

The Integrated Education Fund

Largely through its thematic work on reconciliation, which began in 1996, Atlantic has supported the growth and development of integrated education in Northern Ireland.

This investment has been directed through the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), an independent charitable foundation, and has totalled almost £8.5m over 18 years. The aim of the IEF has been to increase the number of integrated school places across the province and provide a direct challenge to the segregated nature of NI's state education system.



Impacts and Successes

In 1996 there were **33** integrated schools across NI; in 2014 there were **62**. Atlantic's investment has helped to establish **21 new** integrated primary and **eight new** second-level schools

Student numbers are up from **7,000** pupils in 1996 to **22,000** in 2014, helping to secure more than **£80m** of public funding for **investment for school sites and buildings**

In addition to increased places and public funding for integrated education, IEF-supported projects have had a **positive impact on social attitudes** and **improved community relations**

Independent research by Ark shows **children** attending an integrated school have **more friends** from across the community in NI than any other type of school

Sustainable Practices

To ensure the future viability of the IEF, the organisation has focused on developing across a number of areas. Three main areas of focus include:

Fundraising

The IEF has implemented a major gift fundraising strategy that has helped raise in excess of £25m. Funds have been secured from private individuals as well as other trusts/foundations and will be used to assist forward planning and secure long-term financial viability.

Mainstreaming

Since 2000, the IEF has been involved in supporting cross-community education projects across other sectors. Programme for Government matched funding with Atlantic will help ensure further capital investment for shared education projects over the next 4-5 years.

Litigation

The use of legal redress in support of integrated education is a recent development. The IEF supported a legal challenge by Drumragh Integrated College: the judgment has strengthened the broader definition of integrated education and has already resulted in some positive ministerial decisions.

The IEF has entered into partnerships with other integrated education groups in Israel, Macedonia and Croatia. This has contributed to research among groups sharing good practice and providing moral support to one another in challenging circumstances

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+44 (0)28 9033 0031
info@ief.org.uk