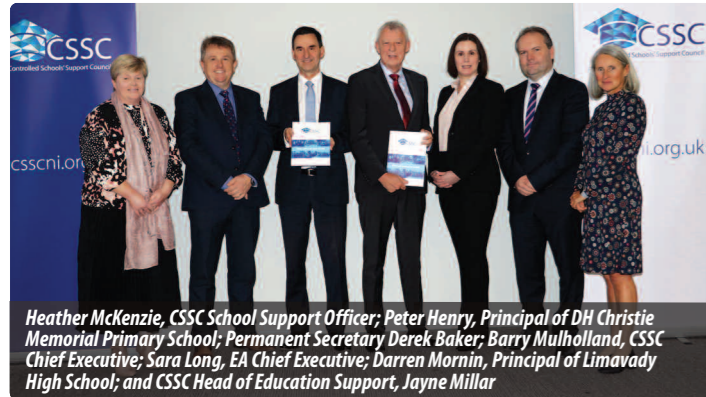


# Ethos self-evaluation toolkit published

Following several years of research, insights and pilot sessions, CSSC has published its ethos self-evaluation toolkit for controlled schools.

Controlled schools across all phases of education live their school ethos on a daily basis, and this toolkit has been developed to encourage schools within the sector to self-evaluate their ethos.

Permanent Secretary Derek Baker spoke at the launch event, highlighting that "By listening to your school representatives and working with the Transferor Representatives' Council and Stranmillis University College, you have established a statement of ethos for controlled schools and the underlying principles that represent them."



Heather McKenzie, CSSC School Support Officer; Peter Henry, Principal of DH Christie Memorial Primary School; Permanent Secretary Derek Baker; Barry Mulholland, CSSC Chief Executive; Sara Long, EA Chief Executive; Darren Mornin, Principal of Limavady High School; and CSSC Head of Education Support, Jayne Millar

Adding that he was pleased to see the ethos self-evaluation toolkit officially launched, he commented that "schools will welcome this development" and that support from CSSC would enable "schools to develop an ethos reflective of the core values of the sector and relevant to their own individual circumstances."

The critical importance of ethos within a school, and the role that CSSC's ethos self-evaluation toolkit can play, was articulated by three controlled school Principals.

Darren Mornin, Limavady High School Principal, was part of the toolkit pilot, and found it beneficial when evaluating the school's ethos. "Each item of the toolkit allowed me to engage with key stakeholders including pupils, parents, outside agencies and the Board of Governors," he said, before adding "their feedback was positive and affirmed the current ethos of the school."

"The ethos of any school is like the wind," said Roz McFeeters, Principal of Hill Croft School. "You can see its effects in everything, but it is hard to grasp, define and measure. The CSSC ethos self-evaluation toolkit is a brilliant resource to help schools on their journey to identify, refine and quantify this continuously moving force."

DH Christie Memorial Primary School Principal Peter Henry commented, "In the midst of so many challenges facing us within education today, CSSC's ethos self-evaluation provides an opportunity to refocus on so much that is good about our schools. Who we are, what we do and why we do it?"

The ethos toolkit is fully customisable for each phase of education and can be downloaded from CSSC's website at

<https://www.csscni.org.uk/schools/ethos-self-evaluation-toolkit> or scan here.



## HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Our team of experienced staff is here to help you. Please don't hesitate to contact us about any issue.

You can also visit our interactive map on our website to find your designated school support officer.

**Controlled Schools' Support Council**  
**Second Floor, Main Building**  
**Stranmillis University College**  
**Stranmillis Road**  
**Belfast**  
**BT9 5DY**

Telephone: **028 9531 3030**  
 Email: [info@csscni.org.uk](mailto:info@csscni.org.uk)  
 Web: [csscni.org.uk](http://csscni.org.uk)



# Best Principal award for Rathcoole Primary School

Congratulations to Emma Quinn, Principal of Rathcoole Primary School and Nursery Unit who was awarded "Best Principal" by Families First NI at its recent ceremony.



Our school has been such a huge part of my life for 20 years," said Emma after the event. "This award reflects the hard work and commitment of the staff, governors, parents and local community, who have supported our community school."

# Lurgan College pupils exploring the world

"With exams behind them, College pupils rounded off a very successful year in the life of the school both inside and outside the classroom with a number of trips around the globe", Trevor Robinson, the College Principal, revealed.

Over the summer, pupils headed off to teach under-privileged children in India as part of the Saphara Project, while others travelled to California to share their experiences of shared education in Lurgan with a global audience.



# Howard Primary School raises awareness of mental health

Howard Primary School, Dungannon, has been working throughout the school year to help pupils develop coping skills to use when situations become difficult.



The school had first joined the wider Dungannon community to raise awareness of mental health through participation in a mental health week in October 2018. This initiative involved sharing the Public Health Agency's 'Take Five' message and celebrating World Mental Health Day.

Mental health will now be a yearly focus in the school calendar.



Abbey community college pupils excelled themselves on both A level and GCSE results days, with the upward trend for results continuing. Mrs Quinn, Principal, said that pupils were "amazing role models for future generations of young people at Abbey Community College."

# SCHOOL SUCCESS

'Phenomenal', 'record breaking' and 'proud' were just some of the words proud Principals used to describe the success of controlled school pupils who received GCSE and A level results in August.

We believe there is nothing more important than education, and would like to thank Principals, teachers, governors, and the wider school workforce, from nursery school onwards, for supporting pupils and offering a varied choice of curriculum despite increasing challenges in the system.

It is also recognised that schools offer a range of activities that contribute to wider employability skills, including self-confidence, leadership, interpersonal skills and time management, as well as educational qualifications.



There were increases in GCSE grades in virtually every subject at Craigavon Senior High School this year. Pupils were supported by a team of "committed and talented teachers", said Principal Ms Harkness, who congratulated the pupils and wished them every success for the future.



Regent House School pupils spoke to Sasha Wylie from Cool FM about their A level results and future plans. "Exceptionally proud" Principal Mr Carville said pupils "were a credit to themselves, their families and to Regent House."



Brilliant Ballyclare High School pupils had plenty to celebrate in August, having done exceptionally well at GCSE and A levels in 2019. Dr Rainey, Principal said, "Our young people are fantastic, they mature into fine young men and women of whom we are very proud; each one a success story."



There was jubilation in Dromore High School with 'best ever' A level results. "The results reflect the high quality, wide-ranging sixth form experience offered here in Dromore High", said Principal Mr McConaghy. Pupils are prepared for both exams and "their future careers," he added.



"Extremely impressive" said Mr McLoughlin, Banbridge Academy Principal, referring to this year's results. "Results were achieved through the talent, industry and commitment of our pupils, supported and encouraged by parents, who can feel justifiably proud of these accomplishments," he added.



Mrs Lendrum, Principal of Antrim Grammar School was absolutely delighted that pupils achieved outstanding A level and GCSE results. She paid tribute to "pupils, staff and school governors for all of their commitment, dedication and hard work."



Vice Principals Ms Gibb and Mr Richardson of Portadown College extended sincere gratitude to the College's dedicated teaching and support staff, alongside the unstinting encouragement provided by parents and carers, for contributing to such successful A level and GCSE outcomes in 2019.



Lisneal college pupils enjoyed great A level results. Principal Mr Allen said, "I am very proud of our pupils, staff and parents and wish to thank them for all their support." Pupils are now accessing a range of further and higher education pathways and employment.



A delighted Mr Mornin, Limavady High School Principal, paid tribute to pupils, their families and staff as the school's 'best ever' GCSE results were received. He commented that this outcome was due to the school's "long established reputation of providing a high quality educational experience for all young people in a supportive and caring environment."



Limavady Grammar School pupils achieved a 100% A level pass rate. "Limavady Grammar is a school where pupils are challenged to achieve their best and where excellence is strived for and achieved, said Principal Mrs Madden. "We are very proud of you all."



Lurgan College Principal Mr Robinson was "absolutely thrilled" with this year's outstanding A level results. Pupils have done their school, their families and themselves proud, and are now embarking on the next exciting stage of their educational journey.



### Antrim Grammar School

Antrim Grammar, St Benedict's College and Parkhill Integrated College have developed a unified learning for life and work programme for Key Stage 3 pupils and have implemented a number of joint projects, such as a joint student council.



### Arvalee Special School and Resource Centre

Partnership working is central to practice in Arvalee School. Pupils at each phase engage in shared education. The completion of the Strule site will enable shared education to develop further.



### Castle Tower School

Castle Tower School partners at nursery school with Ballymena Nursery School and First Steps Nursery, focusing on the medium of music. The primary project with Clough Primary School explores shared play, ICT and PE.



### Devenish College

Devenish College and St Joseph's College have engaged in The Dutch Exchange Programme for over 15 years. More recently the college partnered with St Franchea's, and in 2018/19 all three schools began working on an art and music project.



### Edenderry Nursery School

Located in one of Northern Ireland's most divided interface areas, Edenderry Nursery and Holy Cross Nursery began working together over 20 years ago. Shared education is embedded in the schools' work and incorporates family and parent work.



# FOCUS ON SHARED EDUCATION

Shared education encourages and supports pupils from different backgrounds and sectors to engage with one another.

## Key facts:

- Around 79,000 pupils are involved in shared education through the Shared Education Signature Project and Peace IV funds (DENI, 2019)
- Almost two-thirds of schools were involved in shared education partnerships in 2017/18 (DENI, 2019).

## Key milestones:



In the 1980s, changes to the curriculum and cross-community contact initiatives were introduced.



Over the next three decades a number of policy developments and reviews underpinned the development of shared education. In 2013 a Ministerial Advisory Group was set up.



A number of funding streams were developed including 'Together: Building a United Community' (T:BUC) (2013), £25 million through the Shared Education Signature Project (2014) and £35.29 million through Peace IV.



In 2015 "Sharing Works – A Policy for Shared Education" set out the actions and interventions that underpin the development of shared education.



The Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 placed a duty on DE and the EA to encourage, facilitate and promote shared education. The Act also provides a power to relevant arms length bodies to encourage and facilitate shared education.

## Learning from each other – sharing in education

CSSC's recent 'Learning from each other – sharing in education' report discussed shared education with ten controlled school Principals from across Northern Ireland. The report provides a snapshot of shared education practice across the controlled sector and the partnerships that exist.



### Fair Hill Primary School and Nursery Unit

Fair Hill Primary School, Dromore, and St Colman's Primary School began working together in 2014. Shared education spans from nursery through to P7. A P3 project, in conjunction with the Amma Centre, has become a model of good practice.



### Garvagh Primary School

Garvagh Primary partners with St Patrick's and St John's Primary School, incorporating curricular activities and shared learning. The schools have introduced 'buddying up' for younger children and small groups for older year groups.



### Kilkeel High School

Kilkeel High School offers shared A Level classes in partnership with St Louis Grammar School. The project covers eight shared subject areas. The working relationship between the schools has led to sharing in many other areas.



### Knocknagoney Primary School

Knocknagoney Primary School and St Patrick's Primary began their partnership in 2018. The project is curriculum based, focusing on ICT, technology and coding, areas of priority identified in both schools' development plans.



### Moy Regional Primary School

For over 25 years Moy Regional Primary and St John's Primary have collaborated on a series of shared education projects. Plans are in motion to develop a shared campus through the T:BUC shared education campuses programme.

Read our reports and view videos about shared education on our website at the link below  
<https://www.csscni.org.uk/publications/learning-from-each-other-sharing-in-education> or scan here.





# CSSC celebrates three year anniversary

CSSC celebrated its third anniversary on 1 September 2016. Chief Executive Barry Mulholland reflects on how far the organisation has come.

From quite literally empty offices and no staff, the team now comprises 19 experienced officers working on behalf of Northern Ireland's 557 controlled schools.

Constructive working relationships have been built through continuous engagement with Principals and Governors, and we are delighted that 95% of controlled schools are registered with us. Principals have told us that the ongoing financial pressure facing schools is having a knock on impact on mental health and wellbeing throughout the school; stress is increasing. We will continue to support school leaders in these challenging times.

Collaboration with our educational partners is key, and we have engaged with DE, EA, NICIE, CCMS, CnaG and ETI, plus the Transferor Representatives' Council, trade unions, the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People and others.



We also appreciate the support we have had from all political parties, and we will continue to work with policy makers to ensure that education is given the priority it deserves across government departments.

CSSC officers lend their expertise to a range of strategic and working groups, including those for area planning, Ulster University's Taking Boys Seriously project and THRiVE (a Rathcoole and Monkstown partnership).

I'm also delighted that we have twice secured Erasmus+ funding and grants from the Department for Communities for a primary school sign language programme. Do check out our website for latest funding opportunities for schools.

And so to the future for CSSC. We appreciate the continued grant funding from the Department of Education that enables us to deliver our comprehensive programme of work to the benefit of controlled schools. You will see from the rest of this newsletter some of the work we have been involved in, and the infographic shows our work in numbers.

The need for CSSC to act as a voice on behalf of the controlled sector is clear, and we will continue to listen to and represent Northern Ireland's largest and most diverse education sector at every opportunity.

## International maths conference multiplies knowledge

University College London discussed how technology can support the teaching and learning of problem solving, given that problem solving is a key skill sought by employers.

Teaching problem solving in technology rich environments was the focus of an international maths conference that took place in Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College in August.

Leading academic Dr Alison Clark-Wilson of

Hosted by CSSC, the conference was the final event of a two-year 140,000 euro Erasmus+ strategic partnership that involved partners from Scotland, Republic of Ireland, Denmark and Finland, as well as local controlled schools Kilcooley Primary School and Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College.



Raymond Caldwell, ETI Assistant Chief Inspector, Jayne Millar, CSSC Head of Education Support, Keynote speaker Dr Alison Clark-Wilson and CSSC School Support Officer Jill Brown.

## Two new appointments to education team

CSSC has welcomed two new permanent full time staff to the education support team.

Andrew Brown and Derek Harkness join the organisation in their new roles as School Support Officers (SSOs) to work alongside colleagues Jill Brown, Heather McKenzie and Tracey Woods to complete the education team, led by Jayne Millar, Head of Education Support.

The increase from four SSOs to five is the result of Council's decision to augment the school support model from within existing resources. This has given CSSC the opportunity to reorganise the deployment of officers to support individual schools and enhance efficiencies within the CSSC support model.

These new appointments have resulted in a change to the named SSO for some schools which has been communicated to all registered controlled schools. The new appointments further enhance the extensive range of knowledge, skills and experience within the CSSC staff team.

Within the CSSC programme of work, each SSO also takes the lead in an area of responsibility as follows:

- ethos and governance, shared education – Heather McKenzie
- raising standards, leading learning – Jill Brown
- raising standards, leading ethos – Andrew Brown (post primary)
- raising standards, leading ethos – Derek Harkness (primary)
- nursery sector, special sector and area planning – Tracey Woods

You can read more about our SSOs on the staff page on our website.



CSSC education team - (L-R) Tracey Woods, Derek Harkness, Jayne Millar, Andrew Brown, Heather McKenzie and Jill Brown

### CSSC year to date in numbers

Since April 2019...



## Making aspiration a reality

CSSC's corporate plan was published in October, laying out the role and work of the organisation over the next three years.

The work has been led by Shane McCurdy, CSSC's Head of Corporate Services, who said, "CSSC's work falls within six key functions, and the corporate plan elaborates on what this means for schools in terms of what they can expect from CSSC. It highlights the foundations that will ensure the successful achievement of our objectives."

It is available to download from CSSC's website.



Jayne Millar, CSSC Head of Education Support, Robin Harper, Associate, John Unsworth, Assistant Director School Development at EA, Shane McCurdy, CSSC Head of Corporate Services and Barry Mulholland, CSSC Chief Executive.

## Engaging with governors

CSSC would like to thank the 103 Boards of Governors who invited representatives of the organisation to meet with them. Recommendations arising from the meetings are being used to inform our work.

The report is available to download from CSSC's website.





## Second sign language programme underway



CSSC is pleased to announce it has secured funding from the Department for Communities' Sign Language Partnership Group to deliver its programme of sign language workshops for the second year running.

Expressions of interest have been invited from controlled primary schools who are educating children with severe or profound hearing loss to participate.

The workshops will raise awareness of the needs of the deaf community and teach basic sign language skills.



Pupils from King's Park Primary and Nursery School participated in CSSC's first sign language programme

## Parents have their say at Parentkind's Parliament

Representatives from CSSC attended the recent Parentkind Northern Ireland Parents' Parliament events.

Heather McKenzie, School Support Officer for CSSC commented, "Schools work in partnership with parents, and the Parents' Parliaments were invaluable opportunities to hear directly from parents their views on Northern Ireland's education system."



Pictured at the Parents' Parliament on Tuesday 17 September are (left to right) Jayne Thompson of Parentkind, Liam Dempsey of CCEA, Donna Hyland of QUB, Roisin McCreech of EA, Heather McKenzie of CSSC, Jill Brown of CSSC, Dale Heaney of DE, and Janis Scallon of DE.

## CSSC upcoming events

Please visit our website at <https://www.csscni.org.uk/events/upcoming-events> for details of our upcoming events. All event invitations and booking forms are emailed to either the Principal or [info@](mailto:info@) email address for a school.

All events are organised based on feedback from school leaders, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if there is something you would like us to consider.

## €60,000 awarded from Erasmus+

CSSC has secured €60,000 from the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. Ten controlled schools are involved in the programme.

The funding will enable CSSC to take senior leaders (pictured) to Finland and Estonia to observe and investigate school improvement practices. This visit is an integral part of the CSSC building capacity programme where senior leaders seek to embed evidence-based practice, conduct rigorous self-evaluation and promote school improvement.

