This publication includes direct quotes from young people who have experienced racism and contains a few instances of foul and coarse language which have been reproduced here with their consent.
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During 2010 the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) conducted a case study with Hazelwood Integrated College (IC), a North Belfast integrated post-primary school, as a means of gaining deeper insight into the experience of newcomer and minority ethnic pupils within Northern Ireland’s education system and society. Primarily the case-study involved developing a deeper understanding of the issues facing young people from newcomer and minority ethnic backgrounds through an innovative initiative called a Citizens’ Panel which took place at the college on 22 June. This initiative placed the voices of these students at the heart of this project by giving them an opportunity to relay their personal stories. Their personal accounts provided a platform for engaging in dialogue with the wider school community and a means of building openness, trust and relationships as a consequence of such dialogue.

The intention of the Citizens’ Panel was to offer direction for improving the experience and outcomes of young people from newcomer and minority ethnic families. At a school level it was hoped that this would inform practical approaches and methods for addressing issues affecting such pupils with the intention of easing the process of their integration into the wider community. Hazelwood IC was therefore able to develop a series of inter-linked local activities focusing on respect for diversity and inclusion, in its widest sense, as a means of positively assisting the integration of young people from newcomer and minority ethnic backgrounds.

**INTRODUCTION**

“The (racist) taunts began in earnest... The person who made up the rhyme 'sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me' didn’t know what they were talking about.”

These are the words of an 18 year old minority ethnic student at Hazelwood Integrated College in North Belfast, who has experienced racism during her time in Northern Ireland.
The IEF is an independent financial foundation that was set up in 1992 with the assistance of EU Structural Funds to support the development and growth of integrated schools in Northern Ireland as well as all schools that wish to provide their pupils with the opportunity to celebrate religious and cultural diversity. Through its work the IEF has successfully invested more than £13 million in integrated education and cross-community education initiatives since 1998 working with a range of parent groups, schools and other organizations.

Established in 1987, NICIE is a voluntary body that acts as a central forum and umbrella organisation for integrated schools and groups or individuals that are interested in integrated education. It works with parent groups to start new integrated schools, supports existing integrated schools and helps schools seeking to become integrated through a transformation process. NICIE provides guidance, training and support to schools seeking to strengthen their integrated ethos through professional development and strategies for inclusion and anti-discriminatory/anti-bias practice.

The education system in Northern Ireland remains largely divided along religious and cultural lines with only 5% of schools currently being integrated despite significant parental demand. The first integrated school was started by parents in 1981 catering for children from both Catholic and Protestant backgrounds as well as those from other faiths and none. Today there are 62 integrated schools spread across Northern Ireland, educating over 20,000 pupils. The IEF and NICIE want to help increase the number of integrated school places in response to parental demand.

The IEF and NICIE believe that educating all children together is an essential part of the reconciliation process and of building a society that celebrates, not fears, diversity. The organisations advocate that integrated education can help all children become better citizens of Northern Ireland, the UK, Europe and of the increasingly global world we all now inhabit. Integrated education extends to pupils of all backgrounds, abilities, social strata (approximately 20% of pupils attending integrated schools receive free school meals), religions and cultures. The IEF and NICIE draw their mandate from the growing demand from parents, pupils and schools for inclusive, high-quality integrated education.
Over recent years Northern Ireland has welcomed an increasing number of people from various parts of Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas who have come to Northern Ireland to work and raise their families. The increase in the migrant population has enriched the diversity of our population and our cultural perspectives, and has changed significantly the range of languages spoken in Northern Ireland. In the education world, this has resulted in a significant and steady increase in the number of newcomer and minority ethnic pupils in our schools.

The increase in migration has also brought with it new challenges for Northern Ireland. The country is slowly emerging from 30 years of conflict, a conflict that was characterised by sectarianism and inter-communal violence between Nationalists and Unionists. The danger is that such violence and intolerance to others could spill over to the new migrant population. The challenge is to build a truly shared society in which everyone can live, work and socialise together free from intimidation and prejudice in the context of fairness, equality, rights, respect and responsibility.
According to government reports, 24% of young people in Northern Ireland in 2007 indicated they were worried about being assaulted due to their religion, while 13% were worried that they would be attacked due to their race or skin colour and 10% indicated having experienced name calling or harassment due to their religion.

The latest statistical report from the Police Service of Northern Ireland on Hate Incidents and Crimes shows that during 2009/10 the number of sectarian incidents increased by 245 (an increase of 15.4%) and racist incidents by 48 (an increase of 4.8%) in comparison to 2008/09.

According to a statement by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the educational and employment achievements of children from minority ethnic communities span the whole spectrum of outcomes. However, a higher percentage of minority ethnic pupils (8.2%) leave school with no GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) qualifications, compared to 4.5% of all pupils. In terms of economic activity, people from minority ethnic communities have a slightly lower level than the total Northern Ireland population - 64% compared to 70% overall.

With regard to children of new residents and migrant workers, difficulties faced by pupils whose first language is not English stretch beyond discomfort in the classroom and barriers on accessing the curriculum. It has been reported, for example, that the children of new residents and migrant workers face difficulties in accessing grammar schools in Northern Ireland and that problems with accessing academic selection results in systemic, indirect discrimination in education for this group of young people. Schools may also face difficulties in communicating with parents of children whose first language is not English. This clearly limits parental involvement in the school and their child’s school life. The Equality Commission state that they consider the fact that a young person does not speak English as a first language should not be a barrier to them having the opportunity to reach their full educational potential.

Research undertaken by the National Children’s Bureau (NCB) in 2010 reports the following:

- 9 out of 10 young people who are not from an ethnic minority group said that all or most of their friends are from the same background as them
- 8 in 10 young people in the research got in contact with people from other ethnic origins through other students in their school
- Family and school were identified as the strongest factors influencing young peoples’ views on other ethnic groups
- Around half of all young people believed it was not fair that a lot of jobs were taken by foreign workers
- Around two thirds of young people agreed that sectarian hatred is now being directed towards ethnic minority groups
- 60% of young people agreed that there is a lot to be learned from people of other cultures and backgrounds
- 31% of young people with ethnic minority backgrounds have been personally victims of racist bullying in school
- Nearly 25% of young people with ethnic minority backgrounds have been racially harassed outside school

The conclusion of the NCB research was that schools need to create safe spaces for young people to talk about different ethnic groups; teachers should be given help to learn more about different ethnic groups and deal with racism; and that the media need to give clear messages about minority ethnic groups and migration.
Hazelwood Integrated College
Specialist School: Creativity & Digital Arts

Welcome to our
Diversity & Inclusion
Citizen Panel

Tuesday 22nd June 2010
RECENT GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO COMBAT DISCRIMINATION/ ENHANCE INTEGRATION

The Northern Ireland Executive’s Programme for Government 2008-2011 offers a vision for society in which equality, human rights, mutual trust and respect are core values, and all citizens can realise their full potential and live free from fear and prejudice.

There have been a number of strategy documents and programmes launched by the NI Executive concerning discrimination and integration issues. One of the most recent and relevant is The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005 – 2010, which provides a framework:

- To tackle racial inequalities in Northern Ireland and to open up opportunity for all;
- To eradicate racism and hate crime; and with A Shared Future – Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland
- To initiate actions to promote good race relations.

However, the implementation of this strategy has been delayed pending agreement on a replacement for the Shared Future policy. Following the Hillsborough Agreement in January 2010, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) announced consultation on the policy paper Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI). This document states, “We aim to build a strong community where everyone, regardless of race, colour, religious or political opinion, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation can live, work and socialise in a context of fairness, equality, rights, responsibilities and respect.”

The OFMDFM commits itself to work with the Racial Equality Forum and other stakeholders to “achieve the safety of vulnerable groups”, “tackle the visible manifestations of racism, sectarianism, intolerance and other forms of prejudice” and “achieve a zero tolerance approach to all incidences of, and reasons for, attacks motivated by sectarian, religious, racist and hate prejudice.” and to build a society, “where cultural diversity is embraced and celebrated and to promote pride in who we are and confidence in our different cultural identities.”

CSI recognises the crucial role that needs to be played by the Department of Education in promoting good relations. CSI talks of the need for the Department to develop citizenship education and that “promoting respect for newcomers, Irish Travellers and children from the Roma Community is a particular priority for the Department”. CSI also aims to establish multi-agency partnerships between indigenous and minority ethnic and migrant worker communities to address the specific needs of young people.

In September 2010 another consultation document entitled Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) was published by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland. This document recognises that Northern Ireland is much more diverse than it was when the Department’s original Community Relations Policy was developed 20 years ago. It recognises that the number of newcomer pupils with English as an additional language has risen by some 1,000% and the number of non-white pupils by some 200%.

CRED essentially outlines the importance of embedding community relations as an integral part of education as opposed to an ‘add on’. It talks about the need to provide training support for the education workforce to build capacity and the need for the dissemination of good practice.

These new consultation documents are useful in highlighting the need for such issues to be addressed but are light on detailed actions, budget and resource commitments and timeframes. Indeed the CRED document would suggest a reduction in monetary commitments from the state from a previous average of around £3.5 million to just over £1 million for future years.

With specific reference to education, the Department of Education adopted the policy Every School a Good School: Supporting Newcomer Pupils in April 2009. This policy recognised the year on year rise in the number of newcomer pupils who, because of the language barrier, cannot readily access the curriculum. It also made reference to the increase in the variety of languages that these children have as their first language. As a result, the Department has given priority to developing a policy and putting in place a framework to ensure that newcomers receive the support they need to access the curriculum so that they can fulfil their potential. This policy highlighted the integral role to be played by the recently formed Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS) which represents an amalgamation of previous English as Additional Language/Ethnic Minority Teams from the Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland.

The IDS was established to provide support to schools in catering for the needs of newcomer pupils and parents for whom English is not their first language. The IDS continues to provide school-based support and has developed practical tool kits (with a focus on overcoming language barriers) for primary, post primary and special education.
Hazelwood IC was the second post-primary integrated school to be established in Northern Ireland. It was founded in 1985 by a group of Protestant and Catholic parents from North Belfast. It opened without government funding and was supported through charities such as the Belfast Trust for Integrated Education and the fundraising efforts of parents. The school opened with 17 students and has grown to be over-subscribed, with an enrolment of over 840 pupils.

The college serves an area of North Belfast which has suffered greatly during the conflict, experiencing severe civil disturbance, violence and sectarian murder. Much of North Belfast has Protestant and Catholic communities living in close proximity but separated by high, divisive barriers, known as ‘Peace Walls’. Hazelwood IC is situated in an ‘inter-face area’ with serious social deprivation (33.7% pupils receive free school meals) and sectarian tension.

Hazelwood IC has a keen interest in improving the educational experience of disenfranchised pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. The school has been proactively seeking new ways of integrating their diverse student body (almost 7% from minority ethnic backgrounds, not including those who have been there longer than 2 years) and they exercise a very active inclusion and diversity programme, adopting a whole school approach.

Initiated by the school leadership and facilitated by school teaching and learning support staff, Hazelwood IC students are engaged in a process which aims to deepen their self-understanding and develop mutual understanding and respect for others. The school strives to create an inclusive atmosphere of warmth, care, empathy and respect for all pupils, inspiring them to be citizens, leaders, managers and workers of the future.

The college’s leadership view the increase in newcomer and minority ethnic pupils as an opportunity for the school community to become increasingly diverse. They believe that through this all their students can benefit and their educational experience will be enhanced.
Hazelwood IC has sought to engage in a range of local activities designed to welcome and support newcomer pupils as well as build trust and relationships with the wider school community and beyond. The activities were designed to be as participatory as possible to encourage active engagement as well as a fun and enjoyable learning experience.

1: World Kids

World Kids is a programme which allows newcomer and international pupils to acknowledge and share traditions, customs and experiences with other pupils and the school community. The group also carries out focused projects together within the school. World Kids is divided into a senior and junior programme. The senior group meet each week. A weekend residential has taken place to prepare and plan the year’s activities and ideas for the group. These post 16 students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and traditions and are encouraged and supported by staff and the Youth Leadership faculty to be advocates and sponsors of as many of the different cultures as possible that are part of Hazelwood IC.

During the programme they will film and record their own personal accounts of special events in their calendar, and these will be shown at school assemblies. World Kids will also organise parent evenings where parents will be treated to ethnic foods and song as well as watch the films made by the students.

The programme will also include trips to various places of worship such as mosques and churches. Students will also plan to take a role in the Chinese New Year Festival planned in St Georges Market, Belfast. The Junior World Kids meet twice a term. All newcomer students are encouraged to join the group. They have various team-building exercises with the Youth Leadership faculty, trips outside of school with senior groups as well as mentoring and buddy projects.

On the 22 June, as part of the Citizens’ Panel, World Kids collaborated with a special school in Jordanstown to produce a powerful drama piece on diversity and inclusion. Junior World Kids has also helped produce the Hazelwood Book of Wisdom that was presented to guests at the Citizens’ Panel. The next stage will be to produce and print the Hazelwood Cooks Around The World, a joint project with the school’s healthy eating programme and Home Economics Department and Youth Leadership Faculty, where students will be supplying their own family recipes reflecting the diverse cultures in the college.

The method of activity was chosen as it was deemed participatory and individuals could get actively involved in projects which reflect on the issues as opposed to merely engaging in classroom discussion alone. It is hoped the activities will build teamwork and friendships. It would encourage pupils to consider fun and enjoyable activities such as food/ cooking and cultural celebrations to encourage a positive learning experience and to give everyone an opportunity to consider the richness of such diversity – to provide a memorable experience and not just read about it. The activities would help build confidence in newcomer pupils and allow them the chance to share their experiences and culture with fellow pupils and the wider school community.

2: World Kids’ Conservation Project

Care of the environment and of our immediate surroundings are a universal language for all children regardless of ability, race, colour or language. These issues are a unifying energy that Hazelwood IC wishes to employ to encourage students to mix and socialise, and find a common theme in conservation.

The project has identified several parts of the college grounds as ‘Areas of Interest and Conservation.’ In autumn 2010 a member of Greenmount Agricultural College will be advising the students on the care and maintenance of the various well-established trees and shrubs that surround the college, as well as providing training in how to preserve and conserve the numerous wild flowers and vegetation. The project will also work in partnership with Newtownabbey Borough Council.

This conservation project will help support young people through diverting their energies from any potential negative behaviour and will be used as an incentive to students, a means of working together on a common project alongside other outside groups.
Between 26 and 30 July 2010 the school was able to hold a Multicultural Summer School. Around 24-29 students attended each day from 9.10am to 1.30pm.

Activities were scheduled so that students had equal time with a variety of applied learning activities which included Art and Craft, Circus Skills, Drama, Music, English and Mathematics. The school reported that newcomer pupils appreciated the English and Mathematics sessions the most. This encouraged and supported pupils’ acquisition of language and communications skills.

The Summer School took the theme of the ‘Wizard of Oz’ for set music and drama theatrical production. The school reported enthusiastic participation of newcomer students in the activity. They identified some initial shyness in volunteering for roles but happily engaged in the dressing up. The students had the opportunity to participate in a grand performance for their families, friends and invited guests.

The purpose of the Summer School was to present a safe and caring environment where Hazelwood IC could introduce all participating Year 8 students to the college, some teaching staff and other students with whom they will spend the next 5-6 years. It presented an opportunity to introduce newcomer pupils, parents and carers to the staff who will be there to provide academic and pastoral care.

This method was chosen because it would help students make a successful transition from primary to secondary education, provide early intervention and support for language skills and have the additional benefit of providing students with an alternative to the ‘tension filled’ summer marching season which has huge significance in this particular community.
4: Multicultural Mural

The Senior Student Multicultural Group, working in partnership with a local artist, has inspired and designed a multicultural mural at the entrance to the popular school canteen area. The mural reflects the nature, personality, character and qualities of the environment they live in and incorporates aspects of all the cultures, languages and identities in the school. The mural features the many languages spoken by the pupils and contains the motto 'Facta Non Verba' – actions not words.

This activity was chosen to provide a constant feature in the school that would continually remind the school community of its rich diversity and demonstrate that it is welcoming of all traditions and cultures.

5: Parents’ Language Learning Experience

Hazelwood IC is aware of the need to aid newcomers and their families settling into communities, work and life here in Northern Ireland. The target group for this activity is parents and carers of newcomer students. The Language Learning Experience for parents of newcomer students was set up in response to the need for effective communication between school and home. Whilst the college has access to professional interpretation services, it was clear from experience that there was frustration from parents over the communication barrier.

The college piloted its first language class for parents in April 2009 and decided it would like to be in a position to run one evening class per week for 4-6 weeks. The reasons behind this were:

- The working life of each family. Most parents worked shifts, and found getting to and from classes difficult.
- Almost all the families had young children or babies in the household, so childcare became a problem over an extended period of time.
- By concentrating on essential language (i.e. doctors, dentist, hospital, job application, shopping etc), the parents could use their new language skills almost immediately.
- By running the sessions back-to-back, parents, partners and carers would be able to ‘take turns’ at attending the classes.

Through this project the college plans to commence the Language Learning Experience from autumn 2010.
The Citizens’ Panel was held at Hazelwood IC on the 22 June 2010. It was to create an opportunity to hear the voices of the young people directly and share personal experiences, as well as consider what has worked for them and how to improve things in the future. It provided a forum to outline and shape future activities of Hazelwood IC support for newcomer pupils and demonstrate how they hope this can contribute to ultimately ‘normalising’ the educational experience and help develop its full potential. The Citizens’ Panel was an opportunity to influence and raise awareness within the school community and beyond of how newcomer children can play a positive and enriching role within society and also how they need to be supported.

In determining the most appropriate composition for the Citizens’ Panel, significant individuals/groups were identified within the wider school community who may have a direct impact on the experiences of newcomer and minority ethnic students.

- Parents
- Teachers
- Parents’ Council
- Hazelwood Students’ Council
- Other Hazelwood students
- Youth workers
- Community workers
- Education and Library Board representatives
- Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)
- Local politicians
- Other integrated schools

Influential in forming the final list of invites was a desire to sample views at three levels:

- Student views
- Parent views
- Community views

The following areas of interest were to be considered at the event:

- How to improve the educational careers/ achievement/ success of newcomer and minority ethnic students
- How to identify the various stakeholders and convince them to participate in addressing the needs of the target group
- How to gain and enhance interest and awareness of the need in wider society

The Citizens’ Panel included an opportunity for the attendees to address questions to an ‘External Panel’ comprising:

- A police officer based in North Belfast who was awarded Police Service of Northern Ireland Officer of the Year recently, predominantly for his work with young people on anti sectarianism and anti racism
- A community relations officer from the Belfast City Council who works closely with the PSNI on hate crime incidents
- A community relations officer from the Newtownabbey Borough Council
- The newly appointed Mayor of Newtownabbey who is also a local MLA.
As a means of helping students to feel comfortable and confident with the Citizens’ Panel, and to ensure their maximum participation, the school decided to hold the Citizens’ Panel during normal school hours. Additionally, a decision was made to timetable the event to reflect a school day in terms of breaks and activities. The aim was to keep the participants’ attention by constantly stimulating them.

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) co-ordinator at the school, Andrea Gibson, worked intensively with four students who gave presentations about their personal experiences to ensure they were confident to undertake the task. Andrea took the students through a process of encouraging them to candidly express their thoughts and experiences and gave them permission to be open about the more difficult and challenging aspects of assimilating a new culture and attempting to settle into a new education context. In her own words, Andrea provides detail of the preparation process below:

“Due to the sensitive nature of each of the student stories it was important that they felt sufficiently relaxed to share. I have been on familiar terms with each of the students as long as they have attended the college and this made it easier to contact them and make known what I would be asking of them. Each student was seen individually, at a specific time, and in a designated room. I used my own room, because they are familiar with it and I think they felt immediately relaxed in that they would not be seen by others as doing something out of the ordinary by coming or being there.

We discussed the day and in general terms the issues that would be raised during the course of the event. I asked if they would be willing to take part and then went on to discuss the level of their particular input.

Once I knew that they were willing to take part, we then discussed the possibilities of recording their own personal journey. This was a difficult moment. We would be raising issues and incidents that, for the most part, they wanted to forget. For the older students, it was harder. They did take some time to think about the implications. At this point it is wiser to give space and time to think, so we sat in silence. There was no hurry, and there was no need at this point to say very much (I’m a trained Coach. Silences don’t make me feel nervous or ill at ease. I qualified a number of years ago, so this was an ideal situation for me, I knew that they would come to their own decision without any extra pressure on my part. They needed to know that they could say ‘no’ at any point). They came up with their own boundaries, on what could and couldn’t be said, what incidents could be and could not be talked about, and what language should and should not be used. We came to a few topics that we decided could be negotiated (each student had a different level), and took it from there.

The stories themselves were delivered in an ‘interview’ fashion. I got them to talk about life in general, funny family stories, and events they remembered. No particular order was asked for at that point. Once they felt comfortable enough, it was easier to go to specific incidents that shaped their growing years.

There were a few ‘I’d forgotten all about that’ moments, along with ‘I remember now how angry/happy/confused those made me feel’ times.

On several occasions the use of foul and coarse language had to be discussed. It was only ever reproduced with their permission and consent. It was used by them with the greatest reluctance. As every step the students were in control of the copy and story.”
Personal account 1

My father travelled a lot when I was very young, while my mother and the rest of our family stayed at home in Kenya. I don’t remember him being around a lot; in fact I remember quite distinctly one day, when I was 3 or 4 years old, running to my mum and asking her who the strange man was that had just turned up in our house. It was my dad home from a stay abroad.

A few years later my parents made the decision to leave Kenya and come and live here in Northern Ireland.

My first days in school are a bit of a blur. But I do remember some of the funny questions that the kids asked me. Like “Do you have TV in Kenya?”, “Do you live in a hut in the jungle?”, “Do you ride a donkey?” and “Do you colour yourself in?” I didn’t mind these questions, as they were just young kids like me, but I did think they were a bit stupid. I was, after all, only a young kid.

The first time I heard someone shout ‘Nigger!’ at me I didn’t understand. But I could hear in their voice that it wasn’t good and I was hurt and a bit frightened.

By the time I was in P7 things were a lot worse. I heard the ‘N’ word all the time. They started calling me ‘Monkey Face’ and picked fights with me. One boy even came right up to my face and started shouting at me to go back to my own country, calling me a black bastard and monkey. As I walked away he spat in my face and ran away laughing. It was humiliating. I still get people saying stupid things like that. Adults pull up beside me in their cars and shout the same old stuff throwing things and calling me names. Then drive away before I can do anything about it.

I have a friend who goes to another school and they were in history class. One day they showed a film about the KKK. The boys started making fun of the black people they saw and using the same language as they heard on the screen. They started talking real loud and saying ‘Hang all the Black Bastards’ and ‘I’m going to hang me a nigger’. And other chants the KKK were using. He was getting angry that the teacher wasn’t doing anything about their language.

In the end the teacher came down and asked them to keep their voices down. When he asked the teacher why he didn’t do anything about the boys, he was more or less told to get used to it. My friend left that school.

My mum especially found it hard to settle down here. She missed her friends, family and everything that made up her life in Kenya. It was a stressful time for them. She comes from a very strong Christian cultural background and found it difficult the way Christian people here treated each other and how they talked badly about each other.

Year 13, 17 year old male student
Hazelwood IC

* This account was not read by the author but by a fellow student as the author had to attend a funeral.
My school in Nigeria was very different from my school here. There we all sat in single desks one after the other facing the front. It was very strict. If you got bad marks in an exam you were punished with a cane. If you were caught talking the teacher would make you stand for a very long time with your arms out stretched until they were so heavy, tired and sore you had to let them drop, and that got you into more trouble. We had to buy all our books, pens, pencils, and text books. Every parent had to pay fees to the school, so our parents always reminded us how important it was to do well.

My mum was the first to move away from our home. I really missed her a lot, and our house was a bit sad when she left.

Soon I was able to come and join her in her new house. This new country was so different from mine. At first I lived with friends of my mum’s, most of the time I called them auntie. It was in London and it was hard because I missed my family in Nigeria. It was so cold for a start, even when everyone else was saying it was hot. The food was really different too, and it took me a long time to get used to it.

Then we moved to Northern Ireland. My first days in primary school were OK. I had a friend who went to the same school, so we went together. Then some bigger kids started to make fun of us and called us names like “Nigger”, “Monkey Boy” and said things like “go back to your own country you Black Bastard”. They pushed and shoved, kicked and punched us, made stupid monkey noises and pulled our hair. Telling us to “go back to the jungle where you came from”. Every day they shouted the “Nigger” word at us, it was really bad. That was not a good time for me. I was just a boy like them. It was hard to be different.

Then I went to Hazelwood. I like my school, I like my teachers and I’m working hard at all my subjects. I don’t miss too many things about my other life in Nigeria. I hope to be able to visit sometime soon, maybe next year. One thing I really miss is Christmas times. Christmas at home in Nigeria is so different. We get up very early in the morning and then it’s one long day of parties. We would invite all our neighbours and friends in and laugh, joke, eat and sing all day long. I really miss those times. It was always a very, very happy time.

Maybe one day we will be able to do this here in Northern Ireland, have a big Nigerian Christmas.
I arrived in Northern Ireland when I was 13. We came from Poland because my parents believed that we would have a better life here. My father was a highly trained motor mechanic and my mother a physiotherapist.

At first my mum was very happy that we were all going to be together again and was looking forward to coming to settle down in Northern Ireland. However, it soon became clear that she was not going to be able to get the same job as she had in Poland because her English was not good enough. So, she took a job cleaning offices and began working long hours. My dad had a job as a mechanic and had already made some good friends. Because of the long hours my mum worked and the fact that she was still looking after the family she was not able to get to English classes, that made her feel even more isolated. So I became the spokesperson for the family. Talking to the landlords, doctors, hospitals, and anyone else my parents needed me for. It is hard doing grown up stuff when you are only a kid. It puts a lot of strain on you to always make sure that you get the information right.

My first day at school was very frightening. I came with a friend Zuzanna, our parents knew each other. So it was good to have someone to go to a strange place with. But we were soon separated and I was completely lost.

At first everything was fine in my new school. Then some kids started shouting at us, calling us names like ‘Polish Bastards’, and ‘scumbag’. They threw things at us in the canteen and tripped us up on the way by them. When we did well in class they called us cheaters and picked even more fights with us. They pushed and shoved us in the corridors and started saying stupid things about the Second World War, of all things. They shouted at us that our parents were taking their parents’ jobs, and that all we wanted to do was take benefits and do nothing. If only they knew how hard my parents worked and the long hours they put in just to make a basic living.

The area we lived in was not too bad, but I do know that a boy from our school had to move out of his area because the people there were making his family’s life a misery. They broke the windows in the house, vandalised their car, broke the fences, beat their kids up, threw paint all over the front of the house, threw rubbish through the letter box, and made threats against them. Called them, “fucking Polish Bastards”, and “Take yourself off home, we don't want you here!” That is so not fair, they never harmed anyone, all they wanted to do was settle down and look after their own family. Now he has to travel from the other side of Belfast to get to school.

It still amazes me that when I’m walking down the corridor in school, kids so much younger than me still point me and my friends out and I can hear them saying “that’s the Polish kid”. Sometimes I want to shout in frustration; other times I find it really funny that they know who I am and I have no idea who they are.

All our parents want to do is to work hard to take care of us, their kids, and make a better life for us, they want a better future for us too, a good education and bigger opportunities than they had. They don’t want to do anyone out of a job, but they want to be treated fairly as well.

Hazelwood has been a great experience for me, and I know at times it hasn’t been easy to settle down. But the staff have been really patient and very supportive of our efforts to learn the language and have encouraged us every step of the way on the road to our exams. I have been changed by everything I have been through here and I know that it has made me into a better, stronger, more resilient person than I would have been if I had stayed in Poland. Yes, I am a better person for attending Hazelwood.

I’ve almost finished my GCSEs, and want to come back to school and sit my ‘A’ Levels. After that, I’m going to university to study Business Management and one day I’ll open my own business either here or in Poland.

For the moment I don’t call Northern Ireland home. Poland is where I was born and where I have spent most of my life. All my grandparents, aunts and uncles are still there and I go back as often as I can. I don’t know whether I will ever change my mind about where I want to live, so for the moment I am concentrating on working hard at school to get good grades so that I can follow the rest of my dream.
These personal accounts were delivered with confidence and openness, helping set the tone for the rest of the day. A testament to their huge impact on participants is summed up by the following quote from a participant involved in subsequent group discussions.

"It was quite uncomfortable to hear their accounts and what they have gone through. However, no matter how uncomfortable it is we need to hear it, we need to let others hear it, we can't just say 'no it is too hard' and brush it under the carpet. These are real people, these are real issues and this is really happening."

Those students who presented spoke of feeling passionately about the importance of sharing their experience and being extremely grateful for Hazelwood IC providing a platform for them to do so. They spoke of a feeling of empowerment at having their voices placed centre stage – that for once they were acknowledged as the 'experts' on the experience of being a newcomer or minority ethnic student in a new education context. Their teacher commented “they were all really pleased to be asked to speak and were chuffed that people were interested in them and their story. I think they all got a lot out of the experience.”
Attendees were afforded the opportunity to tour Hazelwood IC to experience and participate in some special activities designed to ease the process of integration:

**Digital Technology ‘See Me’**
Hazelwood IC is a specialist school for digital arts. The digital technology department demonstrated, through participant involvement, how students are encouraged to explore themes such as ‘expression of personal identity’ through producing digital media using Apple Mac technology.

**Art ‘I Am’**
Participants employed some creativity in producing their own uniquely designed artwork which they were asked to decorate in order to express their own cultural background/identity.

**Food Technology ‘Taste Me’**
With the assistance of teachers and some parents, Hazelwood IC students pre-prepared food representing the different cultures which comprise the school community.

**Drama ‘Include me’**
A diverse group of Key Stage 3 (11-14 year old) students from Hazelwood IC joined with pupils from a school in Jordanstown, catering specifically for young people with special educational needs, to produce a mime using masks to represent cultural and ethnic diversity. This mime carried a very powerful message about integration.

**ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) ‘Help Me’**
A designated room (with computers and other resources) is provided for students who require English language support during their first years of coming to the school from non English speaking countries. The teacher explained that newcomer and minority ethnic students with language needs are free to use this facility at any time of the day for self-directed learning and a teacher is also on hand to provide additional guidance and support, if required.
DISCUSSION GROUPS’ VIEWS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants divided into pre-designated facilitated working groups to openly discuss their thoughts on the three areas of interest for the Citizens’ Panel. Group discussions were recorded in summary form and groups were asked to generate two questions for the External Panel. Participants were divided into nine groups, each with approximately 6-10 members. As there were quite a number of students, it was decided to split them into smaller groups. The smaller groups allowed for increased involvement from participants and more effective management from the group facilitators, to ensure everyone’s voice was heard. There were two community groups, one parents’ group and six student groups.

The following is a collation of views organised under three areas of interest.

How to improve the educational careers/ achievement/ success of newcomer and minority ethnic students

There was a clear focus, from all groups, that education and further education are extremely important and students from newcomer and minority ethnic backgrounds expressed clear, confident aspirations for the future. However, a range of young people, from all of the integrated colleges represented, expressed the need for improved opportunities in arts, engineering and mechanics.

Newcomer and minority ethnic students appeared motivated and determined to do well in school. In helping support this, parents and governors suggested that a homework or afterschool support centre would be very useful to help newcomer students’ access additional help with school work. Others believed reducing class sizes and having more one-to-one interactions with teaching staff would benefit their education.

In terms of accessing further education there was a mixed response to this question, with some believing there is limited university choice while others felt there was great university choice but not a strong enough economy to support employment afterwards. Some students remarked that there were few opportunities in Northern Ireland and that you may not get the job you desire or are qualified to do. Another issue raised was the cost of accessing higher education for students not from the UK or EU as fees can be extremely high. Pupils also commented that they would like more support about the world after school, including more work experience, interview practice and guidance on how to find a job. One student from a newcomer/ minority ethnic group expressed concern that she might be discriminated against during the interview process because of her skin colour and/or religion.

Language was recognised by all groups as a potential barrier in preventing people from achieving. All Hazelwood IC students were complimentary about the language support they had received from their school and said it was a huge factor in their development and success. It was also positively noted that Hazelwood IC encourages newcomer students to sit a recognised exam (GCSE) in their home language when they arrive at the school to boost their confidence and introduce them to examination processes in Northern Ireland.

The student groups, parents and community representatives all referred to a lack of recognition of equivalency in qualifications between different countries. This was considered detrimental for parents coming from other cultures and resulted in newcomer families often taking jobs for which they were over-qualified. It was felt that this should be addressed so that qualifications gained in other countries would be given due recognition in the employment arena.

It was also noted how parents play a key role in the success of newcomer students. Parental wishes and understanding and support for educational advancement were considered to be key factors. Newcomer and minority ethnic students proposed a greater involvement of parents in their school life. An example was given of how they could be given some insight, through their child’s school, into careers education/ opportunities to increase awareness levels of opportunities in Northern Ireland.

The parents’ group and the Hazelwood IC group of female newcomer and minority ethnic students gave specific recognition to Hazelwood IC’s ‘Buddy System’ and called for it to be extended further so that a greater number of older students could pass on the value of their experience and support to younger students. It was believed that this would make an incredible difference to the feeling of security experienced by students newly arrived to school.

Description of School Buddy System by the EAL teacher

“The ‘Buddies System’ is not just for our Newcomer Students. Hazelwood IC has a policy of identifying vulnerable students as early as possible and making sure that each of these students has a friend they can identify with. We have Reading Buddies where year 13/14 students are encouraged to develop their own coaching and reading skills with year 8 students. We use the Summer School to locate the newcomer students and use this opportunity to let them team up with someone. However, they usually make a natural choice themselves. We then endeavour to place them in the same form groups, so they spend the maximum amount of time together. If we have someone who arrives later in the year, we ask for a volunteer or discuss the best candidate with the class tutor or year head. In practical terms it is, especially for the first few weeks, someone to get lost with, go to break and lunch with, and someone to help decipher the world they now find themselves swimming in. We know that it is essential that newcomer students feel as comfortable as possible during their first formative weeks.

The students are also given permission in the form of a ‘Time Out’ card that they and their ‘buddy’ can use if the newcomer student starts to feel overwhelmed. The card allows them to come to a designated room (mine really) and take a rest for a period of time. It can be as simple as resting or doing something they like or using the time on the school computers.”

Recommendations

School level:
• Continuation/ extension of the school buddy/ mentor system so that older students can pass on their experience to younger students
• More support from teachers who have training in dealing with diversity
• Continue intensive language support at school
• More preparation for world after school – more work experience, guidance on how to find a job, interview techniques, knowing your rights and support with the job application process
• Involve parents in career education in school
• Homework/ after school support centre – invite parents to attend

National level:
• Create more opportunities within arts, engineering and mechanics
• EU/ International level:
• Transferable qualifications and equivalency given to qualifications gained in other countries
How to identify the various stakeholders and convince them to participate in addressing the needs of the target group

All groups appreciated the need for everyone locally, at community level and nationally, to get involved and address the issue of welcoming newcomers. One group containing community/ residents’ association representatives remarked “in Northern Ireland we should know more than most about the effects and impact of segregation based on cultural background. As a society we need to ask ourselves what we can do to ensure we move forward and not just recreate the past.”

A recurring theme, amongst all groups, was the prevalence of misconceptions about people from other cultures and a lack of education about difference (this was also raised by the Lord Mayor during the subsequent responses to questions put to the External Panel). Students, parents and community representatives all stressed the pressing need for everyone to address these issues. There was no particular sector or element of society considered more responsible for this than any other. However, the important contribution to be made by schools was certainly recognised. Overall, it was felt that schools, police, politicians, community groups, churches, multicultural and culturally specific groups and the media all have a key role to play in challenging stereotyping and prejudice while promoting positive messages about integration and diversity.

In terms of key stakeholders, many believed schools were integral in their ability to offer a unique, safe setting where newcomer and minority ethnic students and their families could learn about Northern Ireland and how to access important services. Moreover, they provide an opportunity for indigenous students to learn about the different cultures of their new classmates. It was indicated that this would play a key part in educating society and contributing to the process of breaking down misunderstanding and mistrust.

Participants saw this Citizens’ Panel as an initial exercise in helping identify key stakeholders and a means of creating a range of connections but stressed that follow up would be essential. Interestingly, the benefits of the Citizens’ Panel were also recognised by Hazelwood IC and the school have already expressed the wish to organise another Citizens’ Panel in the future.

Several participants from students’ groups also commented on the inclusion of other integrated schools and the importance of linking up, sharing best practice and working together.

Students’ and community representatives recognised a lack of engagement from stakeholders in the local communities where newcomer and minority ethnic students and their families reside. This was considered an evident weakness and area for development. Some students were very interested in developing links with local government and exploring youth councils, forums and clubs. There was a general consensus that there was a lack of community facilities for young people in North Belfast. Students were interested in finding out about what opportunities are currently available and the potential for additional youth services or youth led projects designed to meet the integration needs of newcomer and minority ethnic young people.

The group consisting of newcomer and minority ethnic parents and governors also suggested the importance of having translations of essential literature (healthcare, police). There was a suggestion that more general introductory information about how society works in Northern Ireland (customs, important holidays, school starting age and admissions process etc) should be widely available (in the languages of the newly arrived). It was felt that all of this was hugely important in the process of making people feel welcome, comfortable and settled.

Recommendations

School level:
• The Citizens’ Panel exercise was a powerful activity for engaging stakeholders and developing connections. Hazelwood IC is already planning another one in the future.
• The Citizens’ Panel activity should be extended to other integrated schools for purposes of sharing best practice and linking up.
• Local organisations should come into school to speak with newcomer students and their parents, e.g a police officer, a general medical practitioner, someone from the local council etc.

National level:
• Translations of literature (general medical practitioner, hospital, police etc) to be made widely available.
• Provide general information on how society works – school starting age, customs etc. Through translated information in the languages of origin of the newly arrived.
• More engagement from community and youth services – youth clubs/councils engaging with the issues facing young people from newcomer and minority ethnic backgrounds and providing practical activities to encourage greater levels of integration.

EU / International level:
• EU Youth Forum to enable young people to share their thoughts, concerns, issues and affect change at an EU level.
How to gain and enhance interest and awareness of the need in wider society

Numerous comments were made about the positive contribution newcomers make to society and there were a range of suggestions with regard to raising awareness and getting those messages into society.

In terms of the positive impact newcomers can have, several participants remarked that they help us gain a broader, more global perspective. One community representative summed this up “instead of just reading about different cultures you can actually learn about them at first hand. They say the world is increasingly becoming a village and I like that, we are all coming closer together. Instead of just living in our own little bubble we are now making one big bubble!”

To increase interest and awareness of different ways of life and cultural backgrounds, participants made various proposals. These included more celebrations within school and the local community so that newcomers and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds can share their culture and to enable local pupils to learn about it. Pupils focused on the importance of making activities fun and interactive, with one saying “I would rather experience a culture at first-hand than read about it in a book. I want to taste, touch, smell, listen and see it!” Students from Hazelwood IC and the other schools represented suggested it would be great if their school had a multicultural day to give everyone an opportunity to learn about the different cultures represented within their school and the wider community. Also, reference was made to the importance of acknowledgement and celebration of the national holidays, festivals and events related to the countries of origin of young people represented within the school.

Many of the students expressed a desire for more after school clubs (managed by the school) which would address cultural diversity. One participant said “not just sports - I want a club where we can discuss things.” The need to provide opportunities for mixing, which do not rely on fluent English was also expressed. Student participants placed a real focus on art clubs and projects, stressing that “you don’t need good English skills to communicate through art.” There were also some words of warning about establishing after school clubs, however. One member of the student council group spoke of how Hazelwood IC had set up a volleyball club because they were acknowledging that volleyball is a really popular sport in Poland and they wanted to provide opportunities for Polish students. However, instead of improving pupil relations this club was viewed by one participant as potentially divisive because some local pupils felt they were not good enough to play. This participant made the point that “it almost created a minority within a minority.”

A very strong emphasis was placed, by the majority of groups, on the need to counteract negative newspaper and TV coverage about newcomers and minority ethnic students and to put focus and energy into getting positive, good news stories into the local and regional media and promoting positive images of young people. It was felt that schools and community organisations should be proactive and take a lead in this. Media could also be used to raise awareness of the reasons for people coming to live in Northern Ireland and information about their lives back home, in order to educate people about the reasons why people take the brave step of uprooting and moving to another culture.

There was general positivity about the variety of food now available; the different music and dance styles enjoyed; the diverse languages to be heard; and the different lifestyles now explored. However, participants in the student council group also discussed the provision of cultural products within the community, for example food. One pupil mentioned how much she enjoyed experiencing ‘Polish’ and ‘Asian’ shops but for others this was a less positive experience as they felt ‘awkward’ and ‘uncomfortable’. The group wondered if the establishment of ‘separate’ shops was actually hindering integration and making it more of a ‘them and us’ feeling in the community. They felt it would be good for these shops to market themselves as being open and welcoming of all people.
There was also a focus on the need to allocate resources outside school, within the local community, to allow people the opportunity to mix more. Students and community representatives voiced the opinion that local youth workers need to address this issue and programmes need to be developed to engage communities. One community worker acknowledged that the predominant focus in Northern Ireland has been on the issue of challenging sectarianism and that there is an increasing realisation that this needs to expand to include anti-racism. It was suggested that more community programmes would allow people the opportunity to mix together and work on a common purpose.

One participant suggested that one way for Northern Irish people to gain insight into the experience of coming to a new culture without having a highly developed understanding of the local language, could be provided through awareness/training sessions at which participants are welcomed and given instructions in an unknown foreign language. This training technique would encourage empathy as Northern Irish people get a sense of the confusion newcomers experience and have to overcome.

Many suggested that outside groups/agencies/organisations should make visits to the school to teach them about different cultures, for example, The Chinese Welfare Association. Other proposed ideas included the request for more residential weekend activities (organised by the school) to bring people together in a non-school environment, allow them to mix socially and to engage in team building activities and activities concentrating on the exploration of cultural identity. This would help students build relationships and gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity.

Others thought more forums like the Citizens’ Panel should be introduced to provide young people with a real opportunity for their voices to be heard and to be “quite empowering.” The powerful impact of the student presentations delivered in the morning session was discussed with many suggesting more opportunities to showcase personal stories and present positive role models. There was also discussion about bullying and name-calling and the effect it has on pupil self-confidence and pupils’ desire to achieve. One pupil recalled his experience on the school bus when people from his own school taunted him, “they say things like ‘you’re black, look at him he is black.’ They don’t have to tell me, I am black, I know I’m black. I don’t understand and I feel scared and ashamed.” It was noted by newcomer and minority ethnic students that this can and does occur when the youngest students first join Hazelwood IC and discover themselves in a new and diverse school environment. It was commented that the majority of name-calling comes from junior pupils and this is something which should be addressed through giving minority ethnic and newcomer students the opportunity to tell their personal stories. It was suggested that this could happen through junior assemblies or by older minority ethnic and newcomer students being invited into classes where new junior students could ask them questions and increase their knowledge/awareness of diversity within the school.

**Recommendations**

**School level:**
- Engage in a project to counteract racism from junior students as the majority of name-calling comes from those who have recently started school (coming from a range of other primary schools).
- Celebrate cultural festivals/events/holidays (representing the different cultures in the school).
- More residential weekend activities (organised by the school) for team building and integration.
- More/greater variety of after school clubs to encourage integration.
- Showcase positive role models through opportunities to present personal stories.
- Host more forums like the Citizens’ Panel.
- Youth-led projects in school and the wider community.
- Invite culturally-specific organisations into school to raise awareness.

**Community level:**
- More community programmes to consciously provide an opportunity for culturally diverse young people and families to mix with local people.
- A campaign to tackle racist graffiti in the community.
- Awareness/training sessions (run at a community level) to increase knowledge of the different cultures represented within the community.
- Schools and community organisations to be proactive with the media, in presenting positive messages about the cultural diversity within their projects/communities.
- Encouragement for those providing services/products which appear to be culturally specific to be overt in advertising that they are open to everyone and welcome a range of customers.
Three questions were addressed to the External Panel, one was from a member of a Residents’ Association and the remaining two were from students. The following provides a summary of panel member responses:

**Question 1:** Are the statutory agencies aware of and have they effective policies in place for child protection?

The Belfast City Council (BCC) Officer stated that “everyone was on a steep learning curve with regard to these issues.” The council works very closely in partnership with other statutory agencies, particularly the PSNI. They work to ensure that vulnerable groups in the city understand their rights and entitlements. The example of the recent negative experience of the Roma community was highlighted and how a lot of work was being done to work with this group, including engaging with the Romanian government.

The PSNI Officer stated that “there were stringent child protection policies to be adhered to and that these policies were monitored by senior officers.” He confirmed that there were plenty of guidelines available to officers. One of the problems, however, was the under-reporting of hate crime incidents. He stressed that statutory agencies couldn’t do it all on their own and that the support of the community was essential in reporting hate crime. “Wherever possible the PSNI would try and bring offenders through the Criminal Justice System to ensure prosecution and protect the community from such crimes.”

The Newtownabbey Borough Council (NBC) Officer added that procedures and policies were in place. Equality of treatment and opportunity was a major issue for the Council. For example, a lot of work was being done on the issue of European Educational Qualifications to ensure equality is available.

The Newtownabbey Mayor added that work was being done to close legislative loophole and to ensure stronger controls at European level.
The Mayoral Office engaged with young people through frequent school visits and visits to Council offices by young people themselves. They make a point of consulting youth on their ideas for the Borough to encourage active citizenship.

Question 3: How do you help protect us from sectarianism and racism?

The PSNI officer stated that "they need local community support as well as a long term strategy to ultimately succeed." On the one hand, they need to deal with prosecutions but they need the involvement of the young people. They don't want to always be seen as a 'negative' by always 'moving young people along' but wish to also engage positively. They said they recognise none of this is easy.

The BCC spoke of their 'tension monitoring facility' to log and record incidents. The objective was to trace patterns and take action working with the PSNI. It was stressed that name-calling can soon lead to physical attacks. They need to both gather the information and help take action on the ground.

Question 2: What are you doing to get involved in the community and how can you relate to young people (from newcomer and minority ethnic backgrounds)?

The PSNI Officer spoke of "trying to take every opportunity to engage with young people." The example of Limestone United – a cross-community football project with disadvantaged youth from Tiger's Bay and Newington was provided. This team played matches and engaged socially with World United – an ethnically diverse team supported by the Irish Football Association.

The BCC Officer spoke of engaging with youth through the Council’s Awards Project to honour and reward the work of young people. She also mentioned funding for supporting events celebrating diversity and addressing these issues.

The NBC Officer said young people were key and are actively involved in some decision-making within the Council. Youth were involved in redesigning murals in the area, for example.

The Mayor spoke of the need to "keep reaching out and hold events to raise awareness of the issues." She felt ignorance lay at the heart of the problem of racism and sectarianism. "There is a job to be done by everyone in terms of educating ourselves about these issues. There is a need to always look for ways to bring people together."
This project has enabled a range of local activities, including a Citizens’ Panel, to take place at Hazelwood IC focusing on the needs of newcomer and minority ethnic pupils. The project has succeeded in raising awareness of this critical issue in not only the participating school itself but also the wider community and beyond. It has challenged all involved to think more deeply and take action to address the needs of the target group. The project has crucially provided a voice for such a group and enabled their thoughts and ideas to be shared within the school community and wider society. The participation of many stakeholders in the local activities, including the Citizens’ Panel, has helped to strengthen links with the school and has provided the opportunity for other schools to be involved so that they too may adopt some of the strategies and initiatives associated with the project.

The next step will be to further increase awareness and disseminate the results of the project to various stakeholders including other schools, education practitioners, policy makers, politicians and the media. The results will inform action at the school level as it seeks to move forward on its programme of local activities. The college is already considering when to hold another Citizens’ Panel event. We hope the results will encourage others to consider how they too can best address the needs of newcomers and minority ethnic citizens in our society and perhaps adopt some of the activities that have been made possible through this project.

The findings of this project are in line with the outcomes of other recent research, such as that of NCB, demonstrating that schools need to create safe spaces for young people to talk about different ethnic groups; teachers should be given help to learn more about different ethnic groups and deal with racism and that the media need to give clear messages about minority ethnic groups and migration.

The project has affirmed the appropriateness of schools such as Hazelwood IC as suitable institutions for such activities. Schools have been identified as places which can have a strong influence on young people’s views on the target group of newcomer and minority ethnic groups. Integrated schools such as Hazelwood can represent a microcosm of wider society and provide access to a wide range of stakeholders willing to engage in important societal issues. We would encourage the project management team, politicians and the European Union to consider the results of this project and advocate and support similar initiatives so that many more schools, such as Hazelwood IC, can become safe places for the celebration of diversity.

Immigration will continue to be a main feature of European societies. Today, the successful integration of migrant children in European schools and society is both an economic necessity and a pre-condition for democratic stability and for social cohesion. The education (formal and informal) of children, adults and community leaders can play a vital role in this process.

**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCC:</td>
<td>Belfast City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSI:</td>
<td>Cohesion, Sharing and Integration</td>
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<td>CRED:</td>
<td>Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education</td>
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<td>EAL:</td>
<td>English as an Additional Language</td>
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<td>ESOL:</td>
<td>English as a Second or Other Language</td>
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<td>GCSE:</td>
<td>General Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
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<td>ICs:</td>
<td>Integrated College</td>
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<td>IDS:</td>
<td>Inclusion and Diversity Service</td>
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<td>IEF:</td>
<td>Integrated Education Fund</td>
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<td>NBC:</td>
<td>Newtownabbey Borough Council</td>
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<td>NCB:</td>
<td>National Children’s Bureau</td>
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<td>NICIE:</td>
<td>Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education</td>
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<td>OFMDFM:</td>
<td>Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSNI:</td>
<td>Police Service of Northern Ireland</td>
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USEFUL READING


NCB NI and Ark YLT (2010) ‘Attitudes to Difference: Young people’s attitudes to and experiences of contact with people from different minority ethnic and migrant communities in Northern Ireland’. London, NCB


Sponsors/

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