

NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION (NICIE)

APPROVED BUSINESS PLAN - 2024 to 2025

NICIE Strategic Priorities 2022-2025¹

1. Promote Integrated Education

Promote Integrated Education to create measurable change in awareness and understanding, leading to an increase in demand for Integrated schools.

2. Grow Integrated Education

Support the growth and development of Integrated Education to be an accessible option in all geographical areas in Northern Ireland.

3. Support Integrated Education

Support the development of the Integrated Ethos to help governors and leaders to advance sustainable and exemplary Integrated and Transforming schools.

4. NICIE is an effective organisation

Ensure NICIE is an effective organisation in terms of Human Resources, budget management, financial controls, strategic and business planning.

¹ <https://nicie.org/who-we-are/publications/strategic-and-business-plans/>

Learning Together for a Shared Society

NICIE Business Plan 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

All actions below have a target date on 31st March 2025

DE Strategic Priority (from DE Every CHILD, Corporate Plan): *CHAMPIONING the needs and aspirations of all our children and young people and the positive impact of education*

We want our Department and all our education partners to put children and young people at the core of everything we do. By 2028 we aspire to:

- a) Put the interests of children and young people first and provide them with a greater voice in shaping their own future;*
- b) Develop a properly resourced education system that actively seeks to promote the benefits that education brings to our society.*

Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
C1	<p>Children’s Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015 NICIE, in collaboration with DE, EA and other children’s authorities, will work to shape and support educational policies with a view to improving the wellbeing of children and young people as outlined in the Children’s Services Co-operation Act (NI) 2015, and will provide a report to DE when requested.</p>	1.7, 1.10, 2.5, 2.7
C2	<p>Participation of Young People NICIE will begin to plan for and develop mechanisms that could enable better participation of children and young people in one of our key work streams.</p>	

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DE Strategic Priority (from DE Every CHILD, Corporate Plan)- *HELPING all our children and young people by supporting their well-being and learning*

We want to unite families, communities and educators around a shared vision to nurture healthy, confident children and young people, supported to learn and equipped to lead fulfilling lives. By 2028 we aspire to:

- a) Ensure every child and young person with additional or Special Educational Needs (SEN) has their needs identified and assessed as early as possible and receives provision which is timely and appropriate;*
- b) All our children and young people enjoy active lives and healthy minds;*
- c) All children and young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are able to participate fully in education, leading to improved learning outcomes.*

Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
H1	<p>Special Educational Needs</p> <p>NICIE will engage with educational partners and Integrated Education stakeholders to meet the needs of young people with Special Educational Needs including through participation in Area Planning and the end-to-end review of SEN.</p>	3, 3.7

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DE Strategic Priority (from DE Every CHILD, Corporate Plan) - *INSPIRING* all our children and young people to make a positive contribution to society

We want an outward-looking and engaged Department, working in partnership with others, to raise aspirations and develop children and young people to make valuable contributions to society. By 2028 we aspire to:

- a) Encourage more children and young people from different backgrounds to engage together, building societal cohesion and learning to understand, respect and celebrate difference;*
- b) Provide all children and young people with the opportunity, knowledge, skills, experience and support to equip them to make a positive contribution to the economy and society.*

Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
I1	<p>Developing Integrated Education</p> <p>We will take heed of reviews and policy shifts within the educational landscape and work with our educational partners to encourage and promote Integrated Education and support DE in fulfilling its statutory duty to encourage, facilitate and support the development of Integrated Education, positively contributing to the effective implementation of the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022.</p>	<p>2.7, 2.8, 2.9 1, 2 and 3</p>
I2	<p>Communications</p> <p>NICIE will collaborate with educational stakeholders and others (e.g. IEF, our Ambassadors and Supporters) to develop a three-year Communications Strategy (April '24 to March '27) with an annual plan (24/25) in order to improve public understanding (schools, parents and wider community) of Integrated Education.</p>	<p>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7,1.8, 1.11</p>
I3	<p>Growing Integrated Education</p>	<p>1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4</p>

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	NICIE will contribute to an increase in the numbers and percentage of pupils attending sustainable Integrated schools, including the growth of existing schools, new school developments and Transformation of existing schools to Integrated status.	
I4	<p>Irish Medium Education</p> <p>NICIE will support DE in fulfilling its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Irish-medium Education and will provide a report to DE when requested.</p>	
I5	<p>Shared Education</p> <p>NICIE will exercise its power to encourage and facilitate shared education, in line with legislation and DE's Sharing Works Policy, including through the following key actions:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering public messages in support of shared education • Collaborating on multiple projects with EA Shared Education Team <p>and will provide a report to DE when requested.</p>	

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DE Strategic Priority (from DE Every CHILD, Corporate Plan) - Meeting the *LEARNING* needs of our children and young people and developing their knowledge and skills, enabling them to fulfil their potential

We want every child to enjoy a high-quality education and learning experience from Early Years to post primary. By 2028 we aspire to:

- a) *An inclusive curriculum that gives equal emphasis to skills and knowledge and empowers all children and young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives;*
- b) *Develop an Early Years partnership approach – educators, health providers, parents, families and communities working together to ensure all children are supported in their early learning so they are at their appropriate stage of development when they reach school age;*
- c) *Reduce the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people’s learning, and embed improvements in education delivery arising as a result of the pandemic;*

Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
L1	<p>Communities of Practice</p> <p>We will facilitate forums with Principals, Vice-Principals, Teachers, Early Years practitioners and others within Integrated schools through which we can enable sharing of learning and effective practice in relation to issues relevant to Integrated Education within these forums and with other educational stakeholders.</p>	3, 3.6
L2	<p>Ethos development</p> <p>We will support schools to develop their ethos, sustainability, and effective practice by facilitating professional development opportunities for staff, governors and parents in existing Integrated Schools, including supporting schools to achieve the Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA), and in schools exploring becoming Integrated.</p>	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7
L3	Integrated Education Framework	3.5

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Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
	We will continue work on developing a Framework for Integrated Education, in collaboration with EA Sectoral Support, to enable existing Integrated schools to self-evaluate the extent and quality of their Integrated ethos and, for Transforming schools, to assess their readiness for Integrated status. We will work together to trial its use with Transforming schools.	
L4	<p>Researching Integrated Education</p> <p>In collaboration with a range of academic partners and funders, NICIE will contribute to the development and delivery of research that help to inform the practice and ethos development of Integrated Education, including the review of the Statement of Principles.</p>	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 3.4, 3.5

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DE Strategic Priority (from DE Every CHILD, Corporate Plan) - *DELIVERING* an effective, child-first, collaborative and high-quality education system

We want a sustainable education system which is appropriately resourced, works in partnership, invests in its workforce and is committed to excellence and equity. By 2028 we aspire to:

- a) Deliver more modern, sustainable schools and other education settings, which are committed to excellence and equity for every learner;*
- b) Deliver a highly skilled, motivated and high-functioning education workforce, which is provided with adequate support and training to enable it to meet the needs of every learner and stakeholder it serves;*
- c) Deliver an efficient and sustainable education system which works in partnership to meet the needs of children and young people.*

Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
D1	<p>Capital Works NICIE will monitor and support the progress, implementation processes, and completion of Integrated schools' capital works, resulting in improved and safer accommodation which is DE Handbook compliant and contributes to enhanced delivery of the curriculum, subject to Departmental funding for NICIE Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) support role.</p>	1, 2 and 3
D2	<p>Appropriate resources for Integrated Education NICIE will work to secure appropriate DE funding to promote, encourage, facilitate and support Integrated Education and we will work to secure funds from other sources to enable us to effectively deliver appropriate services for Integrated Education development.</p>	1, 2 and 3
D3	<p>Appropriate resources for Education NICIE will advocate with partners across the educational landscape for appropriate funding for the whole education system in Northern Ireland, including advocating for the development of</p>	1, 2 and 3

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Action No.	What we are going to do	Linkage to NICIE Strategic Plan
	collaborative and innovative education provision models which enable more children to be educated together.	
D4	<p>Internal governance</p> <p>NICIE will progress actions within the NICIE Organisation Review Plan, including IT procurement, Hybrid Working, recruitment and retention of staff, communication, staff and Board development and wellbeing. NICIE will ensure effective governance, including the completion of a Partnership Agreement with DE.</p>	4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5
D5	<p>Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC)</p> <p>NICIE will engage with NITC as a member of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC), in respect of teachers' pay (from 2024) and workload issues and contribute to the implementation of the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO) (School Teachers) Act (NI) 2022.</p>	

Reporting mechanism

We will measure our performance in relation to the actions above in a document called a Report Card. The Report Card is framed by and aims to respond effectively to three key considerations, so that our efforts are more keenly focussed on making lives better. These three key Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) considerations are:

How much did we do? – How well did we do it? – Is anyone better off?

We will work to view and report our performance, as far as is possible, through these considerations. The Report Card is under constant review and development. The table below outlines where evidence for our performance in relation to each of the above actions are located within the Report Card structure, and the type of data that we will gather and combine to respond to the three considerations.

Action/ Report Card section ref.	Data that will be gathered and presented	Most relevant OBA Considerations
C		
C1	Examples of collaborative activity across NICIE projects	How much did we do?
C2	Evidence of mechanisms being developed which aim to better enable participation of children and young people within one or more NICIE projects – The evidence will be framed by the question: Are children and young people beginning to be enabled to influence NICIE projects?	Is anyone better off?
H		
H1	Engagement with activity that supports children with special needs. Percentage and numbers of SEN children educated in Integrated schools and comparison to average percentage of SEN children in the system and in other sectors.	How much did we do?
I		
I1	Engagement related to development of Integrated Education and the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022. Area Planning activity.	How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?

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Action/ Report Card section ref.	Data that will be gathered and presented	Most relevant OBA Considerations
I2	Strategic communications activity with stakeholders and impact.	How much did we do? How well did we do it?
I3	<p>Statistical data on growth and sustainability of existing Integrated schools, in percentage and numerical form.</p> <p>Statistical data on growth and sustainability of Transforming Integrated schools (those 'in the system' – ie: post ballot resolution and pre decision).</p> <p>This will include school-level data relating to the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 definition of Integrated Education (ie religious balance, FSM and SEN).</p> <p>Data relating to Development Proposal processes.</p> <p>Ballot data for Transforming schools.</p> <p>NICIE responses to public consultations on Development Proposals and any further consultations agreed with DE in relation to Section 3 of the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022</p>	Is anyone better off?
I4	Report on activity related to encouraging and facilitating Irish Medium Education	How much did we do?
I5	Report on activity related to encouraging and facilitating Shared Education – e.g. PEACEPLUS	How much did we do?
L		
L1	NICIE forums activity – eg Principals, Vice-Principals, teachers, Early Years, SENCO.	How much did we do? How well did we do it?
L2	<p>Activity related to Integrated school ethos development:</p> <p>All school support sessions.</p> <p>All activity related to Excellence in Integrated Education Award.</p> <p>NICIE responses to public consultations on Development Proposals and any further consultations agreed with DE in relation to Section 3 of the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022</p>	How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?
L3	Report on progress of the development of the Integrated Education Framework.	How much did we do?
L4	Report on research projects that we are engaged in.	Is anyone better off?
D		

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Action/ Report Card section ref.	Data that will be gathered and presented	Most relevant OBA Considerations
D1	Report on capital works projects.	Is anyone better off?
D2	Report of activity and progress to secure adequate resource effectively deliver outcomes.	How much did we do? How well did we do it?
D3	Report of advocacy activity to develop new models for education (cross ref to I1).	How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?
D4	Report relating to internal governance activity.	Is anyone better off?
D5	Report on NICIE activity in relation to the TNC.	How much did we do? Is anyone better off?