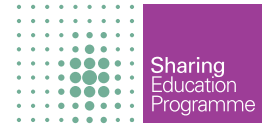


Schools working together.



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The Sharing Education Programme (SEP) aims 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 twelve school partnerships in SEP are deliberately cross-sectoral and comprise almost 60 schools and over 2,500 pupils.

We wanted to release the imagination and creativity of the teachers in the schools, so did not prescribe the focus of their activity. Rather, we asked only that the partnerships had to contain sustainable, high quality engagement by young people from different cultural traditions and backgrounds. Most important, the partnerships will compliment, or better add to, schools' existing key priorities: schools working together, through collaboration, can and will advance our shared aspiration that all schools in Northern Ireland become good schools.

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.

In the longer term we will provide exemplars of best practice in collaborative practice that can be used by schools throughout Northern Ireland to foster reconciliation. We hope also that the positive effects of the programme will be felt throughout the wider community. That surely will be the greatest achievement of SEP and it is a testament to the vision and ambition for a better, shared future of all those schools that have agreed to take part in this exciting and groundbreaking initiative.

“ Possibly the single most important thing is that over the run of the year we are together creating a space where these young people are allowed to talk about identity, Catholics and Protestants, community and culture. ”



“ The direct focus on issues of reconciliation has provided opportunities for high-quality work, which would not have otherwise been possible. ”



“ This project provides an opportunity to develop models of good practice and make a real difference not only to the lives of all our young people, but also to the communities from which they come. ”



“ The theme of the drama we are producing as part of the Sharing Education Programme has at its core, issues of reconciliation. The pupils' treatment of these issues has lead to the creation of a very thought provoking and insightful piece of theatre. ”

