Queen's University Belfast

The Centre for Effective Education

SCHOOL OF Education

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH EVIDENCE.

Education For Transformation

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the 'prison to peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners' educational programme

Lesley Emerson
Karen Orr
Paul Connolly

Centre for Effective Education
School of Education
Queen's University Belfast

We are exceptional

An Agency within the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the 'prison to peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners' educational programme

Lesley Emerson, Karen Orr and Paul Connolly
Centre for Effective Education, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast

September 2014

Additional Contributors

The research team would like to acknowledge the contribution from the young people in the Young People's Advisory Group who worked alongside the adult researchers as co-researchers throughout the project. We would also like to thank Dr. Katrina Lloyd for initial advice on relevant measures at the outset of the project.

How to Cite this Report

Any citation of this report should use the following reference:

Emerson, L., Orr, K. and Connolly, P. (2014) *Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the 'Prison to Peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners' educational programme. Belfast: Centre for Effective Education, Queen's University Belfast*.

School of Education, Queen's University Belfast, 69-71 University Street, Belfast BT7 1HL, Northern Ireland
Ph: +44 (0)28 9097 5051| Fax: +44 (0)28 9097 5066| Email: cee@qub.ac.uk| Web: www.qub.ac.uk

Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

- This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the 'From Prison to Peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners' educational programme conducted by the Centre for Effective Education, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast. The eighteen month research project was funded by the Office of the First and deputy First Minister, Northern Ireland.

- 'From Prison to Peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners' (hereafter, 'Prison to Peace') is an educational programme developed as part of a wider initiative, the Prison to Peace Partnership. This initiative is administered by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI) and part financed by the European Union's (EU) European Regional Development Fund through the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (Peace III), managed by the Special EU Programmes body. It combines the political ex-prisoner support groups from loyalist (UVF and UDA) and republican (IRA, INLA and Official IRA) constituencies. The Citizenship Working Group within this initiative was established to explore ways in which political ex-prisoners could use their narratives to engage with young people in order to de-mythologize the conflict and the prison experience and to encourage them to make a positive contribution to their communities. As a result, members of the Citizenship Working Group developed the school-based educational programme, targeted for use primarily as part of the Key Stage Four (age 14-16) curriculum for citizenship education.

- The overall aims of the 'Prison to Peace' programme are to: prevent young people from becoming involved in and/or returning to violence through presenting the realities of the conflict and the prison experience from the point of view of those directly involved in the conflict; demonstrate to young people alternative ways of dealing with conflict which do not necessarily require individuals to give up their political aspirations or cultural identity; present young people with alternative 'bottom-up' perspectives on the conflict through a comprehensive and complex picture of the political ex-prisoner experience; and provide young people with an opportunity to engage directly with those who were involved in the conflict in panel discussions with ex-prisoners.

Methods

- The study involved a cluster randomised controlled trial to measure the effects of the programme on young people's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. The trial involved 864 young people (with 497 young people matched across pre- and post- test) aged 14-17 years, from 14 post-primary school settings across Northern Ireland.

- The programme's impact on young people was evaluated in relation to the following outcomes: increased awareness of the complexity of conflict in Northern Ireland; increased knowledge of

the conflict, processes of transition and conflict transformation; reduction in sectarian prejudice (exploratory only); increase in respect for political diversity and, more specifically, acceptance that other political positions/opinions are legitimate; reduction in intention to use/support the use of violence to deal with divisions and conflict; increase in intention to be politically engaged.

- Alongside the analysis of the main effects, a series of exploratory analyses were also undertaken to assess whether the programme was having differential effects for different subgroups of young people. Specifically the exploratory analysis considered: the young person's gender, religion, political identity, Free School Meal Entitlement, and Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure for their home post code.

- The study also involved in depth qualitative studies of the programme's implementation in a range of settings (including intervention schools, a youth sector context, and a school experienced in delivering the programme over a number of years). This involved lesson observations, focus groups with participating young people, interviews with teachers delivering the programme, interviews with school leaders and one parent focus group.

- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine educational stakeholders, drawn from the Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment, Department of Education, Education and Library Boards, a victims' organization and non-governmental organizations implementing programmes in schools relating to the conflict and its legacy. The primary purpose of these interviews were to ascertain how the 'Prison to Peace' programme addressed curriculum and policy imperatives and how it could best be coordinated with other educational initiatives.

- The study included a group of young people in a Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG), who worked as co-researchers with the adult research team throughout the project. The remit of the YPAG was to contribute to the research design and to assist in the analysis and interpretation of findings.

Findings

Programme effects

- There is clear evidence of the positive effects of Prison to Peace on young peoples' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. The main analysis demonstrates that there is a statistically significant difference between the intervention and control groups (controlling for any pre-test differences) across several of the outcomes (with sizeable effects ranging from .17-.42). The intervention group, compared to the control group: knew more about the conflict, processes of transitional and conflict transformation; demonstrated more support for using non-violent means to deal with conflict; and demonstrated less blatant and subtle prejudice. Additionally, the programme has increased young people's likeliness to be engaged politically, as measured by several indicators: talking to others more about politics; showing more interest in participating in school related activities; seeking more information related to politics (via newspapers, the internet etc.). No significant differences were found between the intervention and control groups across the measures for participation in politics and respect for political differences.

- Young people who participated in the programme developed a more nuanced understanding of the conflict. Following the programme, participants were more likely to locate the 'Troubles' within socio-political historical contexts and were less likely to simply blame the 'other side' for its origin.

- The programme has potential to maintain trust in social, civic and political institutions and to encourage young people's optimism in relation to permanent peace.

- Exploratory analyses revealed no consistent pattern of differences in terms of gender, religion, deprivation, or political background. The programme therefore works equally well for all groups of young people.

Programme implementation

- Successful implementation of the programme relies on teachers being committed to, and confident in, delivering the material and pupils being engaged through active and participatory approaches in the classroom. Panel discussions with political ex-prisoners are successful when pupils were well prepared, chairing was efficient and reflective, and when political ex-prisoners remained focused on age-appropriate, concise answers.

Young people's perspectives

- Pupil responses to the 'Prison to Peace' programme indicate that young people are ready to learn about issues relating to the past and its legacy and see value in doing so. In particular young people enjoyed the programme and engaging with the narratives of the ex-prisoners, valuing these first-hand accounts which they saw as grounded in reality. Aspects of the programme enjoyed most included learning about the prison experience and asking the ex-prisoners questions during the panel discussion.

- Young people also indicate that the programme increases their knowledge and awareness of the reality and complexity of the conflict, in particular its impact and its legacy. Addressing the conflict helped the young people to make sense of their current socio-political context. They also suggest that the programme challenged some of their previous stereotypical views of ex-prisoners and also of the 'other' community. They indicate further that it provided them with opportunities to explore a range of perspectives and has assisted them in forming their own views.

- Overall, it appears that the programme provides a broad framework of perspectives in which the young people could locate, and understand, the perspectives they encountered in their own communities. Crucial to this however is that the young people trusted their teachers to present balanced views.

- Young people are acutely aware of the sensitivities surrounding the programme, particularly in relation to the impact it might have on people who had lost family members and in relation to

the potential tension it might create between views at home and views they were being exposed to in school. Further, they are aware of the emotional impact of dealing with sensitive issues.

School leader, teacher and parent perspectives

- Adult stakeholders in intervention schools recognize the educational benefits of engaging with 'Prison to Peace'. They see the programme as providing opportunities to challenge myths and help young people make sense of their socio-political context, which in turn assist them in developing their own perspectives.

- The schools involved in this study were clearly 'ready' to engage with controversial and sensitive issues related to the conflict. Features of this readiness include: a school ethos focused (both in policy and practice) on the holistic development of the child and on the preparation of young people to live and work in a diverse society; knowledge of and sensitivity to the perspectives of parents and of the community schools serve; leadership trust in the teachers delivering the programme; teacher confidence to deliver the programme in the knowledge that they were supported by the school; awareness of the sensitivities surrounding this type of programme, in particular in relation to parental responses and the readiness of pupils to deal with issues raised; commitment to a whole school approach which ensures that all staff are aware of the programme's aims and objectives.

- The parents interviewed, though to a certain extent apprehensive initially about the programme, were supportive of their school engaging with the programme and associated issues. They recognize the value of their children learning about their socio-historical context from engaging with ex-prisoners and trusted their school to do this sensitively. Further, they reported that the programme had encouraged dialogue between them and their children about the 'Troubles' and the current nature of Northern Irish society and they were also able to point towards key aspects of their children's learning that had been enhanced through engagement with the programme in class.

Developing and adapting the programme

- The programme can be adapted to non-formal settings. However, if the programme is to be delivered in a cross-community or cross-border context additional time needs to be given to ensuring the young people involved get to know one another and build relationships. Also, in youth sector settings there is a need for additional material that is not dependent on high levels of literacy, such as more audio-visual material. Non-formal settings also provide an opportunity for young people to engage with the programme in communities where schools are not ready to address issues relating to the conflict and its legacy. This indicates that a coordinated, joint-up approach is required at a community level to ascertain where best to deliver the programme and to support its delivery in youth sector contexts.

- There is value in developing the programme to incorporate a range of voices and perspectives. This requires careful co-ordination of parties willing to share their stories together. It is also

important that schools build relationships with the political ex-prisoners involved in the programme in order to ensure that they are confident in its delivery.

Educational stakeholder perspectives

- Educational stakeholders see a strong connection between the 'Prison to Peace' programme and both the history and citizenship curricula. While they suggest that the Key Stage 3 curriculum provided more scope for delivering the programme, Key Stage 4 or possibly post- 16 is seen to be more age-appropriate in terms of the content covered.

- All the educational stakeholders agree that regardless of where programmes such as 'Prison to Peace' are located in the curriculum, there is need for specific teacher training on dealing with the conflict, its legacy and associated controversies in the classroom.

- Educational stakeholders agree that there is a need for a coordinated approach to addressing the past in the curriculum, to ensure that the range of educational initiatives dealing with related issues can work together to maximise impact. Some favoured a centralised co-ordination; others suggested that co-ordination was primarily an issue for the principal of a school to consider in relation to engagement with external programmes. All interviewees agree however that the Department of Education's 'Community Relation Equality and Diversity' (CRED) policy provided the most appropriate framework in which to locate this type of curriculum initiative.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Young people are not only *interested* in learning about the past, but are *ready* to engage with its controversies. Moreover, they value how addressing the past through educational programmes assists them in making sense of their current socio-political context.

- While there are many ways in which the 'Troubles' and its legacy could be addressed in the curriculum 'Prison to Peace' provides young people with a unique perspective on conflict, its impact and on the processes of conflict transformation. In doing so it has a significant positive impact on their knowledge of the complexity of conflict, attitudes towards those from the 'other' community, and on their intended behaviours in relation to support for violence and intention to be politically engaged.

- The 'Prison to Peace' programme's *strengths* lie in the way in which skilled teachers present and engage with the personal narratives of political ex-prisoners, and in doing so offer multiple perspectives on the nature and impact of the conflict. This in turn assists young people in developing their own perspectives, challenging pre-conceived ideas and partial narratives of the 'Troubles'. This is particularly effective when young people engage directly with ex-prisoners through the panel discussions. Its *weaknesses* lie in the text rich resources, which can be challenging for those with literacy problems, and in aspects of the panel discussions which are not sufficiently well chaired and/or when answers from ex-prisoners are over-long.

- The 'Prison to Peace' programme's *challenges* lie in ensuring that teachers feel equipped to deal with its sensitivities and that schools and other institutions commit sufficient time to its delivery. Its *opportunities* lie in its adaptability to a range of contexts and in its potential incorporation with other similar initiatives to present a full and comprehensive overview of the conflict and its legacy to young people.

- In relation to the 'Prison to Peace' programme's future development, by the Prison to Peace Partnership, consideration should be given to: providing more visual and audio-visual stimulus materials to augment the text rich resources; providing additional support materials on conflict transformation, transitional process and community development to ensure teachers maximize the potential of this aspect of the programme; providing guidelines for effective chairing of panels for teachers and additional advice to political ex-prisoners on how to ensure all answers are age appropriate and accessible; disseminating the outcomes of this evaluation to support political ex-prisoners in the process of transformational change, in particular their efforts towards moving into more mainstream conflict transformation activity and peace building work.

- In relation to schools implementing the programme, good practice suggests that the programme will be most successful when schools ensure that: the programme is located within a whole-school approach to dealing with the conflict and its legacy; all staff are briefed fully on the its aims and objectives; parents/guardians are fully aware of the nature of the programme and reassured of its educational value; sufficient curriculum time is given to its implementation; teachers are provided with support and opportunities to attend (and disseminate) training; careful consideration is given in relation to the best 'curriculum home' for the programme that takes in to account pupil maturity as well as available curriculum space.

- In relation to the contribution of 'Prison to Peace' to policy priorities, consideration should be given to ensuring that: support is provided for capacity building of former prisoners to continue to develop their involvement in conflict transformation work with young people and the mainstreaming of their organisations' peacebuilding work; anti-sectarianism modules for young people (to be developed as part of the 'Together Building a United Community' strategy) not only address issues of diversity within society but also attend to the past conflict, its impact and legacy; 'Prison to Peace' is considered as an exemplar of such modules; schools are encouraged to work through the CRED policy and CRED enhancement scheme to seek resources to support the delivery of the 'Prison to Peace' programme either in single identity or in shared/cross-community contexts; existing training for teachers (in pre-service and in continual professional development) addresses not only the teaching of controversial issues in general, but also provides teachers with specific practical support in addressing the controversies associated with the conflict and processes of transition; programmes are developed to encourage inter-generational understanding of the conflict and its legacy; structured support mechanisms, such as a dedicated educational support officer and resource 'hub', are provided to assist schools in selecting from and coordinating the range of available initiatives which seek to address the conflict and its legacy; such coordination needs to ensure joint up approaches within and between schools and between the formal education and youth sector.

Acknowledgements

The research team would like to thank the following people who graciously gave their expertise and time to ensure that this research was comprehensive, high quality and engaging for all participants:

- The young people who participated in the 'Prison to Peace' programme;
- The schools, teachers and facilitators who delivered the 'Prison to Peace' programme;
- The loyalist and republican ex-prisoners who shared their stories and engaged openly and honestly with young people in participating schools;
- The young people who completed the survey in both the intervention and control groups;
- The schools and teachers who facilitated the administration of the survey;
- The young people who participated in the focus groups, who gave of their time to share their experience and views with us;
- The adult stakeholders who provided detailed insight into ways in which schools can engage young people in exploring the past and its legacy;
- The young people who were part of the Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG), who provided valuable input into the design of research instruments and in the interpretation of data;
- The school and teachers who supported the work of the YPAG;
- The members of the Adult Advisory Group for their wisdom and guidance;
- The steering group for the project from within the Office of the First and deputy First Minister who provided guidance and support throughout – with particular thanks to Matthew McFarland.

Members of the Adult Advisory Group

Martin McKevitt/ Roderick Dunbar	An Eochair
Clare McAuley	Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment
Danny Murphy	Coiste na n-Iarchimí
Bernadette Smith/Ciaran Debaroid	Community Foundation for Northern Ireland
Kate Turner	Director, Healing Through Remembering
Cheryl Stafford	Education and Training Inspectorate
Robin Frampton	EPIC, Belfast
Sean Pettis	Facing History, Corrymeela
Michael Arlow	Former Director, Spirit of Enniskillen Trust
Sir. Bruce Robinson	Former Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service
Rev. Harold Good	Former President Methodist Church in Ireland
Colin Halliday	Lisburn Prisoner Support Group
Karen Sims	NASUWT
Gerry Foster	Teach na Fáilte
Gary Knox	Teacher, Regent House Grammar School
Ann McCann	Vice Principal, St Patrick's College, Belfast
Alan McBride	WAVE Trauma Centre
Anne-Marie Poynor	Western Education and Library Board

The research team would like to also thank Cormac McAleer, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, who retired from the organisation before the research was completed. Special recognition is also given to the late Margaret McTeggart, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, for her commitment to this project, both in the development of the programme and its evaluation, who sadly passed away before the research was completed.

The team would like to dedicate this report to the memory of Karen Sims who sadly passed away in September 2014. Karen was passionate about ensuring that young people engaged with the past and its legacy so they could contribute effectively to their communities in shaping the future. Her insight and wisdom added much to this research study.

Glossary

randomised controlled trial (RCT)	a specific type of scientific experiment used to test the effectiveness of an intervention, where participants are allocated randomly to the intervention group(s) or control group
cluster randomised controlled trial (CRCT)	participants are randomised in groups or clusters - in the case of this trial, the 'cluster' was a school
intervention group	the group that received the intervention programme ('Prison to Peace')
control group	the group that did *not* receive the intervention programme ('Prison to Peace')
pre-test	a test/measure (e.g. questionnaire) administered to all participants in a study *prior* to an intervention, which provides a baseline measure of the outcomes identified as being associated with the intervention
post-test	a test/measure (e.g. questionnaire) administered to all participants in a study *after* the intervention takes place - post-test scores are analysed alongside the pre-test scores to ascertain the effectiveness of the intervention in relation to the identified outcomes
exploratory analysis	a sub-group analysis which investigates pre-specified differences relating to gender, religious community background, level of deprivation, political affiliation and national identity etc.
process evaluation	an assessment of the implementation of a programme, that is, was the programme delivered as intended and were there any factors that arose during implementation that might impact upon the results of the trial?
free school meal entitlement (FSME)	often used as one indicator of socio-economic status since it is related largely to parental income
Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM)	a measure of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland which combines seven deprivation domains (income deprivation, employment deprivation, health deprivation and disability, education skills and training deprivation, proximity to services, living environment and crime and disorder)

Abbreviations

KS3	Key Stage 3 - covers years 8-10 (12-14 years)
KS4	Key Stage 4 - covers years 11 and 12 (15-16 years)
OFMdFM	Office of the First and deputy First Minister
CRED	'Community Relations, Equality, and Diversity in Education'
FSME	Free school meal entitlement
RCT	Randomised controlled trial
CRCT	Cluster randomised controlled trial
YPAG	Young People's Advisory Group

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the 'Prison to Peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners'[1] (hereafter, 'Prison to Peace') educational programme conducted by the Centre for Effective Education, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast. The study involved a cluster randomised controlled trial evaluation of the impact of the programme on young people's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. The trial involved 864 young people (with 497 young people matched across pre- and post- test) aged 14-17 years, from 14 post-primary school settings across Northern Ireland. The study also involved in depth qualitative case studies of the programme's implementation in a range of settings and semi-structured interviews with key educational stakeholders.

This introductory chapter begins with a short overview of the societal context of Northern Ireland and governmental policy responses aimed at addressing the legacy of the conflict and, in particular, its impact on young people. It then provides a description of the 'Prison to Peace' programme, outlining the relationship between its educational objectives and the Northern Ireland curriculum. The chapter concludes with a synopsis of the research project's overall aim and objectives, the key research strategies employed in the evaluation and the relevance of the research to government policy priorities.

It should be noted from the outset of this report that the schools who opted to implement the 'Prison to Peace' programme, and to participate in this study, represent schools who could be described as 'ready' to engage with controversial and sensitive issues in the curriculum. The findings of this report should thus be considered within this context.

1.1 The Northern Ireland context

The conflict known colloquially as 'The Troubles' had a significant impact on Northern Ireland's small population: over 3,500 people killed and 47,000 people injured in 16,200 bombing and 37,000 shooting incidents[2]; and, figures suggest, over 30,000 people imprisoned due to conflict related convictions[3]. The legacy of this, and less quantifiable products of the conflict such as community division and high levels of social disadvantage in those areas most affected by the conflict[4], created the societal milieu for a prolonged peace process and for the ongoing processes of transition.

[1] Since the term 'political ex-prisoner' is used in the educational resource as part of the agreed terminology across the five main constituency groups involved in its development, it is also the term used throughout this research report. Other terms used in academic literature include 'politically motivated former prisoners' and in the policy context the term 'people with conflict related convictions' is employed. It should be noted that the educational programme invites young people to reflect on this and other terms used in relation to those who were involved in the conflict.

[2] Report of the Consultative Group on the Past in Northern Ireland (2009) available from http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/victims/docs/consultative_group/cgp_230109_report.pdf

[3] McEvoy, K., and Shirlow, P. (2008) *Beyond the wire: Former prisoners and conflict transformation in Northern Ireland*. Dublin: Pluto; McEvoy, K., and Shirlow, P. (2009) Reimagining DDR: Ex-combatants, leadership and moral agency in conflict transformation. Theoretical Criminology 13(1) p. 31–59; McEvoy, K., and Shirlow, P. (2011) 'Encumbered by data: Understanding politically motivated former prisoners and the transition to peace in Northern Ireland'. In M. Power (Ed) *Building peace in Northern Ireland*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press p191–208.

[4] Note 4

Whilst it is recognised that society has come a considerable way in recent years, the transitional context of Northern Ireland remains politically contentious (particularly in relation to addressing issues of the past and its legacy) and disrupted by residual violence. Thus, young people in Northern Ireland are 'growing up in a politically complex society where the peace, though relatively stable, is not altogether secure and where the effects of violence and the factors which generated, exacerbated and sustained the conflict are not altogether in the past'[5]. Moreover, they are also contending with the largely segregated nature of their society. According to the Young Life and Times Survey 2012, 37% of young people said they rarely or never socialise with people from a different religious community, while 24% said they had no close friends from the other main religious community.

1.2 Government policy priorities

In seeking to address the impact of the conflict on society the Northern Ireland government has articulated a number of policy priorities, particularly in the relation to strategies for children and young people and strategies for good relations. These are outlined briefly below.

Policy priorities for children and young people

Central to Northern Ireland's *Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People* is the vision that all children and young people will 'thrive and look forward with confidence to the future'[6]. In order to achieve this vision, progress is sought in relation to an outcomes framework which includes *inter alia*, indications that children and young people are living in safety and with stability, contributing positively to the community and society and living in a society which respects their rights[7]. The strategy recognizes that in order to deliver these improved outcomes there is a need to respond to the challenges faced in a society emerging from conflict and to recognize that 'our children and young people are key to ensuring a more stable and peaceful future and a society which is inclusive and respectful of difference'[8]. The formal education sector has a key contribution to make in relation to achieving these outcomes, particularly through the statutory curriculum, the aim of which, 'to empower young people to develop their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives as individuals; as contributors to society; and as contributors to the economy and environment'[9], resonates with the vision expressed above. The inclusion of 'Local and Global Citizenship', in particular, as a key component of the post-primary curriculum provides specific opportunities for schools to progress the outcomes outlined above through the delivery of school-based programmes designed to meet the statutory requirements for this subject.

More recently government policy has made further commitment to seeking ways of preventing young people at risk from becoming disaffected and involved in conflict and interface violence

[5] Emerson, L. and Lundy, L. (2013) 'Education Rights in a Society Emerging from Conflict: Curriculum and Student Participation as a Pathway to the Realization of Rights' in Beth Swadener, Laura Lundy, Natasha Blanchet-Cohen and Janette Habash (eds) *Children's Rights and Education: International Perspectives* Peter Lang: New York, p8
[6] Office of the First and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) (2006) *Our Children and Young People- Our Pledge: A Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young Peoples in Northern Ireland 2006-2016* Belfast: OFMDFM, p.5
[7] Note 6
[8] Note 6, p.17
[9] Education (Northern Ireland) Order(2006), Belfast: HMSO

and to 'empower them to engage in positive activities and programmes that will have beneficial impacts and outcomes for them'[10].

Policy priorities for good relations and building a united community

Government policy has consistently indicated that education plays a key role in securing a future free from conflict and intolerance. For instance, the '*Shared Future*' policy[11] recognized that in order to establish 'a shared society defined by a culture of tolerance', there was a fundamental need to address the legacy of the conflict. Amongst a range of objectives the policy identified a need to eliminate all forms of prejudice and reduce tension at interface areas and also to 'promote civic-mindedness via citizenship education through school and lifelong learning' and to 'encourage understanding of the complexity of our history' through the school curriculum[12]. In making specific reference to the role of 'Local and Global Citizenship' the policy stated that for this to 'make a real impact it is essential that this work tackles the reality of living in a divided society'[13]. However Good Relations Indicators to date suggest that more progress needs to be made in achieving these objectives. Notably the indicators suggest that a significant number of people in the community do not believe that schools are adequately preparing young people for life in a diverse society and in particular are failing to encourage their understanding of the complexity of our history[14].

More recently the Executive has committed itself to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society through the '*Together: Building a United Community*' Strategy[15]. The strategy outlines a vision of 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance'.[16] One primary aim of the strategy is the Executive's commitment to 'continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations'[17]. To this end, the Executive has committed to, *inter alia*, 'develop in partnership with the relevant agencies and Departments age-appropriate primary and post-primary anti-sectarianism resources and ensure that teachers are trained, equipped and supported to deliver an effective anti-sectarianism module'[18]. Further, through the strategy the Executive acknowledges that 'there is much in our past that continues to impact on our present, and the past can also provide important lessons and insights to help shape our future'[19]. Attention is also drawn to the impact of the legacy of conflict on the everyday lives of children and young people and in particular that 'romanticisation

[10] OFMdFM (2010) *Good Relation Indicators -2010 update* p.24, accessed at http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/gr-pubs
[11] OFMdFM (2005) *A Shared Future - Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations* Belfast: OFMdFM
[12] Note 11, p.10
[13] Note 11, p.25
[14] see Note 5
[15] OFMdFM (2013) *Together Building a United Community* Belfast: OFMdFM
[16] Note 15 p.11
[17] Note 15 p.25
[18] Note 15 p.51
[19] Note 15 p.22

of our past runs the risk of preventing progress rather than empowering our young people to challenge the attitudes and behaviours that have held our society back for too long'[20].

Educational policy priorities for community relations and equality

In relation to educational polices, the Department of Education's most recent community relations policy, *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education* (CRED)[21] recognizes the need for programmes which develop young people's 'skills and the resilience needed to deal with prejudice' and to provide them with support to 'recognise prejudice, to overcome it and to respond in positive ways to negative influences'[22]. Further, the intended outcomes of the CRED policy are to develop learners who will understand and respect the rights, equality and diversity of all 'section 75 groups' and who have the skills, attitudes and behaviours to enable them to value and respect difference and engage positively with it[23].

It is within this policy context that the current research was undertaken – an evaluation of the impact of a programme designed to engage young people with the past and its legacy in order that they might be equipped to contribute more fully to the society in which they are growing up. The programme is described in detail below.

1.3 The 'Prison to Peace' programme

'From Prison to Peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners'[24] is an educational programme developed as part of a wider initiative: the Prison to Peace Partnership. This initiative is administered by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI) and part financed by the European Union's (EU) European Regional Development Fund through the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (Peace III), managed by the Special EU Programmes body. It combines the political ex-prisoners support groups from loyalist (UVF and UDA) and republican (IRA, INLA and the Official IRA) constituencies. The Citizenship Working Group within this initiative was established to explore ways in which political ex-prisoners could use their narratives to engage with young people in order to de-mythologize the conflict and the prison experience and to encourage them to make a positive contribution to their communities. To this end the members of the Citizenship Working Group developed a school-based educational programme targeted for use as part of the Key Stage Four (age 14-16) curriculum for citizenship education.

The overall aims of the 'Prison to Peace' educational programme are to:

- Prevent young people from getting involved in and/or returning to violence through presenting the realities of the conflict and the prison experience from the point of view of those directly involved in the conflict;

[20] Note 15 p.47
[21] Department of Education, DE, (2011) *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education*, Bangor: DE
[22] Note 21, p.16
[23] Note 21, p.21
[24] Prison to Peace Partnership (2011) *From Prison to Peace: learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners*, Belfast: Prison to Peace Partnership

- Demonstrate to young people alternative ways of dealing with conflict which do not necessarily require individuals to give up their political aspirations;
- Present young people with alternative 'bottom-up' perspectives on the conflict through a comprehensive and complex picture of the political ex-prisoner experience; and
- Provide young people with an opportunity to engage directly with those who were involved in the conflict.[25]

The programme consists of:

- An educational resource, which includes a detailed teacher's manual, with student resources and accompanying DVD, supporting a number of active learning activities to be delivered by teachers (at a suggested 1 hour per week for a term)
- An opportunity for young people to engage directly with political ex-prisoners through the format of a panel discussion

The activities in the resource are based on the narratives of fifteen politically-motivated former prisoners drawn from the five constituencies mentioned above and are intended to be delivered by teachers. The first section of the resource focuses on the circumstances that influenced these individuals in their decision to become involved in the conflict. The second section focuses on the prison experience and its impact on family and community. The final section concentrates on encouraging young people to learn from the positive contribution being made by political ex-prisoners to peace-building, conflict transformation and community development. Teachers are encouraged to contextualize the resource by delivering additional introductory lessons on the conflict in Northern Ireland and the transition to peace.

Throughout the taught component of the programme young people are made aware that they will be given an opportunity to engage directly with a panel of political ex-prisoners (again drawn from across the constituencies mentioned above). It should be noted that a number of former prisoners have completed training sessions in relation to engaging with young people in school settings and are therefore equipped for this aspect of the programme.

1.4 Educational objectives of the 'Prison to Peace' programme and the Northern Ireland curriculum

The 'Prison to Peace' programme was designed originally to make a direct contribution to the curriculum at Key Stage Four (KS4) that is for young people aged 14 to 16 years old. Further, it was anticipated that the programme could contribute to the history curriculum at both KS3 and KS4.

'Prison to Peace' and the statutory citizenship curriculum

The statutory curriculum for Key Stage 4 (age 14-16) requires that students have access to a programme for Local and Global Citizenship which enables them to:

- respond to the specific challenges and opportunities which diversity and inclusion present in Northern Ireland and the wider world;

[25] Note 24, p.70

- identify and exercise their rights and social responsibilities in relation to local, national and global issues;
- develop their understanding of the role of society and government in safeguarding individual and collective rights in order to promote equality and to ensure that everyone is treated fairly;
- develop their understanding of how to participate in a range of democratic processes;
- develop awareness of key democratic institutions and their role in promoting inclusion, justice and democracy; and
- develop awareness of the role of non-governmental organizations.[26]

The 'Prison to Peace' programme was designed to support the delivery of this aspect of the curriculum by providing opportunities for young people to explore:

- the nature of the *conflict* in Northern Ireland, its impact on individuals, families and communities and the challenges arising from its legacy;
- ways in which former enemies from *diverse* backgrounds can establish relationships built on trust and respect for the rights of the other;
- how *non-governmental organizations*, such as political ex-prisoner organizations, are playing a positive role in society and contributing to conflict transformation and community development;
- ways in which young people can *participate* and contribute positively to their communities; and
- their own *social responsibilities* in their community and wider society.[27]

'Prison to Peace' and the history curriculum

The programme was also designed to act as a bridge between the history and citizenship curricula in the Northern Ireland Curriculum. At Key Stage 3 (KS3) (age 11-14) the history curriculum requires that young people 'investigate the long and short term causes and consequences of the partition of Ireland and how it has influenced Northern Ireland today' in addition to exploring how history has affected their personal identity, culture and lifestyle and 'how history has been selectively interpreted to create stereotypical perceptions and to justify views and actions'[28]. The 'Prison to Peace' programme aims to build on this knowledge from KS3 and to assist young people in making links between past events and the present socio-political context in Northern Ireland; an area often neglected in history education[29]. In addition the programme was designed to make a direct contribution to GCSE History Course optional unit 'Changing Relationships: Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland 1965–1985' which explores, *inter alia*, the causes of the 'Troubles', the emergence of paramilitary organisations, internment, the prison protests and the hunger strikes[30].

[26] Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order Northern Ireland (2007), Belfast: HMSO
[27] Note 24, p.11
[28] Note 26
[29] See Emerson (2012) Conflict, transition and education for political generosity: learning from the experience of former combatants in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Peace* Education 9(3) p.277-295
[30] Council for Curriculum Examination and Assessment (2011) GCSE History Specification

1.5 Evaluation of 'Prison to Peace' programme

Following the development of the programme, a small number of post-primary schools were involved in implementing it in KS4 settings. Early indications suggested that teachers and young people were responding positively and, moreover, were identifying potential positive outcomes of the programme. The evaluation undertaken in this study provided an opportunity to trial the programme's impact on young people in relation to these potential outcomes and as such to inform the further development of programme; providing valuable insight into how best to maximize any potential it might have.

Aim and objectives of the study

Thus, the aim of this study is to evaluate whether the 'Prison to Peace' programme is effective in improving young people's knowledge, attitudes and awareness and to increase understanding of the processes that contribute to this effectiveness or lack thereof.

More specifically, the study has the following objectives:

- To ascertain the experiences of key stakeholders involved in the development and delivery of the programme, including the challenges it presents and issues it raises in schools;
- To determine the impact of the programme on young peoples' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours;
- To determine the implications of the research findings for the future development of the 'Prison to Peace' programme;
- To develop recommendations on how best to co-ordinate the 'Prison to Peace' programme regarding its relationship to other educational initiatives in the curriculum; and
- To make a significant contribute to the wider international debate and evidence base on the role of citizenship education in conflict affected and transitional societies.

Summary of research strategy

The study involved a cluster randomised controlled trial evaluation of the impact of the 'Prison to Peace' programme on young people's knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. The trial involved 864 young people (with 497 young people matched across pre- and post- test) aged 14-17 years, from 14 post-primary school settings across Northern Ireland.

In depth qualitative case studies were conducted in four of the schools implementing the programme, with a view to ascertaining the perspectives and experiences of those involved. The case studies involved observations of lessons, semi-structured interviews with school leaders and teachers delivering the programme, focus groups with participating young people, and a focus group with parents. In addition to the case studies, qualitative data were collected across the other three schools implementing the programme in order to document how the programme was delivered and received in diverse settings. The qualitative data collected in this study provides a rich understanding of the ways in which the programme has been implemented and the challenges and opportunities it has provided for each of the intervention schools.

Two case studies were also conducted in non-trial settings: a school which is well established in its delivery of the programme; a cross-border youth project. The former provided opportunity to explore how the programme might evolve in a school context; the latter how it might be delivered in non-school contexts.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight educational stakeholders to ascertain their perspectives on the programme and how best to co-ordinate initiatives dealing with the past and its legacy in the curriculum.

Relevance of the research to government policy priorities

It is hoped that this study will provide valuable insight into how best to develop and implement educational programmes to advance progress in relation to outcomes for children and young people as identified in:

- The Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People
- Together: Building a United Community
- Community Relations and Equality in Education

Moreover, as the CRED policy recognises, there is a need for robust evaluations of the impact of educational programmes, a feature it suggests is notably absent from the majority of past initiatives. It is hoped that the approach taken in this study will act as an example of the type of robust evaluations envisaged by the Department of Education.

2. Methods

This chapter outlines the methods used in the evaluation of the 'Prison to Peace' programme. The primary method employed for determining the *impact* of the programme on young people was a cluster randomised controlled trial (CRCT). The trial was based on specific outcomes, outlined below, that reflect the core aims and objectives of the 'Prison to Peace' programme. The outcomes tested in the trial were identified by the advisory groups for the project and provided the focus for the impact evaluation. However, the study also sought to address a range of research questions, again outlined below, beyond the impact of the programme on young people, which required a mixed methods approach. The chapter begins by describing the central research questions which the project sought to address, and the outcomes which were tested to ascertain the impact of the programme. A detailed overview is then provided of each of the research strategies employed, including:

- cluster randomised controlled trial (CRCT);
- post-test survey of young people's enjoyment and engagement with the programme in intervention schools;
- process evaluation of the programme's implementation in intervention schools;
- in depth qualitative case studies in four of the intervention schools;
- in depth qualitative data collection in non-case study intervention schools;
- case studies of implementation of the programme in contexts outside the CRCT;
- semi-structured interviews with educational stakeholders.

Central to the research was the engagement of advisory groups to assist in the development of the research strategy and provide insight on findings. In particular, a Young Person's Advisory Group (YPAG) consisting of eight young people who worked as co-researchers with the adult research team throughout the duration of the project. Chapter 3 of this report provides a detailed discussion of their invaluable input.

2.1 Research questions

While, as noted above, the primary focus of this evaluation was to ascertain the impact of the 'Prison to Peace' programme on young people, it was also suggested by the advisory groups that an evaluation of the initiative provided scope for exploring a range of research questions. To this end, the following questions framed the overall study[31]:

- What role should schools play in educating young people about conflict and its legacy? What is the role of the curriculum in addressing conflict and its legacy?
- What are the features of a school which make it 'ready' to engage controversial issues, such as conflict and its legacy? What are the challenges and benefits of addressing conflict and its legacy in the curriculum?

[31] Details of these research questions and how they relate to the objectives of the study and research strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

- How has the 'Prison to Peace' programme in particular influenced stakeholder perspectives on conflict, its legacy and their own political engagement?

2.2 Development of the outcomes

For the purpose of this evaluation, an outcome is defined as a real and discernible change in knowledge, attitudes and/or awareness and behaviours that has occurred as a direct result of taking part in the 'Prison to Peace' initiative. This study focused on outcomes for the young people involved in the programme.

The outcomes were developed initially by the political ex-prisoners involved in the Prison to Peace partnership. Training sessions focusing on the role of political ex-prisoners in schools were held during the initial stages of programme development which identified the unique contribution the narratives of ex-prisoners could bring to educational programmes. Subsequent training with teachers during the pilot stage of the programme helped augment these potential outcomes. Finally focus groups were held with young people who had participated in the early stages of the programme development to ascertain their views of what impact they felt the programme had on them. These ideas were informed throughout by literature on the role of educational initiatives in conflict affected societies.[32] These potential outcomes were presented to the advisory groups for the study and the outcomes in Table 2.1 were identified as those to be tested in the trial.

Table 2.1: Outcomes for the Prison to Peace programme

	Outcome
Knowledge	1. Increase in awareness of the complexity of conflict in Northern Ireland 2. Increased knowledge of the conflict, processes of transition and conflict transformation
Attitudes	3. Reduction in sectarian prejudice (exploratory only)[33] 4. Increase in respect for political diversity and, more specifically, acceptance that other political positions/opinions are legitimate
Intended behaviours	5. Reduction in intention to use/support the use of violence to deal with divisions and conflict; 6. Increase in intention to be politically engaged.

[32] See Note 29

[33] On advice from the advisory groups it was decided that this outcome would be exploratory only since experience suggested that reduction in prejudice was difficult to achieve over a short timescale.

2.3 Development of the measures

Where possible existing measures were used (or adapted) to ascertain the impact of the 'Prison to Peace' programme in relation to the outcomes identified above. In the absence of existing scales several new measures were developed. The measures were piloted and analysed before the trial began; the results obtained from the post-pilot instrument were also subjected to analysis (see Appendix 2). The final measures used in the survey, along with their reliability, are outlined below, in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Outcomes, measure descriptions and reliability

Outcome	Measure	No. of items	Scale description	α
Knowledge				
Knowledge of conflict, transition and conflict transformation	Knowledge of causes and impact of the 'Troubles'	6	Respondents' self-reported knowledge of factors causing and resulting from the 'Troubles'	.9
	Knowledge of transitional processes	3	Respondents' self-reported knowledge of issues such as the peace process and community based transitional initiatives etc.	.8
Awareness of complexity of conflict	This was assessed using an open ended response (What caused the Troubles?) in the survey which was coded according to a pre-determined coding scheme, and individual items in relation to reasons for involvement in conflict.			
Attitudes				
Reduction in sectarian prejudice	Subtle: Cultural differences	6	How different the respondent thinks Protestants and Catholics are	.8
	Subtle: Traditional values	6	How much the respondent adheres to traditional values, e.g., 'Protestants are unlikely to be Nationalist'	.8
	Subtle: Affective	3	Frequency of respondent's experience of feeling sympathy/admiration/compassion for those from the 'other' religion/ community.	.9
	Blatant Prejudice	5	Willingness/ preference to engage with/ mix with people from the other community	.8
Respect for political diversity	Respect for political diversity		Capacity to appreciate and respect other political positions and opinions as legitimate	.9
Intended Behaviours				
Support for non-violent means to deal with divisions	Support for non-violent means	4	Support for alternatives to violence to achieve political goals	.7
	Support for violent means	3	Support for violence to achieve political goals	.8
Increase in intention to be politically engaged[34]	Participation Political	9	Likeliness to participate in political activity e.g. campaigning	.8
	Participation School	7	Likeliness to participate in school related activities e.g. putting yourself forward for student council	.8
	Talk to others about politics	9	Tendency to talk to others/be interested in others' views (parents, friends and teachers) about political issues	.9
	Information seeking	5	Frequency of sourcing information regarding politics or current events via TV, newspaper, social media etc.	.8

[34] The measures chosen for this outcome relate to aspects of participatory behaviour in a young person's life that serve as indicators for future political engagement.

2.4 Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial

The purpose of the cluster randomised controlled trial was to determine what actual effects the 'Prison to Peace' programme was having, if any, on pupils' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours.

Recruitment and Random Allocation of Schools

All post-primary schools that had not previously delivered the programme were invited to participate in the trial (except special schools, as the programme had not been adapted for these contexts). 20 post-primary schools responded[35]. At the point of recruitment, schools were asked to participate in the trial not knowing whether they would be allocated to the intervention group or the control group. Once all 20 schools were recruited, they were organized into 10 pairs. Each pair was determined to ensure that the schools were as matched up as far as is possible in relation to their size, location and type. An independent researcher, blinded to the identity of the schools, was asked to randomly allocate one school from each pairing to the intervention group and one to the control group. The recruitment and random allocation of schools was completed during April 2012 to allow those schools allocated to the intervention group to undergo training in the programme in June 2012. Schools allocated to the intervention group delivered the programme to their pupils at some point during between January 2013 and February 2014.

As the project progressed, three of the intervention schools were unable to commit to the programme. In one context the Board of Governors of the school did not grant permission for the programme's implementation[36]. In the other two contexts the critical illness of the teacher charged with implementation and a whole school inspection respectively created a delay in the programme's implementation, resulting in the implementation lying outside the study's lifespan. The implications of this for the programme's effectiveness are reflected upon below.

Intervention school profiles

A profile of each participating intervention school is provided in Table 2.3 below. The schools implementing the programme were also located in urban, sub-urban and rural contexts. Notably, the majority of intervention schools were non-selective (as were the majority of matched controlled schools). Further, only one controlled secondary school implemented the programme. The two schools which withdrew, due to unforeseen circumstances noted about, were from the grammar sector; the school which withdrew due to Board of Governor concerns was from the controlled secondary sector. However, overall the schools which implemented the programme and their matched control schools represented schools from across the spectrum of school types in Northern Ireland.

[35] It is important to note that only 20 schools responded. This suggests that schools have reservations regarding engagement with controversial and sensitive matters in the curriculum. Further, it indicates that the schools who *did* respond to the invitation to participate were most likely in a more 'ready' state to engage with such subject matter.
[36] A semi-structured interview was conducted with the school's Vice Principal to capture reasons for non-implementation

Table 2.3: Intervention school profile[37]

School	School type	Management	No. pupils	%FSM	% GCSE A C (incl. English & maths)	% SEN (Stage 1 5)
School 1	Secondary Co-ed	Grant Maintained Integrated	1249	14%	51%	27%
School 2	Secondary Co-ed	Catholic Maintained	1175	28%	36%	16%
School 3	Grammar Girls	Voluntary (Catholic)	1003	15%	90%	15%
School 4	Secondary Co-ed	Controlled	582	21%	29%	15%
School 5	Secondary Boys	Catholic Maintained	1098	33%	35%	52%
School 6	Secondary Co-ed	Grant Maintained Integrated	547	16	43%	27%
School 7	Secondary Boys	Catholic Maintained	394	42%	35%	45%

Pupil Sample

Demographic data were collected from participants (n=864 in total; with 497 matched pre- and post-test). Several questions were asked to ascertain the ethno-religious-political identity of the research participants, relating to their religious community, political identity and nationality. Table 2.4 below demonstrates that in terms of gender, free school meal entitlement (FSME), religion, political affiliation, national identity, and ethnicity, the pupils in the intervention and control groups were similar, differing mostly in terms of gender and percentage of FSME.

Data Collection

An online questionnaire was developed (using Questback) and administered to the pupils in participating schools to measure their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in relation to the outcomes (see Appendix 3). Each intervention school was asked to ensure that young people completed the online questionnaire during the week prior to when they intended to begin delivering the programme. The school that was paired with that intervention school and allocated to the control group was asked to ensure that their respective pupils completed the online questionnaire during the same week. Similarly, each intervention group school (and their paired control group school) were required to ensure that their respective year groups of pupils completed the online questionnaire again during the second week after the intervention school completed delivery of the programme.

[37] SEN and enrolment figures correct as of 2012/2013; FSME and achievement figures correct as of 2011/2012.

Table: 2.4: Demographic detail for the matched sample (n= 497)

		Intervention	Control
Gender	Male	46%	37%
	Female	54%	63%
FSME[38]	Yes	18%	27%
Religious background[39]	Catholic	54%	52%
	Protestant	35%	43%
	Other	11%	5%
Political affiliation	Republican	15%	11%
	Nationalist	15%	15%
	Unionist	8%	15%
	Loyalist	15%	16%
	Not sure/none	46%	41%
	Other	2%	2%
National identity[40]	British	33%	33%
	Irish	42%	40%
	Northern Irish	30%	43%
	Other	4%	4%
Ethnicity	White	95%	95%
	Other	5%	5%
Year group	Year 10	44%	62%
	Year 11	51%	29%
	Year 12	1%	3%
	Year 13/14	4%	5%

[38] Since FSME is not always a reliable measure of socio-economic status, respondents were also asked to provide postcodes. These were matched to the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) giving a more nuanced indicator of the socio-economic context in which the young people lived.

[39] Note that changes made post-pilot provided greater insight into the religious community of the participants. At pilot 26% of respondents reported 'no religion/other'. However, in light of the pilot results, and in discussion with the Young People's Advisory Group additional options were added, i.e. 'I am not religious, but I come from a Protestant/ Catholic background'. This resulted in the proportion of pupils for whom we could not identify in terms of Catholic or Protestant *backgrounds* reducing to 11% and 5% in the intervention control groups, giving a clearer picture of community background.

[40] Respondents could select more than one 'national identity'.

Trial challenges

As with any CRCT conducted in a school environment challenges will be encountered, for example, in relation to timetabling issues and maintaining school engagement. However, as well as these issues, there were other noteworthy challenges which arose during this trial, much of which were associated with the sensitivity surrounding the intervention itself.

Schools dropping out

As noted above three schools dropped out of the trial as they decided they were no longer going to run the programme. In two schools this was due to unforeseen circumstances: critical illness of the teacher who was to deliver the programme; school inspection resulting in school focusing on core issues. Both of these schools remain committed to delivery, but this will be outside the lifespan of the research project. In one school, lack of support from the Board of Governors resulted in its withdrawal from the programme. An interview with a member of this school's senior management team revealed that the governors and senior staff wished to maintain a level of neutrality in the school, where the issues relating to conflict and the division of NI society are not discussed. It was their view that engaging with the programme would raise awareness of division and conflict within the community and as such negatively impact on the attitudes of their young people. It is important to note that this is a common concern amongst schools in relation to controversial and sensitive issues in general and in relation to teaching about the NI conflict and its legacy in particular[41]. This again reinforces the caveat offered at the outset of this report: that schools need to be 'ready' to engage with these issues.

Timetabling issues/ curriculum

The majority of the schools involved in the trial implemented the programme within the citizenship curriculum. This has implications for the amount of sustained time given to the programme, as citizenship classes are often afforded low priority within schools[42]. In the ideal context the programme should be delivered for an hour a week for a full school term. For most schools this was not the case. Locating the programme within citizenship education classes resulted in the lesson being delivered only once a fortnight for some schools and for others only 30/35 minutes at a time. In terms of data collection, it was during these same lessons that time for the survey had to be incorporated, which for some proved difficult. Furthermore, there were additional issues, such as snow closure days, field trips, G8 trips, sports days etc. which often clashed with programme delivery, and subsequently the amount of time dedicated to this programme. Also, some of the schools were completing the programme very close to the end of term. Therefore for several schools they were completing the post-intervention survey in the last week of term, for example, before the summer holidays, meaning that attendance and return rates were low.

[41] Emerson, L., & McCully, A. (2014) 'Teaching controversial issues in conflict and in transition to peace: an analysis of policy and practice in Northern Ireland' In T. Misco (Ed.), *Cross-Cultural Case Studies of Teaching Controversial Issues: Pathways and Challenges to Democratic Citizenship Education*. Legal Wolf.

[42] University of Ulster (2010) *Evaluation of Local and Global Citizenship: final report.* Coleraine: University of Ulster

Staffing issues

Each participating school had undertaken training for the delivery of the Prison to Peace programme. However, in some schools the teachers initially trained to deliver the programme were no longer available due to timetabling issues and/or staff changes. For example, in one school the original teacher retired, resulting in delays in finishing the programme, and subsequently delays in post-intervention data collection.

Survey administration

This trial used an online survey, which for the most part worked very well. It was more engaging and appealing for pupils to use, rather than a pen and paper version. However, there were also issues with this administration. For example, there were several problems with getting ICT suites booked for survey completion; there were problems with accessing the survey in certain schools; there were timing issues, in some schools the pupils took longer to complete the survey than was available during the lesson time, and as the survey tool used does not have a save function, this resulted in the survey being lost.

2.5 Process evaluation – programme implementation

In order to inform the quantitative results, a variety of information was collected from each intervention school. During the period between pre-testing and post-testing, detailed information was collected from the intervention schools regarding the implementation of the programme through short structured interviews with teachers. This included information regarding the amount of time dedicated to the programme, any programme adaptations or omissions, the extent of training the teachers had received, the subject specialism of the teachers delivering the programme, pupils' exposure to similar content, pupil responsiveness and any challenges faced in delivery. Furthermore, information regarding the exposure of control school pupils to any similar content was also sought.

2.6 Post-test survey of young people's engagement with programme

The post-test questionnaire in intervention schools contained a series of additional questions (see Appendix 4) to ascertain the following:

- The extent to which young people enjoyed the main aspects of the programme
- Young people's views of the value of the programme for other young people
- Young people's perceptions on what they had learnt from the programme

This post-test survey also provided information in relation to which aspects of the programme the young people had not experienced.

2.7 Qualitative case studies in intervention schools

Four schools involved in the delivery of the 'Prison to Peace' programme were selected as suitable case studies. A brief description of the each school is given below, along with a rationale its choice as a site for study.

Case Study – School 1

This is a *large co-educational integrated post-primary school* with a diverse intake of young people, in terms religious and political background, ethnicity, socio-economic status and academic ability. The school was chosen primarily because it provided a site for study in which children from a range of different backgrounds would be engaging with the programme, allowing exploration of the sensitivities involved in teaching about conflict and transition to young people from the two major communities and newcomer young people. Further, this school was delivering the programme to all eight of its Year 11 classes, requiring the involvement of a number of teachers, some of whom had been trained specifically in the delivery of the programme and some of whom who had been trained 'in-house' by other members of staff. This is likely to be the pragmatic model of delivery in schools, so the school provided a useful site for exploring the reality of delivering 'Prison to Peace' to an entire cohort.

Case Study - School 3

This is a large single sex, *Catholic grammar school* situated in an urban context, in an area that was significantly affected by the conflict. The school was selected for case study for a number of reasons. First it provided a context to explore how the programme operated in an 'all girls' context, allowing some exploration of how girls were responding to a programme that may appear on the surface to be 'male orientated' (since the majority of ex-prisoners whose stories are explored are male). Second, it provided an opportunity to explore how the programme could be sensitively delivered in contexts where the young people involved were likely to come from families affected directly by the conflict and its legacy. Thirdly, it allowed exploration of how the programme would be delivered in a single identity context. The school also provided a particular model of delivery. In this case one trained teacher delivered the programme to two of the Year 10 classes in the school.

Case Study – School 4

This is a *co-educational, controlled school* with a largely *rural* intake. The school was chosen primarily because the teacher responsible for delivery of the programme was also involved in a number of other related initiatives. As such the case study might allow some exploration of how different initiatives might work together, an objective of the overall research. The school also provided an opportunity to explore how the programme might be delivered in a largely 'single identity' context, again in an area affected by the conflict and division. Also the school had two teachers delivering the programme to two Year 10 classes: an experienced citizenship and history teacher; a newly qualified teacher with little experience of teaching conflict related issues. The case study therefore provided an opportunity to examine how teachers might be supported in delivering the programme.

Case Study – School 5

This is an *urban, catholic maintained boy's secondary school*, situated in an area that was affected significantly by the conflict. The school was selected primarily because it provided an opportunity to explore the delivery of the programme in an 'all boys' context. Further, the teacher had identified that pupils in the school were identifying increasingly with 'dissident' groups and saw the programme as a way of engaging the boys in debate and discussion in relation to political identity. The school also provided an opportunity to explore an alternative model of delivery: two highly experienced politics teachers co-teaching the programme to two different Year 13 classes. Some of the boys participating in the programme were also doing A level Politics; some were not.

Data Collection

The case studies drew on a range of research tools:

- Semi-structured interview with teachers delivery the programme
- Semi-structured interview with the school principal and/or member of school's senior management team
- Focus groups interview with young people participating in the programme
- Focus group interview with parents
- Observation of classes
- Observation of panel discussion with ex-prisoners

The protocols for each of these strands of the case study methodology were developed to address the key research questions of the overall evaluation and were discussed and agreed with the Advisory Group for the project and the co-researchers in Young People's Advisory Group. These protocols are appended (Appendix 5).

Given the different contexts and mode of delivery, the extent of data collection varied across the case studies (see Table 2.5 and Table 2.6). Overall, the data collected has provided both a comprehensive overview of programme delivery and depth of understanding in relation to how the programme is delivered and received in a range of contexts

Table 2.5: Data collection in case study schools

Case study school	Data collected
Case Study – School 1 (Integrated School)	Three *classroom observations* (with different teachers) were conducted, observation of the panel discussion. Four teacher interviews were conducted, involving the co-ordinator of the programme (who did not deliver the programme), and three teachers (from a variety of subject specialisms) who delivered the programme. School Principal interviewed. Each adult interview lasted between 30-40 minutes. Two student focus groups were held (each lasting approximately 30 minutes), using a sample of pupils from each of the eight classes. One in-depth *parent* focus group was also conducted (lasting 70 minutes).
Case Study – School 3 (Catholic Girls' Grammar School)	Two *classroom observations* were conducted, and an observation of the panel discussion. School principal interviewed and the teacher delivering the programme. Each adult interview lasted between 40-50 minutes. Two *pupil* focus groups were conducted (each lasting approximately 30 minutes) with a selection of pupils from each of the two classes participating in the programme.
Case Study – School 4 (Controlled Secondary School)	Three *classroom observations* were conducted. This school did not have a panel. Interviews were conducted with three *adults* in the school: both of the teachers who delivered the programme (lasting 84 and 52 minutes) and the school principal (lasting 40 minutes). Two *pupil* focus groups were conducted; one group from each class participation in the programme (each lasting approximately 30 minutes).
Case Study – School 5 (Catholic Maintained Secondary School)	Two *classroom observations* were conducted, and observation of panel as well as two *pupil* focus group (lasting approximately 40 minutes). Additionally, two *teacher* interviews were been conducted (lasting 51 and 52 minutes). One of these teachers is also a Vice Principal in the school and this interview therefore included insight on the implementation of the programme from a leadership perspective.

Table 2.6: Details of observations conducted

School	Observations completed	Lesson observed
School 1	Class observation 1	The reality of prison life (teacher 1 and 2)
	Class observation 2	The positive roles of ex-prisoners in the community (teacher 3)
	Panel observation	Question and answer session with political ex-prisoners
School 3	Class observation 1	The reality of prison experience
	Class observation 2	The positive roles of ex-prisoners on community
	Panel observation	Question and answer session with political ex-prisoners
School 4	Class observation 1	The reality of prison life (teacher 1)
	Class observation 2	The reality of prison life (teacher 2)
	Class observation 3	The impact of prison life (teacher 1)
School 5	Class observation 1	The reality of prison life
	Class observation 2	The impact of prison life
	Panel observation	Question and answer session with political ex-prisoners

2.8 Additional qualitative data in non-case study schools

The schools involved in the delivery of the programme were keen to share their experience of implementation with the research team. As such extensive qualitative data were collected across the other non-case study intervention schools.

- **School 2** (Catholic maintained co-educational school): semi-structured interview with teacher.
- **School 6** (Integrated school): semi-structured interviews with one teacher and the principal; two focus groups with participating young people; panel observation.
- **School 7** (Catholic maintained boys' secondary school): semi-structured interviews with teacher and principal; focus group with participating young people.

An interview was also conducted with the vice-principal of the school who withdrew from the programme due to concerns from school's Board of Governors.

2.9 Case studies of programme delivery in non-CRCT settings

Further insight into the operation of the programme in a range of settings was gleaned from additional case studies added to the research project.

- **Cross-border youth group**: semi-structured interviews conducted with programme manager and course facilitator; two focus groups with young people involved; observation of delivery of the programme in Crumlin Road Gaol.
- **Experienced school:** semi-structured interviews conducted with two teachers; two focus groups with pupils; observation of panel involving ex-prisoners and representative of victims' organisation.

2.10 Interviews with educational stakeholders

Nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with educational stakeholders to ascertain their views on the educational benefits of the programme, the difficulties associated with its delivery in schools, school readiness to engage with the programme, how the programme could be improved and how the programme could best be co-ordinated with similar educational initiatives (see Appendix 5). Interviewees were drawn from the Department of Education, education and library boards, the Council for Curriculum and Assessment and from other organisations delivering related programmes in schools and community, including a representative from a victim's support group.

2.11 Ethics

All aspects of the research complied fully with the British Educational Research Association ethical guidelines for educational research and were approved by the Queen's University School of Education Research Ethics Committee. Ethical considerations included issues relating to consent, privacy, confidentiality and data storage, the wellbeing and safety of participants as well as the wider ethical issues relating to research with children. Voluntary informed consent for the research to be conducted in each of the schools was obtained from school principals as well as from each

individual participating in the research. Voluntary informed parental consent was obtained for all the young people participating in the research. All involved were also guaranteed anonymity and were given information on their right to withdraw, assured that this would not have any adverse effects.

Schools were asked to keep parents fully informed of the nature and content of the programme and advised to receive parental consent for young people participating in the panel discussion, in line with normal school protocols.

2.11 Consultation with advisory groups

Two consultation groups were established:

- The Young Person's Advisory Group, discussed in detail in Section 3, which acted as a consultative group to ensure the views of young people were given prominence throughout the project.
- Adult Advisory Group

The purpose of both groups was to provide expert advice on the development of research project. In particular they:

- assisted with the identification of outcomes, the development of specific and the research strategy for the evaluation;
- provided key stakeholder perspectives on the research findings; and
- will assist with the dissemination of research findings.

Membership of the Adult Advisory Group was discussed and agreed with the funders and drew from: the former combatant constituencies; the community and voluntary sector; and the formal education sector. Two sub-groups were established: one group comprising of representatives from ex-prisoner organizations and key stakeholders in the community sector; and one group comprising of representatives from the education sector. Establishing sub-groups ensured that the various sectors involved were able to focus attention on the aspects of the research most pertinent to their own expertise. Liaison between the sub-groups will was facilitated by members of the research team.

Members of the adult stakeholder group have met on four occasions: the full group met to clarify outcomes and overall research design; the ex-prisoner sub-group met to agree outcomes and to have input into the protocols for observation of panels; the education-sub group met to discuss qualitative protocols and suitable stakeholders for interview; the full group met to discuss interim findings and contribute to recommendations. A final meeting of the full group will be held post-completion of the study to discuss dissemination strategies.

3. Young People's Advisory Group

This chapter outlines the contribution made to the project by the Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG). It begins with a rationale for the active engagement of young people as co-researchers in the study before providing detail on their contribution to research design, analysis and interpretation of data.

3.1 Role and remit of the YPAG

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) gives children and young people a right to not only express their views but also to have those views given due weight in all matters affecting them[43]. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors compliance with the CRC, has emphasized that this right should be 'anchored in the child's daily life at home…and in his or her community… as well as in…[*inter alia*] the development of policies and services, including through research and consultations'[44]. The approach taken to the involvement of children and young people in this research aimed to respect that right. As such the project drew an on a children's rights-based approach to research developed within the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast and applied across a number of projects to date[45]. A key aspect of this approach is the meaningful engagement of children and young people as co-researchers, in Children's Research Advisory Groups (CRAGs) and as research participants. Given the age of the young people involved in this project the research advisory group are referred to as the Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG).

The young people who were involved in the YPAG were not research subjects. Rather they were invited to participate in the project as an expert group in relation to young people's views on the issues under investigation. Their remit was to:

- advise on the research process including how best to engage with other young people on the issues;
- assist with the development of specific measures to be used in the research
- assist with the analysis and interpretation of the findings;
- provide insight on the main issues under investigation;
- identify potential solutions which might address some of the issues identified by the research; and
- contribute to the dissemination of the research, for example in assisting in the production of a young people's version of the final research report.

It should be noted that the YPAG were not involved in collecting data and as such did not require training in research techniques associated with data collection. Rather the approach adopted in this

[43] United Nations (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child, Geneva: United Nations
[44] United Nations (2005). Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 7: Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood*. Geneva: United Nations. UN/CRC/GC/7.
[45] See Lundy, L. & McEvoy(Emerson), L. (2012) Children's rights and research processes: Assisting children to (in)formed views. *Childhood,* 19(1), 1-16.

project requires building the capacity of the young people to understand and reflect on the substantive issues surrounding the research questions and to situate their views within the existing knowledge of the issue under investigation. This in turn assists the young people in understanding perspectives beyond their own and provides them with a range of perspectives on which to draw when interpreting findings from the research[46].

Composition of the YPAG

The YPAG comprised eight young people (four boys and four girls), selected from a Key Stage Four Year Group (age 14 to 16 years old) in a school that has already delivered the programme and was thus not part of the proposed trial. As such the members of the YPAG were familiar with the programme.

Outline of the YPAG sessions

Members of the research team have met with the YPAG on five occasions during the course of the project. The first two sessions involved building the capacity of the young people in relation to understanding the key issues under investigation, and seeking their advice on the specific outcomes against which to evaluate the programme. Session 3 focused on seeking the young people's perspectives on the research instruments and their views on the issues arising from the piloting of the online survey. Session 4 involved the young people spending a day at Queen's University Belfast, working with the research team in analysing and interpreting the findings from the qualitative data collected across the intervention schools. Session 5 provided an opportunity for the young people to provide insight on the findings from the trial. A final session will be held with the YPAG post-completion of the study to produce a version of the research report which will be accessible to young people.

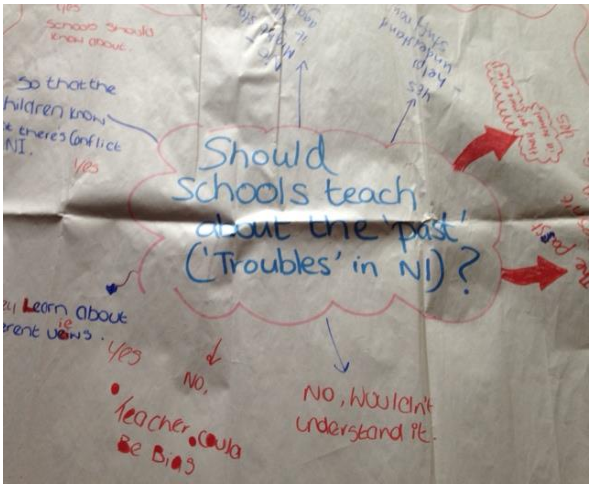
3.2 Capacity building with the ''Young People's Advisory Group'

These sessions involved engaging the young people with the research questions associated with the project. In particular young people were introduced to the debates surrounding whether or not schools should teach controversial or sensitive issues and the features that make a school 'ready' to teach about the past. This involved asking the young people in pairs to 'brainstorm' answers to a set of questions, on flipchart paper (see Figure 3.1):

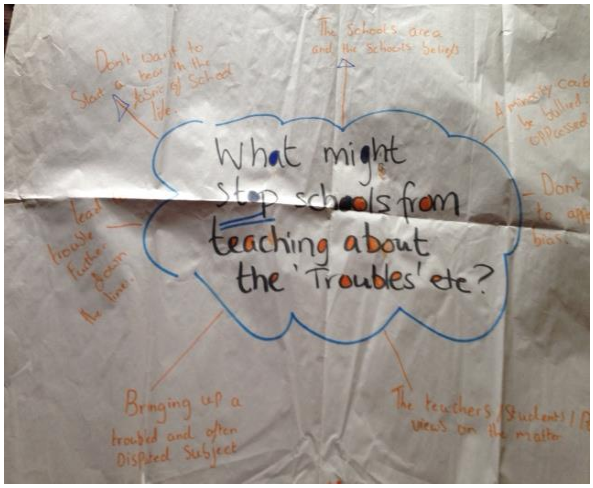
- Should schools teach about the Troubles?
- What might stop schools from teaching about the Troubles?
- What might help/encourage schools to teach about the Troubles?

The young people rotated their sheets until each member of the YPAG had contributed to each question. Members of the research team then located their ideas in the broader debates in the literature surrounding the teaching of controversial issues.

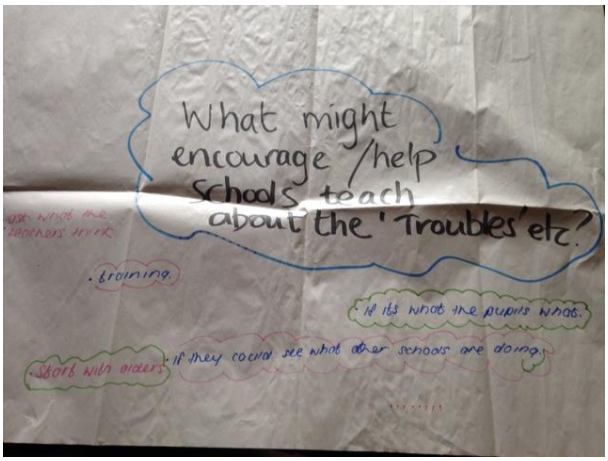
[46] Lundy, L., & McEvoy (Emerson), L. (2009). Developing outcomes for educational services: a children's rights-based approach. *Effective Education*, 1(1), 43-60.



'Should schools teach about the Troubles?'



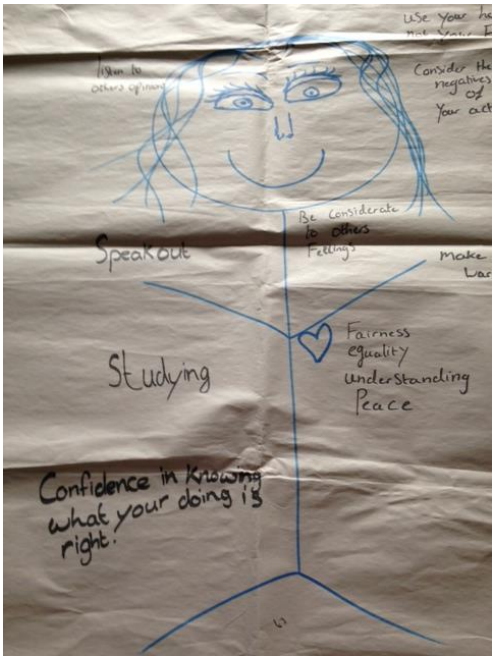
'What might stop schools?'



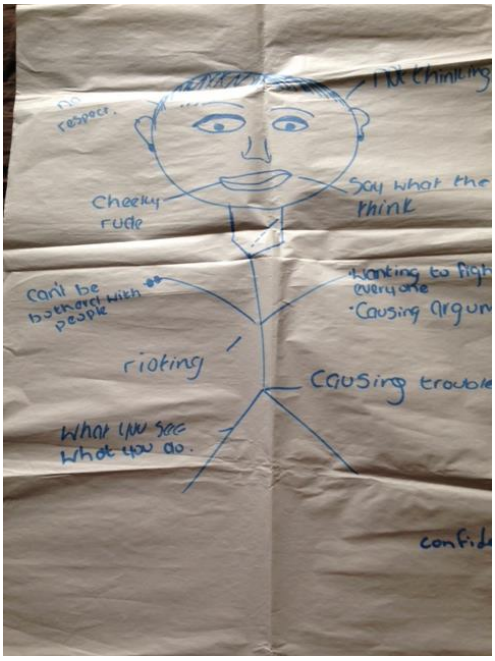
'What might encourage schools?'

Figure 3.1 Engaging the YPAG with the literature on teaching controversial issues

The sessions also involved engaging the young people with the outcomes of the 'Prison to Peace' programme. In order to do this, the YPAG were asked to 'design' a young person who was tolerant and ready to participate positively in society alongside a young person who was intolerant and not prepared to engage positively in society (see Figure 3.2). The research team used these drawings to explain the rationale for the outcomes chosen for the impact evaluation and the associated measures. The YPAG then assisted the research team in 'fine tuning' some of the measures to be used (particularly in relation to the participation measures and language used in the measures for blatant and subtle prejudice).



'Young person ready to participate'



'Young person not ready to participate'

Figure 3.2 Engaging the YPAG with programme outcomes and measures

3.3 Contribution of 'Young People's Advisory Group' to research design

During Session 3 amendments were made to the protocols for qualitative data collection, in particular the observation protocol. The young people also made several key suggestions regarding the survey, which were incorporated into the final survey:

- amending the way in which young people were asked about their religious background, to include, as noted above, statements: 'I'm not religious but I come from a Catholic background' and 'I'm not religious but I come from a Protestant background';
- rewording items to make them more easily understood by peers;
- suggesting the inclusion of additional questions: 'Do you think there is still conflict in Northern Ireland?'; 'Do you think there'll ever be permanent peace?'.

3.4 Contribution of 'Young People's Advisory Group' to qualitative analysis

The young people spent a day at Queen's University Belfast conducting analysis of the qualitative data. The primary focus for the young people was the data from *pupil focus groups*, where the researchers felt they could provide most insight. The analysis of the focus group data with the young people involved three main procedures: analysing selected vignettes from the focus group transcriptions to generate themes; clustering remaining focus data under these themes; summarising key findings from the focus groups.

Analysing vignettes

Based on the initial thematic analysis and analysis of observations, the adult researchers selected seven extracts or 'vignettes' from the interviews and focus groups for the young people to examine in detail. The young people, in pairs, read through the short vignettes highlighting key phrases and annotating the extracts to begin to identify for themselves some of the themes emerging from the data.

The main issues identified by the young people at this stage included:

- 'challenging prejudice';
- 'changing views';
- 'confidence in teachers teaching about the past';
- 'trusting teachers to be unbiased';
- 'reflecting more deeply on the issues';
- 'understanding different perspectives';
- 'seeing through stereotypes';
- 'dealing with other influences on young people's views'.

The young people then discussed these issues and drew out a number of core themes to explore with the remainder of the focus group data:

- 'Deeper understanding'
- 'Challenging stereotypes and prejudice'
- 'Best type of teacher to teach it'
- 'Challenging other influences on young people'

Clustering focus group data

The young people were then provided with quotes from the focus groups data and asked to begin to sort these quotes under the themes they had identified. During this process it became apparent that additional themes were needed, which the young people identified as:

- 'Best place to learn about it'
- 'Talking to parents about it'
- 'Why learn about it?'

They also decided to split the theme 'challenging stereotypes and prejudice' into two separate themes:

- 'Challenging stereotypes of ex-prisoners'
- 'Challenging stereotypes and prejudice about the other community'

Summarising findings from focus group data

The adult researchers then discussed each of the emerging themes in turn with the young people to draw out some 'sub-themes' based on each of the broad headings under which the data had been sorted. This provided the research team with insight from the point of view of the young people on the data collected. The suggestions from the young people have informed the overall themes outlined in the findings chapters below.

Also, the young people were not initially made aware that the data was colour coded so that data from different case studies could be identified. When this was explained to the young people, they were able to provide insight on why there were (or were not) differences in views from different case study settings. For example, it was noted that the theme 'talking to parents about it' came primarily from an all-girls' school. A discussion ensued as to whether that was because girls were more likely to talk about school at home, or whether it may have been because (as the adult researchers were aware) a few girls in that particular class had parents who had been in prison. The young people suggested that we should therefore analyse the survey data (i.e. the 'talking to others' measure in the survey) in relation to gender and in relation to each school. Notes were made throughout this discussion which again provided the research team with new insight on the data and ideas for further analyses of both the qualitative and quantitative data for the final report.

Finalising themes

Following the YPAG analysis, the research team worked with the young people to draw together the themes originally identified by the adult researchers in an initial analysis of the qualitative data, the themes identified by the young people and review these in relation to the key research questions. This resulted in the themes under which the data is presented in Chapter 6.

3.5 Conclusion

The input from the YPAG to this study has been invaluable in ensuring the young people have been engaged meaningfully in all aspects of the research. They will be involved in two further sessions: interpreting the findings from the CRCT, to ensure that they are easily understood by their peers, and assisting in the development of a young person's accessible version of the final report.

4. Findings – Cluster RCT

This chapter outlines the findings from the CRCT impact evaluation of the 'Prison to Peace' programme. In the main it discusses the impact of the programme in relation to the outcomes outlined in Chapter 2 above. It begins with a discussion of the main analysis, followed by a discussion of the exploratory analysis conducted to ascertain if the programme had differential effects on a range of sub-groups. It should be noted that since one of the outcomes ('knowledge of the complexity of conflict') was assessed using closed single item questions and one open ended question this is not included in the main or exploratory analysis below. This outcome is discussed in section 4.3.

The survey also provided an opportunity to explore a number of other issues suggested by the advisory groups: young people's strength of cultural identity, their self-reported trust in various civil, social and political institutions, and their optimism in relation to permanent peace in Northern Ireland. These are discussed below in section 4.4.

4.1 Main analysis: impact on pupils in relation to identified outcome measures

Data were analysed using a series of multilevel models with pupils clustered within schools. In each case, the post-test score was the dependent variable; the independent variables were associated pre-test score and group variable, i.e., intervention or control. Full details of the analysis can be found in Appendix 6.

Table 4.1 below highlights the main primary effects reporting: post-test mean scores for the control and intervention groups (these are 'adjusted' mean scores in that they take into account and control for any pre-test differences between the two groups); standard deviations; whether the difference in these scores between the two groups is statistically significant (those which are statistically significant are highlighted in bold); and the effect size.

This table highlights that the post-test mean values for the intervention group were consistently higher than those of the control group, except for the prejudice scores, where a lower score demonstrates a positive effect/ less prejudice.

The analysis shows that there is a *statistically significant* difference between the intervention and control groups (controlling for any pre-test differences) across several of the outcomes (with sizeable effects ranging from .17-.42). That is, the intervention group, compared to the control group, reported that they: knew more about the conflict, processes of transition and conflict transformation; talked to others more about politics; showed more interest in participating in school related activities; they sought more information related to politics (via newspapers, the internet etc.); they demonstrated more support for using non-violent means to deal with conflict; and they had demonstrated less blatant and subtle prejudice. No significant differences were found between the intervention and control groups across participation (politics) and respect for political differences.

Table 4.1: Main Effects of Prison to Peace

Outcome	Post test Mean Scores (standard deviations)*		Sig.	Hedges' g [95% CI]
	Intervention Group (n 255)	Control Group (n 242)		
Knowledge of the conflict, processes of transition and conflict transformation	3.459 (.846)	3.140 (.923)	**.003**	+.361 [+.122, +.599]
Talking to others about politics	2.933 (.914)	2.548 (.915)	**<.001**	+.420 [+.226, +.615]
Participation (Politics)	3.065 (.665)	2.989 (.617)	.299	+.117 [-.104, +.338]
Participation (School)	3.314 (.761)	3.160 (.766)	**.011**	+.202 [+.046, +.357]
Information Seeking	2.504 (.848)	2.361 (.883)	**.033**	+.165 [+.014, +.316]
Support for non-violence	3.686 (.764)	3.497 (.733)	**.007**	+.252 [+.069, +.434]
Respect for political differences	3.866 (.739)	3.744 (.796)	.201	+.159 [-.085, +.403]
Sectarian prejudice (blatant scale)	2.493 (.908)	2.739 (.900)	**.003**	-.272 [-.448, -.096]
Sectarian prejudice (subtle scale)	3.022 (.564)	3.126 (.541)	**.006**	-.189 [-.325, -.054]

*Mean scores adjusted to control for pre-test differences

4.2 Exploratory analysis

A number of pre-specified exploratory sub-group analyses were undertaken to see whether Prison to Peace worked differently for:

- Boys compared to girls
- Catholics compared to Protestants
- Those with differing levels of multiple deprivation
- Year 10s to Year 11s
- Republicans compared to Loyalists
- Nationalists compared to Unionists
- Republicans and Nationalists compared to Loyalists and Unionists
- Those with differing scores on the outcome variable at pre-test

Although, the results, in Table 4.2 below, reveal several significant effects, no discernible pattern amongst these effects emerged. These results must therefore be considered with caution, given the number of tests undertaken (n=80), some significant results can be expected to occur randomly.

With this in mind, the analysis revealed significant effects on four of the outcome measures.

Talking to others: There was a greater increase amongst Protestants (g = +1.050, p<.001) than Catholics (g = +.443, p=.053).

Information Seeking: There was a large increase among those who already scored more highly on this at pre-test (g = +.893, p=.012) compared to no evidence of change for those who had low scores on this at pre-test (g = -.110, p=.709).

Participation (school): There was a significant increase among Year 11s (g = +.399, p=.002), whereas there was only a small increase among Year 10s which was not significant (g = +.062, p=.459).

Respect for Political Differences: There was a much larger increase amongst those who classify themselves as Republicans (g = +1.370, p<.001) compared to those who classify themselves as Loyalist where the increase is not statistically significant (g = +.336, p=.221).

Sectarian Prejudice (Blatant): The reduction in prejudice was more prominent for those from less deprived areas (g = -.822, p<.001) compared to those from more deprived areas (g = -.175, p=.443), as measured by the NIMDI. However, reduction in prejudice was also more prominent among those eligible for FSM (g = -.802, p<.001), compared to those not eligible for FSM (g = -.286, p=.063). Additionally, there was a large reduction in prejudice among those who already had low prejudice scores at pre-test (g=-1.042, p=.013) whereas there was a smaller (and non-statistically significant) reduction among those who had high prejudice at pre-test (g=-.300, p=.237). Reduction in prejudice among Year 11s (g = -.419, p<.001), compared to small and insignificant reduction among Year 10s (g= -.069, p=.357).

Table 4.2: Interaction Effects (Statistical Significance of Interaction Terms)

Outcome	Interaction Effects Explored								
	Boys vs Girls	Catholics vs Protestants	FSM vs Non FSM	Multiple Deprivation	Year 11 vs Year 10	Republican vs Loyalist	Nationalist vs Unionist	Republican/Nationalist vs Loyalist/Unionist	Pre test Score
Knowledge of causes/impact of 'Troubles' & transitional processes	.226	.304	.853	.244	0.453	.256	.871	.565	.647
Talking to others about politics	.635	**.028**	.150	.938	0.430	.340	.911	.788	.249
Participation (Politics)	.694	.233	.301	.131	0.646	.822	.439	.874	.205
Participation (School)	.638	.641	.750	.467	**0.021**	.288	.592	.323	.552
Information Seeking	.599	.978	.864	.647	0.226	.414	.274	.436	**.017**
Support for non-violence	.917	.667	.943	.283	0.223	.108	.973	.196	.750
Respect for political differences	.875	.981	.995	.399	0.586	**.013**	.767	.235	.664
Strength of belonging/exploration of own cultural identity	.676	.828	.783	.111	0.215	.951	.463	.705	**.016**
Sectarian prejudice (blatant scale)	.847	.754	**.089**	**.085**	**0.004**	.570	.950	.827	**.012**
Sectarian prejudice (subtle scale)	.422	.285	.603	.370	0.449	.369	.832	.483	.808

4.3 Awareness of complexity of conflict

This particular outcome was assessed through use of an open ended question asking the young people to explain what they felt had 'caused the Troubles' and items relating to 'why people got involved in the conflict'.

Causes of the 'Troubles'

Pre- and post-test responses were coded for both control and intervention groups. The coding for this was based on analyses of the causes of the Northern Ireland conflict from the literature. [47] As such responses were coded in relation to reasons which focused on purely individual motivation, those which simply blamed 'the other side', those which focused on endogenous explanations, those which located the conflict within a historical context. The frequencies for these are outlined below in Table 4.2.

The analysis indicates that for the intervention group 'blaming the other side' reduced considerably between pre- and post- test, whereas it increased slightly for the control group. Moreover, while endogenous explanations (i.e. those pointing towards internal conflict between the two main communities) remained largely unchanged overall for both intervention and control groups, there was a shift in emphasis in relation to explanations offered by the intervention group towards those based on political and/or national aspirations. Further, considerably more young people at post-test in the intervention group offered explanations relating to the context of the civil rights campaigns.

Table 4.3 Causes of the Troubles

Young people's understanding of the causes of the 'Troubles'	Intervention		Control	
	Pre %	Post %	Pre %	Post %
Individuals (no motivation other than doing wrong)	7.4	7.9	3.6	6.9
Individuals (influenced by revenge and/or peer pressure)	0	2.5	0	0
Blaming the 'other' side (total)	15.3	7.1	8.9	10.1
- blaming the 'other' religion	7.4	3.8	4.9	3.7
- blaming the 'other' political grouping	2.1	2.5	1.3	1.8
- blaming the 'other' national identity	5.8	0.8	2.7	4.6
Two communities disagreeing (total)	57.1	58.0	58.6	58.6
- two communities disagreeing (no reason offered)	31.0	24.2	30.9	32.3
- two communities disagreeing over religion	14.5	11.3	17.0	16.6
- two communities disagreeing over politics/national identity	11.6	22.5	10.7	9.7
Historical reasons (from plantation to partition)	6.6	6.7	5.8	4.6
Historical reasons (related to the context of civil rights)	3.3	10.0	6.3	4.6
Current reasons (related to current context)	0.8	1.7	3.6	2.3
Don't know	9.5	3.8	13.0	12.9

[47] For example Ruane and Todd suggest three key dynamics of the conflict in Northern Ireland: politics, the economy and culture. Similarly, McGarry and O'Leary point to a range of external and internal explanations: a range of political discourses, theological viewpoints, cultural interpretations and economic perspectives; see McGarry, J., and O'Leary, B. (1995) *Explaining Northern Ireland*. Oxford: Blackwell; also Ruane, J. and Todd, J. (1996) *The Dynamics of the Conflict in Northern Ireland.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Why people got involved in the conflict

Participants were asked to consider several statements explaining why people may have got involved in the conflict; they were then asked to rate how much they agreed with each statement on a 5 point Likert scale. The results are presented in Table 4.4.

These results highlight that the intervention group, at post-test, agreed more strongly that people got involved because: they were seeing family/friends get hurt, or family/friends were encouraging them to get involved; because of the media; for many reasons; and because they had no other choice. However, at post-test they agreed less with the more 'simplistic' statements, which tend to focus on individual 'badness', that is, because people are 'just bad' or 'bigoted'. For the control group, at post-test they agreed less with all statements, except for the last two, which focus on having no other choice, and family and friend's encouragement to get involved.

Table 4.4: Self-reported mean agreement with reasons why people got involved in the conflict

	Intervention		Control	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
They got involved because they were seeing their family and friends get hurt	3.71	3.85	3.70	3.64
They were just bad people who wanted to fight	2.83	2.65	2.82	2.78
They were bigoted and wanted to hurt people from the other side	3.20	3.13	3.25	3.17
The way the 'Troubles' was reported in the media (e.g., news programmes and newspapers) encouraged many people to get involved	3.54	3.62	3.49	3.40
They got involved for lots of different reasons	3.85	3.97	3.90	3.75
They had no other choice	2.54	2.71	2.50	2.67
Friends and family encouraged them to get involved	3.01	3.37	3.12	3.18

Taken together, the data suggest that young people who participate in the 'Prison to Peace' programme are more likely to develop a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of conflict.

4.4 Impact on pupils in relation to non-outcome specific issues explored in the trial

Aside from the main outcome measures, there were additional items included in the survey:

- questions suggested by members of the adult advisory group to explore young people's strength of cultural identity; and to explore young people's trust of a variety of parties in civic, political and social spheres;
- questions suggested by the young people's advisory group to ascertain if their peers were optimistic about peace in Northern Ireland.

The responses to these items were analysed in relation to potential pre- and post- test changes for intervention and control groups.

Cultural identity

A measure was included in the survey to ascertain if the programme had any impact on young people's sense of cultural identity. This measure assesses the extent to which young people feel a sense of belonging to their cultural community in addition to their willingness to explore their cultural identity (see Appendix 2)[48]. Allow not associated with an identified outcome of the programme the data relating to this measure were included in the main CRCT (see Table 4.5) and exploratory analysis (see Table 4.6).

Analysis indicates that there is no evidence of change in relation to the programmes impact on strength of cultural identity. Given that the programme does not seek to impact young people's strength of cultural identity, this is a positive result. Exploratory analysis indicates a fairly large increase in identity among those who already had a strong identity at pretest (g = +.617, p=.021) compared to a fairly large reduction in identity (although not statistically significant) among those who had a weak identity at pretest (g = -.679, p=.194). However, as noted in section 4.2 above, there is a strong likelihood that any significant results from the exploratory analysis have occurred randomly.

Table 4.5 Effect of 'Prison to Peace' on cultural identity

Measure	Post-test Mean Scores (standard deviations)*		Sig.	Hedges' g [95% CI]
	Intervention Group (n=255)	Control Group (n=242)		
Strength of belonging/exploration of own cultural identity	3.278 (.741)	3.228 (.764)	.584	**+.066** [-.170, +.302]

Table 4.6: Interaction Effect (Statistical Significance of Interaction Terms)

Measure	Interaction Effects Explored							
	Boys vs Girls	Catholics vs Protestants	FSM vs Non-FSM	Multiple Deprivation	Republican vs Loyalist	Nationalist vs Unionist	Republican/Nationalist vs Loyalist/Unionist	Pre-test Score
Strength of belonging/exploration of own cultural identity	.676	.828	.783	.111	.951	.463	.705	**.016**

[48] Note young people were given the opportunity to respond to the following statement: 'I don't belong to any cultural community. No young people in either the intervention or control group 'strongly agreed' with this statement (both groups pre-test mean=2.6; both group's post-test mean =2.7, on a 1-5 Likert scale where 5=strongly agree).

Changes in trust

Table 4.7 below demonstrates the mean scores for self-reported trust of a variety of parties in civic, political and social spheres in Northern Ireland. Descriptively, trust between pre- and post-test for the intervention group increased across each party, whereas, for the control group trust decreased across all parties.

Independent samples t-tests assessed if there was a significant difference between the intervention and control group's responses to these items at pre and post-test. At pre-test there were no significant differences. However, at post-test, one significant finding emerged, that is, the intervention group (M=3.19, SD=1.3) were significantly more trusting of the police, compared to the control group (M=2.87, SD=1.3; t (495) = 2.7, p=.007). This may be due to the fact that the control group's trust in the police significantly decreased between pre (M=3.04, SD=1.4) and post-test (M=2.87, SD=1.3, *t*(241)=2.1; p=.039). This finding must be contextualised within the broader political and social unrest that evolved over the course of this trial. Disputes regarding the union flag and dissident activity will be a confounding factor when interpreting these results. However, this considered, these data point to the capacity for a programme such as Prison to Peace to maintain/ increase trust in these bodies during times of social unrest.

Table 4.7: Trust - Mean values pre and post intervention across intervention and control groups

	Intervention		Control	
How much do you trust:	Pre test Mean	Post test Mean	Pre test Mean	Post test mean
Politicians	2.29	2.39	2.39	2.37
Media	2.32	2.37	2.33	2.24
NI government	2.61	2.76	2.75	2.62
Police	3.09	3.19	3.04	2.87
Political parties in NI	2.48	2.55	2.58	2.51

Further analysis also explored differences in pre- and post-test scores for each of the trust items to assess if there was a pattern emerging in terms of differences (i.e., across FSME, gender, religion, and political background), however, no such discernible pattern emerged.

Changes in optimism

Participants were asked if they felt that there was still conflict in Northern Ireland, these responses did not change greatly between pre (intervention group: 91% answered yes; control group: 94% answered yes) and post- test (intervention group: 87% answered yes; control group: 88% answered yes). In all circumstances the large majority of the respondents felt that there was still conflict in Northern Ireland.

To explore their optimism for peace in Northern Ireland, an additional question was asked: 'Do you think there will ever be permanent peace in NI?' Differences emerged with regards to responses to

this question. Table 4.8 below demonstrates that significantly more of the intervention group answered 'yes' at post-test (which rose quite substantially from pre-test) compared to the control group (which stayed much the same from pre- to post-test) (χ =5.3, p=.02). This result suggests that having participated in the programme the young people in the intervention group were more likely to believe permanent peace is possible in Northern Ireland, compared to the control group.

Table 4.8: Optimism - Association between pre/post scores across intervention and control groups

	Intervention		Control	
Do you think there will ever be permanent peace in NI?	Pre-test %	Post-test %	Pre-test %	Post-test %
Yes	27	37	25	26

Exploratory analyses, using Chi Square, assessed if there were any statistically significant associations between the frequency of 'yes' responses at post-test across several different groups, namely, FSME, gender, religion, and politics, for both the intervention and control groups. Despite, some significant associations found at pre-test, no significant results were found at post-test, suggesting that the likelihood to respond 'yes' to this question at post-test was not associated with any particular demographic detail.

4.5 Conclusion

In summary, the analyses have provided clear evidence of the positive effects of 'Prison to Peace' on young peoples' attitudes and behaviours. The results reveal that the programme has increased pupils' knowledge of the 'Troubles', as well as their support for non-violent means to deal with conflict. Additionally, the programme has increased young peoples' likeliness to participate positively in political activities, as measured by several indicators, i.e. their likeliness to participate in democratic activities in school, their tendency to talk to others about politics and their frequency of information seeking. Furthermore, although not considered as one of the main outcomes, the programme has reduced sectarian prejudice.

There is also evidence to suggest that young people who participate in the programme are more likely to develop a more nuanced understanding of the conflict, in that they are less likely to simply blame 'the other side' and more likely to locate the 'Troubles' within an understanding of its socio-political context. Further, the programme has potential to maintain trust in social, civic and political institutions and to encourage young people's optimism in relation to permanent peace.

Finally, the programme appears to work equally as well for all groups, as exploratory analyses revealed no consistent pattern of differential effects in terms of gender, religion, deprivation, or political background.

5. Findings – programme implementation

Since the findings from the CRCT should be understood in the context of the delivery of the programme, this chapter provides a short overview of the contexts in which the programme was implemented, including an analysis of classroom observations and panel discussions.

5.1 Implementation overview

As noted above, in order to inform the quantitative results, a variety of information was collected from each intervention school regarding implementation of the programme (see Appendix 7). Implementation seems to have focused most heavily on the first two sections of the programme: involvement in conflict and prison experience; with less focus on transition to peace and conflict transformation and on young people and community participation. This may explain, in part, the lack of significant increase in relation to the measure of pupils' political participation (see section 4.1 above).

Information regarding the exposure of control school pupils to any similar content was also sought. None of the pupils in the control schools, during the course of the Prison to Peace trial, had been exposed to similar material relating to the 'Troubles' which involved the discussion of, or interaction with, political ex-prisoners. As would be expected however, some had experienced lessons relating to the 'Troubles' in their history/ citizenship classes as part of the statutory curriculum. These details are presented in Appendix 7.

Teachers delivering the programme

In the majority of intervention schools the teacher who had been trained to deliver the programme was the only teacher implementing the programme. In some cases (School 2, School 3, School 5 and School 7) this was due the trained teacher feeling best equipped to deal with the sensitivities associated with the programme, either due to their subject background or previous involvement in similar initiatives (discussed more fully in Chapter 7). However, this resulted in the programme only being delivered to the classes within the year group that the teacher taught. In two cases the trained teacher involved another teacher in delivery of the programme to ensure that the full cohort received the programme; time was spent ensuring the additional teacher was fully briefed (School 4 and School 6). In one case (School 1), the programme was delivered to a full cohort of pupils by their form teachers, requiring cascading of training to those teachers who had not received the initial training in the programme. Whilst this ensured that all pupils received the programme, delivery was inevitably variable. However, this school intends to ensure that all staff are trained fully in the programme to ensure that all form teachers are equipped to deliver it should the need arise.

Notably, the majority of intervention schools intend running the programme with another cohort of pupils. In fact, to date, three schools (School 1, School 3 and School 6) have already completed a 'second-run'. Two schools are exploring options to maintain the programme within current curriculum structures (School 5 and School 7). One school (School 4), due to timetable constraints, no longer has curriculum time to run the programme, but is seeking opportunities to deliver the

programme as part of a cross-community initiative. Another school (School 2) is shifting the programme from Year 10 to Year 13 and intending to incorporate it as part of the A Level Politics programme.

5.2 Lesson observations

During each lesson observation several notes were made, the findings are presented below. Images of board work etc produced during lessons are included in Figure 5.1 below.

Lesson style and pedagogical approaches

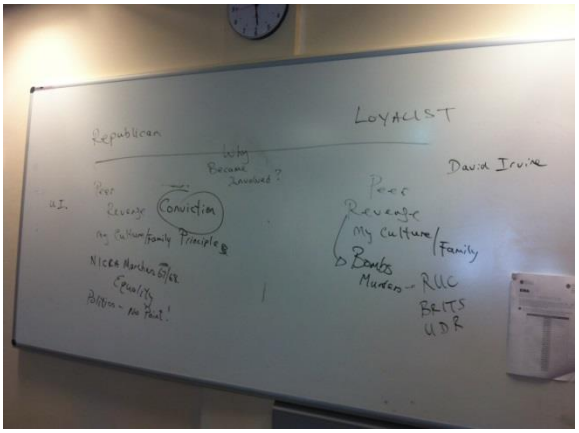
All the lessons observed could be categorised as teacher-led. The majority also adopted more dynamic lesson styles, for example, using group work and activities (as suggested in the 'Prison to Peace' resource). In certain instances there was evidence of teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil engagement. In these instances the teacher was very effective at facilitating discussion and debate. For example, in one class disagreement arose between two pupils with one girl stating 'I disagree', to which the teacher reminded the pupil that 'if you disagree, you have to justify why you disagree'. These particular lessons tended to appear less formal, where the teacher was very much on the pupils' level both physically (sitting with the pupils in their groups) and in their approach (having fun/ joking with the pupils etc.). Other teachers however, adopted a more didactic approach. For example, in one school the teachers tended to encourage pupil input only when the pupils were directly asked a question. Note that these teaching styles are reflected in the pupils' overall enjoyment of the programme (see Chapter 6), as the most positive school adopted less formal and more inclusive lessons.

With regard to pedagogical approaches adopted there was evidence of teachers shifting from the 'known' to the 'unknown'. For example, in one school the teacher used republicanism as the frame of reference that the boys would be familiar with, and then progressed to the less familiar topic of loyalism; finally comparing and contrasting the two. There was also evidence of the teachers drawing on their own personal experience as well as their use of additional resources, beyond those offered in the resource, e.g. using images of other goals in the lesson looking at prison life.

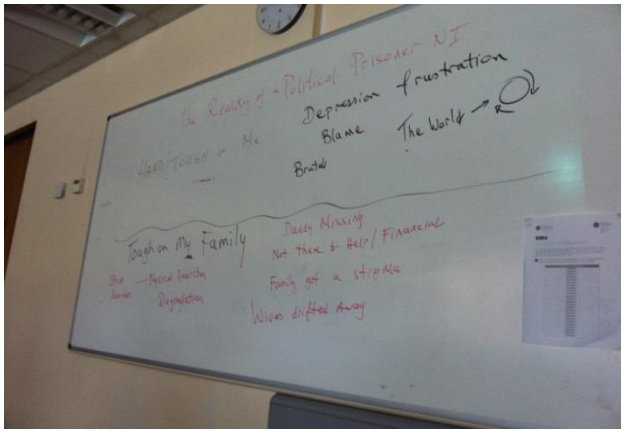
Engagement

Overall, the pupils appeared to enjoy the Prison to Peace lessons. Despite some signs of disinterest throughout the observations, there were also clear signs of engagement across the majority of lessons observed. For example, there was evidence of pupils reading carefully and in silence and at times highlighting and discussing issues with their friends, as well as instances when pupils would rehearse voluntarily a presentation they had to deliver to the rest of their class.

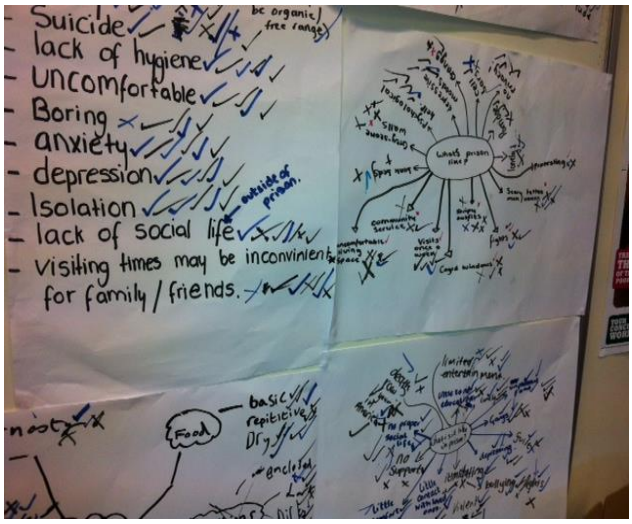
Engagement was highest during group work when there were more opportunities for pupil interaction; however, it dipped during segments which were more strongly teacher-led. In the more didactic lessons (noted above) pupils did not appear very engaged or responsive, for example, in this school questions asked tended to be ignored by the pupils, and when answered, they tended to be answered by the same pupil.



Why people got involved – board work



Tough on me; Tough on my family – board work



Prison experience – pupil work

Figure 5.1 Classroom images

Attitudes and behaviours

Although not evidenced directly there were signs of certain attitudes and behaviours being targeted during the observed lessons. For example, stereotypes of political ex-prisoners in Northern Ireland were challenged by teachers encouraging pupils to recognise the more positive roles played by ex-prisoners in society.

Pro-social behaviour was also encouraged in the lessons observed. Teachers utilized the programme to highlight the reality and negative impact of the prison experience *in general* and asked pupils to reflect on the implications of this for their own lives.

Sensitivities and challenges

In most lessons, there was evidence of sensitive issues being raised, and there were some good examples of these issues being dealt with. For example, in one class (in the school with informal

lessons and the highest reported pupil enjoyment) the term 'political prisoner' was problematized, in relation to the differences between political and 'other' ex-prisoners. The teacher handled this by probing the pupils, asking them to note the differences between these two types of prisoners, and the differences in terms of how they are viewed in their community. In another school the notion of ex-prisoners as victims was addressed, however, this was not fully explored.

In one school (that with the more didactic lessons), the tone of the lesson was quite neutral with very little reference to the conflict in Northern Ireland, rather it focused more on prison life in general. Very little sensitivity emerged in these lessons. However, one pupil did ask to leave the class as her uncle was in prison, the teacher obliged and asked the pupil's friend to accompany her.

5.3 Panel observations

During each observation of the panel discussion with political ex-prisoners several notes were made in relation to its conduct, questions asked, pupil engagement and the school's attitude towards the panel event. The findings are presented below.

School response

Overall in the panels observed the political ex-prisoners were very much welcomed into the school environment. In several schools they were introduced to the school principal and other members of staff. In several instances, out of interest, other members of staff attended the panel and contributed to the discussion.

Parental response

As noted in Appendix 7, very few parents raised concerns regarding the programme, with only a few reported cases of parents not giving consent for their children to attend the panel discussion. The views of parents, and the impact of this on school 'readiness' to engage with the programme, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Organisation and chairing of the panels

One school had organised the panel extremely well (notably, the school with the most positive pupils): the teacher initially explained the ground rules; she had asked another teacher (a politics teacher) to chair the session; the pupils were well prepared; one pupil had been appointed to thank the prisoners formally at the conclusion of the session. The chair in this session was extremely effective. For example, he invited speakers to introduce themselves; encouraged questions from pupils; when necessary re-phrased the pupils' questions for clarification for the panel members; was responsive to students' awareness, understanding and interest. Another example of effective chairing from a different panel included instances when the teacher checked for clarification amongst the pupils (in reference to some of the terminology used by the panel members). However, in other instances panel discussions could have been chaired more effectively. In such cases, while the chair facilitated 'turn taking' in terms of question asking, answers were not fully probed or built

upon to facilitate further discussion. Teachers would benefit from advice/guidelines on the features of effective panel facilitation.

Pupil engagement

Overall the pupils were extremely engaged during the panel discussions. For many, this was the highlight of the programme. For example, one boy when he learned he would miss the panel due to a geography field trip commented 'Sir, please get me out of geography'. Additionally, in one school the panel was the final lesson of the day, despite this, seven pupils stayed behind for almost an hour for an informal discussion, asking the panel members further questions. During all panels the pupils listened intently and maintained their focus and attention for the majority of the time. In one instance the teacher commented 'you could have heard a pin drop'. There was however instances when the pupils lost focus. This tended to be when the ex-prisoners spoke for long periods of time, or when their answers used political terminology unfamiliar to the pupils.

Questions

In most cases the pupils had the opportunity to discuss and prepare questions before the panel. In some instances the questions were quite straight forward, for example, 'what were the best and worst things about being in the paramilitaries?' and 'how long did you spend in prison?' But overall, the majority of questions asked were very well informed and thoughtful. Such questions focussed less on the facts and the prison experience, and more on the panel members' views on substantial issues, such as economic, educational and social issues. For example, 'will a united Ireland create more jobs for us?'; 'why do you think young people are getting involved with dissidents, and what are you doing to try and stop it in your community?; and 'what are your views on integrated education?'. Mostly the pupils were satisfied with the responses they received from panel members, although the observations revealed that at times the responses were lengthy and not fully relevant to the question posed. In such situations pupil interest waned. Despite this, overall the panels observed were very successful. Their success could be maximised further with less direct input from the panel members during introductions and more of an emphasis on answering questions succinctly. This would allow more time for pupil input and probing questions. Panel members could also ask pupils following a response if they feel their question has been answered.

5.4 Conclusion

Evaluation of the implementation of the programme in schools suggests that successful implementation of the programme relies on teachers being committed to and confident in delivering the material and pupils being engaged through active and participatory approaches in the classroom. Panels are successful when pupils are well prepared, chairing is efficient and reflective, and when ex-prisoners remain focussed on age-appropriate concise answers.

6. Findings - young people's perspectives

This chapter outlines findings in relation to young people's perspectives on the 'Prison to Peace' programme: their learning from the programme and their 'readiness' to engage with the past, despite its controversy and sensitivities. It begins with an analysis of the data from the post-test section of the survey for intervention schools which asked respondents specific questions in relation to their enjoyment of the programme and suggestions for its improvement. The chapter then presents an analysis of the qualitative data collected across intervention schools through focus groups with young people.

It is worth noting again that the schools in which the programme was implemented can be classified as schools 'ready' to deal with contentious issues in the curriculum. The experience of the young people who participated in the programme and this research should be understood within this context.

6.1 Post-test survey of young peoples' response to 'Prison to Peace'

The post-test survey asked the pupils to rate their enjoyment of the programme as well as their views on programme improvement. Table 4.1 below highlights that overall the pupils enjoyed the Prison to Peace programme (with 0=not at all; 5= a lot). Aspects of the programme enjoyed most included learning about the prison experience and asking the ex-prisoners questions during the panel discussion.

Table 4.1: Enjoyment of Prison to Peace

How much did you enjoy…?	Mean	SD
The Prison to Peace programme overall?	3.9	1.1
Learning about the 'Troubles'	4	1.1
Learning about why people got involved in 'paramilitary' groups	3.9	1
Learning about the prison experience	4.1	1
Learning about ways to deal with conflict, without using violence	3.9	1.1
Learning about what ex-prisoners are doing now in the community	4	1
Learning about ways in which Northern Ireland can move away from its violent past	3.9	1.1
Listening/talking to ex-prisoners (at the panel discussion)	4.1	1.2

The items above were combined to create an overall enjoyment measure (exploratory factor analysis and reliability analysis was conducted to ensure suitability, note Cronbach's alpha = .95) which was then used to explore further how enjoyment of the programme varied across different groups of pupils. Some statistically significant differences emerged. In relation to gender, girls were significantly more positive in terms of their enjoyment of the programme overall (M=4.07, SD=1) in comparison to the boys (M=3.63, SD=1.1; $t(299)=-3.5$, p=.001). However, it is important to highlight that one school within the sample was an all girls' school (School 3), and this school was consistently more positive across all of these enjoyment questions (and significantly more positive ($p<.05$) across five of the items). In relation to FSME, those not entitled to a FSM were consistently most positive (and significantly so across five of the items), compared to those with FSME and those who were not sure. Finally, in terms of religion and political background, Catholics (M=4.03, SD=1.1) and

Republicans and Nationalists (M=4.2, SD=.97) were significantly more positive across the overall enjoyment item compared to the other groups (e.g. Protestants and Unionists etc.).

Young people's self-reported learning from the 'Prison to Peace' programme

Young people were asked to complete an opened ended response in relation to what they had learned from the programme. Overall the majority of young people reported positive learning gains. Thematic analysis of the responses indicated several common self reported learning outcomes, outlined below.

- Most young people reported that the programme had resulted in increased knowledge and awareness of the Northern Ireland conflict, for example, 'how the troubles came about', 'what paramilitary groups were', 'how much problems there were' and 'what happened back then'.

- Another commonly reported aspect of learning from the programme was insight into 'why people got involved' in paramilitary groups and 'why people decided to use violence'. In relation to this, some responses indicated an understanding of the complexity of people's involvement. For example, one young person stated that there 'many reasons for joining the paramilitary groups', and another that 'a lot of people did not want to get involved back then but they did not want their friends and family hurt'.

- Many young people also indicated that they had learned more about the complexity of the conflict, for example, one comment stated that 'there is [sic] two sides to each story and it is a lot more difficult for people than I thought'. This appreciation for how 'both sides were affected' was frequently cited. Further, the young people demonstrated an understanding of the similarities between both sides of the community. For example, some comments included 'there isn't much differences between the two religions 'and 'people from different backgrounds can be the same'. Similarly the commonalities in terms of the impact of the conflict was also recognised, for example, 'I learned that Catholics were affected and hurt by the troubles equally as much as Protestants' and 'both sides were affected in the same way'.

- An appreciation for non-violent means was also evident as a key learning outcome for many young people. For example, one young person stated 'violence is never the way', while another commented that they learned about 'ways to deal with conflict instead of using violence'. Similarly another young people commented that they learned that 'it's ok to be different and to fight for what you believe in without conflict'.

- Many young people identified that learning about the prison experience was a major learning outcome for them in the programme. For example, they stated they had learned 'about the prison experience and how people's lives were changed' and 'what life is really like in prison'.

- More specifically, young people indicated that a key learning point for them was about the negative impact of imprisonment. For example, they learned 'that jail is a bad place to go', 'that prison is a bad place to be and can ruin your life physically and mentally 'and 'how much jail messed up their [the ex-prisoners minds] minds'. Associated with this was understanding of the

wider impact of prison, for example, 'how people around them were affected' and the 'effect on families when people go into prison'.

- There was some evidence of some young people revising their opinions of ex-prisoners. For example, some young people stated that they had learned: that 'not all prisoners were murderers or bad people'; about 'what political ex-prisoners do in their community now'; 'that ex-prisoners can turn their lives around'.

- Finally, a degree of optimism was also demonstrated in the open ended responses from some young people. For example, one stated that they learned that 'change can happen'. Another felt that they as young people were in control of this change - 'My generation is in charge of carrying on the peace process'. Others appreciated the importance of 'respect' and the progress made in Northern Ireland, for example, one young person commented that 'We are a GOOD COUNTRY, striving to be PEACEFUL'.

Notably, these themes also arose in the focus groups with young people, discussed in section 6.2 below, which provided an opportunity to explore in more depth young people's experience of the programme.

Young people's views on other schools doing the programme

As well as enjoying the programme, the majority of the respondents (94%) agreed that other schools 'should do this programme'. Respondents were asked to explain the rationale for their response. While the majority of comments were quite basic, for example 'it is good', it is interesting', 'it is very educational' and it is 'very worthwhile' (or for the small number who did not enjoy the programme, 'it is boring', 'it is a melt' or 'because what is the point in learning about the past?'), others offered more extensive reasons. Thematic analysis of these responses indicates four key reasons offered by the young people as to the value of the programme.

First, the young people felt the programme would be beneficial to their peers in other schools as it would mean that 'all young people would have a knowledge of the situation'. Related to this there was a sense that the young people who responded felt that it was important to learn about the past in order to understand fully the context of the society in which they are living. For example, one respondent stated:

> As a young girl, I grew up never really told anything about the troubles….I feel that this programme really helps young people learn about the history of Northern Ireland.

Secondly, although less frequent, there were comments suggesting that the programme could change the way young people think. For example, one respondent stated:

> I strongly think that other schools should do this programme as it changes initially how you think, you have an open mind about things, it was quite inspiring to see ex-prisoners get along so well and tell their stories.

Other comments suggest that the young people felt the programme could encourage tolerance. For example, 'it helps people understand other points of view' and 'young people need to learn how to tolerate and understand other people and their beliefs'.

Thirdly several respondents suggested that the programme could help with current issues in society. For example, some stated: 'because it will help stop the fighting', 'it can push kids away from violence' and 'it is good to learn from our mistakes from the past so we don't repeat them in the future'.

Finally, several young people also felt that this programme could encourage young people to be optimistic about peace. For example, 'so we can move on to a better future and all be at peace' and 'because it shows there can be peace'.

Recommendations for programme improvement

The majority (85%) of young people felt that nothing needed added to the programme. For those that felt something should be added suggestions were made in terms of content; several young people commented that additional voices should be included, for example, prison guards, victims and female ex-prisoners. Other suggestions included the addition of further detail on current issues, attempts to 'reconnect communities' and the role of the media, specifically in relation to 'how Northern Ireland was portrayed through media to the world during the Troubles and how this affects our identity today'. It was also suggested that the programme could be contextualised more with examples given in relation to how the 'Troubles' started and more detail in terms of the different groups involved.

Suggestions were also made in relation to how the programme could be better delivered. These suggestions all favoured more interactive approaches. For example, respondents suggested a visit to a prison, the opportunity to interview the prisoners (notably in the school which did not have a panel), the inclusion of more videos, discussions, debates, activities and games.

The majority (92%) of respondents did not feel that anything needed to be taken out of the programme. For those that did feel omissions were necessary very few offered any recommendation.

Finally, 10% of the young people felt that some aspects of the programme should be done differently. A few specific suggestions were made such as including more 'visual stuff' and 'practical things', extended duration (especially for panel discussion), and more ex-prisoner stories.

6.2 Focus groups with young people in intervention schools

While the post-test survey of young people's experience of the programme provided some insight into how the programme was received generally by young people, focus groups conducted across the intervention schools allowed for a more nuanced engagement with the central research questions associated with this study. An analysis of the data from these focus groups, by the adult researchers and the YPAG, indicated a number of emerging themes presented below: young people's readiness to learn about the past; the value in learning about the past; the value in learning from the narratives of ex-prisoners; creating space for reflection on multiple perspectives; providing space to reach own conclusions; challenging prejudice; challenging involvement in violence; generating optimism; awareness of sensitivities; and trusting teachers.

Readiness to learn

Young people across the focus groups were clearly keen to learn about the conflict and its legacy, and indicated that they felt 'ready' to do so. This they associated with their own maturity and with a need to understand their own history and current context.

Maturity

Young people in intervention schools felt that they were mature enough to deal with the range of perspectives required to understand fully the nature of the conflict, as typified by the following extracts from the focus groups:

> You need to be old enough to understand that people do have disagreements and you can't just be, really a child about it and get all offended at one thing. You need to be able to listen level headedly to both sides of the story. So I think there is a certain age where it should to be taught in class, you know...I think Secondary School is the best time to learn it cause of the level of maturity. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> We're more mature now and can get out heads around it. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Young people also indicated that their increased maturity meant that they could explore perspectives and form their own view:

> Pupil 1: It depends on the age you start learning about it though. If you start learning about it when you're younger…
> Pupil 2: You wouldn't really get the grasp of it you'd just listen to it and it sort of, wouldn't go in. But if you learned about it at our age (age 15) now you can sort of analyse and take it in and sort of make it build your views on things. (Focus group, Integrated School, School 1)

Notwithstanding the sensitivities inherent in tackling these issues in the classroom (discussed further below), the young people were confident that they were at a stage of maturity where they could handle such topics, as one young person explained:

> You're not ready to learn about the stuff like that there … the brutality of it … when you're young, you have to be at a certain age to actually understand it as well. You don't understand it when you're younger; it's kind of just going in one ear and out the other. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained School, School 5)

Further, as another young person noted, at their age they were expected to deal with other sensitive topics in class:

> If you compare the Holocaust to the Troubles there's a lot more that's in-depth and a lot more, in a way, scary about the Holocaust that the Troubles. (Pupil, Controlled School, School 4)

Needing to understanding their own context

The young people's readiness to learn was also attached to what they considered as their *need* to learn about their own history. The vast majority of the young people interviewed felt it was more interesting and more important that they learned about the 'Troubles' than other historical events:

> It's interesting when it's your own country rather than another country. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> It's still a piece of history and you just can't brush it under the carpet, it would be like turning around and saying you shouldn't learn about WWI. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> Because that [other histories] doesn't affect us but the Troubles does, it affects our family, our friends. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

> Yes they're both [learning about the world wars and the 'Troubles] just as interesting; World War One and Two affected – well, it's world war – affected the entire world but the Troubles did affect us specifically so we need to know. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

It was clear from the young people's responses that this need to learn about the past was connected to their need to understand the context in which they were living; a context that for many of them remained deeply divided and where aspects of the conflict continued:

> You can even see looking around Belfast even the Peace Wall is still evidence that it did happen, you can't hide from it happening and even if you walk into a particular area that might be majority Catholic or majority Protestant you can still see the divide between the two areas. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

> I think it should be taught in classes, like, the deep detail because you have to know about it because it's sort of Northern Irish history that you sort of have to get used to because it still happens today, it's still going to happen in a few years, it's still going to happen in about twenty years, so you have to know about it. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> It did happen then and now we're living it. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Notably, for some young people, their need to learn about the 'Troubles' was expressed as a 'right'.

The value in learning about the past

Young people across the focus groups were by and large insistent that there was value in learning about the past in that it could help prevent history being repeated, it helped 'make sense' of the conflict and its legacy, and it encouraged inter-generational understanding.

Preventing history being repeated

A very small minority of the young people (in total, six young people across the focus groups) questioned the value in learning about the past. For some, this was due largely to them not having a personal interest in the topic, finding it 'boring' or 'not useful':

> I'd rather not...[learn about the 'Troubles'] I'd rather have been studying something useful, I don't find this useful at all. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

For others, their reasons for not wanting to learn out the past were related chiefly to how it might exacerbate conflict and that there was more need to look forward, as illustrated in this exchange:

> Pupil 1: I personally don't think it's good enough to bring up old history and, like, stuff that's happened in the past, like, if people learn about it then they might agree with it and want it to start again.
> Pupil 2: I think we should just look towards the future instead of the past.
> Pupil 3: Well, I can see where you're coming from, like, I myself…there are more important events in history that have happened and, like, you just have to…through the twentieth century just to see what kind of stuff is more important. But in terms of just our country, it is important to know about it because, say we just leave it in the past, that's fine but then, if we don't learn from it what's to stop someone else from making those same mistakes…. You could argue that it could start again and that….but equally by looking at it you're encouraging people to look at mistakes people made then and how not to make those mistakes again.
> (Focus Group, Integrated School, School 1)

However, the view expressed above, that it could prevent further conflict, was the view of the majority of young people interviewed, as illustrated by these indicative quotes:

> If we don't learn about the past we could even repeat it in the future (Pupil, Integrated School, School 6)

> And if they [learn about the past] then they'd know that they'd would never want to go back to them days (Pupil, Catholic Maintained School, School 5)

For other young people, there was a need to learn about the past so that society could move on:

> You can't really move on unless you know about it [the 'Troubles']. Because if you're just going into it like not knowing about it and just being like blind from it, then how do you expect to move on if you don't know what happened and how to change it. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

'Making sense' of the legacy of conflict

Young people in the focus groups across intervention schools also suggested that learning about the past through the 'Prison to Peace' programme had helped them gain a clearer sense of the (ongoing) impact the conflict had on society. The value in this was that it helped them make sense of the division they experienced in their own communities, as illustrated by these indicative quotes:

> We're growing up in like, kind of this state now where everybody like, there is still people out there that will fight with the other, you know, and talk bad about them all and then you walk past and you'll see two people and you'll go, 'Why? Why are they doing this thing?' And you come in the class and you learn about the Troubles and then you're like, 'I get it now'. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> When I was younger I thought that the Troubles were just a few people with disagreements I didn't realise it was such a large scale so when we started to learn about it I realised almost why the people had the thoughts and feelings that they did. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar, School 3)

> When I was younger I didn't really understand why you couldn't go into this certain area wearing a Celtic top or you wouldn't be able to walk into this area wearing a Union Jack, I didn't understand, like, why this was happening, so then once I found out it was from something that happened in the Troubles I wanted to know why people started to feel like that and just wanted a clear understanding, like, of the whole division in groups of people. I understand it a lot more. (Pupil, Catholic Girl's Grammar, School 3)

Inter-generational understanding

Young people also reported that learning about the past through programmes like 'Prison to Peace' had value in that it had helped them understand the context in which family members, such as grandparents and parents, had lived:

> It's what your families grew up on. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

> If your parents are talking about it and if you don't know about it you won't understand and then they're trying to communicate with you, you're just going to sit there and be like 'I don't know what you're talking about'. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> I think it's really important cause it's stuff that like our like mummies and daddies and grannies and all went through and we shouldn't just forget about it, we should learn about it to, like, so stuff like that doesn't happen again. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar, School 3)

> Like you were also able to know [through doing the programme] what your mum and dad grew up in, what kinds of conditions are different from now. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

Indeed some young people suggested in order to secure peace, they had a role to play in ensuring the generation after them also learnt about and from the past:

> You don't want to bring up your children not really knowing and not them understanding what's going on. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

The value in learning through the 'Prison to Peace' programme

The value in learning about and from the past outlined above could be realised through any number of approaches in the curriculum, however the young people did see particular value in learning from the experience of political ex-prisoners.

Value of first-hand accounts

First, they saw value in first-hand accounts of certain aspects of the conflict, which were grounded in the reality of lived experiences:

> Pupil: It brings sort of like, reality to it.
> Interviewer: Why?
> Pupil: Because they're telling us about it from their views.
> (Pupil, Integrated School, School 6)

> There were two men who came in [referring to the panel]; they're the ones who experienced it and they know the most about what happened and all that. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained School, School 7)

As some young people explained further, the accounts of ex-prisoners were of more value to them than learning from 'historians' or 'politicians':

> Because they [historians] didn't actually experience it they're just looking at facts and what they saw through, like, media and stuff but then what prisoners, like, they experienced it and they know, like, what happened. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> Because an ex-prisoner was there, he was the one who maybe, maybe he didn't, but he was most likely the one who picked up a gun and went for it and he spent his life in prison and he spent his life going through it. A politician, yes, he can say what he thinks, but he wasn't really there to know what it actually was. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Understanding the impact of involvement

These accounts also helped young people come to terms with what had motivated individuals to get involved in the conflict, the impact of prison and, notably, the similarities of republicans and loyalists:

> We watched a film on it the other day and it tells you why the people got into it and it was very interesting because some people got into it because of their families just they were brought up in it or other people because somebody got killed. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> I think it's good because, like, you get to find out what it's really like in the prison and you get to find out, that, like, that Loyalists and Republicans have, like, the same experiences even though they were

> fighting for, like, different things but they were, like, experiencing the same things in prison. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar, School 3)

> It makes you recognise about what actually happened and what happened to the families and stuff like that, the aftermath of it. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 6)

For some young people, these aspects of the programme helped them to grasp the reality of conflict:

> I didn't really think it was bad before, like, as bad as it was until we learned about it. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Creating space for reflection on multiple perspectives

Young people indicated that the programme had given them the opportunity to explore a range of different perspectives on the conflict and as a result felt they were given a more balanced view than perhaps was the case from some of their homes and communities. As one young person explained in relation to the impact the programme had on her:

> [Before doing the programme] I only had views, like, where I came from but now it's, like, wider view on it. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Young people across the intervention schools had clearly valued being able to see 'both sides', which appeared to be challenging some previously held views and assisting them in developing more nuanced understandings of the conflict:

> So I found out that there....just wasn't only one side it was both sides and it's both sides to blame not just one. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> We probably have a stronger understanding of what all went on and how other people felt, not just ourselves, we learned how it affected others and... other communities rather than just our own. How it affected people in Belfast or how it affected people who had people die, not just Protestants dying but the other side as well. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> Like, when you're reading the, like, people's opinions of their experiences you can see that everybody's sort of the same, like the Loyalists and the Republicans, they were kind of having the same experience they were just on different sides. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

> I think it's [the programme] important because it gets rid of the prejudices we have against certain groups of people and the stories that we've heard from the Troubles, but with the Prison to Peace, that programme, you were able to see both sides of the story so you could see what actually happened. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

The value of the panel in particular in helping young people see 'both sides' was evident across the focus groups:

> The two ex-prisoners who came in, one was Protestant and one was Catholic. So it wasn't just two Catholics coming in giving their side and then not having the Protestant side, or two Protestants coming in and not having a Catholic side. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained School, School 7)

> Well, we've heard the experiences of two ex-prisoners and along with that two different sides of the story which is quite rare to get and something like that it really provides you with understanding because as you're hearing it from the horse's mouth. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

Overall, as one young person simply stated, the programme made them realise that 'it's not so black and white'.

For some young people this in turn helped them to develop and articulate what one referred to as a more 'educated opinion' that wasn't based on 'just what we hear [in home and the community]' (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3). Further, the more 'in-depth' learning about the conflict in the programme for some young people resulted in questioning previous held views as untrue. As one young person explained, this meant that 'you don't go off and just keeping say stuff which isn't true' (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4).

Other young people explained that it had challenged what they had previously learnt from the media about the conflict, who in their opinion, as one pupil explained, 'sensationalise things, like make it exciting'; the Prison to Peace programme they suggested, countered this as it was 'more real'. As one young man explained:

> I mean all the kids know what happened, that something did happen, but a lot of them don't know what happened in detail and they might miss a lot of facts that are crucial and it just kind of helps out, it just gives them the reality of it. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

Finally, for some young people it had added considerably to their understanding of how the experience of conflict can result in positive outcomes during transition. As one young person stated:

> It's sort of given you more stuff to put in your opinion, it's sort of handed you another slice or something to grasp on to instead of always thinking about it just being bad, like the Troubles being bad, it sort of also makes you recognize how it may be good for some things. Not the full-blown, like, fighting and everything but it can sort of make you recognise that after it, the aftermath can sort of bring out good things as well. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

What was evident from the focus groups was, that the while the programme addresses issues from the perspectives of political ex-prisoners, it was clearly being used by teachers as a vehicle to open up multiple perspectives on the conflict in general.

Providing a space to reach own conclusions

Young people valued that the programme provided space for them to reflect on a range of views and to develop their own perspectives. Resonating with the theme of 'readiness and maturity' outlined above, young people across the focus groups felt they were at an age where they could start to

develop ideas independent of their family and community perspectives, illustrated by the comments below:

> Because you have sort of been brought up by your parents and you have a sort of chance when you're coming in around that 15 or 16 odd age, you'd be able to sort of become sort of independent, have a sort of independence and have your own views so you could classify your parents as one type of opinion and then you own as a type of opinion. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

> Because now we start to get a voice, get our own opinion but our opinions whenever we are younger is just brought upon us by other influences like family and friends and the community. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> Cause, like, your mummy and daddy would tell you stuff about it and then you just think that's automatically right but then you learn about other people's opinions so then you second guess yourself and stuff. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar, School 3)

> But, like, telling...you're being told that certain group's bad and, like stay away from them, that may be just, like, your mummy and daddy's opinion and you need your own opinion and school's, like, helping you to get that. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

The issue of tensions this might create was also raised in each focus group. The young people recognized that while discussing new perspectives in some home contexts might be problematic, it had benefits, as illustrated in this exchange:

> Interviewer: Can you see any problems with that? Going home with different views?
> Pupil 1: If, like, you're at home and you've been told something completely different to what the teachers are saying or, like, what's in a book or something, and then, like, you go home and say to you parents, or something, and they start an argument with you over it.
> Interviewer: Yea, OK. So you might hear something in school that's completely different to what you heard at home?
> Pupil 1: Yea.
> Pupil 2: Yea, But it could be a good thing, because it could, like, open your mind more.
> (Focus Group, Integrated School, School 1)

Young people also felt that the relationship between home and school could assist a more detailed understanding of the conflict and its legacy, as explained below:

> I suppose school and home, like, I mean, it's handy to get the factual details and recorded events of what happened, in school, since they can provide the resources and it has credibility to it, you know that it's not something that's half-baked and shoved in your face but again at home, when you talk to people who've experienced this, who've seen the effects and impact it's had first-hand, and then remember…they remember what it was like, they've grown up during this time and often that's how history has been passed on through generations, through word of mouth. (Pupil, Integrated College, School 1)

> Like your teacher's not going to tell like personal matters and all, like if their family members were killed, but your family can tell you that. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained School, School 5)

> It could be a tricky thing cause if you said it to your parents they might not be fit to explain it fully or as full as the teacher could so you might not get the whole picture. But your parents or brother or sister might know a bit more about what happened in the local community other than the teacher. So you're basically getting your local story as well as what happened elsewhere in Northern Ireland. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

In short, what emerged from the focus groups was that young people expected their teachers to provide them with the 'big picture' into which they could place the particular lived experiences of their family and community. Further, young people reported that they were engaging more with family members in conversations related to the 'Troubles' and the nature of Northern Irish society.

Challenging prejudice

Across the intervention schools, young people reported that the programme had challenged some of their previously held stereotypes and prejudicial views. First, it had made some young people think differently about the ex-prisoners themselves, as exemplified by this focus group extract:

> Pupil 1: It doesn't give the stereotypical view on prisoners because you did think they were all bad but really some of them might of made a mistake that they've regretted for the rest of their lives and have to live with the consequences of it.
> Pupil 2: It sort of makes you recognize that they're real people too, they're not just sadistic people with no emotions, that didn't feel emotion for everyone else.
> Interviewer: Do the rest of you agree with that?
> All: Yea.
> Interviewer: Did it kind of challenge your opinions of ex-prisoners?
> All: Yea.
> Interviewer: In what way?
> Pupil 3: Like, before you would have thought because they're ex-prisoners that they've got a bad mind in their head but then you actually see them and how they talk like they were with ok and all and like I wouldn't expect that. And you kind of just change your opinion that they can actually change and get on with each other and try and promote peace in Northern Ireland.
> (Focus Group, Integrated School, School 1)

In addition, the programme appears to have encouraged young people to think differently about their attitudes to 'the other community'. This seems to have been based on recognition of the similarity of experiences of both loyalist and republican ex-prisoners (noted above), with young people inferring that people were generally 'the same':

> Yea, cause, like, they're (other community) like the same as you when you didn't think that before [doing the programme]. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

> Oh what's good about it [the programme] is ..... I remember when I was, I would have been sectarian, but now that in the school we learned about the Troubles and going through Prison to Peace and all, I can just say we're all really just the same. Yeah some people might wear a Rangers top and other people might wear Celtic top or whatever, but then you think, what if they're all just, everybody's just equal, everybody's the same. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

The programme also appears to helped young people understand the extent to which all sections of the community had experienced the conflict and as such were bound to feel anger. As one young person stated:

> It [the programme] sort of encourages...it sort of tells you or shows you both sides of the story and it makes you actually think properly as to how the other side felt as well and how they have experience some of the same emotions as you have. They felt the anger, they felt the crossness, they felt the exact same feelings we have. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 6)

Another young person's perspective illustrates the effect a similar realisation had on them:

> You'd probably be more respectful to the other side. You wouldn't be just quite as blunt or cross at them and you'd try to, like, mend what they had broke years ago so that it doesn't happen again so that nothing as bad or worse would happen. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Finally, across the focus groups young people reported that the programme had encouraged them to 'always respects others' views' and had made them 'more aware of how we act outside of school towards these views'.

Challenging involvement in violence

Some young people in the focus groups when asked if it was important for their peers to participate in programmes like 'Prison to Peace' indicated that they felt it could potentially challenge young people who were inclined to using or supporting violence to further political goals, as illustrated in this exchange and comment below:

> Pupil: You know the way there are still small factions of them [referring to 'dissident' groups] still fighting? It's better if this information in a school environment instead of one of them [a member of a 'dissident' group] trying to convince them [a young person] to join up by saying all these things.
> Interviewer: Would it make them think about it more?
> Pupil: Yeah. Like this whole Prison to Peace describes how there's no need for violence anymore, whereas if one of them was talking to you they would say "Join up" and "All these bad things that they did to us".
> Interviewer: Okay, so you think it could potentially stop somebody from joining up?
> Respondent: Yes.
> (Focus Group, Catholic Maintained secondary School, School 7)

> It's very important, it'll keep us away from joining those sort of groups [dissident groups] (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

This sentiment was expressed across the focus groups, with young people offering a range of reasons as to why the programme might deter them from involvement in violence:

> It'll make sure you don't want to go back and, like, relive the past (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

> Because you would know not to kick off and ….. You're more aware of the consequences. (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

> It teaches you .... you know, don't get involved in the violence because it will only bring, you know, sadness to your life and I know like somebody may have hurt you but let them be .... if you ended up in gaol that means your family is going to suffer (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

It was evident from the focus groups that engagement with the narratives of ex-prisoners, alongside the panel discussion, confronted young people with the reality of involvement in violence and the consequences of prison, which in turn had the potential to deter them from engaging in activity that would result in them experiencing the same issues.

Generating optimism

One issue that arose in the focus group was that they young people felt the programme, particularly the panel discussion with republican and loyalist ex-prisoners, made them optimistic about a future peaceful society, as illustrated by these comments:

> It's good to see them [ex-prisoners], like, get along because then you just think if everyone…well not everyone could get along but, like, if they [the ex-prisoners] can, then there might be, like, peace (Pupil, Integrated School, School 5)

> It's just really made, like, a reassurance that, like, we do live in peace in comparison to what it was back then and we should keep it this way (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

> I gained a sense of optimism [speaking of the panel discussion] because peace seems now much more achievable that it was say fifteen twenty years ago and now that, you know…that it's a lot easier to start moving forward and establishing that peace (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

As one young person explained, seeing republican and loyalist ex-prisoners discuss issues on the panel gave him an alternative outlook to that which he had previously had based on his perception of mainstream politics:

> I don't think young people like ourselves see that enough [referring to the engagement with panel]. Because of like party politics and stuff, I don't think we, like, see enough of that. If we did maybe we'd have a better outlook on it. (Pupil, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School, School 5)

Awareness of sensitivities

Young people across the intervention schools were acutely aware of the sensitive nature of this type of educational programme. In particular they drew attention to the impact it might have on those whose family had direct experience of the conflict, how conversations resulting from the programme might offend their peers and finally the emotional impact of the programme.

Impact on those with direct experience of the conflict

Discussion in relation to this centred primarily on the impact it might have on those who had lost loved ones during the conflict:

> Yeah, people did lose like relatives and family by the other side. They don't want to learn about the others. Dig up the past. (Pupil, Controlled School)

Further, some young people suggested that those who had maybe been involved or had family members involved in the conflict would find talking about the issues problematic:

> People maybe have had experiences in the past, you know with the police and stuff and they might not want to talk about it so it might be difficult for them to, like, be having a discussion about it. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar)

To this end some young people suggested that the programme could involve a range of 'other voices', such as those from victims' groups or former soldiers and police officers.

Concerns regarding offending peers

Young people also suggested that, particularly in mixed classrooms, they might feel apprehensive about offending others with their perspectives when sharing views, as illustrated by this exchange:

> Interviewer: What's quite difficult about learning about this sort of stuff in school?
> Pupil 1: You might be scared of, like, offending someone.
> Pupil 2: You could touch a raw nerve.
> Pupil 1: Just being sensitive to other people's experiences, like, because it's been said before that people across Northern Ireland have had different experience of the Troubles, like, some people it hasn't touched much, other people it's, its'…had a big impact. So again it's really just being conscious of other people's beliefs or their just…really it's just being conscious of other people's experience of the Troubles that can sometimes be quite difficult when learning about it.
> Interviewer: Who do you think has to be conscious?
> Pupil 1: I'd say everybody because if people are doing a group task and people start touching raw nerves things could escalate quite quickly. I think again if it was teacher not showing enough sensitivity, then again things might escalate quite quickly, so.
> (Focus Group, Integrated School, School 1)

The idea of escalation outside class was raised in other focus groups as a potentially difficult issue arising from the programme:

> Sometimes there can be somebody who's very sectarian, then, like, they say something [sectarian] about or 'it's their [meaning 'the other community'] fault' or something, or they say, 'Oh, you can have your opinion but I know what's right', you know, yeah. And then it can lead on out of the classroom because they wouldn't drop it. They'd keep it going, you know, and even the next day in history or citizenship whatever the case is, they'll bring it up again. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

As noted above, this points to the need for teachers to handle conversations inside the class and potential outside class situation with sensitivity. This is discussed more fully in Chapter 7.

Emotional impact

Some young people indicated that there were aspects of the programme that made them feel apprehensive. For example, in this case, these young people explained that learning about the positive work of ex-prisoners in their community had as a corollary made them more aware of those who were not committed to the peace process:

> Pupil 1: But it's sort of tricky knowing that there still are some bad people out there that weren't caught, they're still out…still got their view and…
> Pupil 2: They're still forcing it on….
> (Focus Group, Integrated School, School 6)

One young person shared how she had been fearful regarding the ex-prisoner panel discussion. She explained:

> Pupil: I was really, like, nervous about it, like them coming up to the school and all because, I don't know, I just was. I mean, like, me and my parents had a completely different view on it. I was very like 'It [inclusion of the panel] shouldn't have been done' but they were like 'It should have been because it opens you mind more', and all.
> Interviewer: And how do you feel now having done it?
> Pupil: I actually feel better because I originally came in thinking that people who done, like, terrorist attacks couldn't have changed and all this stuff and after, like, hearing their stories and all, it's changed my mind a bit. No, it's actually changed my views dramatically. Like, I came in last night and was, like, talking to my parents about it and they were all, like, 'It'll be fine, it'll be fine, they wouldn't let them come to school if there were dangerous' and I was like still 'Just because they say they've changed doesn't mean they have, they could come in and start shooting' - like, I was being over dramatic but…
> Interviewer: I know, I know
> Pupil: But I was, like, really freaking out last night and this morning coming in I was kind of freaking out an all and when I got in and sat down I was like, this is not that big of a deal, like.
> (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

In this case, the support of her parents had allayed her fears, and the school too had provided reassurances to her. However it does demonstrate the need for emotional support for young people engaging in this type of programme.

Another sensitivity identified by the young people was that being exposed to alternative perspectives might also have an emotional impact, in that it might challenge previously deeply held views and generate confusion for young people who had been quite certain about their perspectives:

> You find it hard trying to take in, like, what your religion done, like, why they killed innocent people or why they just killed people in general. (Pupil, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> This might sound stupid, but making your mind up, like, you're hearing something [different] and you don't know what's right and what's wrong so that can be confusing a bit (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

However, notwithstanding all these sensitivities, the young people across the focus groups remained convinced of the value of engaging with these issues, as summed up by this illustrative quote:

> I think that if you do believe it is a sensitive topic [and avoid it] you're not going to learn from the mistakes.... So it's almost like the sensitive topics are the ones you need to pay attention to most. (Pupil, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Trusting teachers

A consistent theme emerging across the intervention schools was that young people trusted their teachers to ensure that balance was maintained in the presentation of the Prison to Peace programme. They recognized that teachers would have their own views on the matters arising in the programme, but as illustrated in the focus group extracts below, trusted in their teachers' professionalism to present a range of views fairly.

> Pupil 1: You'd need to know 'double sided' to be a teacher.
> Pupil 2: But teachers still live in these Catholic or Protestant places, they would still have their own views.
> Pupil 1: They would still have their own opinions but they'll not be able to voice those opinions
> (Focus Group, Integrated School, School 1)

> Interviewer: Would your teachers have their own views on this stuff, do you think?
> Pupil 1: Yea, probably.
> Pupil 2: But they won't actually show it.
> Interviewer: Why?
> Pupil 3: They're neutral in class.
> Interviewer: Are they better at being neutral than other people, say in your community?
> All: Yea.
> Pupil 1: They have to, like. It's their job.
> (Focus Group, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

> Because if they [teachers] have ….. like if they have their certain views …. they can't really be biased about it they have to have the middle zone of things and that's the way you sort of have to go in teaching - if you're going to have opinions you have to have the middle view (Pupil, Integrated School, School 1)

Young people in one school also suggested that 'older teachers' who had experienced the 'Troubles' had personal experience to draw on and as such 'interacted more' with them in relation to the taught part of the Prison to Peace programme (Integrated School). In another case study school, young people similarly discussed the value of input from teachers who had lived through the conflict:

Pupil: Like it's different if your daddy or somebody's explaining it to you because it's going to be biased.
Interviewer: Why do you think that?
Pupil: Because they were influenced from their parents so it's just been passed down.
Interviewer: But didn't your teacher grow up with it too?
Respondent: Yeah.
Interviewer: So what's the difference?
Respondent: They're more educated about it as well.
(Focus Group, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

What was evident from the focus groups was that young people expected teachers to be more knowledgeable and to present a range of perspectives, relying on their professionalism and education to overcome any potential bias in delivery.

6.3 Conclusion

Pupil responses to the 'Prison to Peace' programme indicate that, for the most part, young people feel ready to learn about issues relating to the past and its legacy and see value in doing so. In particular young people in this study enjoyed engaging with the narratives of the ex-prisoners, valuing these first-hand accounts, grounded in reality.

Young people also indicated that the programme increased their knowledge and awareness of the reality and complexity of the conflict, in particular its impact and its legacy. The young people also suggested that the programme had challenged some of their previous stereotypical views of ex-prisoners and also of the 'other' community. They indicated further that it provided them with opportunities to explore a range of perspectives and had assisted them in forming their own views. Overall, it appears that the programme is providing a broad framework of perspectives in which the young people can locate, and understand, the perspectives they encounter in their own communities. Crucial to this however was that the young people indicated that they trusted their teachers to present balanced views.

Some young people suggested that the programme had the potential to deter them from involvement in future conflict. Further they suggested that it increased their optimism in relation to a future where peace was secure.

Notably, the young people were acutely aware of the sensitivities surrounding the programme, particularly in relation to the impact it might have on people who had lost family members and in relation to the potential tension it might create between views at home and views they were being exposed to in school. Further, they highlighted some of the emotional impact of dealing with sensitive issues.

7. Adult stakeholder perspectives

This chapter provides an analysis of the data collected from interviews with adult stakeholders (the teachers, school leaders and parents) in intervention schools. In doing so it should provide a clear sense of the school climate in which the programme was delivered and the nature of school contexts prepared to approach controversial and sensitive issues in the curriculum.

Again it should be noted that the schools involved in this intervention represent schools clearly willing and able to engage with such sensitive issues in the classroom and as such should not be seen as necessarily typical of all post-primary schools.

7.1 Teachers' views

Teachers involved in the implementation of 'Prison to Peace' saw value in engaging young people with the past, in particular with the narratives of ex-prisoners. They were also mindful of the challenges of the programme and of the need for schools to be 'ready' to engage with sensitive issues. These themes are discussed in turn below.

Value of learning from 'Prison to Peace'

The teacher's interviewed across the intervention schools identified a number of valuable features of the programme, similar to those identified by the pupils. One teacher summed up the benefits of the programme in relation to 'personal' as well as 'historical' learning. As he explained:

> I suppose you could say that there were two kinds of benefits. …. So, one was on a kind of a personal level, that they [the pupils] realised the circumstances that were involved in the Troubles and the issues with it, like not going to prison; they could interpret that on a personal level. The other one was obviously on a historical level as well; that they were able to have a bit more of an input and insight to actually what took place during the Troubles and continues today, about the social impact, about the family impact as well. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

This relationship between the personal and historical aspects of learning resonates through the themes emerging from the teacher interviews in relation to how the programme, in addition to key academic benefits, helps pupils to: understand the past and challenge myths; develop their own perspectives; understand the reality of conflict; and understand the reality of prison. These themes are discussed below.

Understanding the past and challenging myths

Teachers across the intervention schools indicated that their pupils had limited knowledge of the conflict and its impact on society. As one teacher stated:

> Yea, I think…one of the things that struck me as very interesting as I started to do the whole Prison to Peace thing was that so many of my students had no understanding whatsoever. (Teacher, Integrated School, School 6)

This limited knowledge of the conflict, teachers felt, could lead to 'myths' and 'glorification'. As this teacher explained, the programme created space to challenge this:

> If we don't teach these kids that it doesn't have to be like that, then you're in a situation where you're creating a passage of time where people don't connect with what has happened. I actually see that in classrooms. It makes it easier for me to teach Prison to Peace and the Troubles. This is all slightly bizarre that it's easier now to teach it because they are more disconnected. But yet you don't want them to be disconnected because eventually myths will be created relating to that conflict. (Teacher A, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

This idea of 'reconnecting' to the past was raised by other teachers as vital if young people were going to have a more balanced, nuanced understanding of the past:

> I think it's necessary [to teach about the conflict] because one of the things that has been detected, particularly in an area here which has borne a large brunt of the conflict is that there tends to be whether it is both conscious or unconscious or whether it is something that is coming from the home, nearly an amnesia, to what took place, then I'm willing to say they need to discuss maybe a world-weariness in the sense that they no longer want to talk about it. ...And so in many ways I think we've lost a little in terms of what the conflict was about, what the nature of what it was about and I think there's probably less discussion at home .... They're not learning about it so I think in many ways, they're not getting it at home, in the way that they did, they're not getting it at school, so they're either getting it out on the street if they're getting it at all, or they're getting a misshaped and misformed view of it. So I think it's a ground that is fertile then for others to exploit. (Teacher A, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

As this teacher indicated, there was a concern within the school that a lack of understanding of the exact nature of the conflict left pupils vulnerable to manipulation, in this context by dissident republican groups.

As such, teachers across the schools saw a need for young people to engage with the programme to raise awareness about the past and challenge the potential impact of partial truths and 'glorification', as indicated by these comments:

> Because they [pupils] can learn about it from murals on the wall, they can get the one-sided versions. Hopefully in the classroom they'll get a picture of the conflict that is as close to the truth as possible and then – youngsters can deal with it honestly. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Co-Educational School, School 2)

> It's not about glorifying anything or praising anybody, it's about learning from what people have regretted that they've done, to come to the point where you'll not get involved and regret doing something similar. Yea, it's been very good for that. (Teacher A, Integrated School, School 1)

One teacher reflected on how her pupils, who she described as coming from a very 'staunch' background, where challenged by reality of the narratives, which in turn challenged their sectarianism:

> They [pupils] said, 'Miss, did that actually happen, did that really happen?' and I said, 'Oh aye, that's his real life,' you know, 'This is true, this is real life stories'. And they couldn't believe that. You know, because they didn't know … they hadn't been told both sides of it. (Teacher B, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Resonating with young people's perspectives, teachers also felt that the programme helped the young people make sense of their own current context, providing them with connections between the past and present, and ultimately their future:

> It helps them understand why the issues could flare up again now and how to deal better with the issues when they do flare up now because they have the history of what's happened. (Teacher B, Integrated School, School 1)

> And in a society like Northern Ireland you're going to have to learn about the history before you can really make any judgements or, you know, assumptions about what's going to happen in the future. They have to know the foundation of sort of what happened here, you know, and during the troubles and things before they can then move on. (Teacher B, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Helping pupils develop their own perspectives

The teachers were aware of their pupils' backgrounds and that they may not have had the opportunity to explore a range of perspectives in relation to the conflict and associated issues. Across the case studies, teachers felt that school provide a safe environment for their pupils to explore these new ideas:

> For a lot of our children it will be a very one sided view so the girls get the opportunity to get other experiences or other possible places to get knowledge as well, which is quite good.... And the only time that they are ever seeing anybody from a different background is watching negative news stories or negative experiences they're having somewhere else. (Teacher, Catholic Girls Grammar School, School 3)

> I think it's been such a brilliant learning experience for them all to come from seeing kids who genuinely knew so much about the conflict and the kids who knew nothing about it and I think it's been brilliant for them to be able to experience that in a safe place in school where they are allowed to give their opinions in a safe environment within a classroom and learn from each other. I think it's been brilliant. (Teacher C, Integrated School, School 1)

> It raises questions and it allows them to ask questions, it allows them to think about things and change their opinions about in some ways fuelling opinions but at least gives them that opportunity in a controlled environment to have conversations (Teacher, Catholic Girls Grammar School, School 3)

One teacher aptly summed up his goals in relation to the impact of the programme, explaining that while he clearly wanted the young people to be arrive at their own perspectives he hoped they would realise as a result of the programme that respect for their own culture and identity meant they needed to respect that of others. He stated:

> I would hope it [the programme] would make protestant children and catholic children realise that they've both got different cultures, that they have no reason to give up on their culture, they have no reason not to be proud of their culture, but if they love their culture and respect their culture from either side then you must accept that people from a different culture feel equally the same about theirs. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Co-Educational School, School 2)

Helping pupils understand the reality of conflict

Teachers interviewed also felt that the range of narratives provided in the programme helped the young people understand the reality and complexities of the conflict. One teacher explained how he initially felt the programme might have a narrow 'don't go to prison' focus, but after engaging with the narratives realised its fuller potential:

> That's maybe facetious, that before I started it, I thought it would just be 'don't go prison because it's bad'. But then when I started it and you see the narratives, you work with the narratives, there can be more than one, you know, these narratives and why people did this and what decisions they made ... and how they feel about that now. That narrative is amazing. (Teacher A, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

The importance of the narratives in helping young people understand the reality of conflict was attached strongly to the notion that it gave first-hand personal insight into the nature of what had happened during the 'Troubles', as one teacher stated:

> I feel that the pupils actually got was that it wasn't just typical 'Open your historical books and the all the statistics are there', it was going on a deeper level, it was the social aspect and the family aspect and the personal aspect that sometimes is gleaned over in other historical accounts offered, and that was the big impact that realised that these are actually person, it's not just a group of people generally talking, it people's particular experiences on a personal level. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

Helping pupils understand the reality of prison

It was recognised by teachers that the programme had the potential to act as a deterrent in relation to prison. As one teacher explained, he used the programme as an opportunity to explore with young people the impact prison (as a result of involvement in the ongoing residual conflict) would have on their own lives. This, coupled with the session with ex-prisoners in the panel discussion, he believed had an impact on his pupils. As he stated:

> Certainly one of the impacts that I wanted the youngsters to have was that they would realise that going to prison is the last thing that they ever want to have to do, or even getting a criminal record. Now, I know I deliberately then… put the program across in that fashion, but I was pleased with that because when the two men came in to speak to them [ex-prisoners on panel] they did the same, they told them why they had become involved in the organisations they'd become involved in. Something about what they got up to and what their gaol experience was like and what it was like for their families outside, and what it has been like for them ever since because .... it doesn't go away. It's not there just for a couple of years; it's there for the rest of your life. It's there for the rest of your

> family's life, if you're lucky enough still to have them when you come out. And I think the biggest impact was this idea of prison being glorified was dented. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Co-Educational School, School 2)

The value of ex-prisoner narratives was particularly pertinent in some contexts, as explained by this teacher, in terms of providing first-hand accounts, but also in terms of making positive use of the status afforded to ex-prisoners in certain communities:

> Well, I mean, they probably, you know, at the end of the day, the ex-prisoners, the one good thing about it is you have, you know, a living testimony there, you know, it isn't you and I saying it, you know, and it's a little bit of the problem, you know, that you have in terms of teachers is that basically a lot of times they're telling you to do it without ever having experienced the thing themselves so here you have, you know, people who are able to say, you know, this is where it has led us and I think that's a powerful testimony, I can say, that's something. I think many of these prisoners still have credibility and kudos within their own communities so I think that there's an element there that ticks it. I think that, particularly within areas like this here, prison isn't the stigma that it is in other areas and therefore these people carry weight. (Teacher A, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Academic benefits

Teachers also pointed to the academic benefits of their pupils engaging with the programme. For example, as illustrated by this comment, teachers across the schools felt it developed their thinking skills:

> Academically it gives them the opportunity to question, it's that higher order thinking that we are so encouraged to do ... and everything else at least they'll have a chance to think (Teacher, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Further, they felt that in terms of personal development and general life skills, the programme helped the young people think through the consequences of actions, as typified by this comment:

> It's maybe not even in the context of the Troubles; it's individual actions no matter what about being able to see the wider picture, or the knock-on effect or thinking the short-term impacts or the long-term impacts and that's not just confined to the Troubles that's confined to everyday life in the end (Teacher D, Integrated School, School 1)

Also, teachers indicated that the programme had encouraged their pupils to engage more with their parents about what they were learning. As one teacher stated:

> Any educational experience that involves bringing in parents discussion at home is only a positive, no matter what the subject is or whatever the context is, that that's going back to the house. That's a nice outcome. (Teacher, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Challenges of the programme

The teachers interviewed across the intervention schools recognised the sensitivities associated with the programme, although they felt that this added to the value of the programme, as illustrated in this comment:

> I think best lessons strangely enough are the most challenging ones, are the ones where we do challenge and push the boundaries a little bit, you know. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

Teachers had however, different perspectives on the way in which they *positioned themselves* on the issues in the classroom. For example, some teachers felt that it was important not to share personal experiences with their pupils; others felt that placing their own narrative into the context of the programme made the pupils more aware of the sensitivities they were discussing and helped the young people see different perspectives:

> I don't think I want to muddy the waters with my thoughts on this, which are totally personal as to how I came to my decisions. I think that could be wrong, that could be seen to be me influencing them overly, too much, and somewhat almost me indoctrinating them with my views. So I'm absolutely clear it's a process. It's a process that is important they think their way through. And I try not to let myself and my notions colour the waters too much (Teacher B, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

> I was very honest with the pupils. I said 'Some of this had had an impact on my life'. (Teacher D, Integrated School, School 1)

> I just give my opinion; I just say it was mine. Knock me down; argue with me in a diplomatic way and as long as you've got a good back up for your argument I'll accept it. I might not change my mind but you're entitled to your own and that's how I started off **....** just say that "This is me, this is what I think. What do you think?" (Teacher C, Integrated School, School 1)

> I'm not saying teachers should teach everything from a neutral perspective or shouldn't give some opinion, in particular a personal opinion of what they think, but we have to allow the students also to have their personal opinion and personal space to develop their own thoughts relating to the actual facts. (Teacher A, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

What was apparent across the intervention schools was that teachers' approaches to dealing with sensitivity in the classroom were very much influenced by their understanding of the pupils they were teaching and the contexts from which they were coming, as illustrated below:

> Well I mean I think first of all, in any school and in any town, in any walk of life, you've got to know your audience. And I think, you know, there, within, you know, classes aware of students in the school who, let's say because of their family backgrounds, or because of their family's experience in teaching something like this here could unleash emotions and could you know, in many ways bring things to the fore that they're not comfortable with. (Teacher B, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

As the last quote notes, teachers were acutely aware of the *emotional aspect* of the programme, recognizing that it could 'touch a nerve' with some pupils and parents. One teacher explained why this had influenced his decision not to have a panel discussion in the school:

> I had no fears about the programme. I went to the training, I loved the training; the training was great. I always wanted to teach it. My only reluctance was the prisoner panel. Number one I don't want to create icons. I know that Prison to Peace doesn't want to do that and the prisoners are very, very good, and they've all been trained and they've all talked about how they would come into schools and so on. And number two, particularly historically relating to the INLA, in this area the INLA had a very active unit and memories in this area are very long and some of them are fresh, ...but if I brought them in, there are people that would try to make it difficult for you by actually going out into the community and giving the wrong impression of what I was doing. The adults aren't ready. (Teacher A, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Teachers also explained the ways in which they handled sensitivities. For example, they stressed the need for preparation both in terms of thinking through teaching the programme and in terms of being sure they understood the background of the pupils they were teaching:

> You know, it's not a program that you can kind of just go in here; off you go and see what happens. The preparation time for it is a wee bit more... and you need to speak to the Year Head of the group beforehand and say just "I'm going to be doing this, this is the kind of context of the program, is there anything I should know?" (Teacher, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Related to the teachers' abilities to handle the challenges of the programme was the extent to which they felt that their schools were 'ready' for such sensitive programmes, discussed below.

School 'readiness'

While this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, it was apparent from the teacher interviews that a number of factors contributed to their school being 'ready' to deliver the programme. First, there was consensus among those interviewed that teachers delivering the programme needed to feel supported by school leadership. As one teacher explained, teachers' reticence to deal with issues such as those raised in the 'Prison to Peace' programme was bound up ultimately in the degree to which the school was prepared to engage:

> A teacher's reluctance is about a school's reluctance ..... Individual class teachers have limited autonomy. The more experienced and the more mature you are, the more you can get away with, because you know how to deal with stuff. But principals in turn are and aren't constrained by their board of governors, some use governors as an excuse and some, you know for their own fears, and some are genuinely being hauled over the coals in different way and cant step out of turn you know. So, it is up to leaders to lead. (Teacher, Integrated School, School 6)

However, it was also evident from the interviews that support was mutually dependent on the degree to which teachers were trusted by their school leaders, as the teacher explained:

> I know I've got the support of my principal and my board of governors. Given that I address issues with due sensitivity ... but you know I don't have license to do stupid stuff. (Teacher, Integrated School, School 6)

Second, a pertinent factor in relation to the 'readiness' of schools to engage with the programme was the issue of parental response. Teachers described the need to 'keep parents on board' and it was clear across the interviews that the teachers were respectful of the need to keep parents well-informed and to be responsive to any concerns. In fact, teachers across the schools were pro-active in this regard:

> Well, basically, when they heard there was information about talking to ex-prisoners they were a bit concerned about what was the agenda, what was the format of this, and just once they realised that it was actually an educational point to it and there was like a personal aspect, that the guys were going to take on board their experiences and learn from that, they were more than happy. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

> Obviously I had to tell parents that I was bringing in somebody who was a paramilitary [to the panel discussion] ... that I was going to bring two people that had been jailed for similar offences into the classroom to speak to their children. But the amazing thing was I only had one parent who was concerned, and that one parent wasn't concerned in a negative way whatsoever … [they just wanted clarification]. So maybe we are moving forward. And without a shred of a doubt – I'd say this here to the doubters, to those people who are going to read this and doubt it or listen to this and doubt it, whatever – is 'Try it. I tried it, it works believe you me'. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Co-educational School, School 2)

This resonates with the experience of teachers across the intervention schools, with very few parents overall raising concerns. Crucial to this, it would appear, is clear communication to parents about the goals of the programme and the way it is delivered. This is illustrated, for example, in the description of this exchange between a teacher and a parent:

> I had one wee girl, and actually her mummy was asking me on the parents' evening about it [the programme], about what was it about and what were they going to be doing because her and her husband had sort of always sheltered her from it or protected her from it and didn't want her to know anything about it. But when I explained that it was all very structured and it was all like, you know, controlled and they didn't... you know, it wasn't as if to say they were going to be just fired out to the wolves sort of thing, you know, she agreed with it and she thought that it would be good and be interesting for her to get involved in. (Teacher B, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Similarly, another teacher explained an exchange with a classroom assistant, whose child was in the school, but who as part of her job had attended the panel discussion with the class to which she assigned:

> And one of our classroom assistants came, there were several who came because they wanted to hear what [the ex-prisoners] had to say. At the end one was like 'there's no way my daughter would have taken part in this, but now that I've heard it'.....she wanted to keep them all afternoon, you know! (Teacher, Integrated School, School 6)

Thirdly, it was clear that the teachers involved in delivering the programme felt, for the most part, equipped to deal with sensitive and controversial issues. For most, this was attached to a sense that in addition to the specific training they had received for the programme, their main subject specialisms had provided them with the necessary skills to deliver the programme:

> If you're trained in something like sociology… you're a bit better at it I think. Because I know a lot of the teachers who do teach things like Maths said that they did struggle a bit …. personal opinions and things. (Teacher C, Integrated School, School 1)

> My main subject's Geography, it's not a straight forward "What's happened" 'black and white' issue, there's a lot of grey area. (Teacher, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

In one school, the programme was delivered by form teachers, regardless of subject specialism. As a teacher explained, this placed him in a teaching context with which he was at first uncomfortable:

> I'm a Maths teacher and this is so far out of my comfort zone, you know like, if you speak to politics or history teachers, like, they're probably much more familiar with, you know like, arguments for and against and looking at the evidence, to me, it's so different. (Teacher D, Integrated School, School 1)

Notably, this teacher chose to be more open with pupils about his personal experience of growing up during the 'Troubles' as a way of dealing with his initial discomfort.

In one school, the issues of teacher confidence resulted in a decision being made that teachers who did not feel comfortable teaching the programme should not be put in a position of having to do so:

> There were certain other teachers, at the time it was suggested that they might be involved, that weren't 100% au fait with that, but possibly because their subjects didn't naturally lend itself to that. They wouldn't maybe have been comfortable talking about issues … It's just that the nature of selecting appropriate staff members who are comfortable delivering it and who are confident doing it. (Teacher, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 7)

However, it should be noted that whilst certain subject specialisms can equip teachers better for dealing with ambiguity rather than fact, teachers also indicated that their confidence in delivering the programme had come from having had specific training for citizenship education and being involved in other similar educational programmes:

> The fact that myself and one of the other members of staff have been involved in other programs before, the fact that the two of us have come through Teacher Training that have offered opportunities for citizenship for sub-sid or have facilitated how to deal with teaching controversial issues through Corrymeela programs - so we have that wee bit of confidence to do it. (Teacher, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

7.2 School leaders' views

The leadership in each of the intervention schools indicated strong endorsement of the 'Prison to Peace' programme and commitment to supporting the teachers who were delivering it. It was evident in each of the schools that the leadership saw this type of educational programme as an important aspect of young peoples' learning, identifying a number of benefits of implementing the programme in their school. They also provided valuable insight on the nature of a school 'ready' to engage with the difficulties of teaching about the conflict.

Benefits of the Prison to Peace programme

Resonating with the teachers' views, school leaders identified a number of benefits of the Prison to Peace programme: helping pupils make sense of their own context; helping pupils develop their own perspectives; and developing pupils' thinking skills and personal capabilities.

Helping pupils make sense of their own context

School leaders emphasised the way in which the programme assisted young people in understanding their own societal context. This included an understanding of their own history:

> It comes back to that idea of putting perspective on things. It's about giving the young person the realisation of what the history was, it's putting their history in context. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> I mean, we're not wanting them to wallow in the past, just be knowledgeable about it, that this actually happened in your country and in your name. (Principal, Integrated School, School 6)

Further, for the school leaders, it helped young people understand the nature of the society in which they were currently living, making sense of the division they were seeing in their community contexts:

> It [the programme] came at the right time –what with the flag protests. And the same issues are also going to come up every summer when the marching seasons starts. So this doesn't go away, it keeps coming back. (Vice Principal, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

> I suppose it's always important to realise why things happened, because if you don't understand why things happened ..... then you have no way to avoid those situations. I'm very much a believer of it's really important to know *who* you are. (Principal, Catholic Girls Grammar School, School 3)

> I absolutely think it's [learning about the past] necessary so that one can move forward with a consciousness of what has led to where we are now. (Principal, Integrated School, School 6)

Helping pupils develop their own perspectives

The school leaders also explained that they had been motivated to become involved in the programme because they hoped it would provide a vehicle for their pupils to explore a range of

perspectives outside the potentially 'one-sided' views they might be exposed to at home or in their community. As one principal stated:

> The children are coming from backgrounds where their perceptions of what has happened, they are seeing it from or they are hearing about it from one side, from their own side of the fence so to speak.... So therefore a project like this, I think, creates balance and also maybe gives them a perspective that they wouldn't otherwise get. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Further, as another principal explained, exposure to other views in school might help the young people see a more holistic picture:

> I think is essential, because otherwise children often will hear things second or third hand, and I think to bring them close to the truth is important. (Principal, Integrated School, School 1)

Moreover, notwithstanding the sensitivities (see below), the school leaders also explained the benefit of addressing the issues from the point of view of ex-prisoners, as it could challenge their pupils to take new perspectives. Again, as one principal stated:

> I suppose they [the pupils] can see that these [ex-prisoners] are just ordinary people like them. They're not monsters. They're not somebody who's from another planet. That could be my brother, that could be my sister, that could be my father. .... I think when you're a child... you can see things in very black and white terms, but nothing in life is black and white. They can see that in this [the programme] (Principal, Catholic Girl's Grammar School, School 3)

As such it was felt that the programme could potentially create the space for their pupils to develop their own perspectives:

> It's hopefully developing the skills and the knowledge and the understanding and the comprehension of those children to analyse it in a much more profound and thinking way, rather than again, as we were saying, accepting what they've been told. (Principal, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Notably, one Vice-Principal emphasised the importance of ensuring that the programme was not seen as a vehicle for necessarily *changing* a pupils' perspective, but rather giving them the space to reflect on a range of perspectives in order to be able to justify their own views, as these extracts from his interview demonstrate:

> And what he [the pupil] wants to follow is absolutely fine – as long as he's thought it out and he's come to that determination, then that's great.
>
> It's a process we're trying to develop here rather than somebody becoming someone who follows what has been the norm. If we all follow that for every generation, there's no progress.
>
> That's the joy of the programme. If those boys still adopt that position [that is, particular political views] after the programme, that's absolutely fine – but they've thought it out, that's where *they* want to stand. It isn't where they've been *made* to stand by their parents – that's where they want to stand. And I and society have to accept it – that's a valid viewpoint.
> (Vice Principal, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

This approach was attached to the idea of developing pupils' critical thinking, discussed in more detail below.

Developing pupils thinking skills and personal capabilities

The school leaders also explained that beyond helping young people understand their socio-political context, exposure to a range of different perspectives had particular value in developing young people's thinking skills, communication skills and general personal development, a key aspect of the Northern Ireland Curriculum:

> Schools are now supposed to be all into thinking skills and personal capabilities and so forth, and I can see something like this as being a great aspect in terms of developing those within the curriculum (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> Content aside, the idea or the opportunity for a young person to think about a world issue and then to reflect and then, if they choose to, to verbalise it is crucial. So the communication skills involved in talking in a small group of four or five other people, the listening skills – all the generic skills that we want to develop as teachers as part of the Northern Ireland curriculum, which is thinking, talking and listening. This programme sets it up beautifully, because that's what the student must do. And they must engage in a number of sentences, they must deliver that out loud to another boy or girl who's listening. And then the skill is to listen to what the other person has said. And, very often, we don't do that – we're already miles ahead, planning our next sentence that we're going to say and we haven't heard what they've said. (Vice Principal, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

The development of such cognitive skills was attached by school leaders to the ways in which young people had to learn, through the programme, to deal with complex ideas:

> There's good and bad on both sides, and there were valid reasons why people took various stances and people took various points of view. So I think the developmental aspect for the children is fantastic. It gives them so much ability to really rationalise a very complex and a very difficult situation. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Further, as one principal suggested, it developed skills needed for later life:

> It is, because when they go into the working world, that's what they're going to have to do. I suppose in a way it's about a certain amount of wisdom that says, 'I do see the opposing argument, I can see exactly what motivated that view' ..... I suppose any programme that comes in that kind of leads people to think, talk, whatever, is good (Principal, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Moreover, in recognizing the emotional nature of the programme, school leaders identified the ways in which it provided opportunities for young people to engage with their feelings, more so than traditional subjects, as aptly explained in the following interview extracts:

> This programme is about really getting under your skin and asking *you* how *you* feel about it – that doesn't apply to like GCSE History for example. If I'm asking them how they feel, I'm asking for a personal reaction to it - there's no question on a GCSE paper which asks a student how do *you* feel –

> the question on a GCSE paper will always ask how would the Protestant community have reacted to the hunger strikes, how did the Catholic community react to hunger strikes, for example. This is a personal programme. And there's nowhere else in education in GCSE where you have got to answer such a personal thing. (Vice Principal, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

> I think the best experience for children in something like this is first-hand; they get enough of the formal teaching approaches that we use through the rest of the curriculum and, therefore, I think the best thing for the children is through experiencing the experiences, the feelings, the emotions of the people or some of the people who were involved. I think that personal perspective being given to children is so much more important and so much more effective than anything that we could deliver just in terms of formal teaching. They're not just absorbing and accepting what they read or what they are told, they are challenging, they are questioning. And I think if we, as teachers, aren't doing that then we are failing our children in a way as well. So, therefore, a programme like this is developing new skills. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

It was evident from these interviews that school leaders viewed the 'Prison to Peace' programme as a valuable vehicle through which their pupils could explore their own societal context, and that through engagement, cognitively and emotionally, with the narratives of ex-prisoners develop useful life skills.

School 'readiness'

Though the intervention schools were very different in nature, certain common features emerged as central to their 'readiness' to engage with a potentially controversial programme such as 'Prison to Peace'. First, as discussed above, the leadership in the school *recognized the educational benefits* in delivering a programme which encouraged young people to reflect on multiple perspectives in relation to their own socio-political context. However, it was also evident that the school leaders associated their school's readiness with a number of key themes: a conducive school ethos; knowledge and understanding of parents and the community the school served; trust placed in teachers.

Conducive school ethos

Each of the school leaders spoke of how their schools were committed to the social aspects of education, seeing what was described as one principal as 'the vital role of the school' (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4) to be the holistic development of the child, preparing them for life in its broadest terms:

> Well, I suppose the core business of education is to prepare people for life and I suppose one of the core purposes or foci within that, or aspects of that, is to ensure that they get the best possible qualifications, but that's one part of the work, and probably what might be deemed by most parents to be the most important one .... I suppose from our opinion, is that if you're not actually educating the whole child, it doesn't really matter. You can come out with a string of As but if you haven't developed across a wide range of sort of skills and competencies then you're not doing your job right. So at this school we would have very much a holistic approach to education. We certainly have very, very high expectations of the girls and we expect them to have high expectations of themselves .... but likewise we would make them very aware from early on that being good, being kind, being

> thoughtful, having a social conscience, are very much part of our education here.(Principal, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

> We're coming from a Catholic ethos school, which has even more responsibility to prepare children for living in a multicultural divided society in 2013, so this opportunity to get involved in this programme came along at a very opportune time, because of our notion and our belief of what education is all about – the preparation of our young people to live in *any* society, but particularly those who are going to be living in *this* society (Vice Principal, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

For the integrated schools involved in delivering the programme, both principals pointed to the how the nature of their schools promoted openness to difference in opinion and ensured balanced views:

> Well it's your founding ethos which is about inclusivity and celebrating what we share in common but also celebrating difference that we don't all come from the one position. And not everybody has to agree with everything the other person... You know, it's not about compromise, it's not about being somewhere in the middle, and obviously if you're examining, let's say, the hunger strikes, people from a Unionist or Loyalist background will not have the same perception as people from a Catholic or Republican background. So it is about the ethos, the fact that it's alright that we don't simply agree on everything. (Principal, Integrated School, School 5)

> Because we are working in an integrated setting, we are very conscious of giving a balanced truth, and making sure that children from all parts of the city and the wider context of where we are here ....., that youngsters get a very balanced view. (Principal, Integrated, School 1)

It was evident from the interviews that the ethos of the school aligned with the values underpinning the 'Prison to Peace' programme. Also, as one Principal explained it was important for them that the school maintained its roots in the conflict that had been the backdrop to it being established, and 'Prison to Peace' presented an opportunity for them to reconnect their ethos to this:

> I think when we were offered the opportunity to join the [Prison to Peace] programme I think we thought long and hard about it and the implications it would have, and one of the challenges we made of ourselves was we've been operating here, ... since the heart of the troubles. [The teacher] and I, we had a discussion about that we have come a long distance from our school, originally was founded in the heart of the troubles, but there was a commitment on us to make sure that we don't forget that our school, our own personal context, started in a very difficult time of conflict and troubles and divisions when our children couldn't even come to school with wearing their own badge..... I think it's important for us not to let those opportunities go, and as you say, to sort of face that truth and to make sure our youngsters get an opportunity to hear it first-hand. (Principal Integrated School, School 1)

Further, each of the school leaders interviewed expressed their commitment to and involvement in similar educational programmes and cross-community initiatives.

Knowledgeable about and sensitive to parental and community concerns

School leaders were acutely aware of how to deal with the sensitivities surrounding the implementation of the programme, in particular the need to be *cognizant of parental perspectives*.

Both the Principal of the Catholic Girls' Grammar and the Vice Principal of the Catholic Boys' Secondary related past experiences of bringing the police into their schools and how parents had objected to this – this experience had meant that they reflected carefully on how parents might respond to the implementation of the 'Prison to Peace' programme. For one, this had bearing on the year group in which the programme was delivered. In this extract he explains why the programme was placed into 6th year, rather than in Key Stage Four:

> I wouldn't have wanted to take onboard some of the baggage and some of the difficulties that may have come to my door from parents complaining, and having to sort that out – that some would have complained about perhaps seeing that it was a social engineering programme [if delivered to young pupils], that we were trying to move students away from a certain political viewpoint towards a more neutral one. And I could have had deputations, I could have had pickets outside the school, as I have had in the past when I've tried to, say, bring in the police to talk in the school. (Vice Principal, Catholic Boy's Secondary School, School 5)

Having come from the community himself, and having taught in the school for many years, he was confident that parents would accept the programme if delivered to older pupils. This sense of understanding parental perspectives was also evident in the other intervention schools. For example, in this extract another principal displays an understanding of 'how far' he thinks the parents of his pupils would be prepared to go (explaining why the school delivered the taught aspect of the programme but not the ex-prisoner panel):

> I think, as we would do with a lot of these things, we'd give parents the information and certainly if any parent wants their child to opt out of it, it's not our job to overrule the parent's decision in that front, but I certainly would feel that if we tried to go down as far as the prisoner panel aspect of the programme we would have had much more resistance from the parents. The other aspects, the parents were happy enough with, bought into, but I think that just would be a step too far..... I suppose... it comes back to that notion of being conscious just of where or how far your school can go. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

Similarly, the Principal of an Integrated School showed sensitivity to and awareness of both potential parental concerns and also the trust parents placed in the school:

> I think the challenge is that the hopes and aspirations for some of our families who come here is that they're moving further and further away from conflict. So you're balancing up trying to connect families and parents in particular with the fact that you're not trying to expose their children to something that's going to be damaging to them. That you're not trying to elongate conflict, that you're not trying to preserve division, that you're actually trying to do the opposite, that you're actually trying to work through, and as I talked about, you know, being honest with young people, letting them have a historical source right in front of them. And I think that our parents respect and trust that we wouldn't put our youngsters in a position where they were going to feel uncomfortable. (Principal, Integrated School, School 1)

Further, an awareness of how parents' views sat within the broader community context was an important factor in the decision to engage with the programme, as illustrated by this comment:

> I suppose again ... I know the parents here. I know so many of them that their parents would have been involved, or their families, that for them... I know the community are going on a journey of peace at the moment, that that would be the feelings, because they've all moved in that direction, and that would be the feeling that it would be important to hear the other viewpoints. (Principal, Catholic Girls' Grammar School, School 3)

Finally, the need to be c*onscious of the community served* by school was also a feature of the leadership in the intervention schools, as illustrated in these comments:

> A rural community is so much more tightly knit and, therefore, what happened to a family affects the wider community because of the connections and the marriages and intimate relationships .... in a country community, in a rural community, it's [conflict] still under the surface but you don't have to scratch too far to find it. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

> I have to be conscious of the community that I work in, and be respectful towards the people we serve (Principal, Catholic Girls' Grammar, School 3)

Trusting teachers

School leaders in the case study schools demonstrated trust in the teachers who had been selected to deliver the programme. They recognized that in the 'wrong hands' the programme could create problems, as illustrated in this quote:

> It's a very, very dangerous programme. And I don't know if enough people are sufficiently skilled to deliver this, because the content is so unbelievably dangerous and so open to manipulation. (Vice Principal, Catholic Maintained Secondary School, School 5)

The trust in their teachers appeared to involve not only a trust that the teachers would be sensitive and balanced in their presentation of views, but also that they possessed the necessary 'subject expertise': and 'real depth of knowledge' required to deliver the programme effectively. Further, in the case study schools, the teachers involved in delivering the programme had, in a sense, proved themselves, through their involvement in other initiatives, as summed up in this comment from one principal:

> Yes, we had staff.... like [teacher's name] and so forth who had been involved in projects, in cross community projects, down through the years and, therefore, you felt there was a nucleus there of good quality staff that you felt could deliver this programme in an objective way..... There's no point me trying to push those staff in to the project who I know would deliver it because they were directed to deliver it, but you don't want people who are just doing it because they are told, 'Listen, I want you to do this project of Prison to Peace.' It will not be done in the right sense. (Principal, Controlled Secondary School, School 4)

7.3 Parents' views

One focus group was held with parents in the integrated school. As such, this cannot be seen as in any way representative of the parents in the other schools. However, as discussed below, the themes emerging from analysis of the focus group data resonate with the themes identified across the schools, discussed above. Hence they do at least serve as an indicator of the types of issues which are pertinent to parents in relation to the Prison to Peace programme.

Parents in this school, though to a certain extent apprehensive about the programme, were supportive of the school engaging with these issues. They recognized the value of their children learning about their socio-historical context from engaging with ex-prisoners and trusted their school to do this sensitively. Further, they reported that the programme had encouraged dialogue between them and their children about the 'Troubles' and the current nature of Northern Irish society and they were also able to point towards key aspects of their children's learning that had been enhanced through engagement with the programme in class.

Value of learning about the past

Similarly to the other adults interviewed as part of the study, parents in the focus group saw value in their children learning about the 'Troubles' through the programme, though as one parent explained it was important that there was not an overemphasis on it:

> I think it's important they know a certain amount but not become bogged down in absolutely everything but I'm happy that they ought to know how…the history of where we live and what made it what it is but not just focus completely on it… (Parent, Integrated School)

This need to address the past and its impact was highlighted further by other parents who, as this extract suggests, felt that their generation's complacency about the past might mean important issues were not dealt with in school:

> Parent 1: I think sometimes as time progresses we can get very much lulled into a sense of security. I can say that as a parent ... that would be my worry, that you actually don't address issues that need to be addressed.
> Parent 2: Yea, don't get complacent.'
> (Focus Group, Integrated School)

This was linked to a sense from the parents that their children needed to understand the past in order to make sense of their current situation, as illustrated in this extract from the focus group:

> Parent 3: I think it definitely needs to be discussed especially because of the current climate of flag protests and things. But they're so young they don't know what went before so they only hear what happens today, moving forward, and they don't know. I know when the flag protests started there seemed to be a wee bit of excitement in my son and that age group around where we live and I was like 'Whoa, whoa, whoa. You don't want to go there. You need to understand that it may seem like a bit of fun today but that's how things started and that's how it goes into the 'Them' and 'Us' in society'. And we're trying to move away from that so there needs to be education to prove to them that, yea, what's exciting tonight actually causes a lot of problems and grief tomorrow.

Interviewer: OK.
Parent 4: I would agree. I think it's still current, you know, for a lot of the children in different communities and they have a forum within school that's safe to discuss that and I think that is important…
(Focus Group, Parents, Integrated School)

The extract above also suggests that the parents trusted the school to be a safe place in which their children could deal with these issues.

Trusting the school

Just as the young people and the school leadership trusted the teachers to deliver the programme, it was evident from this focus group that the parents trusted the school to handle controversial aspects of the Prison to Peace programme. One parent explained how this trust had been important in her balancing out her own apprehension about the ex-prisoner panel in particular:

> Well I, I signed [the permission form for her son to attend the panel]…I had not issue signing it because I have great faith that the school knows what it's at and I thought 'No, that's fine' even though part of me thought 'Oh God'. (Parent, Integrated School)

This trust also seemed to be bound up in the fact that the parents expected the school to provide a 'balanced view' and to 'challenge' misconceptions and mistruths. Further, they expected the school to show leadership in dealing with difficult issues. As one parent stated:

> I think it comes down to courage and leadership and that's what you expect [of this school]. Schools have a role in society to provide leadership and leadership sometimes means doing difficult and unpopular things and you know… (Parent, Integrated School)

Apprehension

That is not to say that parents were not apprehensive about the programme being delivered in the school. As noted at the start of this section, parents also indicated that they did not want an overemphasis on the past, as illustrated in this comment:

> You know, I signed [the permission form for daughter to attend the panel] not a bother because I think it's good but with a slight 'Right OK, I hope there's not going to be too much' because I do think we've got to think future forward. (Parent, Integrated School)

Discussion during the focus group also highlighted parental concern regarding the impact of the programme:

> Parent 1: I was quite anxious how it was going to impact on them, to be truthful.
> Interviewer: What were you afraid of?
> Parent 1: Just how it would impact her with regards to her views because she's not that type of a child who would be in trouble, you know, and she sort of keeps herself to herself and I just wondered what her own perception of it would be, you know. She's come out of it and she's actually said, you know,

she realises there was obviously trouble in the past and she has now reflected on it and said 'You know, I can understand why they got into trouble and there was…sucked into that situation'.

Notably, this extract points towards another theme that emerged from this focus group, that the programme had prompted conversation between children and their parents.

Talking to their children about the past

It was evident from the focus group that the programme had resulted in young people talking to their parents about the issues it raised:

> It [the programme] obviously increases their knowledge because they're asking… he [son] asked more questions than ever before. (Parent, Integrated School)

For some parents this had posed initial challenges, as they had not previously discussed the issues:

> Parent: Yes, I've spoken to her [daughter] about it.
> Interviewer: Would you have had those conversations before she did this program?
> Parent: Not necessarily, no. No, no. I wouldn't have known how to lead it…But it starts that conversation.
> (Focus Group, Parents, Integrated School)

For others, who had talked previously to their children about the past, it provided them with increased opportunity to talk in more depth than they had perhaps done prior to the programme:

> I would say it's triggered questions. I mean, my son asked me yesterday 'I've got to go to school tomorrow to talk about this' he said 'Mum, did the UDA kill people?' and I said 'Yes, yes they did.' But I said 'You know but there was killing on both sides'. I said 'Look, you don't know, you live in a different world. We watched the news at night' and I said 'There would have been children of a policeman walking behind a coffin, there would have been children of a man who pulled a gun walking behind a coffin and what was it at the end of the day? It was still kids without a father or a mother or…' you know, I said 'Sadness on all sides it's too difficult to…' so we discussed things like that. (Parent, Integrated School)

Talking to their children about the programme had also provided the parents with insight into the material being covered, and appeared to have allayed initial apprehension, discussed further below.

Learning from ex-prisoners

Parents in the focus group reported that through conversations with their children they had become aware of what they were learning as a result of participating in the programme. In particular the parents, some of whom had been initially slightly apprehensive about the panel discussion related the effect meeting the ex-prisoners had on their children:

> I think what [name of child] got out of it was the regret that the prisoners had with regards to what he put his personal family through and his wife and his children, you know, and she felt so sorry that he

had made that decision and she really appreciated that he opened up about that, about that wrong choice just wherever that had happened in his past and his experience. (Parent, Integrated School)

I think it just put a face to the myths that my child understood. She can now picture someone and she realised they're not going to walk in with a gun like some of her friends said.... You wouldn't really believe that there were kids there worried that there was a terrorist coming to the school and would the terrorist bring a gun out - and that actually had more effect on her realising that her peers had that sort of sensationalised it. (Parent, Integrated School)

He [son] learnt that they weren't these glorified, strange, TV, you know, baddies they were ordinary people in ordinary circumstances who ended up in prison. (Parent, Integrated School)

Parents, as a result of talking to their children, were thus reassured that the programme did not 'glamorise' of 'sensationalise' the past.

Notably, the parents also suggested that the value of first-hand accounts and direct engagement with former prisoners lay in the way in which it made young people take on board the consequences of involvement in violence, and alternative ways of engaging with their community:

Kids don't listen to their parents, they don't listen to their teachers but two guys who've been in jail 'I'll listen to them' (Parent, Integrated School)

Parent 1: And they're speaking factually as well. If I was to say to my daughter 'Now, you will never go and stand and protest', it's just like, 'You will never smoke and you will never drink'. She will look at me. Somebody who's been there and says 'This is actually what's going to happen'.
Parent 2: The consequences.
Parent 3: Do they give them advice then on how to steer clear from it? Do they give them advice, you know, on how to engage?
Parent 4 (who had observed the panel): They talked about the importance of their education. Actually, that was a big thing that came from both of them 'You know, you've got fantastic opportunities, you take every one of those opportunities and don't go down the route we went.' That's what they were saying.
Parent 5: It's giving the young people tools, actually, then, isn't it?
(Focus Group, Parents, Integrated School)

Parent 1 (who had observed the panel): Yes, well I asked the question what would you say to our young people who might be tempted to get sucked into some of this stuff and I thought ... the answer was brilliant, he said 'You're a mug, you will be used, you will in all likelihood end up in prison and you will rot there and nobody will give a solitary damn about you'
Parent 2: That's fabulous.
Parent 3: That's a brilliant answer.
Parent 1: He says 'It's not like the old days where, like, people who would have been in the IRA would have supported each other, there would have been prison visits and there would have been all sorts of associations' and he also said 'And you're not working for peace and you're not working for the cause. The guns gone from politics now, you're wasting your time'. I just thought that's great.
(Focus Group, Parents, Integrated School)

7.4 Conclusion

Analysis of the interviews with adult stakeholders in the intervention schools suggests that in addition to recognizing the educational benefits of engaging with 'Prison to Peace', they see the programme challenging myths, helping their young people make sense of their socio-political context and assisting them in developing their own perspectives.

The interviews also reveal a number of features pertinent to a school's readiness to engage with controversial and sensitive issues. This includes a school ethos focused (both in policy and practice) on the holistic development of the child and on the preparation of young people to live and work in a diverse society. Further, the schools involved in the study are knowledgeable of and sensitive to the perspective of parents and of the community they serve. Moreover, it was apparent that in schools participating in the programme, the leadership were prepared to trust the teachers delivering the programme, and as a result teachers had confidence to deliver the programme in the knowledge that they were supported by the school. Finally, it was clear that the schools were acutely aware of the sensitivities surrounding this type of programme, in particular in relation to parental responses and the readiness of pupils to deal with issues raised.

The parents interviewed, though to a certain extent apprehensive initially about the programme, were supportive of the school engaging with these issues. They too recognized the value of their children learning about their socio-historical context from engaging with ex-prisoners and trusted their school to do this sensitively. Further, they reported that the programme had encouraged dialogue between them and their children about the 'Troubles' and the current nature of Northern Irish society and they were also able to point towards key aspects of their children's learning that had been enhanced through engagement with the programme in class.

8. Programme implementation in non-trial settings

During the course of the research opportunities arose to examine how the programme operated in other contexts. This chapter presents two 'vignettes' to illustrate how the programme might be adapted and developed: a cross-border youth programme; a school experienced in delivering the programme.

8.1 Adapting the programme for a cross-border youth context

The 'Prison to Peace' programme was delivered in a youth context to a group of young people drawn from a cross-border initiative. The delivery of the programme consisted of a three hour evening session in a youth setting, followed by a full day programme in Crumlin Road Gaol. This incorporated a tour of the gaol and a panel discussion with two political ex-prisoners. The day in Crumlin Road was observed by the research team and focus groups with young people conducted. Interviews were conducted with the programme manager and course facilitator.

Responses of young people

The young people involved in the programme were positive about the experience, in particular engaging with the panel and having the opportunity to attend the programme in the gaol. For the young people from the south of Ireland, they saw a benefit in learning about the conflict, as it helped them understand the context of the north, challenging their own version of history and stereotypes they had held:

> So you understand the vibe between the Protestants and the Catholics, up north and down south.

> When we went to school we kept hearing from the Republican view, you never heard from, like, the British kind of side.

For the young people from the north of Ireland, the benefits of the programme lay in engaging with the past, learning from the past and having their personal views challenged:

> You can't really avoid it because it's the history of the whole, the whole thing and avoiding it isn't going to help because you have to find it out one way or another and you're best confronting it and trying to deal with it.

> Well I think it's best to understand why and how the Troubles happened so that future generations won't make the same mistakes and turn to violence again. So, yeah, I think it's beneficial.

> I suppose it's amazing to see them [ex-prisoners] sitting side by side rather than on the streets you know, fighting against each other. And sort of what people learn from those, they've more similarities than differences.

> I liked learning just all the different factors of it, like ... just hear all different viewpoints because often when you grow up you just get one set, like you, and there is a bit more side, but it's showing, you know, it's not a good thing to do.

The value of learning about these issues with young people from other contexts was highlighted by both sets of young people, however they did suggest that more sessions could have been carried out in evenings prior to the full day programme to build relationships and help them engage more fully with the programme and each other.

Adult perspectives

The views of the young people resonated with those of the adults involved in the delivery of the programme. The programme leader was motivated to use the programme to challenge the young people she worked with to see the reality of conflict and to demythologize involvement in violence, as illustrated by these extracts from her interview:

> So they [young people] need to understand the actual feelings that people had, what impact it had on them, who was impacted by it, and even the economic consequences that the troubles had in Northern Ireland, you know, it would just take us completely backwards, which at any stage is very close,.

> They [young people] just don't get their voices heard, and this is why the young people feel they have to go out in the streets. Some are, yes, doing it for recreational purposes, because they are bored and they are being easily influenced by others, like puppets.

> Yes, it is trying to stop any young people from getting encouraged to get involved in any paramilitaries. It is trying to get rid of all those myths and legends and thing that they are hearing from other people in the community, that maybe just aren't that real.

She also explained that delivering the programme in a youth context, could reach young people whose schools did not feel ready to engage with these issues, pointing to the need for a more 'joined up approach' between schools and youth/community groups. This she suggested might help target those most vulnerable to influence into violence.

The programme facilitator also recognised the importance of the informal education sector in dealing with such issues, explaining how the work in the sector had led the way in dealing with contentious issues:

> I think some of the informal sector have been quite advanced and have been sort of trailblazers.

As an experienced practitioner, he was aware of the sensitivities associated with delivery of the programme, in particular the fact that many young people were not fully aware of the issues associated with the conflict, resulting in a need for facilitators to be acutely aware of their audience:

> Without doubt, it's definitely sensitive material you're dealing with, and not only is it sensitive for you, perhaps you have some negative experience of the conflict that you're carrying with you, but also people are very aware that young people growing up today, they don't necessarily know everything about their background, what's their family history and so forth, so we do have to tread carefully and be sensitive around what language we use and terms we use for various groups and how we present certain information to them.

Further, he suggested a need to be sensitive to the fact that talking about 'real life' issues had an impact not only on young people but the ex-prisoners themselves, as they related their own stories. As he stated:

> Well, it's not like you're teaching them to do Maths or something. You're talking about real life, real events that happened, and you don't know in what way it's going to affect people, whether it's the young people participating or indeed the ex-prisoners. They're ex-prisoners and they're not performing puppets, they're real people as well and so it's demanding of them.

Like the young people involved, he suggested that the implementation of the programme could have been improved by more time for delivery and more time for the young people to build relationships. Further, he suggested a need to adapt the programme for youth settings, reducing engagement with text for those with literacy problems and increasing use of video footage, additional to the DVD in the programme. The panel, for him, was the most impactful part of the programme as it provided a real focus for the young people. Similarly to the programme manager, the facilitator was of the view that the programme would benefit from a co-ordinated approach between the formal and informal sector.

Conclusion

This 'vignette' illustrates that the programme can be adapted to non-formal settings and can be delivered effectively in longer sessions over a shorter time period. However, if the programme is to be delivered in a cross-community or cross-border context additional time needs to given to ensuring the young people involved get to know one another and build up relationships. Also, in such settings there is a need for additional material that is not dependent on high levels of literacy, such as more audio-visual material. Non-formal settings also provide an opportunity for young people to engage with the programme in communities where schools are not ready to address issues relating to the conflict and its legacy. This indicates that a co-ordinated, joint-up approach is required at a community level to ascertain where best to deliver the programme and to support its delivery in youth sector contexts.

8.2 Developing the programme to incorporate other voices

A school experienced in the delivery of the programme was included in this research as a case study (non-trial) since they provided insight into how the programme has developed over the last few years. Over the years the programme has been developed to include tours of interface areas in Belfast and also the perspectives of victims' representatives. To date the 'Prison to ' programme has been followed in the school by sessions with pupils engaging with a representative from the victims' sector. The school then decided to draw these two aspects of their overall programme together, resulting in a joint final panel with ex-prisoners and the victims' representative.

Responses of young people

Young people in the school received the programme favourably, welcoming the opportunity to engage with issues through the taught programme before meeting the panel at the end of the

programme. Focus groups with the young people indicated that they see the value in learning about the past and as in other school contexts, this has assisted them in gaining a deeper understanding of the reality of the conflict and the impact it had on the society they were living. For example, as these young people stated:

> I never knew how bad it was.
>
> It is important (to learn about the past), its reflecting now, it could get as bad as it was.

The young people also said that for some of them it had them to think differently about the narratives they had received to date, again as had been the case in other schools:

> I know more about the subject now, you know both sides of the story.

Again, similarly to young people in other schools, the pupils in this focus group also described how the programme had resulted in them talking more to their parents about the conflict to understand their perspectives:

> You know I would never really talk about it before, but now I have gone home and told my mum about it….and my dad, he was in the police during then, I've asked him things too.

The young people particularly welcomed seeing ex-prisoners and a victims' representative sitting together addressing them, finding this a powerful image of what was possible post-conflict. Particular admiration was shown for the victims' representative:

> How [victim] can talk to them knowing he is the reason [referring to the ex-prisoners]…I couldn't do what he done.

This in turn prompted one pupil to say:

> If they can move on, why can't we?

Young people were also acutely aware of the sensitivities raised by the programme, first in relation to the impact of finding out about the reality of the conflict:

> Maybe it has upset some people knowing how bad it actually was.

Secondly, they pointed to the emotions raised in relation to attending the panel:

> It's a bit creepy, you're sitting with people who were in prison, right in front of you.
>
> Talking to the ex-prisoners was a bit scary.

This points to the need for pastoral support, careful preparation and de-briefing of pupils in relation to their experience of the programme, features very much part of the way in which this school delivers the programme.

Adult perspectives

Value of the programme

What is notable about this school context is the manner in which the school initially addressed engagement with the programme and how it has supported its evolution. Interviews with adults in the school demonstrate a deep commitment to helping their pupils understand the past and their current context. As one teacher in the school stated:

> I believe it's very relevant, and especially the last year and a half with all that's gone on in Northern Ireland. I think the children are finding it harder and harder to say, 'This isn't relevant anymore, there's no conflict'. I think now they're beginning to say, 'Well, actually there are some really key issues here'. (Teacher A)

> It allows students to make connections with what's happening today, allows them to see different viewpoints – so some might come from very one-sided communities and they can maybe see why what they would see as the community why they got involved in the conflict, what were their reasons. (Teacher B)

This was particularly important in contexts where young people did not have opportunities to discuss these issues at home. One teacher stated:

> I think a lot of parents don't talk to their children about it and, sort of, bubble wrap them, and I think that actually gives them an opportunity to really engage with what went on and what's still going on in Northern Ireland. (Teacher A)

Further they see the programme as a key vehicle for deterring young people from becoming involved in violence and conflict.

> If it saves a few people from getting involved in that then it'll be worth it. Even just to think about what prison is like, I don't think any of them really fully comprehend what going to prison is like and I think that the ex-prisoners do really go into very clear pictures of the separation from their family and missing, the impact it had on them. So, yes, even if it makes them think of the reality, 'If I do get into trouble here', the reality of being locked up, basically. (Teacher A)

School 'readiness'

Key features of the school's 'readiness' include a whole school commitment to the programme. In the first instance this involved a full staff training day for all teachers, classroom assistants and governors to 'take them through' the programme so all were fully aware of its content (not just those who would be delivering it). This day finished with a panel discussion with ex-prisoners for all adults in the school. Further, the school ensured parents were fully informed. As a teacher explained:

> I definitely think that getting our staff on board first was one of the best things we ever did because once you have your staff on board and then it come into a new curriculum, it's fine. We also always

> sent a letter home to parents. At the start we used to send it at the very start of the programme telling them about it and actually, as the years went on, we just sent the letter out before the Q and A session. (Teacher A)

While in the first instance a small number of staff chose not to attend the panel and were uneasy about the programme they nonetheless accepted that this was the approach the school had opted to take. As the teacher explained:

> Now, some of our staff didn't go to the afternoon [the panel], they weren't comfortable with it. Some of them who have been really against it from the start actually did come in at the end of the morning session and then we had a bit of a discussion, they said, 'Look, I don't think we need to teach this sort of thing', and there was a bit of a discussion but they were like, 'We can agree to disagree on this'. (Teacher A)

Another teacher in the school presented a useful overview of the ranges of teacher responses:

> And so some staff thought it was an excellent idea because of their past, they had seen people who they had grown up with get involved in the Troubles that would not necessarily have got involved but for where they lived. Then you had a section who weren't sure but were willing to go along and hear about it. And then there was a smaller section again who felt 'No, I totally disagree with this' because some of them felt it needed more balance. Others felt that's not the role of schools and we shouldn't be getting involved in this, and so 'Stay out of it'. They were in a minority and they're not involved in citizenship education at all and probably don't value it, but that was their perception at the time. So some of them refused to go to the training or to the information on it. Others who weren't sure went along and said 'No, I was glad I did'. (Teacher B)

However, as the school has continued to implement the programme over the last four years, fears appear to have been allayed:

> It's become so much part of our school and the curriculum that actually they don't really bat an eyelid or anything. (Teacher A)

It is also clear from this case study that the school leadership were highly supportive of the programme and the teachers delivering it.

> I think though, as well, it needs to be said that our senior leaders in our school and our principal at the time was very supportive. If our principal had had been against it there was nothing I could do and at the time our principal was very supportive of the programme and even our current principal is. (Teacher A)

The adults have found the programme challenging and are aware fully of its sensitivities. Interviews reveal how it has raised emotional issues for them, but this has in turn helped them to deal sensitively with the material.

Notably, the teachers involved have struggled with their own views of ex-prisoners but over the years they have become increasingly comfortable with engaging directly with them despite their own experiences of the conflict. This, it appears, is due largely to ensuring that the same ex-

prisoners address their pupils every year, allowing relationships to be built between them and the school. Moreover, the teachers are aware of the need to ensure that the panel members connect with their young people:

> I think, some of the speakers [ex-prisoners] engage better [with our children], and I think, what I have done is that I have learnt through doing the panels which speakers [our] children respond best to ….. So, that's why we did reduce the panel, that's one thing we did. We initially started off with four ex-prisoners … and then we decided it was one from each [side] because I felt it was too big. (Teacher A)

The inclusion of the victims' representative perspective, and the culmination of this in a joint panel, has been important for the school in maintaining a sense of balance and has allowed for a wider range of conversations to be had in relation to the processes of transition to peace.

> Some people [teachers in the school] came along and said, 'We don't feel comfortable with this programme, I think it'd be better to get a victim's perspective…' So we took that on board and that's why we contacted [victim] and he has come in as well. And we did take that on board and thought, 'Right, that's a very valid point'. Balance. It's about perspectives…. I knew [victim] was very supportive of the programme… then I thought that if he was comfortable enough to do it then actually it might give it a different spin. So, it worked brilliantly and I found it the most interesting…I would definitely do it that way again. (Teacher A)

Conclusion

Important lessons can be drawn from this vignette of an experienced school. First, it illustrates the value of developing the programme to incorporate a range of voices and perspectives. This however requires careful co-ordination of parties willing to share their stories together. Second, the experience of this school emphasises the importance of institutional commitment in the successful delivery of the programme and the need for a whole school approach to ensure that all staff are aware of the programme's aims and objectives. This in turn can ensure that teachers are more confident and more prepared to take risks in engaging young people with sensitive issues. Finally, this vignette also points to the importance of schools building relationships with the political ex-prisoners involved in the programme in order to ensure that they are confident in its delivery.

9. Findings – educational stakeholder perspectives

This chapter presents the findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with nine educational stakeholders, drawn from the Curriculum Council, Department of Education, Education and Library Boards, a victims' organization and non-governmental organizations implementing programmes in schools relating to the conflict and its legacy. The primary purpose of these interviews was to ascertain how the 'Prison to Peace' programme addressed curriculum and policy imperatives and how it could best be co-ordinated with other educational initiatives. However, the interviews also contributed to an understanding of the value of learning about the past through the 'Prison to Peace' programme, potential sensitivities associated with the programme and features of schools ready to engage with controversial issues. These are discussed in turn below.

9.1 Value in learning about the past

All interviewees agreed that there was a need for society in general to find ways of dealing with the past and its legacy, if future conflict were to be avoided. This, they suggested required open engagement with the issues, as aptly summed up in this response from one interviewee:

> I think understanding why it happened prevents it happening again. We deal with trauma on an individual level, and somebody comes in and says 'I'm traumatised', the first thing our counsellors will say is 'take me back to the event or incident'. So then what does that look like at large, when a society is traumatised, because what we know is if an individual does not deal with their trauma, it will come back, they may hide it but it will manifest itself in some way.....And if that's true for an individual surely its true for society as well. Where is the societal trauma? And how do you deal with that? You have got to deal with that. (Representative, victim's support group)

Further, interviewees stressed the importance of connecting young people, in particular, with the past:

> There's a collective memory, which many young people don't have. And so education in schools provides a context for young people and I think it's really important that they provide that context. (Representative, citizenship and oral history initiative)

> ... if we don't teach young people about this stuff then there's kind of some kind of historical amnesia taking place whereby young people don't have knowledge of what was happening here in the past. (Representative, history initiative I)

All interviewees also agreed that learning about the past helped young people to make sense of the society they were living in; specifically in relation to the impact it has had on all sectors of society:

> I think it's important to look at what has gone on in the past so that they can make sense of what's happening today and where they're at today. (Representative A, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

> A whole range of reasons that the, I mean, the thing that strikes me is this .... all the conflict, division, all these kinds of stuff have shaped the society we live in and continue to play havoc in the lives of young people. And that varies depending on the circumstances of the young person but I would argue even the kind of more sheltered middle-class kids, it still shapes their lives in terms of who they don't meet, where they don't go, the experiences that they don't have, and even the

> education system being so divided is in part a product of division here, ... so this stuff plays out, it matters, it shapes who they are, even though a lot of young people won't recognise that. (Representative, history initiative I)

One interview suggested that there was a connection between young people learning about, and understanding the past and its legacy, and educational outcomes, and in particular, preparing them to work in a diverse context:

> The issues which young people face can be barriers to their learning and it very often manifests itself in things like bullying etc. So from that aspect it [the legacy of the past] can actually impact on their educational outcomes and therefore that's why the Department sees it as important, but also from the aspect that education is not just about the academic qualification, although they're obviously very much to the forefront in terms of the Department of Education, but it is about ensuring that young people develop skills to take their place in society and skills that they need for the workplace and that means that you need to know how to deal with people with different opinions, different backgrounds to yourself etc. So from all of those aspects it's a key part of education. (Representative, Department of Education)

Specific benefits of 'Prison to Peace' programme

Notwithstanding concerns regarding the sensitivities of the programme, discussed below, all interviews saw particular value in young people addressing the past through the vehicle of the 'Prison to Peace 'programme. First, the fact the programme was based on first-hand accounts and narratives of those involved in conflict was seen as a particular strength in that it brought to life the reality of conflict, as illustrated by these extracts from interviews:

> It is making it a human story, as opposed to just a story that is kind of a bit disassociated from them. (Representative, history initiative II)

> That's why I felt this particular resource had a great opportunity to challenge young people to think about these things, but also doing it in a way that was meaningful, because it is about the true stories and the true lives of people who came through that time, and who also instigated a lot of things that happened and were the perpetrators, and therefore the message can be so much more powerful..... I think it brings an honesty. And I think they do show that whenever they're talking, even about, their journeys, and the impact it had on their families. (Representative, education and library board)

Second, interviewees pointed to the importance of young people engaging with the range of perspectives provided in the programme, particularly in relation to how that might challenge their own views and give them a deeper understanding of diversity:

> I think all of that is incredibly important because those are perspectives that young people often will not have the opportunity to hear and if they do hear them, they will be one-sided from their own side of the community. To hear the sense of balance I think is really important. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

> Well, the benefits are that you do get the opportunity to engage with somebody maybe with completely opposite opinions and that the young people can actually learn what actually drove them, what was their thinking behind that, and they may not agree with their views but they may have a better understanding of why they ended up doing what they did as a result of that, and that's a powerful message in terms of dealing with diversity, that it's not always the obvious, you need to dig

> down a bit deeper below the surface to see a better understanding of diversity. (Representative, Department of Education)

Third, as suggested by interviewees, the range of narratives and perspectives provided opportunities for young people to think more critically about the complex nature of conflict in Northern Ireland. As one interviewee explained:

> The wonderful thing about Prison to Peace and other projects like that is they make you ask more questions. They don't answer everything for you, they actually make you ask ,and they give you food for thought. And that is what Prison to Peace does in a way that a textbook could never do, in a way… in many instances that [name of initiative] couldn't do; it challenges you, it makes you question things, it puts a human face on the conflict, it makes you realise that there is no simple explanation to the history of Northern Ireland and there's no simple explanation to what happened. (Representative, citizenship and oral history initiative)

Similarly, another interviewee indicated how it challenged young people's perceptions in relation to those who had been involved directly in the 'Troubles', developing perhaps a more nuanced understanding of the reality and complexity of conflict:

> It would be very easy to just demonise paramilitaries, to demonise, you know, as simply bad people, whereas the reality is having had a lot of people grow up, or had the circumstance, found themselves in the circumstances that political prisoners find themselves in they would ... may well do the same thing. So it's that sense of building empathy as well. That doesn't mean to say that for me personally that what they did was okay. I still think they made very bad choices in many cases that were devastating for both themselves and other people. But it is about building that capacity to understand that given certain situations, you know, people are capable of making bad choices. It just, it kind of, it untangles a bit the stuff around paramilitaries and prison life. And I think it can help kind of complicate young people's thinking about this. Not just young people, but adults as well. (Representative, history initiative I)

Finally, the panel discussion and its location within a structured resource, was identified as an important feature of the programme, in that it provided opportunities for young people to engage directly with ex-prisoners and also created a space for teachers to work with pupils to make sense of the narratives they were encountering:

> Well, I think it [the panel] gives a connection with a first-hand source, to talk about their own personal experience that you won't get from a history book, that you won't get from watching a video or anything like that; even an opportunity to ask questions and personally interact with a voice that you normally wouldn't have access to and I think that just personal interaction is incredibly important to realise that these people are not demons, that they are human beings who have genuine motivations and whatever. So just their very presence in the room I think is really important but what sits alongside that is the whole programme, the materials that are used before the visit and after and working through all of that I think is extremely useful. It's really good that it's not just an isolated visit but there's this whole programme that sits around it, is extremely important; especially if that is integrated into other work that is going on in school. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

9.2 Sensitivities surrounding the programme

All interviewees were acutely aware of the sensitive and controversial nature of the programme and of the need to ensure it was implemented carefully in schools. As one of the interviewees stated:

> First of all, I think it is really important that it happens and I think it's a real positive that it happens but I think there are dangers in that..... Of all of the types of intervention that I've seen, I would say it probably is the most risky in terms of adverse parental reaction and in terms of senior management [in school] reacting badly. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

He explained that there was a danger that the presentation of narratives of ex-prisoners could lead to a potential glorification of violence. To this end he suggested that the inclusion of other voices, such as those of victims could provide a balance:

> There's a potential for their role to be glorified in some kind of way. Now, I know the project and I know that doesn't happen and I know that's not the way the boys talk but nevertheless - there's still that potential. I think that without the voice of victims being alongside, there is a risk of an imbalance in the story being told. You know, they can talk about their deeply held political views and how we felt we had to fight for it but without the content of that word 'fight' being explicated – unravelled, you know - It can sound almost clinical, you know, that this was a thing that we did ... do you know what I mean? (Representative, citizenship organisation)

This, he went on to suggest, was why the role of the teacher was important in ensuring that such issues were explored fully in the classroom:

> They can say the things they want to say but what is it the young person hears? You know, are they seeing a hero of theirs or are they seeing the devil incarnate or you know, what? But those are things that would be interrogated in class before and after. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

Other interviewees raised similar concerns regarding the need to contextualize the narratives of ex-prisoners in the stories of others:

> I think what's missing in this, there's a lot of space there for the voice of ordinary people and for my money I think it would be a good idea that more of those voices were engaged in the conversation around what's happening now (Representative A, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

However, as one interviewee explained, when discussing why the programme might be controversial, there was validity in addressing the issues separately:

> Because the question will be what about the victims? Which is a very, very valid question. And I think one of the problems in Northern Ireland is unless we address everything we address nothing. And that doesn't get you anywhere. So yes, victims are important ... but let's take a while and focus in here on the experience of political ex-prisoners, and we'll look at victims as well. (Representative, history initiative I)

9.3 Schools 'readiness'

Interviewees were asked to describe the features of a school 'ready' to deal with programmes like 'Prison to Peace', and to reflect on how ready they felt schools in fact were. Notably, they focused

on the readiness of adult stakeholders in schools rather than the readiness of pupils; a tacit understanding that young people were ready. As one interviewee explicitly stated:

> Very often it's the adults who are less ready than the young people.
> (Representative, history initiative I)

Unsurprisingly, the features identified by the educational stakeholders resonate strongly with the features evident in the schools involved in the research.

School leaders and readiness

In relation to the readiness of schools to engage with the programme, interviewees pointed to a number of issues, pertinently addressed in the extracts below:

> But also there has to be a sense of readiness in those schools as well. Because if you don't have the right ethos, the right culture, and if you're not doing the right things to actually set this in the right way, that it becomes something big...controversial, then people park it. There's an issue there around schools readiness. I'm thinking when we did the training [for the introduction of citizenship education], we trained the teachers. We didn't actually train the leaders, the principals, and I think there's something there around developing them, so they have an understanding and support this work. (Representative, education and library board)

> An ethos that's supportive; a school that isn't afraid of taking risks; a school that is committed to principles like critical thinking, where they want their young people to be equipped for the modern world. I think often things like a commitment to high standards sit alongside that but on the understanding that high standards just don't simply mean exam results but there's a broader commitment to the growth and development of the young person. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

> The key is with that within the school there is a shared understanding that that happening and there is support from the senior management within the schools so that teacher knows if the shit hits the fan that they are backed up. That they're not going to be scape-goated as some kind of rogue educator. (Representative, history initiative I)

These quotes summarise the general view of interviewees that a school's readiness was dependent upon a risk-taking, supportive ethos that valued the holistic development of the child and the commitment of school governors and school leaders to addressing this type of work in the school. However, as one interviewee pointed out, regardless of schools' reluctance to address such issues, there was a curricular requirement that they did:

> [Some schools] would be of the opinion of 'We don't have those issues within our schools, our young people don't have those issues'. But those young people are the same young people that are going out into the communities and having to deal with those issues [referring to issues related to the past]. So in some schools – and not all ...– but in some schools there is a view that 'Well, it's not really a problem for us so we don't really need to deal with it', and the way we get around that is saying 'Well, actually the curriculum requires you to deal with it, this is not a choice.' (Representative, Department of Education)

This, he suggested, was why schools needed to be supported in developing a climate conducive to dealing with diversity in general and issues related to the legacy of the conflict in particular.

Teachers and readiness

In relation to teacher readiness to deal with the type of issues raised in 'Prison to Peace', interviewees suggested they need to feel supported by school leaders, resonating with the views of teachers discussed in Chapter 7. Moreover, it was suggested by all interviewees that teachers would be unwilling to address the controversial issues raised in the programme if they felt they did not possess the requisite skills:

> When you look at all the research and stuff it tells you time and time again that teachers are reluctant to tackle controversial issues and two of the reasons are they don't really have the skills and they're not confident enough at doing it. Now, why would they take that [Prison to Peace] onboard if they're not able to teach something that's less controversial down that end? (Representative A, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

Other interviewees offered different explanations for teachers' unwillingness to deal with programmes like 'Prison to Peace'. One suggested that it was because they were *disconnected* from the impact of the conflict:

> And yet the legacy of what happened doesn't resonate with teachers, it doesn't sit anywhere with them, they kind of skirt through it and I think. We've noticed this in our work. There are people who have been effected by the 'Troubles', they were actively involved in the conflict, either as a victim or a perpetrator; then there were many people who were never touched by the conflict, who got on with their lives. And I have to say teachers tend to be part of that constituency, there's a sense that it had nothing to do with me, honestly, I was never affected by it, so why would I teach the legacy of it? (Representative, victim's support group)

However, another interviewee suggested that the reasons for not engaging were associated directly with the *impact* the conflict had on individual teachers, as explained in this account below:

> And for Prison to Peace it really is the teachers, it really is the teachers. – reluctance to engage for personal reasons And I hope… I… I training last month and there was a teacher who had been through Prison to Peace, was on my training, and she still struggles with Prison to Peace and is still unsure as to whether she'll implement it in her school or do anything with it in her school, but she had a very particular history of her father being a prison officer and so for her she found sitting in the room with all of the ex prisoners a hugely emotional experience. (Representative, citizenship and oral history initiative)

What was clear across all interviews was that if schools were to be 'ready', then there was a need for teachers to have access to training in relation to teaching controversial issues, and for them to feel supported by their schools in tackling this type of work. One interviewee explained how the current policy context required that teachers had access this type of training:

> What we found was that teachers were not comfortable teaching it [issues relating to CRED work in schools] because they weren't sure in terms of whether it might raise any issues with their class and weren't sure whether they could really open a can of worms, as they would see it. So they felt they wouldn't then know how ... to manage that situation. Part of the difficulty is that teachers didn't really get a huge amount of training around community relations….. We fully understand why that's part of the issue and what the community relations policy attempts to do is it looks at teacher education as a key element of it, so now as a result of the policy going in teachers will get specific training. (Representative, Department of Education)

In relation to the nature of such training, it was suggested by all interviewees that it should be grounded in the practicalities of classroom delivery, as typified by this comment:

> I think you still need to make sure there is some training. I don't think you could do it just cold. ... I think very often when people come out and I do training with them, they say if they had seen it on a piece of paper they'd think they couldn't do it. But because they've seen it and modelled it themselves, they feel confident then to go and try it with the pupils. (Representative, education and library board)

Parents and readiness

Interviewees were aware that school readiness to address a programme like 'Prison to Peace' would be affected by school leaders' concerns regarding parental reactions. While some interviewees gave a small number of examples when their programmes had encountered parental concerns, it was generally agreed that the fear of adverse reactions from parents was somewhat unfounded. As one interviewee stated:

> Although I would argue that adverse parental reaction is a bit of a myth; that in many of the projects I've been involved in or have knowledge of, the level of adverse parental reaction to stuff like this is minimal – if it happens at all. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

Another interviewee suggested that potential parental concerns were easily allayed if the school engaged with parents in relation to the programme:

> Sometimes I think the parents are often a lot more forward thinking than the governors and the school management think. Educate the parents or find a way round it, find out what is wrong, communicate with the parents, communicate what it is you're trying to do, and if you bring parents along they're going to be much more open; if they buy in to what you're doing, if they understand why you're doing it and the context and if Prison to Peace is part of a wider course of study of which it is an element then, you know, what's there to object about? (Representative, citizenship and oral history initiative)

This resonates with the findings from the process evaluation which demonstrate that in schools connected to their communities, and who are proactive in relationships with parents, very few parental objections to the programme were raised.

9.4 Locating the programme in the curriculum

Interviewees in general saw a strong connection between the 'Prison to Peace' programme and both the history and citizenship curricula, with a consensus emerging in relation to the role such programmes played in bridging the gap between the two subjects. For some, citizenship education in general grounded history to current contexts; for others history brought rigour to citizenship:

> I don't like the division between history and citizenship … I think children need something to hang something on, you need to know the history…. Sometimes Citizenship is this touchy feely subject, you need to hang it on something…contextualise it for them…I taught Citizenship through history, they need that lens. (Representative B, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

> I think one of the big challenges for the teaching of history is to connect historical fact with current reality; in many ways, that was one of the key intentions of Citizenship. (Representative, citizenship organisation)

For both these interviewees, the 'Prison to Peace' programme was a good example of how to draw both curriculum subjects together. Other interviewees suggested that 'Prison to Peace' could also be delivered across a range of subjects as part of a 'connected learning' initiative:

> I mean it's not rocket science, you could, get a few people together for a meeting, get the idea of who does what between art, music, history and so on. It would be possible. (Representative, history initiative I)

Overall, from the educational stakeholders interviewers there was a sense that while the Key Stage 3 curriculum provided more scope for delivering the 'Prison to Peace' programme, Key Stage 4 or possibly post- 16 was more age-appropriate in terms of the content covered. Representatives from the Curriculum Council for Examination and Assessment offered particular insight in this regard. For example, it was suggested that while issues relating to the conflict were part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, it was not always addressed fully:

> It is statutory that they do it at KS3, but again I would say there is patchy provision, it's left to summer term, and chances are they won't get to it. (Representative A, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

This, it was suggested, would mean that there was no guarantee that there would be the space in the Key Stage 3 curriculum to adequately weave 'Prison to Peace' into the history curriculum. Further, it meant that it could not be assumed that young people towards the end of Key Stage 3, or at the start of Key Stage 4, would have any substantial knowledge of the history associated with 'the Troubles'.

Incorporation of 'Prison to Peace' in the Key Stage 4 curriculum was similarly problematised, with representatives from the Curriculum Council for Examination and Assessment explaining that since it did not fit directly into the GCSE for Learning for Life and Work teachers would be reluctant to deliver it:

> If it doesn't fit that specification why would a teacher do it? (Representative A, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

Similarly, in relation to the history GCSE, while 'Prison to Peace' had relevance for parts of the specification, it was suggested that:

> When you have an examination driven curriculum, they do not have time to do it…they actually don't have time to cover it. (Representative B, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

However, it was suggested that there was scope to incorporate aspects of the programme into the history GCSE:

> There would be opportunities through the controlled assessment…where we would do Northern Ireland, we would give an assessment task every year where one of the options, it's only an option, ... we give them an opportunity to look at Northern Ireland since the Good Friday Agreement, and they

> can, whatever perceptions they want … that would be where a teacher who is forward thinking could use this sort of work (Representative B, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

As caveat, it was added that very few schools engage with that option.

However, a number of options were suggested as the most feasible locations for the programme:

> It could be part of a post 16 current affairs enrichment programme or a watered down version at 3rd year, or an enrichment programme at KS4 to be part of LLW, not an exam, or something like that (Representative B, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

9.5 Relationship between 'Prison to Peace' and other educational programmes

All interviewees felt strongly that there was a need for programmes like 'Prison to Peace' to be seen as a related set of initiatives that schools could draw on as they saw fit:

> I think the [name of initiative] project is an excellent project, I think Prison to Peace is an excellent project and there's a number of other projects and what I can't understand is why all of these can't be pulled together to provide a suite of options for teachers. (Representative, citizenship and oral history initiative)

Some suggested that this might provide ways for schools to gradually work towards more controversial issues, by first working with programmes that were perhaps less sensitive in order to develop confidence to deal with the more problematic issues:

> I think if we kind of started with maybe a softly, softly approach, like our project - which is one of the reasons why we start with the civil rights, because it is less contentious or whatever. (Representative, history initiative I)

> With [name of initiative] you could play safe..... We have a number of teachers that have done [our] training and also Prison to Peace training and they have struggled more with Prison to Peace, mainly because of their own personal experience, and Prison to Peace brings your own personal feelings to the fore. And it did for me but I'm the sort of person that welcomes that because anything that makes me think and re-examine my position on things I like, you know. And I think a couple of my teachers that have got involved in Prison to Peace have gone through this very same thing; some of them have come to the same conclusion as me and some haven't. (Representative, citizenship and oral history initiative)

However, one interviewee provided some insight on why co-ordination might be difficult:

> I really do believe that there's an important part that they [non-governmental organisations] play in this. But at the moment what I think hasn't happened is a sort of working togetherness, if you like, and part of that's probably because of competition for funding and things. And then, you know, if you maybe have two NGOs working in the same area, there is a wee bit of competition for funding .... And then there's the possibility of the dilution of their identity, you know, because, yes, they [do] collaborate but they [don't] go too far into it because they feel they have messages to say that were different than another NGO. (Representative A, Curriculum Council for Examinations and Assessment)

Hence, any type of central co-ordination would need to be managed in such a way that the organisations involved maintained their autonomy and unique perspectives.

In the absence of a centralised approach within the system to co-ordinate related programmes, it was suggested that at the very least school leaders could be more proactive in ensuring programmes within their schools were at the least co-ordinated. For one interviewee, the Department of Education's 'Community Relations, Equality and Diversity' (CRED) policy provided a potential framework for this:

> In terms of principals sometimes just anything comes in and they go ' Yes, yes, yes'. And sometimes you'll find in a school it's the same teachers who are doing all of those things. I think now there's maybe an opportunity with the CRED policy. Now don't get me wrong, it's not perfect, but anyway. The Department of Education now have the CRED policy .... and clearly within that schools have to…be engaging with [these issues]. When we have teachers out [on training] we are saying to them you need to start looking at what you're already doing in the school……and think about how they actually connect and complement each other. But I don't think the schools necessarily have the skills or the capacity to do that. (Representative, education and library board)

Also, for interviewees, CRED policy provided the ideal vehicle through which to ensure a 'joined-up approach' to the range of initiatives on offer to schools and the youth sector, resonating with the views expressed in section 8.1. As one interviewee explained:

> And the other thing which we've done through this policy, which wasn't happening in terms of any of the previous policies, is a more joined-up approach. Because within a local area young people are going to school during the day and then they're going to the youth clubs at night, and up until the CRED policy came in neither side were talking, so the schools had no idea what the youth side were doing and vice versa. So we have said 'Look, there needs to be a more joined-up approach; at a minimum level at least the schools need to be aware and the youth side… what's being addressed'. Because at least they can align what they're dealing with so that there's some sort of commonality. (Representative, Department of Education)

Overall, interviewees were in agreement in relation to the need for co-ordination, and the benefits of a more co-ordinated approach, but differed in relation to the degree to which this should be centralised or school based.

9.6 Additions to the programme

As noted above interviewees felt that the programme could be better contextualised if located within a range of other perspectives on the conflict, in particular narratives relating to victims. However, there was consensus amongst the educational stakeholders that this was not necessarily something to be addressed specifically in the 'Prison to Peace' programme, but rather could come from alternative programmes and resources. However, in relation to the programme itself, it was suggested by a number of interviewees that inclusion of perspectives of family members of the ex-prisoners would add significantly to the programme: voices of women, wives, partners or girlfriends; voices of children; voices of their parents.

Suggestions were also made in relation to including more film footage and/or images to augment the text-heavy nature of the resource. In relation to this it was suggested by one interviewee that the panel discussions could be filmed as a resource. As she explained:

> Let's say there are some schools that won't feel comfortable to do the panel but, but maybe do the resource, but you've also the fact over time the capacity to get those ex-prisoners into school might…so maybe there needs to be a filming of the panels, where young people are asking the questions, so there's a legacy from those as well that go as part of that resource so that I can do this work. Because I think they are very powerful those panels. (Representative, education and library board)

One interviewee also saw potential in embedding the programme as part of a school's response to CRED policy priorities:

> I know there's a lot of funding for CRED work… if schools were to come on board and even roll it out over a couple of years…you could do some work in your own school, then another school, over a couple of years, especially under that CRED framework…there's a lot of planning … but you could bring the parents in, involve them, take it slowly… (Representative B, Curriculum Council for Examination and Assessment)

This approach was supported by the representative from the Department of Education who saw value in joint work on such initiatives:

> So you have that basic level which schools are having to deliver the curriculum and then in addition to that we provide funding through the board and they have what they call a CRED enhancement scheme, which is not about the delivery of the curriculum *per se* because schools are already funded through their local school budgets to do that, but this is about the enhancement ... so it's over and above what they would normally have to do. And the sorts of activities that you can do around that is you could be teaching history about partition and about the Boyne and you can actually then apply for CRED funding to actually take the young people along with maybe a controlled and maintained school coming together and doing a joint visit to the sites and activities like that where you would have joint activities. We've done a lot of work around flags and murals and emblems particularly over the recent time. So there are lots of opportunities to do those sorts of things. (Representative, Department of Education)

9.7 Conclusion

The educational stakeholders interviewed recognise the benefits of engaging young people with issues surrounding the conflict and its legacy, particularly in relation to helping young people make sense of their present situation and in developing an awareness of the complexity of the Northern Ireland conflict. They see the value of engaging with the perspectives of ex-prisoners as part of a broader engagement of a range of voices from the conflict.

Interviewees in general see a strong connection between the 'Prison to Peace' programme and both the history and citizenship curricula, with a consensus emerging in relation to the role such programmes played in bridging the gap between the two subjects. While the Key Stage 3 curriculum provides more scope for delivering the 'Prison to Peace' programme, Key Stage 4 or possibly post- 16 was seen to be more age-appropriate in terms of the content covered. All the educational

stakeholders agreed that regardless of where in the curriculum programmes like 'Prison to Peace' were located, there was need to for teacher training and support in relation to dealing with the conflict, its legacy and associate controversies in the classroom.

All interviewees suggested that there is a need for a co-ordinated approach to addressing the past in the curriculum to ensure that the range of educational initiatives dealing with related issues can work together to maximise impact. Most favoured a centralised co-ordination; some suggested this is primarily an issue for the principal of a school to consider in relation to engagement with external programmes. All interviewees agreed however that the Department of Education's 'Community Relation Equality and Diversity' policy provided the most appropriate framework in which to locate this type of curriculum initiative.

10. Conclusion and recommendations

In societies emerging from conflict there is a recognised role for education in addressing the legacy of the past, particularly in relation to how aspects of the curriculum such as the history and citizenship curricula can generate understanding of past conflict and assist young people in contributing positively to the development of their post-conflict communities[49]. The Northern Ireland policy context acknowledges this role, both in relation to policies and strategies developed to address issues of social cohesion in general, and in relation to polices for community relations, equality and diversity in education in particular (as outlined in Chapter 1). What is evident from this study is that young people are not only *interested* in learning about the past, but are *ready* to engage with its associated controversies. Moreover, they value how addressing the past through educational programmes assists them in making sense of their current socio-political context.

While there are many ways in which the 'Troubles' and its legacy could be addressed through the curriculum, 'Prison to Peace' provides young people with a unique perspective on conflict, its impact and on the processes of conflict transformation. As indicated by this study, the narratives of political ex-prisoners provide one lens for understanding the broader context of the conflict in the Northern Ireland and the processes of transition to peace. Further, this research demonstrates that adults and young people alike *value* the learning that emerged from the programme and that young people in particular enjoyed engaging with it. Notably, the programme has also resulted in inter-generational dialogue about the 'Troubles' and related current political issues.

Impact of the 'Prison to Peace' programme

Not only is the 'Prison to Peace' programme *seen* as valuable by key stakeholders, but the analysis of findings from the CRCT provide clear evidence of its positive effects on young peoples' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. The programme increases young people's knowledge of the 'Troubles', as well as their support for non-violent means to deal with conflict and their likeliness to participate positively in political activities, as measured by several indicators, i.e. their likeliness to participate in democratic activities in school, their tendency to talk to others about politics and their frequency of information seeking. Furthermore, the programme reduces sectarian prejudice. Whilst the latter is not articulated as a primary outcome of the programme, this research indicates that addressing issues of the conflict and its legacy helps young people understand the nature of their current societal context, make sense of division resulting from conflict and as a consequence reduces sectarian prejudice.

There is also evidence to suggest that young people who participate in the programme are more likely to develop a more nuanced understanding of the causes of the conflict, in that they are less likely to simply blame 'the other side' and more likely to locate the 'Troubles' within an understanding of its socio-political context. Further, the programme has potential to maintain trust

[49] Cole, E., Barsalou, J. (2006) *Unite or divide? The challenges of teaching history in societies emerging from violent conflict. Special Report.* Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace; Smith, S., and T. Vaux (2003) *Education, conflict and international development.* London: Department of International Development (DFID); Tawil, S., and A. Harley. (2004) *Education, conflict and social cohesion.* Geneva: International Bureau of Education.

in social, civic and political institutions and to encourage young people's optimism in relation to permanent peace. The programme works equally as well for all groups, as no consistent pattern of differential effects in terms of gender, religion, deprivation, or political background was found.

School 'readiness' to engage with controversial issues

Crucial to the success of programmes like 'Prison to Peace' is the readiness of schools to engage with controversial and sensitive subject matter. What was apparent in this study was this readiness depended on: a school ethos focused (both in policy and practice) on the holistic development of the child and on the preparation of young people to live and work in a diverse society; knowledge of and sensitivity to the perspectives of parents and of the community schools serve; leadership trust in the teachers delivering the programme; teacher confidence to deliver the programme in the knowledge that they were supported by the school; awareness of the sensitivities surrounding this type of programme, in particular in relation to parental responses and the readiness of pupils to deal with issues raised; commitment to a whole school approach which ensures that all staff are aware of the programme's aims and objectives. In such circumstances, this study suggests that young people engage readily with sensitive material, as they trust their teachers to provide a non-biased 'broad framework' of knowledge in relation to the conflict within which they can locate the often partial narratives of their family and communities from which they come.

Analysis of the 'Prison to Peace' programme

The 'Prison to Peace' programme's *strengths* lie in how skilled teachers present and engage with the personal narratives of political ex-prisoners and in doing so offer multiple perspectives on the nature and impact of the conflict. This in turn assists young people in developing their own perspectives, challenging pre-conceived ideas and partial narratives of the 'Troubles'. This is particularly effective when young people engage directly with ex-prisoners through the panel discussions. The programme's *weaknesses* lie in the text rich resources, which can be challenging for those with literacy problems, and in aspects of the panel discussions which are not sufficiently well chaired and/or when answers from ex-prisoners are over-long complex.

The programme's *challenges* lie in ensuring teachers feel equipped to deal with its sensitivities and that schools and other institutions commit sufficient time to its delivery. The programme's *opportunities* lie in its adaptability to a range of contexts and in its potential incorporation with other similar initiatives to present a full and comprehensive overview of the conflict and its legacy to young people.

Recommendations

In relation to the 'Prison to Peace' programme, and its future development by the **Prison to Peace Partnership,** consideration should be given to:

- providing more visual and audio visual stimulus materials to augment the text rich resources;
- providing additional support materials on conflict transformation, transitional process and community development to ensure teachers maximize the potential of this aspect of the programme;
- providing guidelines for effective chairing of panels for teachers and additional advice to political ex-prisoners on how to ensure all answers are age appropriate and accessible to all young people;
- disseminating the outcomes of this evaluation to support political ex-prisoners in the process of transformational change, in particular their efforts towards moving into more mainstream conflict transformation activity and peacebuilding work.

In relation to **schools** implementing the programme, good practice suggests that the programme will be most successful when schools ensure that:

- the programme is located within a whole-school approach to dealing with the conflict and its legacy and that all staff are briefed fully on the programme's aims and objectives;
- parents/guardians are fully aware of the nature of the programme and reassured of its educational value;
- sufficient curriculum time is given to its implementation;
- teachers are provided with support and opportunities to attend (and disseminate) training;
- careful consideration is given in relation to the best 'curriculum home' for the programme, that takes in to account pupil maturity as well as available curriculum space.

In relation to the contribution of 'Prison to Peace' to **policy** priorities, consideration should be given to ensuring that:

- support is provided for capacity building and up-skilling of former prisoners to continue to develop their involvement in conflict transformation work with young people and to continue the mainstreaming of their organisations' peacebuilding work;
- anti-sectarianism modules for young people (to be developed as part of the 'Together Building a United Community' strategy) not only address issues of diversity within society, but also attend

to the past conflict, its impact and legacy; 'Prison to Peace' should be considered as an exemplar module;

- schools are encouraged to work through the CRED policy and CRED enhancement scheme to seek resources to deliver the 'Prison to Peace' programme on a single identity or shared/cross-community basis;

- existing training for teachers (in pre-service and in continual professional development) not only addresses the teaching of controversial issues in general but provides teachers with specific practical support in addressing the controversies associated with the conflict and processes of transition;

- programmes are developed to encourage inter-generational understanding of the conflict and its legacy, with particular emphasis on supporting parents to engage in conversations with their children about their experience of the 'Troubles';

- structured support mechanisms, such as a dedicated educational support officer and resource 'hub', are provided to assist schools in selecting from and coordinating the range of available initiatives which seek to address the conflict and its legacy; such coordination needs to ensure joint up approaches within and between schools and within and between the formal education and youth sector.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Research questions, aims and methods

Table A1: Objectives and methods

Project objectives	Quantitative method		Qualitative methods			Process evaluation	School profile data
	CRCT	Post-test pupil survey	Interviews (adults)	Focus groups	Observations		
To ascertain the experiences of key stakeholders involved in the development and delivery of the programme			x	x	x	x	
To determine the impact of the programme on young peoples' knowledge, attitudes and behaviours	x	x	x	x	x		
To determine the implications of the research findings for the future development of the 'Prison to Peace' programme	x	x	x	x			x
To develop recommendations on how best to co-ordinate the 'Prison to Peace' with other educational initiatives in the curriculum			x	x		x	
To make a significant contribution to the wider international debate and evidence base on the role of citizenship education in conflict affected and transitional societies.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Appendix 2: Development of the measures

Piloting the measures

The pilot involved 210 pupils, across years 10, 11 and 12, from two different schools in Northern Ireland (134 males and 76 females). In order to assess the effectiveness and suitability of the items in the questionnaire, the results were subjected to psychometric testing as well as being informed and amended according to the advice of the Young People's Advisory Group. This resulted in a 137[50]-item post-pilot instrument (note, this includes all items, including demographic detail and voluntary open-ended questions etc; see Appendix 3).

Data reduction and extraction: exploratory factor analysis

Methods used included exploratory factor analysis (using principal components analysis) and reliability analysis (using Cronbach's alpha). Prior to subjecting the scale items (i.e., those answered according to a 5 point Likert scale) to principal components analysis (PCA), the suitability of the data was first confirmed (i.e., according to the following criteria: suitable sample size; inter-item correlations >0.3; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values >.6; and reaching statistical significance in Bartlett's test of Sphericity at the p<.0001 level).

Factors were then extracted using PCA. Numerous methods were employed to decipher the number of factors to retain, namely Kaiser's criterion/eigenvalue rule, Cattell's [1966] scree test and parallel analysis. This analysis resulted in the extraction of multiple factors which were then subjected to further analysis (Cronbach's alpha) to ascertain their reliability (note that during this analysis, several items were deleted in order to maximise the strength of the measure).

Each of the measures, mapped to the outcome they are measuring, are presented below in Table A2.

[50] This figure is based on the baseline intervention group survey. There is some variation between control group and intervention group surveys in terms of initial detail (e.g., class detail in terms of where Prison to Peace was delivered), as well as some variation between baseline and post-test (e.g., post-test surveys for the intervention group also asked questions specific to enjoyment of the programme). However, there were no differences across the main measures.

Table A2: Outcome measures

Outcome general	Outcome specific	Item number on survey	Item development
Intended behaviours	Reduction in intention to use/ support the use of violence to deal with divisions and conflict	36	These items focus on the justification of/ support for the use of violence. New items were developed for this scale.
	Increase in intention to be politically engaged	15	These items assess young people's participation in activities associated with school, community and politics. The ICCS (2009) 'Students' behaviours' scales and the 'Young life and Times survey' (2003, politics module) were used as a basis for these items (new items were also added).
		16&17	Assesses information seeking behaviour. Qn 16 uses Flanagan et al's (2007) 'Political conversation with others' scale. Qn 17 is adapted from Flanagan et al's (2007) 'Media: Current events & Political Coverage' scale .
		18	Explores trust. Items were adapted from ICCS (2009) 'Trust of Civic Institutions' subscale (exploratory only)[51]
Attitudes	Reduction in sectarian prejudice (exploratory only)[52]	20-23	Explores prejudice (subtle and blatant). Items were adapted from the 'Subtle prejudice scale' and the 'Blatant prejudice scale' (Muldoon & Connolly, 2007).
	Increase in respect for political diversity and, more specifically, acceptance that other political positions/ opinions are legitimate	38&39	Explores respect for political diversity and cultural identity. Some items for Qn 38 were adapted from the ICCS (2009) 'Students' support for democratic value beliefs' scale, plus, new items were added Qn 39 uses items from the 'Evaluation of 'promoting reconciliation' programme', which were an adaptation of the 'Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure' (Phinney, 1992) (exploratory only)[53]
Knowledge	Increase in awareness of the complexity of conflict in Northern Ireland	33-35	Qualitative responses are requested to assess perceived causes of conflict/ the 'Troubles', followed by quantitative items which were designed for this outcome.
	Increased knowledge of the processes of transition and conflict transformation	32	New items were designed for this outcome

[51] It should be noted that increase in trust is not an identified outcome for the programme; these items were included as exploratory only with a view to analysing the relationship between participation and trust

[52] As noted above it was agreed on advice with the advisory groups not to identify this as an intended outcome of the programme

[53] This measure was included as exploratory only, with a view to ascertaining if any relationship existed between cultural identity (exploration and affirmation), prejudice, and respect for political diversity. This was not an identified outcome for the programme.

Appendix 3: Survey

Prison to Peace Survey

	4437543		279
	0	True	0
0	True		

Thank you for taking the time to answer more questions for us. Your answers will be kept confidential. Any answers you give will be sent to a researcher at Queen's called Karen. Only her and other members of the research team will see your answers. So please answer as honestly as possible. This is not a test, there are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know what *you think*.

Important information: When completing this survey please do not click the 'back' button on your computer as this will automatically direct you to the start of the survey meaning you would have to start all over again!

Please click this box if you agree to do this survey

I agree to participate

We need to ask some questions about you.

We need this information so that we can find out if different young people answer differently, e.g., boys and girls or people from different areas of Northern Ireland.

We are going to ask for your name. We need your name so that we can match up your answers from today with the answers you gave a few weeks ago when you did this survey the first time.

We **promise** that your names will not be shared with anyone. We also **promise** that no one will know what answers you have given. Only

the researchers at Queen's will see your name and they don't know who you are!

What is your name?

Are you a boy or a girl?

Boy Girl

What is your date of birth?

What is the name of your school?

What year are you in?

Year 10 Year 11 Year 12

Please give the name of your citizenship class (or form class if you do citizenship in your form group).

Are you entitled to a free school meal?

Yes No Not sure

What is your home postcode?

If you are not sure of your postcode, can you provide your street name?

In Northern Ireland, many people come from different religious backgrounds. They belong to different communities. They have different nationalities.

We want to know about *your* background.

So, please answer the following questions about your religion/community/nationality.

How would you describe the religious background you come from?

- Catholic
- Protestant
- I'm not religious, but I come from a Catholic background
- I'm not religious, but I come from a Protestant background
- Other, please give details

Which word best describes your political background?

- Republican
- Nationalist
- Unionist
- Loyalist
- Not sure
- None
- Other, please give details

Do you see yourself as ... (you can choose more than one answer)?

(If you see yourself, as European, e.g., Polish, select other and please give details.)

- British
- Irish
- Northern Irish
- Other, please give details

Many people in Northern Ireland also have different ethnic backgrounds.

Please pick one from the list below that best describes your ethnic background.

- White
- Chinese
- Irish traveller
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Black Caribbean
- Black African
- Black other
- Mixed
- If mixed please give details. Or if other, please give details

We want to find out what kind of young people are interested in things like politics and taking part in activities in their school or community.

When we say 'politics' we don't *just* mean things to do with our politicians and what goes on at Stormont.

We *also* mean 'citizenship' issues. Things affecting young people in their communities. Things that are on the news etc.

So, what kind of person are you?

Please read each of the statements below and let us know how much you agree with them.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
I would take part in a peaceful protest/march	○	○	○	○	○
I would sign a petition	○	○	○	○	○
I would never join a political party, even when I'm older	○	○	○	○	○
I would wear badges/ wristbands to express my views	○	○	○	○	○
I would campaign for a political issue	○	○	○	○	○
When I'm older, I would vote in elections	○	○	○	○	○
I would contact or visit someone in politics who represents my community	○	○	○	○	○
I would contact a newspaper, radio, or TV talk show to express my views	○	○	○	○	○
I would join a current affairs club (e.g., a politics, citizenship, or debating club)	○	○	○	○	○
I would take part in decision-making about how the school is run, e.g., in a school council	○	○	○	○	○
I would put myself forward for student council	○	○	○	○	○
I would vote for a student councillor	○	○	○	○	○
I would join a 'pressure group' (e.g., an	○	○	○	○	○

environmental group/ human rights group etc.)					
I would volunteer in my local community (e.g., helping out with youth clubs, church groups etc.)					
I would never help out in my community					
I would join a religious club					

We also want to find out how much young people talk about politics.

Remember when we use the word 'politics' we mean general political issues as well as 'citizenship' issues facing young people in their community. To help us do this, we would like you tell us how much **you** talk about these issues.

Please read each of the statements below and let us know how much you agree with them.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
I talk to my parents/ guardians about politics					
I'm interested in my parents'/guardians' opinions about politics					
My parents/guardians encourage me to express my opinions about politics and current events, even if they are different from their views					
I talk to my teachers about politics					
I'm interested in my teachers'					

opinions about politics					
My teachers encourage me to express my opinions about politics, even if they are different from their views					
I talk to my friends about politics					
I'm interested in my friends' opinions about politics					
My friends encourage me to express my opinions about politics, even if they are different from their views					

Please can you tell us how often you do the following?

	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Most of the time	All of the time
Watch the local news on TV for information on politics and current events					
Listen to news about politics and current events on the radio					
Read a newspaper for information on politics and current events					
Read news on the internet about politics and current events					
Use social media, e.g., Facebook/Twitter, to get information on politics and current events					

We would like to know how much you trust different groups of people.

So, can you tell us how much you trust each of the following

	Not at all	A little	Uncertain	Quite a lot	A lot
Politicians					
The media (e.g., newspapers)					
The Northern Ireland government					
The police					
Political parties in Northern Ireland					

We also want to know if young people think they can make a difference.

Please read each of the statements below and let us know how much you agree with them.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe I can make a difference in my community					
By working with others in the community I can help make things better					

Many people in Northern Ireland see themselves as coming from either protestant or catholic backgrounds.

We want to find out how young people view people from a different religion/community background.

Please indicate how similar or different you think Catholics and Protestants are...

	Very different	Somewhat different	Uncertain	Somewhat similar	Very similar
In the TV programmes and films they like to watch	○	○	○	○	○
In the values that they teach their children	○	○	○	○	○
In what they find funny	○	○	○	○	○
In their religious beliefs and practices	○	○	○	○	○
In the way they speak and behave	○	○	○	○	○
In their political beliefs	○	○	○	○	○

And how strongly do you agree that...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
People who see themselves as Irish are normally Catholic	○	○	○	○	○
Protestants are unlikely to be nationalist	○	○	○	○	○
If one religious group/side of the community gets more money and more jobs etc., it generally means the other side will lose out.	○	○	○	○	○
Protestants normally see themselves as British	○	○	○	○	○
If one religious group/ side of the community gets more political power, then the political groups from the other side will lose some power	○	○	○	○	○

Unionists are unlikely to be Catholic	○	○	○	○	○

For the questions below, if you see yourself as Catholic, the 'other' is Protestant. If you see yourself as Protestant, the 'other' is Catholic. If you see yourself as a different religion (e.g., Muslim), then 'other' refers to religions different from your own. Now can you tell us how often you have...?

	Never	Not too often	Uncertain	Fairly often	Very often
Felt sympathy for those from the other religion/community	○	○	○	○	○
Admired those from the other religion/community	○	○	○	○	○
Felt compassion (kindness and concern) for those from the other religion/ community	○	○	○	○	○

How much do you agree with the statements below?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
I would prefer to live in an area where everyone/most people are from my own religion/ community	○	○	○	○	○
I wouldn't mind if one of my close relatives married someone from the other religion/community	○	○	○	○	○
When I am older and have children, I would prefer to send them to a school where everyone/ most people are from my own religion/community	○	○	○	○	○

When I am older and have a job, I wouldn't mind if my boss was someone from the other religion/community					
When I am older, I would prefer to have a job in a workplace where people are from my own religion community					

You can use this box below to explain any of your answers.

You're doing great.

You're half way there.

Just a few more to go...

We are interested in finding out what young people know and understand about conflict (e.g., wars, groups of people fighting each other etc.)

Please tell us what you think causes conflict (like wars and communities fighting)

Please tell us what you think caused the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland

Do you think there is still conflict in Northern Ireland?

- Yes
- No

If so, what do you think causes this conflict?

Do you think there will ever be permanent peace in Northern Ireland?

- Yes
- No

You can use this box to explain your answer

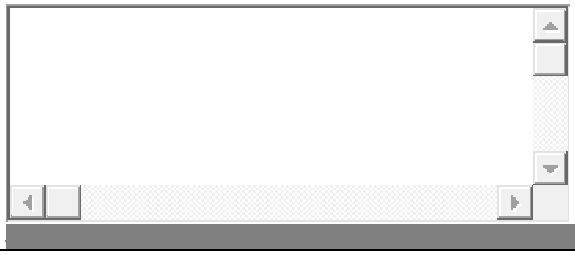
We would like to know how much you think you know about the conflict in Northern Ireland (sometimes called the 'Troubles').

How much do you know about?

	Very little	A little	Uncertain	Quite a lot	A lot
What caused the 'Troubles'	○	○	○	○	○
How the 'Troubles' has affected people's lives in general in Northern Ireland	○	○	○	○	○
How the 'Troubles' has affected people who were injured or lost friends or family members due to the violence	○	○	○	○	○
Why people got involved in 'paramilitary' groups during the 'Troubles'	○	○	○	○	○
How the 'Troubles' has affected people who were involved in the 'paramilitary' groups	○	○	○	○	○
How the 'Troubles' has affected the families of people who were involved in 'paramilitary' groups	○	○	○	○	○
The Peace Process (that led to the 'Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement') in Northern Ireland	○	○	○	○	○
Things organised by the government to help move Northern Ireland forward (like decommissioning, changes to policing etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Community-based projects that are trying to help people deal with the effect of the 'Troubles'	○	○	○	○	○

Why do you think people got involved in 'paramilitary groups' during the 'Troubles'?

Write down the **main** reason in the box below:



If you think there are **other** reasons then list them here:

Here are some reasons why other people think some people got involved in 'paramilitary groups' during the 'Troubles'.

How much do you agree with each of these?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
They got involved because they were seeing their family and friends get hurt	○	○	○	○	○
They were just bad people who wanted to fight	○	○	○	○	○
They were bigoted and wanted to hurt people from the other side	○	○	○	○	○
The way the 'Troubles' was reported in the media (e.g., news programmes and newspapers) encouraged many people to get involved	○	○	○	○	○
They got involved for lots of different reasons	○	○	○	○	○
They had no other choice	○	○	○	○	○
Friends and family encouraged them to get involved	○	○	○	○	○

We are interested in what young people think about using violence as a way to deal with political or religious differences, like in Northern Ireland. The following statements are about using violence in Northern Ireland.Tell us how much you agree with each.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
People have a right to use violence to fight for what they believe in					
It's better to try and find a peaceful solution than to fight					
It's never ok to use violence to get what you want					
If you can't get what you want in a peaceful, democratic way, then violence is the only answer					
You can still fight for what you want without using violence					
Sometimes you need to compromise to avoid violence					
Violence is the best way to get what you want					

Please use the box below if you would like to further explain any of your answers

These statements look at what you think about other people's political opinions.

How much do you agree with each:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
Everyone should have the right to hold and express their opinions freely	○	○	○	○	○
All people should have their political rights respected	○	○	○	○	○
I respect other people's political beliefs, even when they are different from my own	○	○	○	○	○
I respect people's right to want Northern Ireland to remain in the UK	○	○	○	○	○
I respect people's right to want a united Ireland	○	○	○	○	○
I respect people's right to vote for whatever political party they want	○	○	○	○	○
I respect people's right to be proud of their own culture and identity	○	○	○	○	○
It's OK for people to show their culture in public	○	○	○	○	○
I respect people's rights to express their culture, as long as they do not hurt anyone else	○	○	○	○	○
It's OK for people to express political views which I completely disagree with	◉	○	○	○	○

It's important that people in Northern Ireland try to respect each other's political views					
It's important that people in Northern Ireland try to trust people who hold different political views					

We would like you now to think about your cultural community. Cultural community means the community which you feel you belong to; it can be made up of people sharing the same religion, or traditions, or political views, or identities.

How much do you agree with each statement?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
I have spent time finding out more about my cultural community, such as its history, traditions, and customs					
I belong to clubs or teams mostly with people from the same cultural community as me					
I know what my cultural community means for me					
I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my cultural community					
I am happy that I am a member of my cultural community					
I strongly feel I belong to my own cultural community					

I understand pretty well what belonging to my cultural community means to me					
I have often talked to other people about my cultural community so that I can learn more about it					
I feel proud of my cultural community and what it stands for					
I do things that are special to my cultural community, such as sports, music, or language					
I feel strongly attached to my cultural community					
I feel good about my cultural community					
I don't belong to any cultural community					

Now hit send.

Your answers will be sent to Karen and the research team at Queen's.

Remember when we write up the results of this questionnaire we will not include any names, so no one will ever know the answers you provided.

Appendix 4: Additional post-test survey for intervention schools

Prison to Peace Survey

	4437543		279
	0	True	0
0	True		

We would now like to ask you some questions specifically about the Prison to Peace programme that you have being doing in school.

Firstly, can you tell us how much did you enjoy...?

	Not at all	A little	Uncertain	Quite a lot	A lot	We didn't cover this
The Prison to Peace programme overall?	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning about the 'Troubles'	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning about why people got involved in 'paramilitary' groups	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning about the prison experience	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning about ways to deal with conflict, without using violence	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning about what ex-prisoners are doing now in the community	○	○	○	○	○	○
Learning about ways in which Northern Ireland can move away from its violent past	○	○	○	○	○	○
Listening/talking to ex-prisoners (at the panel discussion)	○	○	○	○	○	○

Do you think other schools should do this programme?

- Yes
- No

Please explain your answer

What were the main things you learned from the Prison to Peace programme?

Do you think anything should be added to the programme?

- Yes
- No

If so, what?

Do you think anything should be taken out?

- Yes
- No

If so, what?

Do you think anything should be done differently?

- Yes
- No

If so, what?

Thank you!!

Now hit send.

Your answers will be sent to Karen and the research team at Queen's.

Remember when we write up the results of this questionnaire we will not include any names, so no one will ever know the answers you provided.

Appendix 5: Qualitative protocols

Pupil focus group protocol

What role should schools play in educating young people about the conflict and its legacy?

- How important do you think it is to learn about the past?
- How important do you think it is to learn about the 'Troubles'?
    - Unpick how it affects Northern Ireland today – use 'flag' as example.
- How much do you want to learn about the 'Troubles'
    - Why/ why not?
- How much do you enjoy learning about the 'Troubles'

How ready are NI schools to engage with the legacy of the conflict?

- Where do you think your interest in the 'Troubles' comes from?
- Do you feel 'ready' to learn about this?
    - Why/ why not?
    - What affects readiness? – Community, age, flag etc.??
- Who would be best to teach you about this?
    - Explore differences between learning in history versus citizenship
- How would you feel about learning about the 'Troubles' in school?
- Do you think that a programme teaching about the 'Troubles' would 'go down well' in your school?
    - Does your school do anything like this already?
    - Do you think your school would teach a programme like this well?
    - Why/why not?

What are the challenges/benefits of addressing the conflict and its legacy in the curriculum?

- What is 'tricky'/difficult and what is 'good'/easy about learning about the 'Troubles' in school?
- How do you feel about learning through the stories and experiences of ex-prisoners?

How has Prison to Peace influenced perspectives of the conflict, its legacy and political engagement?

- Having gone through the Prison to Peace programme, do you think you have benefited from it at all?
    - How?
    - Unpick specifically understanding of the complexity of the conflict
- Do you think it has had a negative impact on you at all?
    - How?

How much do they appreciate Prison to Peace?

- How much did you enjoy doing this programme? Why/ not?
    - What did you like/ not like?
- How could we make this programme better?
    - Is there anything we could add/ take out/ improve upon?

Teacher interview protocol

What role should schools play in educating young people about the conflict and its legacy?

- In your opinion, what role does education play in Northern Ireland?
    - Political and social
- To what extent do you think it is necessary that young people learn about the conflict and its legacy?
    - 'Need to know'/'right to know' – benefits to individual/society
- Who do you think is responsible for educating young people about the conflict in Northern Ireland?
    - Pursue the role of school
- How do you feel about teaching about the conflict and its legacy?
- In your opinion, why might some teachers be reluctant to teach about the conflict and its legacy?
- How does this fit with a suggested 'need' to engage with the legacy of the 'Troubles'?
    - The 'need/right to know' versus the problems of teaching controversial issues and the young persons' right to shape the curriculum
- Where in the curriculum is it best to address the conflict and its legacy?
    - What should it cover? What subjects should be involved? What learning approaches should be taken?

How ready are NI schools to engage with the legacy of the conflict?

- To what extent do you think schools are ready to engage with the legacy of the conflict?
- What made your school ready?
    - Consider teacher, pupil, parent and community readiness
    - Explore willingness (school ethos etc) versus preparedness (logistics)
- How could your school be more ready?
    - What needs to be in place to encourage readiness?
    - Are there any systemic issues that need addressed?
    - Again consider factors to encourage willingness and preparedness.
- What advice would you give to a school considering this programme?

What are the benefits/ challenges of teaching about the conflict and more specifically, Prison to Peace?

- In general, what are the benefits/challenges of addressing the conflict and its legacy?
- Thinking about Prison to Peace specifically, what are the benefits of addressing the conflict and its legacy from the point of view of the ex-prisoners?
- How can the programme be improved?

The influence of Prison to Peace on perspectives of the conflict and behaviour

- How can Prison to Peace influence people's knowledge and understanding of the conflict?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils
- How can it influence attitudes and perspectives of the conflict and its legacy?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils
- How can it influence behaviour, e.g., political engagement?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils

Principal interview protocol

What role should schools play in educating young people about the conflict and its legacy?

- In your opinion, what role does education play in Northern Ireland?
    - Political and social
- To what extent do you think it is necessary that young people learn about the conflict and its legacy?
    - 'Need to know'/'right to know' – benefits to individual/society
- Who do you think is responsible for educating young people about the conflict in Northern Ireland?
    - Pursue the role of school
- Where in the curriculum is it best to address the conflict and its legacy?
    - What should it cover? What subjects should be involved? What learning approaches should be taken?

How ready are NI schools to engage with the legacy of the conflict?

- To what extent do you think schools are ready to engage with the legacy of the conflict?
- Why were you happy for your school to use the Prison to Peace programme?
- What made your school ready?
    - Consider teacher, pupil, parent and community readiness
    - Nb explore willingness (school ethos etc.) versus preparedness (logistics)
- What could make your school more ready?
    - Are there any systemic issues that need addressed?
    - Nb again consider factors to encourage willingness and preparedness.
- What advice would you give to another Principal who is considering implementing this programme in their school?

What are the benefits/ challenges of teaching about the conflict and more specifically, Prison to Peace?

- In general, what are the benefits/challenges of addressing the conflict and its legacy?
- Thinking about Prison to Peace specifically, what are the benefits of addressing the conflict and its legacy from the point of view of the ex-prisoners?
- How can the programme be improved?

What influence does Prison to Peace have on perspectives of the conflict and behaviour?

- How can Prison to Peace influence people's knowledge and understanding of the conflict?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils
- How can it influence attitudes and perspectives of the conflict and its legacy
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils
- How can it influence behaviour, e.g., political engagement
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils

Parent focus group protocol

What role should schools play in educating young people about the conflict and its legacy?

- To what extent do you think it is necessary that young people learn about the 'Troubles' and its legacy?
    - 'Need to know'/'right to know' – benefits to individual/society
- Who do you think is responsible for educating young people about the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland?
    - Pursue the role of school versus the role of parents

Readiness to engage with the legacy of the conflict?

- How do you feel about your child learning about the 'Troubles' and its legacy?
    - Pursue their own readiness
- Why do you think your child's school was ready to learn/teach about this?
    - Why/why not – Integrated? Tease out what else, e.g., trust between parents and teachers (nb some integrated schools have opted not to do it).

What are the benefits/ challenges of teaching about the conflict and more specifically, Prison to Peace?

- Thinking about Prison to Peace specifically, are there any benefits of addressing the 'Troubles' and its legacy from the point of view of the ex-prisoners?
    - Explore feelings/issues relevant to the programme and the panel.
- What do you see as the challenges?

What influence does Prison to Peace have on young people's perspectives of the conflict and behaviour?

- *What have the pupils got out of this programme?*
- Do you think this programme has had any influence on your child's knowledge and understanding of the 'Troubles'?
    - How has this influenced your own understanding?
- Has it had any influence on your child's attitudes and perspectives of the 'Troubles' and its legacy?
    - Do they think any differently?
    - Have their attitudes changed, e.g., towards different people in the community
    - How has this influenced your own perspectives?
- Has it had any influence on your child's behaviour, e.g., political engagement?
    - Are they talking more about the 'Troubles'
    - Paying more interest to the news/ social issues
    - Reading the newspaper more etc.
    - How has this influenced your own behaviour?

Educational stakeholder interview protocol

Firstly, can you tell me a bit about the programme/ initiative that you are involved with…..?

What role should schools play in educating young people about the conflict and its legacy?

- In your opinion, what role does education play in Northern Ireland?
    - Political and social roles
- To what extent do you think it is necessary that young people learn about the conflict and its legacy?
    - 'Need to know'/ 'right to know' – benefits to individual/ society?
- Who do you think is responsible for educating young people about the conflict in Northern Ireland?
    - Pursue the role of school
- In your opinion, why might some teachers be reluctant to teach about the conflict and its legacy?
- How does this fit with a suggested 'need' to engage with the legacy of the 'Troubles'?
    - The 'need/right to know' versus the problems of teaching controversial issues
    - Pursue also the extent to which they think young people should be involved in deciding whether or not these issues are addressed in the curriculum?
- Where in the curriculum is it best to address the conflict and its legacy?
    - What should it cover? What subjects should be involved? What learning approaches should be taken?
- Can you think of anywhere else this programme might fit?
    - Community settings? Youth settings? Churches?

How ready are NI schools to engage with the legacy of the conflict?

- To what extent do you think schools are ready to engage with the legacy of the conflict?
    - Teacher, pupil, parent, and community readiness
- What does readiness looks like, i.e., key features
- What can we do to encourage readiness?
    - Are there any systemic issues that need addressed?

What are challenges/benefits of addressing the conflict and its legacy in the curriculum?

- In general, what are the challenges and benefits of addressing the conflict and its legacy?
- Thinking about Prison to Peace specifically, what are the challenges and benefits of addressing the conflict and its legacy from the point of view of the ex-prisoners?
- How can the programme be improved?

The influence of Prison to Peace on perspectives of the conflict and behaviour

- How can Prison to Peace influence people's knowledge and understanding of the conflict?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils
- How can it influence attitudes and perspectives of the conflict and its legacy?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils
- How can it influence behaviour, e.g., political engagement?
    - Explore their own and that of the pupils

Prison to Peace and other programmes

- Does Prison to Peace fit with other similar programmes?
- How do you think Prison to Peace and your/other programmes could work best together?
    - Challenges/ benefits/ support required.
- Who should be responsible for this collaboration, e.g., statutory formal sector?

Lesson observation protocol

Year:
Lesson:
Duration of lessons:
Lesson no:
Teacher:
No. of pupils in class:

Responsiveness

Evidence of:	
Inclusion of all pupils	
Pupils joining in	
Pupils asking questions	
Teacher pupil/ pupil pupil engagement?	
Pupils offering their own opinion	
Teacher led/ interactive? Pedagogical approaches?	
How are different opinions handled?	

Handling Challenges

What sensitive issues are arising?	
How are these handled by the teacher? How does the teacher frame these issues?	
Pupils' response?	

Evidence of Outcomes Addressed

Knowledge	
What content is addressed? How is it addressed?	
Attitudes	
Which attitudes are being targeted? How?	

Behaviours	
Which behaviours are being targeted? How?	

Focus on conflict/transition

How are issues related to conflict/ transition being addressed/ framed in the class?	
How is the nature of the conflict framed?	
Note reference to complexity addressed,	
Note language used/ tone used/ approach	
Are terms being problematized?	

Appendix 6: CRCT analysis

Table A3. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Knowledge of Causes/Impact of the 'Troubles' and Transitional Processes (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.319	.407	.224	.354	.439	.364	.233	.319
	(.108)	(.124)	(.145)	(.128)	(.156)	(.097)	(.142)	(.107)
Pretest Score	.442	.446	.460	.441	.448	.418	.495	.426
	(.041)	(.041)	(.043)	(.043)	(.041)	(.043)	(.054)	(.057)
Boy*		.040						
		(.116)						
Catholic*			-.114					
			(.130)					
FSM*				.040				
				(.119)				
MDM*					.0003			
					(.0002)			
Year 11*						-.200		
						(.112)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							.053	
							(.135)	
Interaction**		-.191	.186	.033	-.0003	-.112	.110	.038
		(.157)	(.181)	(.176)	(.0001)	(.151)	(.191)	(.082)
Constant	3.140	3.129	3.214	3.094	3.033	3.265	3.234	3.139
	(.076)	(.086)	(.100)	(.092)	(.101)	(.063)	(.095)	(.076)
Variance (School)	.020	.016	.011	.027	.018	.000	.005	.020
	(.014)	(.013)	(.012)	(.017)	(.014)	(.000)	(.013)	(.014)
Variance (Pupil)	.599	.599	.590	.590	.598	.602	.492	.599
	(.038)	(.039)	(.040)	(.039)	(.038)	(.040)	(.044)	(.038)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497 (14)	497 (14)	456 (14)	464 (14)	497 (14)	463 (12)	269 (14)	497 (14)
-2LL	1166.5	1164.5	1060.0	1083.7	1164.0	1079.3	574.9	1166.3

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A4. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Talking to Others (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.384 (.091)	.362 (.110)	.627 (153)	.465 (.101)	.374 (.141)	.329 (.138)	.452 (.174)	.382 (.093)
Pretest Score	.586 (.036)	.583 (.036)	.571 (.039)	.581 (.038)	.587 (.036)	.592 (.039)	.619 (.049)	.541 (.053)
Boy*		-.107 (.105)						
Catholic*			.275 (.135)					
FSM*				.066 (.110)				
MDM*					.0000 (.0002)			
Year 11*						-.099 (.145)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							.006 (.162)	
Interaction**		.068 (.144)	.405 (.185)	.235 (.163)	.0000 (.0003)	.158 (.200)	.061 (.223)	.084 (.073)
Constant	2.55 (.064)	2.592 (.075)	2.403 (.106)	2.510 (.074)	2.540 (.091)	2.559 .092	2.521 (.118)	2.544 (.066)
Variance (School)	.012 (.013)	.011 (.014)	.018 (.017)	.011 (.013)	.012 (.014)	.014 (.016)	.018 (.023)	.013 (.014)
Variance (Pupil)	.515 (.033)	.515 (.33)	.519 (.035)	.531 (.036)	.515 .033	.516 (.035)	.504 (.045)	.513 (.033)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	1088.8	1087.6	1005.4	1029.8	1088.7	1016.0	585.9	1087.46

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A5. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Political Participation (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.075 (.072)	.061 (.082)	.143 (.112)	.116 (.081)	.198 (.107)	.091 (.067)	.118 .118	.072 (.072)
Pretest Score	.545 (.040)	.551 (.040)	.551 (.042)	.544 (.042)	.542 (.040)	.509 (.043)	.552 (.056)	.491 (.059)
Boy*		-.090 (.079)						
Catholic*			.093 (.010)					
FSM*				.069 (.083)				
MDM*					.0001 .0001			
Year 11*						-.259 (.079)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							.072 (.110)	
Interaction**		.042 (.108)	-.162 (.136)	-.127 (.123)	-.0003 .0002	.048 (.105)	-.025 (.155)	.101 (.080)
Constant	2.989 (.051)	3.03 (.056)	2.953 (.078)	2.969 (.059)	2.951 .069	.309 (.045)	3.017 (.081)	2.990 (.051)
Variance (School)	.009 (.007)	.006 (006)	.010 (.007)	.009 (.007)	.007 (.006)	.000 (.000)	.007 (.009)	.009 (.006)
Variance (Pupil)	.288 (.018)	.288 (.019)	.279 (.190)	.298 (.020)	.287 .018	.291 (.019)	.256 (.024)	.287 (.018)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497 (14)	497 (14)	456 (14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	801.1	799.6	721.6	764.0	798.8	742.0	411.6	799.5

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A6. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to School Participation (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.154	.138	.125	.176	.196	.048	.061	.151
	(.061)	(.077)	(.086)	(.074)	(.100)	(.071)	(.111)	(.062)
Pretest Score	.596	.585	.580	.587	.599	.596	.562	.575
	(.036)	(.037)	(.038)	(.037)	(.036)	(.038)	(.051)	(.050)
Boy*		-.107						
		(.082)						
Catholic*			-.037					
			(.079)					
FSM*				.033				
				(.087)				
MDM*					.0002			
					(.0001)			
Year 11*						-.225		
						(.083)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							-.038	
							(.108)	
Interaction**		.052	.052	.041	-.0001	.257	.151	.043
		(.111)	(.113)	(.130)	(.0002)	(.112)	(.153)	(.072)
Constant	.316	3.203	3.19	3.152	3.058	3.247	3.201	3.162
	(.043)	(.054)	(.058)	(.054)	(.064)	(.047)	(.074)	.044
Variance (School)	.003	.003	.000	.004	.000	.000	.001	.003
	(.005)	(.005)	(.000)	(.006)	(.000)	(.000)	(.010)	(.005)
Variance (Pupil)	.339	.337	.350	.340	.338	.328	.359	.338
	(.022)	(.022)	(.023)	(.023)	(.021)	(.022)	(.032)	(.022)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	875.9	873.7	816.0	820.0	871.2	798.0	488.6	875.5

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A7. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Information Seeking (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.143 (.067)	.104 (.088)	.105 (.107)	.160 (.081)	.099 (.129)	.058 (.089)	.082 (.136)	.139 (.066)
Pretest Score	.546 (.039)	.549 (.039)	.535 (.041)	.541 (.041)	.548 (.039)	.572 (.042)	.553 (.056)	.457 (.054)
Boy*		.064 (.099)						
Catholic*			.044 (.098)					
FSM*				.056 (.110)				
MDM*					-.0001 (.0002)			
Year 11*						-.132 (.106)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							-.022 (.134)	
Interaction**		.071 (.136)	.004 (.141)	.028 (.165)	.0001 (.0003)	.169 (.140)	.148 (.190)	.186 (.078)
Constant	2.36 (.048)	2.337 (.060)	2.342 (.073)	2.334 (.060)	2.416 (.082)	2.411 (.059)	2.436 (.089)	2.358 (.048)
Variance (School)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)
Variance (Pupil)	.553 (.035)	.550 (.035)	.548 (.036)	.568 (.037)	.552 (.035)	.515 (.034)	.591 (.051)	.547 (.035)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497 (14)	497 (14)	456 (14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	1115.8	1113.3	1019.7	1053.9	1115.1	1006.5	622.1	1110.2

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A8. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Violence (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.189 (.070)	.205 (.074)	.135 (.088)	.175 (.067)	.092 (.117)	.103 (.092)	.071 (.102)	.190 (.069)
Pretest Score	.572 (.04)	.534 (.041)	.577 (.041)	.568 (.041)	.566 (.041)	.584 (.041)	.632 (.051)	.587 (.058)
Boy*		-.188 (.085)						
Catholic*			.073 (.082)					
FSM*				-.091 (.091)				
MDM*					-.0001 (.0002)			
Year 11*						-.147 (.101)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							-.093 (.101)	
Interaction**		-.012 (.112)	.050 (.117)	-.010 (.136)	.0002 (.0002)	.167 (.137)	.184 (.143)	-.026 (.080)
Constant	3.497 (.050)	3.575 (.052)	3.476 (.060)	3.530 (.050)	3.543 (.075)	3.549 (.061)	3.525 (.068)	3.496 (.050)
Variance (School)	.005 (.007)	.005 (.006)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.007 (.008)	.004 (.007)	.000 (.000)	.005 (.007)
Variance (Pupil)	.371 .024	.367 (.024)	.375 (.025)	.385 (.025)	.369 (.024)	.362 (.024)	.334 (.029)	.371 (.024)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	923.0	913.2	847.1	873.6	922.0	846.8	468.4	922.9

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A9. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Respect (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.122 (.095)	.135 (.086)	.136 (.155)	.108 (.097)	.207 (.137)	.112 (.129)	.008 (.192)	.120 (.095)
Pretest Score	.341 (.045)	.341 (.043)	.339 (.048)	.326 (.046)	.342 (.045)	.353 (.046)	.343 (.063)	.320 (.066)
Boy*		-.283 (.092)						
Catholic*			-.053 (.134)					
FSM*				-.039 (.101)				
MDM*					.0001 (.0002)			
Year 11*						-.009 (.136)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							-.197 (.167)	
Interaction**		.019 (.124)	-.004 (.182)	.001 (.148)	-.0002 (.0002)	-.102 (.187)	.277 (.233)	.039 (.090)
Constant	3.744 (.068)	3.861 (.060)	3.771 (.108)	3.763 (.071)	3.721 (.089)	3.775 (.087)	3.793 .132	3.746 (.067)
Variance (School)	.071 (.012)	.003 (.007)	.023 (.017)	.012 (.011)	.017 (.012)	.134 (.010)	.038 (.029)	.017 (.012)
Variance (Pupil)	.431 (.028)	.425 (.027)	.435 (.029)	.434 (.029)	.430 (.028)	.420 (.028)	.396 (.035)	.431 (.028)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	1003.6	988.3	928.1	938.6	1002.8	921.6	527.5	1003.4

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A10. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Cultural Identity (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	.050 (.091)	.039 (.103)	.106 (.131)	.075 (.107)	.202 (.130)	.186 (.077)	.123 (.110)	.033 (.085)
Pretest Score	.519 (.041)	.523 (.041)	.513 (.044)	.495 (.044)	.519 (.041)	.531 (.041)	.526 (.057)	.422 (.058)
Boy*		-.149 (.095)						
Catholic*			-.028 (.117)					
FSM*				.073 (.010)				
MDM*					.0002 (.0002)			
Year 11*						-.163 (.089)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							.060 (.107)	
Interaction**		.054 (.130)	-.035 (.160)	-.041 (.148)	-.0004 (.0002)	-.148 (.119)	.058 (.153)	.197 (.081)
Constant	3.228 (.064)	3.289 (.071)	3.241 (.091)	3.211 (.077)	3.163 (.085)	3.276 (.050)	3.224 (.073)	3.236 (.060)
Variance (School)	.015 (.010)	.011 (.009)	.012 (.010)	.018 (.012)	.013 (.010)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.012 (.009)
Variance (Pupil)	.410 (.026)	.409 (.026)	.414 (.028)	.423 (.028)	.409 (.026)	.377 (.025)	.386 (.033)	.407 (.026)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	978.4	975.0	900.7	929	975.9	862	507.1	972.7

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A11. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Blatant Prejudice (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	-.246	-.248	-.287	-.169	-.100	-.061	-.165	-.250
	(.081)	(.103)	(.122)	(.091)	(.121)	(.071)	(.101)	(.076)
Pretest Score	.555	.543	.556	.526	.553	.588	.510	.482
	(.032)	(.032)	(.033)	(.032)	(.032)	(.031)	(.043)	(.044)
Boy*		.108						
		(.090)						
Catholic*			-.060					
			(.109)					
FSM*				.260				
				(.087)				
MDM*					.0002			
					(.0001)			
Year 11*						.064		
						(.082)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							-.003	
							(.103)	
Interaction**		-.023	.046	-.218	-.0004	-.316	-.031	.158
		(.121)	(.148)	(.128)	(.0002)	(.110)	(.142)	(.063)
Constant	2.739	2.695	2.775	2.643	2.669	2.703	2.820	2.743
	(.058)	(.071)	(.085)	(.066)	(.079)	(.046)	(.072)	(.054)
Variance (School)	.012	.014	.012	.013	.013	.000	.000	.009
	(.009)	(.101)	(.009)	(.009)	(.011)	(.000)	(.008)	(.008)
Variance (Pupil)	.336	.334	.331	.320	.334	.318	.322	.333
	(.022)	(.022)	(.022)	(.021)	(.022)	(.021)	(.029)	(.021)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	879.8	877.4	800.5	799.2	876.8	783.3	458.6	873.6

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

Table A12. Multilevel models for the Outcome Relating to Subtle Prejudice (with standard errors in parentheses)

Independent Variables in the Model	Main Model	Exploratory Subgroup Analyses Models						
		Gender	Religion	FSM	MDM	School Year	Politics	Pretest Score
Intervention Group*	-.105 (.038)	-.084 (.050)	-.159 (.062)	-.101 (.045)	-.045 (.074)	-.067 (.051)	-.092 (.078)	-.105 (.038)
Pretest Score	.578 (.036)	.571 (.036)	.575 (.038)	.561 (.037)	.577 (.036)	.579 (.035)	.538 (.054)	.587 (.052)
Boy*		.093 (.057)						
Catholic*			-.080 (.058)					
FSM*				.025 (.062)				
MDM*					.0000 (.0001)			
Year 11*						-.020 (.059)		
Nationalist/Repub'n*							.066 (.078)	
Interaction**		-.062 (.078)	.088 (.082)	.048 (.091)	-.0001 (.0001)	-.060 (.080)	-.077 (.109)	-.017 (.072)
Constant	3.126 (.027)	3.092 (.035)	3.184 (.043)	3.114 (.033)	3.122 (.047)	3.123 (.033)	3.162 (.054)	3.126 (.027)
Variance (School)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)
Variance (Pupil)	.182 (.012)	.181 (.011)	.185 (.012)	.173 (.011)	.182 (.012)	.169 (.011)	.196 (.017)	.182 (.012)
No. Pupils (No. Classes)	497(14)	497(14)	456(14)	464(14)	497(14)	463(12)	269(14)	497(14)
-2LL	564.1	561.2	525.5	501.7	562.9	489.6	325	564.1

*Dummy variables, coded "1" for the group named and "0" for others.

**Interaction term between the variable of interest and Intervention Group.

*Note that with regard to the 'politics' models, more specific comparisons were examined (comparing republicans/loyalists and nationalists/unionists), these results are not presented above, as there were no significant results found. Included above are the comparisons between nationalists/republicans combined with unionists/loyalists.

Appendix 7: Process evaluation

Table A13: Exposure of control matched school pupils to similar content

Intervention school	Control matched school's exposure to similar content
School 1 Cohort 1	'Troubles' covered in History
School 1 Cohort 2	'Troubles' covered in History
School 2	None
School 3	None
School 4	None
School 5	'Troubles' covered in History
School 6	None

Table A14: Implementation - Programme delivery details

	Year group	No. of classes	No. of teachers	Hours	Omissions	Teacher training in P2P	Teacher subject	Exposure to similar content
School 1	11	8	8	Approx. 9	Varied across classes	Some	Geography, maths, sociology, RE, HE, PE, Art, IT/History	Historical perspective in history
School 2	10	1	1	Approx. 8	Transition. Positive contribution of ex-prisoners was covered lightly	Yes	History/ politics	No
School 3	10	2	1	Approx. 8	Light coverage of - transition, reflecting on the role of ex-prisoners and young people's contribution	Yes	Geography	No
School 4	10	2	2	Approx. 8 hours	Panel and young people's community participation	Yes (1 teacher fully, the other less so)	History, Politics, Citizenship and Business studies and IT	Yes (civic voices)
School 5	13/14	1	2 (one teacher left, another took over)	Approx. 10	Young people and community participation and transition.	Yes/no (self-taught due to teacher leaving and timing)	History and Politics	Historical perspectives covered in History (earlier in Citizenship) and for some of the sample in A-Level politics.
School 6 Cohort 1	11	2	1	Approx. 9	Transition	Yes	Languages	No
School 6 Cohort 2	11	1	1	Approx. 5	Transition	Some	English	Uncertain
School 7	11	1	1	Approx. 7	Light touch on young people and community participation	Yes (brief)	Religion and Citizenship	No

Table A15: Implementation - responsiveness and challenges

	Participant responsiveness				Challenges
	Pupils	**Teacher**	**Parents**	**Senior management**	**Delivery/ programme**
School 1	Well received	Some initial reluctance	Some initial apprehension	Initial reluctance, then acceptance	Time/ consistency in delivery across classes due to issues – teachers off sick, days lost due to weather, school trips etc.
School 2	Some boredom, low ability group	Positive	One parent demonstrated reluctance, however, their son still attended	Very positive	Requires more planning/ time. Inhibited by classroom structures.
School 3	Initial apprehension, but later embraced it with enthusiasm	Well received	Minimal – one parent expressed concern, but having spoken to the teacher, they were happy for their child to take part	Very supportive	Time – preparation time was lengthy, felt roll out was rushed.
School 4	Very well in the early lessons, they found the later lessons more difficult	Positive	No response	Well supported in terms of the programme, but not willing to host a panel	Time/ timetabling, and political ex-prisoners visiting the school.
School 5	Well received	Well received	No negativity, however, a few did not return consent for panel	Very supportive	Time – lessons took longer than planned. Also commented on the need for different perspectives
School 6 Cohort 1	Well received – some struggle with lengthy text	Positive	No questions asked, however, 2 parents refused attendance to panel	Very supportive	Lengthy delivery (and text heavy materials) resulted in some reduced focus from the pupils.
School 6 Cohort 2	Well received	Apprehensive	No reaction	Very supportive	Time constraints, external issues (holidays, dust days, school closure) reduced no. of lessons
School 7	Well received	Positive	No reaction	Very positive	Delivered as part of enrichment class so often disrupted by other priorities; one staff member retired before programme completed.

CDS120028