefer that pupils wear uniforms in collaborative activities					
I would prefer that pupils do not wear uniforms in collaborative activities					

Section 5: Trust in cross-sectoral collaboration

In general, thinking about collaboration between predominately Protestant and Catholic schools I would say that:

Statement	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
I would be anxious about participating in cross-sectoral collaboration					
Prior trust between schools from other sectors is important to promote collaboration					
Building trust between schools from different sectors is likely to be difficult in a collaborative arrangement					
My fear is that other collaborating schools will exploit my school					
I can rely on a collaborating school to be consistent in their behaviour					

Section 6: Experiences of cross-sectoral collaboration

Please complete this section only if you have been involved in cross sectoral collaboration.

Thinking about relations between Protestants and Catholics in the most recent cross-sectoral collaboration that you've been involved in would you say in general relations between pupils were/are:

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
Friendly					
Cooperative					

Comfortable					
Anxiety provoking					
Awkward					
Superficial					
Equitable					

Statement	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
The contact generated through cross sectoral school collaboration is the best way to promote good community relationships between Protestants and Catholics					

Section 7: Policy and social climate for collaboration

Thinking about schools in Northern Ireland would you say that:

Statement	strongly disagree	mostly disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
The current education policy context supports cross sectoral collaboration					
Separate schools reinforce division between Catholics and Protestants					
Schools in Northern Ireland have an obligation to promote better relationships between Catholics and Protestants					
The integrated school sector promotes better relationships between Protestants and Catholics					

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. If you have any other comments regarding collaboration in education we would be grateful if you could provide these below.



Appendix 2: Pupil Survey



An evaluation of inter-school collaboration Pupil survey



Many school pupils are involved in activities with pupils from another school. This survey is being carried out to help understand how pupils from different schools work together. The research is also interested in how the activities can help promote better relations between Protestants and Catholics. The survey should take 10 minutes to complete. Do not put your name on the survey to make sure all responses remain completely confidential

Section 1: Background

Age: _____

Gender: Female ____ Male ____

Section 2: Activities with other schools

Do you participate in any activities involving pupils from another school?

Yes

No If no, please go to section 3 page 2

Please tick the main reason why you are involved in activities involving pupils from another school

I am studying a subject not on offer in my own school

The subject I am studying in my school is offered to pupils in other schools

I am involved in school trips/residentals which involve pupils from other schools

I am involved in after school activities offered to pupils in other schools

I am involved in joint school based activities such as school production /competitions

Other _____

Please tick how often you are involved in the following activities with pupils from another school

	Yearly	Termly	Monthly	Weekly
Mixed classes				

After school activities				
Joint school based activities e.g. school production/school competitions				
School trips/residential activities				

Section 3 –Identity: The following questions concern your feelings towards your community and your relationship with members of your community.

- If you are a Catholic please complete Section 3a below
- If you are a Protestant please complete Section 3b page 3

Section 3a: Please complete this section if you are from the Catholic community

Would you say that...

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am a typical Catholic					
I am happy to be a Catholic					
I am proud to be a Catholic					
Overall, being a Catholic has a lot to do with how I feel about myself					
Being a Catholic is an important part of how I see myself					
I have a strong sense of belonging to the Catholic community.					
I am a person who feels strong ties with other Catholics					
I feel supported by other Catholics					
Sometimes I feel rejected by other Catholics					
A typical Catholic is very similar to the typical Irish person					
Being a Catholic means the same as being Irish					

How do you feel about Catholics in general? Please rate Catholics on a thermometer that runs from zero (0) to a hundred (100) degrees. The higher the number, the warmer or more favourable you feel towards Catholics. The lower the number, the colder or less favourable you feel. If you feel neither warm nor cold towards Catholics, rate them at 50.

- If you are a Catholic we are referring to the Catholic community
- If you are a Protestant we are referring to the Protestant community

In general when you talk to other members from your community

Statement	None	1	2	3	4	5	Very Much
How much personal information do you tell them?							
How much personal information do they tell you?							

Statement	None	A few	About half	More than half	Most	All
How many of your close friends are from your community?						

Statement	None	1	2	3	4	5	Very Much
How much personal information do you tell your close friends ?							
How much personal information do they tell you?							

Section 5: Contact with people from the other community

- If you are a Catholic we are referring to the Protestant community. Please complete section 5a below
- If you are a Protestant we are referring to the Catholic community. Please complete section 5b page 8

Section 5a: Please complete this section if you are from the Catholic community

Statement	None	A few	About half	More than half	Most	All
In the area where you live, how many of the people do you think are Protestants?						

If you have contact with Protestants in the area where you live would you say relations were generally

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
Friendly					
Cooperative					
Comfortable					
Anxiety provoking					
Awkward					

Superficial					
Threatening					

In general when you talk to Protestants

Statement	None	1	2	3	4	5	Very Much
How much personal information do you tell them?							
How much personal information do they tell you?							

Statement	None	A few	About half	More than half	Most	All
How many of your close friends are Protestants?						

Statement	None	1	2	3	4	5	Very Much
How much personal information do you tell your close Protestant friends ?							
How much personal information do they tell you?							

How often have you experienced the following types of treatment from Protestants?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
Been made to feel unwanted					
Been supported					
Been verbally abused					
Been intimidated					
Been helped out					
Been threatened with harm					
Been made feel welcome					

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
I try to think about the conflict in Northern Ireland from a Protestant's well as a Catholic's perspective.					
If I'm sure I'm right about something happening in Northern Ireland, I don't waste much time					

listening to the arguments of Protestants.					
I believe that I have a good understanding of how Protestants view the world					
On most issues, I cannot seem to grasp how Protestants think					

If you were the only Catholic interacting with Protestants would you generally feel...

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
Nervous					
Anxious					
Comfortable					
Awkward					
Safe					
At ease					

The following questions concern your opinion about a number of issues in Northern Irish society.

	Definitely Protestants	Somewhat Protestants	The Same	Somewhat Catholics	Definitely Catholics
Do you think Catholics or Protestants have higher social status in NI?					
Do you think Catholics or Protestants have more power in NI?					

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
The more power Protestants gain in this country, the more difficult it is for Catholics					
Allowing Protestants to decide on political issues means that Catholics have less to say in how this country is run.					
More good jobs for Protestants means fewer good jobs for Catholics.					
I worry about being physically attacked by people from the Protestant community.					
Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland think differently					
Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland have very different values.					

To what extent do you feel threatened by the following expressions of Protestants' cultural identity:

	Not at all	2	3	4	Extremely
Paramilitary murals/flags					
The Union Jack					
Religious symbols					
Wearing of Poppies					
Wearing of football strip associated with the Protestant community					
Use of Ulster Scots					
Celebration of Protestant cultural festivals					
Orange Parades					

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
I am respectful of the traditions of the Protestant community					
I feel that Protestants have a strong sense of respect for the traditions of my community.					
Protestants think they are better than Catholics					
Protestants have no respect for Catholics					
Protestants see themselves as superior to Catholics					
Protestants think negatively about Catholics					
It annoys me when others don't see the important differences between Protestants and Catholics					
It is not right that Protestants and Catholics are treated as if they were the same.					

In the following questions we would like to find out how often you have felt certain emotions towards Protestants:

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
felt a desire to seek contact					

Friendly						
Cooperative						
Comfortable						
Anxiety provoking						
Awkward						
Superficial						
Threatening						

In general when you talk to Catholics

Statement	None	1	2	3	4	5	Very Much
How much personal information do you tell them?							
How much personal information do they tell you?							

Statement	None	A few	About half	More than half	Most	All
How many of your close friends are Catholics?						

Statement	None	1	2	3	4	5	Very Much
How much personal information do you tell your close Catholic friends ?							
How much personal information do they tell you?							

How often have you experienced the following types of treatment from Catholics?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
Been made to feel unwanted					
Been supported					
Been verbally abused					
Been intimidated					
Been helped out					
Been threatened with harm					
Been made feel welcome					

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
I try to think about the conflict in Northern Ireland from a Catholic's well as a Protestant's perspective.					
If I'm sure I'm right about something happening in Northern Ireland, I don't waste much time listening to the arguments of Catholics.					
I believe that I have a good understanding of how Catholics view the world					
On most issues, I cannot seem to grasp how Catholics think					

If you were the **only Protestant** interacting with Catholics would you generally feel...

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
Nervous					
Anxious					
Comfortable					
Awkward					
Safe					
At ease					

	Definitely Protestants	Somewhat Protestants	The Same	Somewhat Catholics	Definitely Catholics
Do you think Protestants or Catholics have higher social status in NI?					
Do you think Protestants or Catholics have more power in NI?					

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
The more power Catholics gain in this country, the more difficult it is for Protestants					

Allowing Catholics to decide on political issues means that Protestants have less to say in how this country is run.					
More good jobs for Catholics means fewer good jobs for Protestants.					
I worry about being physically attacked by people from the Catholic community.					
Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland think differently					
Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland have very different values.					

To what extent do you feel threatened by the following expressions of Catholics' cultural identity:

	Not at all	2	3	4	Extremely
Paramilitary murals/flags					
The Tricolour					
Religious symbols					
Ashes on Ash Wednesday					
Wearing of football strip associated with the Catholic community					
Use of Irish					
Celebration of Irish cultural festivals					
Parades associated with the Catholic community					

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	mostly agree	strongly agree
I am respectful of the traditions of the Catholic community					
I feel that Catholics have a strong sense of respect for the traditions of my community.					
Catholics think they are better than Protestants					
Catholics have no respect for Protestants					
Catholics see themselves as superior to Protestants					
Catholics think negatively about Protestants					
It annoys me when others don't see					

Section 6: If you have any comments please provide them below



Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Please return the survey using the envelope provided. If you have any other comments or questions please contact the team at k.carlisle@qub.ac.uk

Appendix 3: Profile of Case Study Sites

Table Presents Summary Data for Each Case Study.

	CASE STUDY 1	CASE STUDY 2	CASE STUDY 3	CASE STUDY 4	CASE STUDY 5	CASE STUDY 6
SCHOOLS INVOLVED	- 4 post primary schools (Maintained & Controlled schools) & 1 FE College -Funding to facilitate collaborative activities	- 3 post primary schools (2 Maintained, 1 Controlled School) -Funding to facilitate collaborative activities	-Primary school collaboration involving 2 Maintained & 1 Controlled school -Funding to facilitate collaborative activities	-5 post primary schools (1 Integrated, 1 Controlled, 1 Maintained & 2 Voluntary Grammar schools) -No external funding for collaborative activities	-3 post primary schools (2 Maintained & 1 Controlled school) -No external funding for collaborative activities	-3 post primary schools (1 Controlled & 2 Voluntary Grammar schools) -Limited external funding for collaborative activities
CONTACT	-Weekly curricular contact (GCSE;Alevel) -Termly extracurricular contact (KS3; KS4) -Regular informal & formal contact between staff at all levels	-Weekly curricular contact (A level equiv.) -Regular informal & formal contact between SMT & staff directly involved in activities	-Termly contact between pupils (KS1&KS2) -Regular contact between headteachers & at all levels staff	-Weekly curricular contact (A level & Equiv) -Regular formal contact between SMT & staff involved in collaboration planning	-Weekly curricular contact A level (no uptake from Controlled school)& in FE college (mixed classes) -Regular formal contact between SMT & staff involved in collaborative planning	-Termly extracurricular contact between pupils (all year groups) & links to citizenship programme -Limited curricular contact (No mixed classes to date) -Regular formal & informal contact between staff

WIDER COMMUNITY CONTEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rural setting/ Predominantly mixed area -Largely unaffected by troubles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inner city setting/Predominantly segregated housing and history of sectarian violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -City setting in predominantly Protestant area with some segregated housing -Location of schools in close proximity to areas which experienced sectarian violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rural setting/ Predominantly mixed area with pockets of segregated housing and outlying villages -Largely unaffected by troubles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rural setting/segregated housing -Predominantly Catholic area with small Protestant community -History of sectarian violence and existing community tensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Town setting -Predominantly mixed area with some segregated housing -History of sectarian violence and tensions between communities
SUPPORTS/ CONSTRAINTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Well establish collaboration embedded in school practice -Strong school support and networks to facilitate collaboration -Good relations in the community -Competition between schools -Many activities dependent on funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Curricular collaborative activity highly valued in schools (staff & pupils) -Curricular collaboration dependent on funding -Segregated communities & lack of shared space -Policy context & uncertainty in relation to sustainability of work in the absence of funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Collaborative work closely linked to Primary curriculum -Funding facilitated joint activities and training pack -Difficulties fully implementing programme when funding withdrawn - Competition between schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strong school support and structures for curricular collaboration -Generally good community relations -New to collaborative work, first year of joint classes -Absence of structures and expertise to raise awareness of identity issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Willing of key staff to engage in collaboration -Time investment in preparation for joint activities -Very segregated communities and history of tensions between schools -Negative experiences of contact resulted in limited uptake of joint classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Well established collaborative network -Community relations key driver for collaborative activity -Full implementation of Community Relations programme dependent on funding -Competition between schools

