Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland · Charity number 100310

Details

Known as	NICIE
Status	Received
Registered	2015-03-18
Register	View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register

Contact

Address	Nicie James House 2-4 Cromac Avenue Belfast Bt7 2jb BT7 2JB
Phone	07395285849
Email	admin@nicie.org.uk
Website	www.nicie.org

Activities

Purposes: The object for which the company is established is to assist the development of integrated education and schools in Northern Ireland for the public benefit. In this Memorandum “integrated education” shall mean the education together of children of Protestant and Catholic cultures or traditions on a broadly equal footing within a Christian ethos and with parental involvement, but so as to encourage the education together with them of children of other beliefs, cultures or traditions provided that, so far as education within a Christian ethos allows, all such children shall be equally cherished and respected.

What the charity does: The advancement of education,The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity

How the charity works: Community development,Education/training

Who the charity helps: Children (5-13 year olds),Parents,Preschool (0-5 year olds),Youth (14-25 year olds)

Downloaded from opencharities.uk/ni/100310

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£868,545	£952,546	£-66,234	13

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Adele Kerr		
Ashleigh Moran		
Cathal Mullaghan		
Colin Millar		
Mr Duncan John Morrow		
Mr Eamon Quinn		
Mr Shane Greer		
Mr William John Miscampbell		
Mrs Bernadette Webster		
Mrs Colleen Armstrong		
Mrs Helen Smyth		
Nigel Arnold		
Pamela Algie		
Patrick Mc Ilveen		
Sandra Patterson		

Downloaded from opencharities.uk/ni/100310

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Accounts

Registered number: NI022427
Charity registered number: 100310

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(a company limited by guarantee)

Directors' report and financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
Under the requirements of the Department of Education/NICIE Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

On
21 June 2025

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Directors' Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Contents **Pages**

Reference and administrative details	2 - 3
Directors' report	4 - 24
Annual report	25 - 26
Chief Executive Officer's report	27 - 28
Annual Governance Statement	29 - 48
Remuneration and Staff report	49 - 55
Assembly Accountability and Audit Report	56
Independent auditors' report	57 - 61
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	62
Statement of financial position	63
Statement of cash flows	64
Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow/ (outflow) from Continuing operating activities	65
Notes to the financial statements	66 - 81

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Reference and administrative details

Directors/Trustees

Adele Kerr
Anne Murray (Resigned November 2024)
Ashleigh Moran
Bernie Webster (Appointed November 2024)
Bill Miscampbell
Cathal Mullaghan
Colin Millar (Vice Chair)
Duncan Morrow
Eamon Quinn (Chair)
Gavin Gray (Resigned November 2024)
Helen Smyth (Secretary)
John Scott (Deceased May 2025)
Maeve Marnell (Resigned November 2024)
Nigel Arnold
Pamela Algie (Appointed June 2024)
Patrick McIlveen (Appointed January 2025)
Patricia Douglas (Resigned May 2024)
Sandra Patterson
Shane Greer

Senior management members

Sean Pettis (Chief Executive Officer Appointed August 2024)

Roisin Marshall (Chief Executive Officer Resigned July 2024)
Maureen Johnston (Finance Officer)
Cliodhna Scott Wills (Senior Development Officer)
Lorna McAlpine (Senior Development Officer Resigned April 2024)
Lynn Johnston (Senior Development Officer)
Emma Hume (Senior Development Officer)

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

Reference and administrative details (continued)

Registered and Principal office

James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Belfast BT7 2JB

Solicitors

Cleaver Fulton Rankin
50 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7FW

Bankers

Allied Irish Bank
33 – 35 University Road
Belfast
BT7 1ND

Independent auditors

SCC Chartered Accountants
17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

You may reuse this information (including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, please visit http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gis.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This Document is also available on our website at http://www.nicie.org.uk

Any Enquiries regarding this document should be sent to NICIE, James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Belfast BT7 2JB

Directors' Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

The directors, who are also trustees, present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, *Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice,* affordable to charities preparing their accounts. This is in accordance with the International Financial Reports standards and in accordance with the requirements and guidelines set out in the Government's Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and other guidance issued by the Department of Finance (DoF) in force for the financial year for which the financial statements are being presented.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standard as adopted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Reference and administrative details

Details of the registered office, directors, independent advisers, and other relevant information are given on page 2 and 3.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education ("NICIE") was incorporated in 1989 as a company limited by guarantee and is exempt from tax under Section 505(1) (c) of the Income and Corporation Act 1988 as a body established for charitable purposes only. NICIE was designated as a Non-Departmental Public Body ("NDPB") in February 2012. It is sponsored by the Department of Education ("DE"). The company's principal activity as defined in the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 is "to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated Education and schools for the public benefit".

Directors

All directors are members of NICIE. All directors are guarantors of the company with a maximum liability of £10.

Appointment of directors

NICIE directors are elected/appointed from six areas representative of all stakeholders with provision to co-opt up to three additional members. These comprise, those involved in the provision of teaching, Principals, Schools, Trusts, Early Years and DE. Directors can serve two periods of between 2-4 years' subject to the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Director induction and training

The Company Secretary ensures that appropriate induction and training is given to all NICIE Board of Director ("BoD") members. Each new director is provided with an information pack about NICIE and their responsibilities and is given an opportunity to meet all staff. Details of the BoD structure is illustrated on page 32 of the NICIE Governance statement.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Organisation

The Board of Directors ("BoD") in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of NICIE and the Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) carries out the governance, management and conduct of the business and affairs of NICIE. The Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") was Roisin Marshall until July 2024 and Sean Pettis thereafter.

Funding

NICIE works in close collaboration with its principal funder DE. It is also supported by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and The Northern Ireland Office to promote the work of the organisation.

Risk management and internal control

The directors are responsible for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by NICIE.

The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures and a system of delegation and accountability.

It includes:

- A comprehensive budgeting system, with a strategic plan and an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the directors;
- Regular reviews by the directors of monthly and annual financial reports, which indicate financial performance against approved budget and forecast; and
- Monitoring progress against the strategic plan.

As part of the monitoring process, the directors have implemented a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review of the risks which NICIE may face, and actions taken to mitigate identified risks;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the organisation should any of those risks materialise.

Significant risks identified are in relation to the following areas:

- NICIE fails to deliver a balanced Resource and Capital Budget as a result of ineffective management of resources to ensure the delivery of the Department of Education's Strategic Priorities and NICIE's statutory duties and priorities within budget.
- Weakness and Ineffective governance & accountability arrangements.

- Failure to exercise proper stewardship, and maximise the resources allocated to NICIE in line with Financial Memorandum and grant conditions where applicable, within a proper financial control framework under Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) status.

- Failure to support, promote and grow Integrated Education.

A key element in the management of financial risk is the setting up of a reserves policy and its regular review by directors. Particular attention is also focused on non-financial risks arising from fires and the health and safety of all staff and visitors.

Objectives and activities of NICIE

During the year, NICIE continued to operate in the following Programme areas:

1. Development and support services, for which core funding was made available through DE. The key objectives for this Programme underpinned DE's Strategic Priorities and policies and included promoting the growth of Integrated provision through supporting parents' groups, supporting schools in the process of 'Transformation,' or interested in 'Transforming' and supporting existing Integrated schools regarding consolidation and expansion and in embedding 'Integration in practice.' NICIE worked with Integrated schools and other stakeholders in the process of Area planning. NICIE raised the level of debate about the role of Integrated Education by informing and influencing public opinion. NICIE promoted the characteristics of Integration in practice both in Integrated schools and across other schools. NICIE continues to strive to improve its internal capacity to be able to fulfil its Business Plan as agreed with DE.

2. The initiation and development of related work funded through the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) in partnership with the Integrated Education Fund IEF).

3. The implementation of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Grant to foster increased awareness and support for integrated education in Northern Ireland and encourage wider societal reconciliation between communities in the educational system.

Achievements and performance

The statement of financial activities for NICIE.

All programmes are drawn up in accordance with best practice and link to the Strategic Aims of NICIE and are aligned to the business plan of DE. All programmes have detailed operational plans to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic and Business Plans and are monitored on a regular basis by the Board, Senior Management Team, and the external funding bodies.

Details of NICIE's activities during the year can be accessed online at www.nicie.org or by contacting NICIE at the registered address.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Financial Review

The full financial results of NICIE are set out in detail in the financial statements on pages 62 to 81. The net outgoing resources for the year before recognised gains and losses was £68,001 (2024: £26,764)

Performance

NICIE bases its operations on a 3-year strategic plan and on an annual basis through a Business Plan, which is reported on a quarterly basis to the Board of Directors and DE. The Business Plan is set within the context of DE's business plan, and additionally, it includes related projects, which are funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). NICIE reports on its operations in its Annual Report. NICIE has achieved or substantially achieved all its Business Plan commitments in this current year.

Reserves

NICIE receives grants from various sources that are spent on the activities as detailed in the respective Letters of Offer. Any unspent monies may be subject to claw-back by the grant provider.

The net assets at the year-end including the pension surplus is £73,533 (2024: £141,534). This includes a net pension liability of nil. (2024: £NIL). The company's funding for the year ended March 2026 has been confirmed from the DE. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. For further details of the pension commitment liability, please refer to note 12 of the financial statements (page 75) and the Remuneration report on pages 49-55.

Forward funding

NICIE has secured sufficient income from a variety of sources for the year 2025 - 2026 to offer assurance to the directors and stakeholders of its ability to operate for the next financial year. Major funding has been guaranteed from DE, with other project funds being made available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a grant from the Northern Ireland Office through the Department for Education (England).

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Strategic priorities, objectives, and activity

Our Vision

A society where children are educated together; confident to express their own identity and culture; and respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

Our Mission

To promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education

Strategic Priorities 2022-2025

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

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

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

This report is structured into six sections. The introduction is followed by three sections which each relate to our strategic priorities to promote, grow and support Integrated Education. Section five is an overview of the strategic successes and challenges of the past year and section six is a conclusion.

1. Introduction

This has been another exciting year for the Integrated Education movement in Northern Ireland. The Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 continues to impact the policy and practice environment. The public consultation of 'Vision 2030' - the Department of Education's (DE) Strategy for Integrated Education and the associated Action Plan commenced in March 2025. We look forward to participating in the consultation and the final strategy outcome.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Introduction (continued)

This year we have continued to experience increased demand for our services which include:

- Providing our considered views about Integrated Education, and representing these, in relation to DE policy, strategy, guidance and in a range of statutory and non-statutory collaborative forums.
- Providing general information about Integrated Education, and its associated themes and issues, to a wide range of stakeholders and public audiences.
- Facilitating Integrated ethos professional development sessions, the Excellence in Integrated Education Award, and shared learning fora.
- Alongside our partners, providing a comprehensive programme of support for schools Transforming to Integrated status.
- Delivering on the governance and accountability requirements in relation to our NDBP status and working in collaboration with multiple funders.
- Working to support new and existing school growth to meet the consistently expressed demand for Integrated Education.

The pressures on our small team are exacerbated by the ongoing reductions (in real terms) in our core funding from DE. We are grateful for the time bound and project specific funding from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA). Without these funds, we would have been unable to provide the level of support required to further encourage and promote Integrated Education.

The additional NIO and DFA funding enabled us to recruit three new Development Officers this year and restructure our Senior Management Team on a temporary basis in relation to strategic communications and support for transforming schools. In March 2025, we are a team of fourteen people (nine funded with DE resource, four with NIO resource one with DFA resource):

NICIE Staff Team: March 2025
Chief Executive Officer (CEO): Sean Pettis
Finance Officer: Maureen Johnston
Senior Development Officers (SDO): Cliodhna Scott-Wills, Lynn Johnston, Emma Hume
Development Officers (DO): Tiarnán McMeekin, Jessica Clarke, Mary Potter, Fiona Darrah, Cathy McIver, Claire Martin, Harriet Neely,
Office Manager: Mark Roberts
Administration Officer: Michael Nicholl

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Introduction (continued)

In this last year, the CEO and a permanent SDO retired. A temporary Development Officer left to pursue PhD studies. Thank you, Roisin Marshall and Lorna McAlpine whose contribution to Integrated Education spans several decades. We wish Laura Largey good luck in her PhD studies.

2. Promoting Integrated Education

We have increased our reach in relation to promotion of Integrated Education and have met the majority of our targets outlined in our Strategic Plan (22-25) and Communications Strategy, despite not being able to have a designated Communications Officer in place.

This year saw the revival of the #ChooseIntegrated campaign, which ran over a three-month period to coincide with the Integrated School Open Days and the Education Authority Admissions Process. We promoted all Integrated school open days via our website and social media accounts as well as profiling school specific content for the 36 schools who provided us with content. This active participation and engagement resulted in a significant increase in our reach. We launched a new social media campaign this year, called 'Anti-Bias Wednesdays,' enabling us to share more widely on the impact of the Integrated ethos in relation to a range of identities and contemporary social issues. Integrated Education Month continues to be popular, enabling schools to celebrate the uniqueness of their integrated ethos. Supported and driven by the Teachers' Committee, the theme this year was 'Celebrating Cultural Connections.'

These social media campaigns and activities have collectively resulted in the amplification of our online presence, as outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Facebook Engagement Metrics 24/25

Facebook Activity	**Performance Result**	**Growth** (compared to last year)
Views (no. of times content was displayed)	387.9k	New metric no comparable figure available for last year
Reach (no. of unique people who saw our content)	116.5k	Up by 73.4%
Content Interactions (likes, reactions, comments & shares)	9.7k	Up by 75.4%
Link Clicks (no. of link clicks from posts)	1.6k	Up by 21.9%
Visits (no. of times our page was visited)	20.7k	Up by 59.5%
Followers (no. of people who follow our profile)	4177	Up by 380

Promoting Integrated Education (continued)

There has been additional media interest in Integrated Education this year, in particular around the time of the eight Ministerial decisions in January. We have been involved in media and political engagement throughout the year and in March NICIE and IEF presented jointly to the Education Committee at Stormont.

We have presented on Integrated Education at 37 events, with at least 19 of these in collaboration with IEF. It was often funding from IEF that made these events possible. These sessions have included student teachers at Stranmillis College and Ulster University, as well as hosting visitors from European and American academic institutions and presenting at larger public events, such as IEF's 'Journeys of Transformation' event at the Harbour Commissioners' Office in January 2025. These opportunities have enabled us to provide information about Integrated Education to approx. 2800 people.

3. Growing Integrated Education

There are over 28,400 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools – over 100 in nursery schools, more than 12,900 in primary schools and over 15,400 in post primary schools. The number enrolled has increased by over 700 pupils compared to last year, and more than 4,100 pupils from 2019/20.

Since 2021, nine schools have Transformed to Integrated status. In September 2024, Cairnshill IPS and Lurgan Model IPS opened as Integrated schools. In March 2025, there are 73 Integrated schools: two at Nursery phase, fifty at Primary phase and twenty-one Integrated Colleges. In September 2025, we will welcome three additional Integrated Nursery schools: Magherafelt, Downshire and Ballymena.

Four schools balloted parents in this last financial year: Ballougry Primary School and Larne and Inver Primary school both returned positive ballot results and have moved forward to prepare and submit a Case for Change in support of their Development Proposal to the Department. Larne High School and Holywood Primary School both returned a 'no' result. We continue to enjoy effective collaborative relationships with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and Education Authority (EA) in our work to support schools seeking to explore and/or start the Transformation journey. Our joint annual 'Integration Works' event took place in March 2025 for school leaders and governors, with attendees from nine schools across all school phases.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Growing Integrated Education (continued)

We have supported nine schools to write and submit Development Proposals for growth to the EA for publication in this financial year. This includes six Transforming schools (Culmore, Downshire, Ballyhenry, Duneane, Killowen and Larne and Inver Primary schools). There are four schools awaiting Ministerial decision in relation to Transformation, with a further three in the writing and/or consultation phases. EA Area Planning Team have provided draft Cases for Change for Governors of sustainable schools that are seeking to Transform. Our team's resources would not have been sufficient to deliver these submissions without this writing and data provision support, alongside the support of the EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) and the IEF. We have supported three existing schools to submit proposals for growth: Slemish and Hazelwood Colleges are seeking to increase admissions and/or enrolment and Braidside proposes to grow Nursery provision at the school. All three of these proposals are in consultation phase.

In February 2024, devolved government was restored after a two-year gap. Paul Givan MLA was appointed Minister of Education and in the past year the Minister has made twelve decisions relating to Integrated Education. Table 2 below shows the Ministerial decisions since 1st April 2024 relating to Integrated Education.

Table 2: Ministerial decisions 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

No	Date	School	Proposal	Decision
1	18th April 24	St. Eugene's (Tircur) PS	Transformation	Not approved
2	29th April 24	Millennium IPS	Increase admissions	Approved
3	23rd July 24	Cliftonville IPS	Nursery Unit	Approved
4	23rd July 24	St. Eugenes' (Victoria Bridge) PS	Transformation	Not approved
5	8th Jan 25	Omagh IPS	Nursery places	Approved
6	8th Jan 25	Bridge IPS	Nursery unit	Not approved
7	8th Jan 25	Downshire NS (Banbridge)	Transformation	Approved
8	8th Jan 25	Spires IPS (Magherafelt)	Nursery Unit	Not approved
9	8th Jan 25	Magherafelt NS	Transformation	Approved
10	8th Jan 25	Rathmore PS (Bangor)	Transformation	Not approved
11	8th Jan 25	Ballymena NS	Transformation	Approved
12	8th Jan 25	Bangor Academy & Sixth Form College	Transformation	Not approved

Growing Integrated Education (continued)

There have been positive and negative decisions in equal numbers. All of the negative decisions are extremely disappointing both for NICIE and for the school communities impacted. The two decisions in January related to sustainable schools in Bangor which held parental ballots in June 2023 and received 79.4% and 82.3% 'yes' results. We continue to engage with the Department to clarify their policy position in relation to religious balance and what is considered a reasonable balance of Protestant and Catholic pupils in line with the legislative framework.

We continue to work with partners to assist the development of three exciting new Integrated school projects: Causeway Academy, a new College in the Mid-Down area and new Integrated Irish Medium Primary and Nursery provision in East Belfast.

4. Supporting Integrated Education

We support existing and Transforming Integrated schools in three key areas:

4.1 We facilitate a range of sessions designed to support ethos development in schools.

4.2 We deliver a programme of support that enables schools to work towards achieving NICIE's Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA).

4.3 We facilitate a range of forums which enable staff working in Integrated schools to share learning and effective practice.

4.1 We facilitate a range of sessions designed to support ethos development in schools:

This year we have facilitated at least 75 sessions to explore and develop the Integrated ethos, including Anti-Bias in Education, with school leaders, staff and governors. These sessions are school-facing and most of them take place in existing or Transforming Integrated schools. We used community venues to host two 'Anti-Bias in Education' 3-day programmes, with 43 participants across both cohorts. We hosted 'Staff new to Integrated Education' in February and were delighted with the level of interest. We were unable to provide sub-cover for this event and so attracting 36 attendees to this full day workshop is evidence of the commitment from Integrated schools.

Supporting Integrated Education (continued)

Fig 1: Delivery of NICIE sessions related to Integrated Education

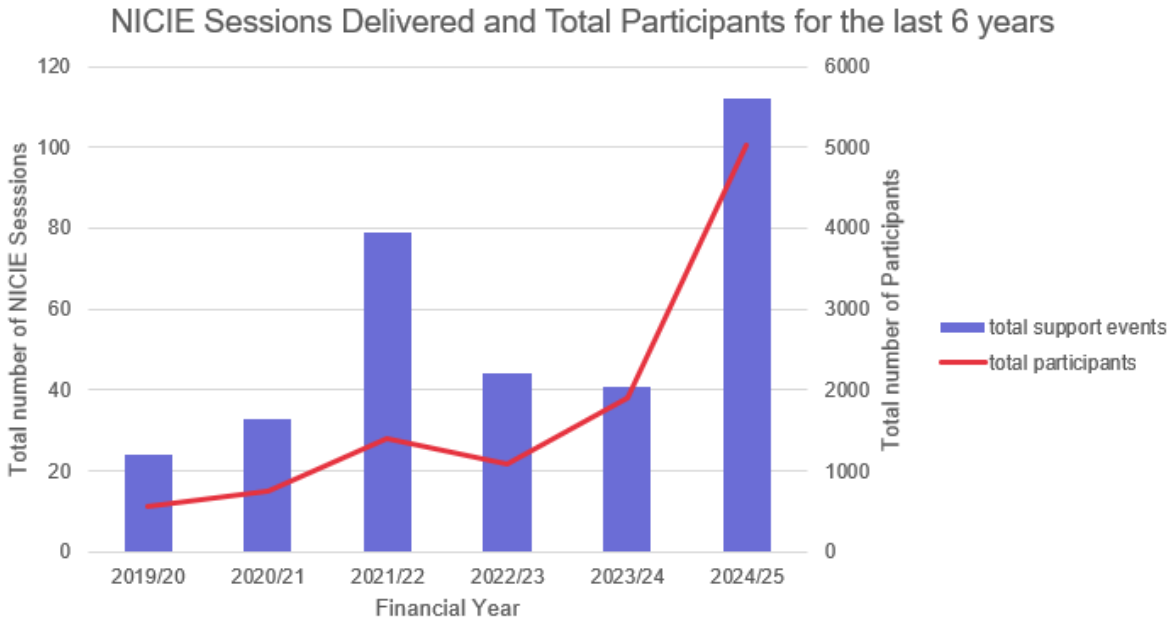


Fig 1 above shows the increasing demand for sessions relating to Integrated Education. These sessions include:

- Ethos development (75 sessions and 2200 participants approx.'.) These are ethos development sessions to stakeholders: parents, governors and school staff at all levels in Integrated and Transforming schools. The workshop content is focused on an exploration of the Integrated ethos and/or the Excellence in Integrated Education Award and/or Anti-Bias in Education. This has included sessions with the three legacy schools which will close to create Causeway Academy, a new Integrated College in Coleraine, as well as sessions with Scoil na Seolta, a proposed new Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit in East Belfast.

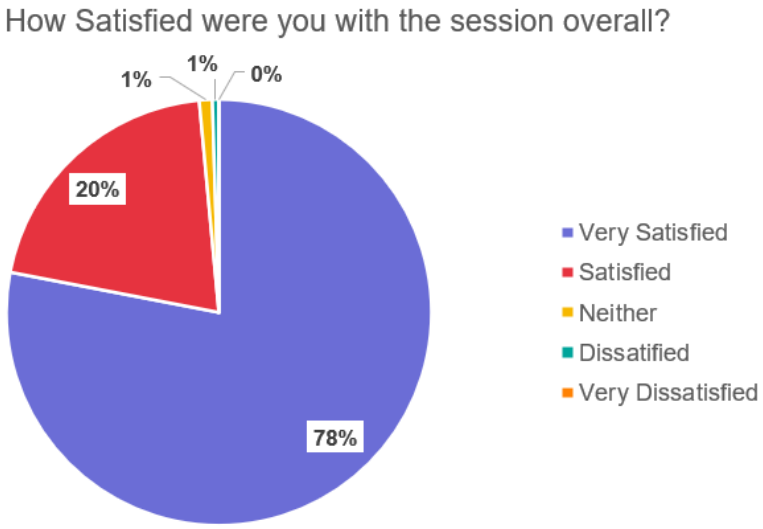
- General information, public-facing sessions (37 sessions and 2800 participants approx.) to other audiences relating to Integrated Education. There is further information on these sessions at Section 1 above: 'Promoting Integrated Education'.

These sessions have involved NICIE staff engaging in conversations with approx. 2200 people, all of whom are now better equipped to contribute to the development of their school's Integrated ethos. Figure 2 below shows the high levels of satisfaction expressed by attendees.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Supporting Integrated Education (continued)

Figure 2: Reponses from 407 evaluation forms completed relating to NICIE ethos support sessions in 2024/25 for the question 'How satisfied were you with the session overall?'



We also asked participants if they felt that they were 'well informed' because of the session: 62% stated they 'strongly agreed' and 35.5% stated they 'agreed' (total of 97.5%).

Participants comments in the value of session included:

'Hearing other people's experiences and opinions and how this related to the school setting.'

'[it] Gave me time to reflect on how to respond to different scenarios.'

'Eye opening to the different cultures and backgrounds of my employees.'

'I did anti bias training years back, so glad to be updated.'

'Discussion of how the school celebrates and promotes the Integrated ethos.'

'Lots of information about Integrated Education that I didn't previously know.'

The increase in delivery of these sessions has been made possible by the current size of our Development Team. Eight out of the ten members of this team are currently employed on short term contracts, and six of them with funding external to our core DE grant, so that our ability to continue to have this level of impact is reliant on attracting additional financial resources. Funding for education as a whole remains a concern and, as a small NDPB, changes in funds available to us are felt acutely.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

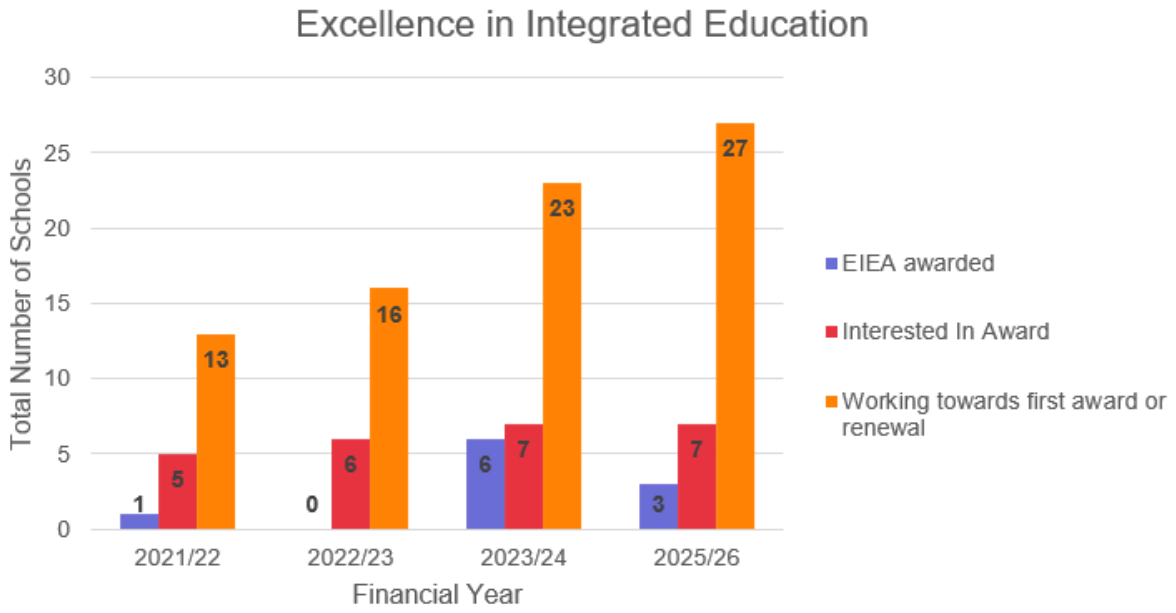
Supporting Integrated Education (continued)

4.2 We deliver a programme of support that enables schools to work towards achieving NICIE's Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA).

In order to achieve the Excellence Award, schools work through a self-evaluation and development process, based on the EIEA audit tool. Achievement of the EIEA is through external assessment, based on an evidence portfolio and two visits by the assessors. Each school receives an EIEA assessment report, including recommendations for further development of their integrated ethos/practice. The Award requires renewal after a five-year period. Three schools achieved renewal of their Award, including the first school to renew for a second time (Hazelwood IPS). Priory College achieved the Award for the first time and Crumlin IPS renewed their Award for the first time.

At the time of writing, there are nineteen schools working towards the Award for the first time, and eight in the process of renewal (27 schools total). In the last 5 years, six schools have achieved it for the first time and six have renewed their Award (12 schools total). This is 39 schools, representing 61% of eligible schools (A recently Transformed school (of which there are nine) is usually not eligible to work towards the Award for around five years, meaning there are 64 eligible schools). Fig 2 below shows the increasing interest in the Award.

Fig 2: Integrated schools' engagement with Excellence in Integrated Education Award.



Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Supporting Integrated Education (continued)

4.3 We facilitate a range of forums which enable staff working in Integrated schools to share learning and effective practice.

We facilitate forums which aim to support the development of the Integrated ethos and share learning amongst schools. This year:

The **Teachers' Committee** has been particularly active in this past year, meeting seven times and hosting five online workshops:

- Decolonising the Curriculum;
- Linking Generations NI webinar;
- Two INTO Film webinars in support of Integrated Education Month (Celebrating Cultural Connections); and
- Forgiveness Education workshop.

There approx. 70 attendances from around 20 schools. These sessions are all available on our YouTube Channel where they have accumulated an additional 250 views.

The **Vice-Principals' Forum** met four times, engaging over 45 (61%) Integrated schools, with over 150 attendances across three workshops which explored a variety of themes:

- Session facilitated by ETI on the new Inspection framework
- The ETI framework and its connections to EIEA
- Evidence gathering for EIEA
- Handling difficult conversations in schools
- Positive engagement with parents
- Promoting your school for religious & community balance intake

The **Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools'** (APTIS) planning group meets monthly during term time and this year there were three general meetings:

- Spring Conference in Dungannon
- Autumn AGM in Ulidia College
- Annual 2-day residential conference in Limavady

These events attracted over 70% of schools, with a total of 122 attendances across all three engagements.

The **Integrated Schools' Finance Association** supports bursars in GMI schools. The group met once this year with 11 schools represented.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Supporting Integrated Education (continued)

We our continuing to invest substantial time and effort into tracking the range of our activities and this year we are delighted to be able to report that we have had direct engagements with 97% (71 of 73) of existing Integrated schools. By 'direct,' we mean that at least one person from school has engaged in one of more of the above forums or workshops, or we have delivered an ethos development session in their school. In the majority of schools, we have had multiple direct engagements.

5. Strategic Successes and Challenges

5.1 *Successes*
We welcome the new growth and attention that has been brought to Integrated Education in the past year and were delighted to attend celebration events for new schools that opened as Integrated this year.

Supporting DE to implement the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 continues to be a key focus. We contributed to the first 'Section 10' report on Integrated Education, which was laid before the NI Assembly in April 2024 and have engaged in multiple meetings with officials throughout the year in our joint aim of developing a shared understanding of the implications of the Act.

NICIE Officers at all levels engaged in several consultative processes this year in order to make recommendations and comments on the development of the first five-year Integrated Education Strategy: 'Vision 2030'. We are pleased to see the current public consultation of this and the associated action plan and look forward to the outworking of the actions over the coming months and years. We are optimistic that the research and evidence gathering actions within the Strategy will help to build the case for a wider strategic drive across our education landscape to enable us to provide more opportunities for children and young people to learn together for a shared society.

We have invested resources this year into the Development Team, which increased from nine to ten members. The fact that we have been able to recruit and retain talented, committed and resourceful people in this team is one of our biggest successes. The growing knowledge, skill and confidence of this team is the reason why our impact, in terms of the outputs reported above, has grown significantly this year.

We have complied with all financial and governance requirements in relation to our status as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), a Limited Company and a Charity. Appropriate Financial and Management Reports were produced for senior management team, Finance and General Purposes Staffing Committee (FGPSC) and our Board of Directors throughout the year. An effective internal and external audit programme was delivered. Our full Board of Directors met on five occasions, with an additional eleven committee meetings.

We were delighted to receive confirmation that we have continuation funding for 2025-26 from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) Reconciliation Fund, delivering on bespoke projects with key performance indicators and targets.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Strategic Successes and Challenges (continued)

As an NDPB and a sectoral support body, we represent Integrated Education at a wide range of forums, one of which is the Area Planning processes, facilitated by the Education Authority (EA). Area Planning governance structures comprise a strategic Area Planning Steering Group (APSG), an operational Area Planning Working Group (APWG) and three Area Planning Local Groups (APLGs). NICIE has been present at all meetings throughout the year. In addition, Officers attended meetings relating to Specialist Provision in mainstream Schools, as this area of educational planning continues to work to respond to increasing demand. Through our attendance, we have supported the Area Planning process and worked collaboratively with partners to create a draft Operational Plan for the period 2024 to 2027, which was published in January 2025.

Other examples of our representation across the delivery of education services include:

- Teachers Negotiating Council: Oversight Group, Schools Leaders Workload, Pensions and Managing Attendance Groups and other ad hoc workstreams as required.
- EA-led Community use of Schools working group
- Pre School-Education Group (PEG)
- EA Cross Directorate Group for Integrated Education
- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Ethos support group and interim BoG of Causeway Academy
- Attendance at conferences and events in support of other educational stakeholders (eg union conferences, Shared Education events, Irish Medium Education events, DE new policy and programme launch events, Future schools Toolkit launch)
- The Joint Consultative Forum
- Engagement with the EA Intercultural Service

5.2 *Challenges*
Our organisational challenges, in common with many publicly funded institutions are centrally concerned with the chronic under-funding for education services in NI. In relation to NICIE, this places additional burden on the staff team on an ongoing basis.

The ongoing impact of the removal of Fresh Start funds from Integrated Education and the lack of government financial resource commitment to 'Vision 2030' – the DE's Integrated Education Strategy continue to be a challenge.

The review of the DE Guidance to schools about how to Transform to become Integrated is urgently required and we look forward to its publication and ultimately, its impact.

In a wider sense, we are pleased to be part of the ongoing conversations about how 'demand' (as defined in the 2022 Act) for Integrated Education will be measured. This is a complex task, as parental preference is multi-faceted and fluid.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Strategic Successes and Challenges (continued)

We addressed another ongoing challenge for the Integrated Education movement in February 2025, when we hosted the 'Dunleath lecture', in Ulster University Belfast campus, which focussed on the issue of what 'religious balance' could and/or should mean for Integrated Education in 2025.

In order to tackle some of the other fundamental challenges for Integrated Education and to increase the body of knowledge, we continue to participate in research projects. This has been expressed in various roles including as partners, participants, connectors, commissioners and steering group members. In the last year, these projects have included:

- IEF funded projects relating to: Social Attitudes in Integrated Education; Religious Balance in Integrated Education and Barriers to schools relating to the processes of Transformation to Integrated status, which were largely concluded this year.

- NICIE commissioned and published research on the lived experiences of school principals who have engaged with the process of Transformation.

- IEF, APTIS and NICIE collaborated to commission research which led to the publication and printing of guidance relating to Faith and Belief in Integrated primary schools, launched at an event in February 2025.

- The SCoTENS project 'EDUCATE,' in which we are a partner, produced a final report this year, in which teachers' preparedness to deal with diversity and inclusion were explored.

- We commenced our formal three-year partnership with Queen's University Belfast in September 2024, with two PhD studentships who are working this year to develop a typography of Integrated Education.

- NICIE staff have been participants in several studies, conducted by Stranmillis University College and QUB; and in Masters' and PhD students' projects from overseas and local universities. We have facilitated connections to Integrated schools for the increasing numbers of researchers who have an interest in Integrated Education.

These various learnings have and will continue to build our understanding of how Integrated Education might adapt to contemporary Northern Ireland. They have laid a solid foundation for the review of the Statement of Principles for Integrated Education. We have applied to an external funder to resource this significant project and are very eager to commence the formal review process in the next financial year, if resources permit.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

6. Conclusion

In a year in which NICIE experienced the retirement of two senior staff members and the collective loss of their daily expertise, we are pleased to report on our significant achievements. NICIE continues to deliver well beyond our resourcing, but this is not sustainable in the long term.

We have:

- Exceeded all previous years' delivery of ethos development activity (75 sessions/ 2200 people),
- Increased the numbers of schools pursuing the Excellence in Integrated Education Award (27 schools)
- Exceeded all previous years of public engagement activity (37 events/ 2800 people)
- Continued to increase the number of places available in Integrated Education (by over 700 places)
- Contributed to significant steps forward in the implementation of the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022
- Increased the capacity of our staff team to deliver impact

In post-conflict societies, education is often a contested environment and any change must be considered, cautious and inclusive. We are pleased to have come this far. This is the first time in the 43-year history of the movement, that there is clear intention from the NI government to proactively measure, monitor and aim to meet demand for Integrated Education. This is an opportunity that must be grasped, and we will do our best to continue to build momentum, with our focus firmly on the educational experiences of children and young people.

In particular, we look forward to action 10 in the draft 'Vision 2030', in which DE have committed to review the objectives, resources and funding of NICIE. We choose to be optimistic that this will lead to a resource commitment commensurate with the contribution we make to building a shared society by promoting, supporting and growing the Integrated Education movement.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Fixed assets

Details of the movement of fixed assets are set out in note 7 to the financial statements.

Donations

NICIE made no political donations during the year (2024: £nil)

Tax status

On 2 March 1989, NICIE was granted charitable status and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of NICIE are exempt for value added tax purposes. NICIE therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

Charitable status and public benefit

The company is a registered charity with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland under reference 100310. The directors have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

Disabled employees

NICIE gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment from disabled persons, having regard to their aptitude and abilities as well as Health and Safety factors.

Equality of Opportunity

NICIE follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service Policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement based on ability, qualification, and aptitude for work.

Employee involvement

It is the policy of NICIE to promote the understanding and involvement of all its employees in its aims and performance and it is committed to the continuing development of effective employee communication and consultation.

Sickness Absence

The sickness absence rate for the year was 146 days 4.6% (2024: 146 days 4.6%). The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Prompt Payment

NICIE is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with NICIE Financial Memorandum, the Confederation of British Industry's Better Practice Prompt Payers Code.

Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. In 2024/2025 NICIE paid 100% (2023/2024: 100%) of its creditors within 30 days and no commission debt interest was paid or was due in respect of transactions in 2024/2025.

Statement of accounting officer and directors' responsibilities

The directors (who are also trustees of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education) are responsible for preparing the Directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law and Article 8(6) of the Financial Provisions (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 require the Chief Executive and directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the situation and of the surplus or deficit of NICIE for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Chief Executive and directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that NICIE will continue in business.

The Chief Executive (CEO) and directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of NICIE and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of NICIE and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The CEO is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of NICIE's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In addition, in appointing the Chief Executive of the NICIE as Accounting Officer for NICIE, the Department of Education has placed on the Chief Executive responsibilities including the regularity and propriety of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records. These are set out in the "Accounting Officers" Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) issued by the Department of Finance. The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced, and understandable and that he takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that they are fair, balanced, and understandable.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Accounting Officer and each of the Directors in office at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which NICIE's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that NICIE's auditors are aware of that information.

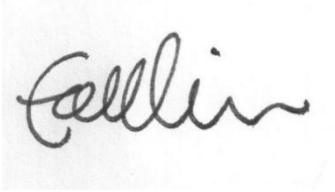
Small companies' exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small company's exemptions provided by the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013.

Independent auditors

The auditors, SCC Chartered Accountants, have been appointed as Independent Auditors through a tender process. A resolution concerning their reappointment for next year will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Board



Eamon Quinn
Chair

21 June 2025

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report from the Chairperson for the year ended 31 March 2025

The 2024/25 year was a period of significant achievement, growing demand, and financial challenges.

In 2024/25 the NICIE staff worked tirelessly and effectively: promoting Integrated Education; supporting existing schools; and assisting many schools and parents on their journeys to transformation and Integrated Education. Across Northern Ireland Principal Teachers were brought together for conferences and collaboration, development sessions took place with thousands of school staff, bias busting programmes refreshed how we engage with each other, and parental interest in Integrated Education was nurtured and was, at times, difficult to keep up with. NICIE staff continued to support schools in their day-to-day activities, and there was a significant growth in media and social media reach. An indication of the growth in demand for Integrated Education was the nine development proposals that NICIE worked on with schools.

In this reporting period we bid a fond farewell to Senior Development Officer Lorna McAlpine MBE and CEO Roisin Marshall OBE, as they both retired following successful and dedicated careers with NICIE. NICIE was delighted to welcome Sean Pettis as its new CEO, starting in August 2024. Within a short period of time Sean has already strengthened relationships with Integrated Education advocates within and outside of Northern Ireland.

NICIE continued to operate effectively while managing a reduced budget. While NICIE is grateful for financial support from the Department for Education, NICIE's core Department funding has decreased over several years. This challenging financial situation was managed at a time of ongoing increasing demand for Integrated Education and for NICIE's services. It is difficult to imagine how NICIE will cope with the further increased demand envisaged by the Integrated Education Act and accompanying strategy without significant additional financial resources. NICIE is grateful for support from the Northern Ireland Office and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade from the Republic of Ireland in supporting other discrete pieces of work. In managing the finances, I would like to congratulate Finance Officer Maureen Johnston for her work effectively managing NICIE's budget in difficult financial times.

NICIE appreciates the support and collaboration with its partners in Education. We are grateful for the ongoing engagement with the Department of Education and welcome its release of the Draft Integration Education Strategy at the end of March 2025. Integrated Education has benefitted from partnerships with our colleagues from the IEF and AlumNI, APTIS, and from collaborations with the Education Authority, CSSC and other sectoral bodies. NICIE also played its part, supporting negotiations for a pay agreement for the teaching profession, which was resolved at the end of the financial year. The teaching community across Northern Ireland, and the school staff and governors that educate our children, do an incredible job.

I would like to thank the NICIE Board of Directors who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to support the good governance and operations of NICIE. The Directors have volunteered their time on a wide range of tasks and the ongoing stewardship of NICIE, and Integrated Education is in a better position because of their efforts.

The growth in demand for Integrated Education is undeniable.

Annual Report from the Chairperson for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

In the last three years there are five new integrated schools and NICIE has received growing numbers of requests from schools and parents for support on ballots for transformation as well as on development proposals. In 2024/25 we saw a number of happy anniversaries, including the 25th anniversary of Kilbroney Integrated Primary School and the 30th anniversary of Lough View Integrated Primary School. Days after this reporting period, Northern Ireland's main daily paper, The Belfast Telegraph, reported recent polls showing that two thirds of people in Northern Ireland want Integrated Education as the main model of schooling for children and young people.

But there is much work to do in the work of reconciliation. At the time of writing, only 15.5% of schools in Northern Ireland have at least a 10% mix of pupils from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds. The vast majority of children and young people at school spend every day being educated alongside few or no children from other backgrounds. Given the predominance of children being educated separately in Northern Ireland it is puzzling to hear opponents of the Integrated Education Act claiming it gives Integrated Education unfair advantage over other sectors. Surely the act seeks to level up access to provision, particularly in the many places across Northern Ireland with over-subscribed, little, or no Integrated Education provision. The rejection of the wishes of parents of two schools in Bangor to transform their school to Integrated status is disappointing. But their enthusiasm and that of increasing numbers of parents for Integrated Education offers hope for increased reconciliation in Northern Ireland. NICIE looks forward to working with all education stakeholders to achieve its mission of promoting reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

Eamon Quinn
Chair, NICIE

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

Chief Executive's Annual Report For the year ending 31 March 2025

Introduction

It is a privilege to write my first report as Chief Executive of NICIE, having taken up post in August 2024. I am honoured to follow in the footsteps of Roisin Marshall OBE, whose long-standing commitment to Integrated Education has helped shape NICIE and inspired so many. I offer Roisin my sincere thanks for her leadership and generosity during our handover and beyond.

This has been a year of growth, transition and challenge — a year that tested our resilience and reaffirmed our purpose. As I reflect on my first months in post, what strikes me most is the commitment, creativity and drive of the NICIE team. At a time of unprecedented demand and pressure on resources, we have delivered real impact for communities across Northern Ireland.

Delivering with Purpose

NICIE exists to promote reconciliation through education — a mission made ever more urgent by the continued separation of children in our school system. In 2024–25, we supported more schools, reached more people, and delivered more activity than in any recent year.

This included:

- 75 ethos development sessions, engaging approx. 2,200 participants
- 37 public engagement events, reaching 2,800 people
- Growth of the Excellence in Integrated Education Award, with 27 schools actively working towards or renewing their accreditation
- The transformation or growth of multiple schools, contributing to an increase of over 700 pupil places in Integrated settings
- Direct engagement with 97% of existing Integrated schools

This was made possible by a dedicated staff team. We welcomed several new colleagues this year and bid farewell to long-serving leaders, in particular Lorna McAlpine, whose wisdom, wit and work ethic drove our growth over many years. I am grateful to all who have contributed their time and talents to this movement, past and present.

Collaboration and Influence

This year saw the publication and beginning of the consultation on '*Vision 2030'*, the Department of Education's Strategy for Integrated Education. NICIE was a key contributor to its development, and we are thankful to the Department for their work on this, alongside other partner agencies. The Strategy has the potential to further develop Integrated Education, with NICIE as a key delivery partner. We hope appropriate resourcing will enable the plan to be fully delivered, enabling Integrated Education to be a realistic choice for every family who wish it. Our engagement with sectoral partners and public bodies has deepened through Area Planning, policy consultation, and forums on leadership, governance, diversity and inclusion. NICIE continues to play a central role in conversations about the future of education in Northern Ireland.

Chief Executive's Annual Report For the year ending 31 March 2025 (continued)

We also supported research activities, including the lived experiences of the transformation journey and the issue of faith and belief in Integrated schools. The partnership working with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS) provided an exemplary model for future initiatives, and we are grateful for their support. We deepened our partnership with Queen's University Belfast through a three-year PhD collaboration, which will help us further understand and develop Integrated practice.

Navigating Challenges

Like many organisations in the education and public sectors, NICIE continues to operate within significant financial constraints. Allowing for inflation, our core funding from the Department of Education is 50% less than 10 years ago, while demand for our services grows year on year. The bespoke project funding from the Northern Ireland Office and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has been essential, allowing us to meet urgent needs, expand our team, and innovate in areas such as communications and transformation support.

Looking Ahead

As we look to 2025–26, I am filled with cautious optimism. Integrated Education continues to grow — not just in numbers, but in reach, relevance and ambition. The continued support of parents, governors, educators and funders evidences the appetite to have schools where children from diverse traditions learn with, from and about each other, every school day.

We know that this is complex, long-term work. Transformation takes time. Reconciliation through education requires care, commitment and courage. But we also know what is possible when people come together with a shared vision. I am always humbled by the civic courage shown by the founders of schools and those who led school transformations. They took risks that should be remembered and celebrated.

NICIE will continue to be a champion for Integration. I want to thank, our partners, our funders and our staff for all they do to make this possible. Our Board of Directors also deserve special recognition. They are a group of committed and skilled volunteers. In particular I would like to thank our new Chair, Eamon Quinn, who has been a great source of support for me, always generous with his time, providing humour when needed and dedication in abundance.
I look forward to continuing this work together.

Sean Pettis
Chief Executive Officer
NI Council for Integrated Education

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Department of Education (DE). NICIE was established in 1987 as an umbrella body to represent Integrated schools and to promote Integrated Education. NICIE was set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is supported through grant in aid by DE under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

The role of NICIE as defined in the Management Statement is '*to promote Integrated Education and to perform a wide range of roles in facilitating the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland for the public benefit.'*

The Governance Statement sets out the governance structures, risk management and internal control procedures that have operated within NICIE during the financial year 2024 to 2025.

The Annual Governance Statement has been produced in line with guidance issued by DoF in accordance with the guidance in Annex 3.1 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and forms part of the Statutory Accounts and is reviewed, considered, and approved by the Board of Directors (BoD).

This Governance statement reflected NICIE's activities and governance for the current financial year.

Scope of responsibility

I was delighted to join NICIE as CEO/Accounting Officer in August 2024 replacing the previous CEO Roisin Marshall who retired in July 2024.

As Accounting Officer, I am committed to operating in accordance with best practice in business integrity and ethics and maintaining the highest standards of financial reporting and governance. I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of controls that supports the achievement of NICIE's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the NICIE assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned in MPMNI. As part of the requirement of Accounting Officers, I completed Accounting Officer training and met with the DE Accounting Officer.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

As Accounting Officer of a public body and designated NDPB, I am committed to governance excellence and to ensuring accountability and transparency for all decisions and activities. I am responsible to the Permanent Secretary of DE under the terms and conditions as set out in NICIE's Management Statement (incorporating the Financial Memorandum) (MSFM) which will be replaced by the Partnership Agreement in 25/26.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I am satisfied that I have delivered upon my responsibilities as NICIE Accounting Officer and thereby declare to the Departmental Accounting Officer of my fitness to act as Accounting Officer.

Strategic Objectives

NICIE launched its new three-year Strategic Plan 2022-2025 in April 2022.

This strategic plan aims to:

1. Promote Integrated Education

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

2. Grow Integrated Education

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

3. Support Integrated Education

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

NICIE's vision is a society where children are educated together, confident to express their own identity and culture; and respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

The NICIE mission is to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

The current strategic plan sets out clearly defined strategic objectives for the year. I have ensured that the aims and objectives have been implemented with staff, Board of Directors (BoD) and relevant stakeholders during the year and are regularly reviewed.

The NICIE business plan aligned to DE's strategic priorities clearly set out NICIE aims and objectives for the year and was monitored throughout the year.

NICIE are currently preparing an interim Strategic plan for 2025-2026.

Governance Framework

In partnership with the NICIE Board of Directors, I have a corporate responsibility for setting objectives, agreeing priorities, and implementing ministerial policy. The BoD, and I, as the NICIE Accounting Officer and the staff of NICIE, developed and agreed to a business plan for the year, which was formally approved by DE.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Business Plan was regularly reviewed along with key risks associated with the delivery of NICIE's objectives throughout the year. A mid-term six-month evaluation report to 30.9.2024 and year end evaluation provided updated progress reports on the achievements of NICIE for the 12 months to 31.3.2025 to both the BoD and DE.

NICIE have been working within our current Development Team capacity to respond to the increasing demand for our services. This DE funded team currently consists of two Senior Development Officers (one on a temporary contract to 30.6.2025) and one Development Officer. NICIE have obtained restricted funding from the Northern Ireland Office to fund one Senior Development Officer and three Development Officers until 31 March 2025. The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs through a partnership with the Integrated Education Fund have also funded a Development Officer until 31 March 2025.

In the 2024/25 school year, there were approximately 28,411 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools. Five Transforming schools got approval across 2024/25. Four schools were not approved for Transformation. Three other Development Proposals were approved in 2024/25 including one for increased enrolment in a GMI Primary and two for Nursery Units. Two Development Proposals for Nursery Units were not approved.

This year has seen continued demand from schools requesting support from NICIE regarding Transformation to Integrated Status. Five cases for change have been submitted to EA for schools Transforming to Integrated status, with three having been published by year end. A further case for change for Transformation is in progress and will be submitted to EA early in 25/26. There are approximately four other schools actively exploring Transformation, with a decision to progress expected in 25/26.

Development Proposals for significant change to the Integrated Schools sector

In addition, there are three more cases for change at an advanced stage, with pre-publication consultations being undertaken. Two of these are for increased enrolment in oversubscribed GMI Post Primary schools and one for the establishment of a Nursery Unit in a GMI Primary.

There is one development proposals awaiting Ministerial decision for a Nursery unit in a CI Primary School.

Substantial ongoing development work on the establishment of a new Controlled Integrated College 'Causeway Academy' in Coleraine has been undertaken in partnership with the Education Authority and the Controlled Schools' Support Council. Support work on the development of a new GMI Post Primary School in the Mid Down area continues. This support includes provision of template governance documents, Governor training, training focused on the Integrated ethos, attendance at open days and community outreach initiatives, attendance at steering group meetings and liaising with the Dept of Education to progress the project. In addition, substantial work has been undertaken on the development of a new Irish Medium Integrated Primary and Nursery School, 'Scoil na Seolta.' Publication is expected in early 25/26.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

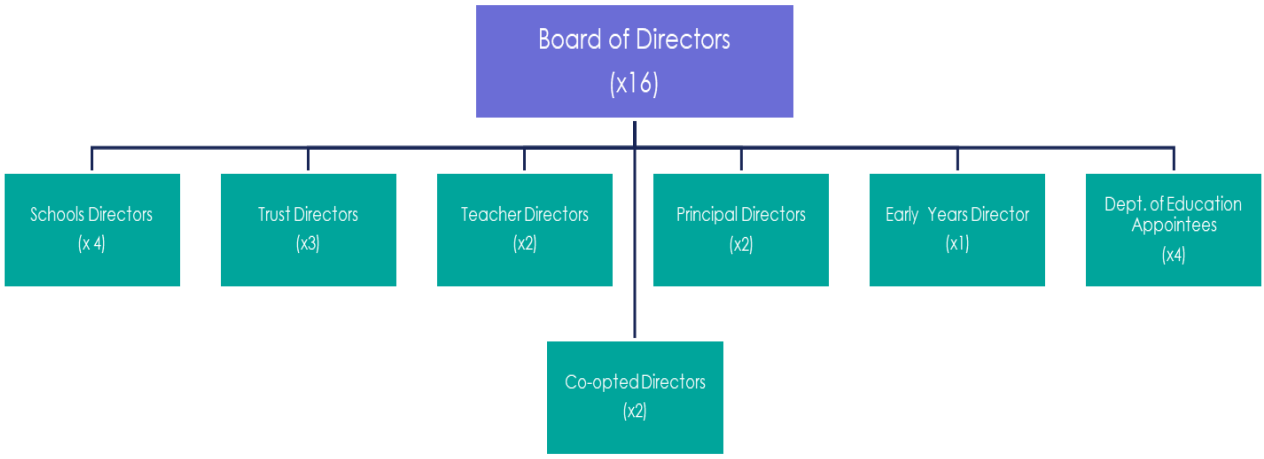
Structure of NICIE

Board and Committees

The Board of Directors has a current membership of 16 non-executive members including two DE appointees. There are currently two vacant DE Director positions and one vacant 'Schools' Director. Two new DE Directors were appointed through a public appointments' competition during the year, replacing two Directors who completed terms in October 2024.

The role of the Board is to provide leadership to NICIE during the budget year, within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enable risk to be assessed and managed, to set NICIE's strategic aims, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet its objectives, provide oversight to set NICIE's values and standards and to ensure its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

The current BoD structure is illustrated below:



NICIE is a constituent body of member organisations with seven categories of membership:

1. School members • 5 members to be elected at AGM	Those engaged in running a particular Integrated school.
2. Support members / Trust • 3 members to be elected at AGM	Organisations for the support and promotion of Integrated Education.
3. Teacher members	Representatives of teacher organisation. 2 members nominated by The Teachers Committee

4. Principal Member • 2 members nominated by APTIS (Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools)	Representatives of Principals' association.
5. Early Years members • 1 member nominated by the Early years Committee	Those engaged in running pre-school provision in a particular Integrated school.
6. Co Opted • Up to 3 directors Currently 2 24/25	To provide additional experience
7. Department of Education	Up to 4 people appointed by DE

Board and Committees Structure

There has been traditionally three committees which serve and report to the Board of Directors. In 2024/25 a fourth committee, a 'Governance Committee' was established through Terms of Reference and met once during the year.

The Governance Sub-Committee's objectives are to:

- Support the Board of Directors in reviewing governance matters and identifying governance related tasks and issues to be addressed by NICIE
- Undertake identified tasks as highlighted by the Board of Directors, such as reviewing and informing new drafts of existing governance related documents such as Memorandums and Articles of Association
- Working alongside the NICIE Board and Staff to prepare drafts of documents for consideration and approval by the Board of Directors.
- Assisting in the discussing and clarifying of NICIE's legal and governance links with external bodies/ organisations/ individuals.
- Identify gaps in governance provision at NICIE and prepare options for the Board of Directors to consider.

The committee structure is outlined below.

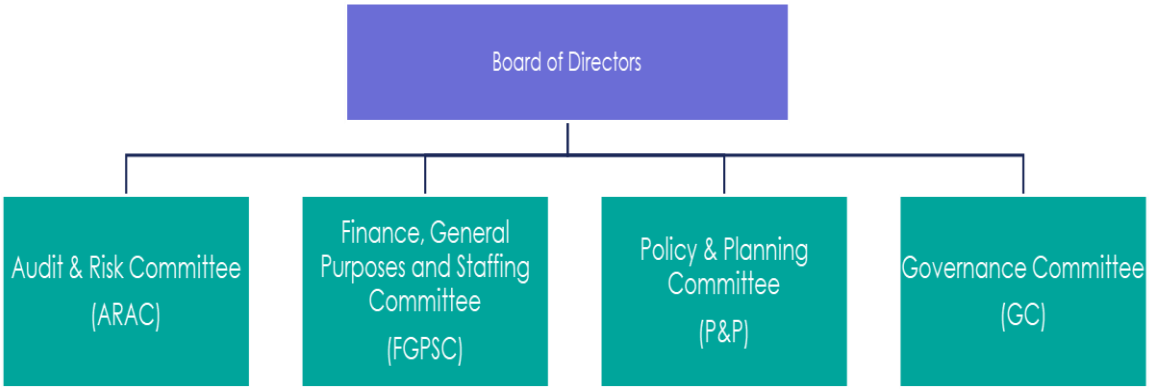
The current directors and attendance records are recorded below. The Board structure and all directors were reviewed prior to the hybrid Annual General Meeting (AGM) including attendance records to ensure that the structure complied with NICIE's Articles of Association.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

NICIE Board and Committees Structure



Attendance at Meetings

Directors' attendance at meetings held during 2024-2025 is detailed below. Please note that some directors were not in post for the full financial year and joined the subcommittees during the year and the figures represent their percentage attendance based on when they joined.

Director/Member	Board of Directors 4 Zoom mtgs, 1 in person + AGM)	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee 4 Zoom mtgs	Finance, General Purposes & Staffing Committee 4 Zoom meetings	Policy and Planning Committee 2 Zoom mtgs	Governance Sub Committee 1 Zoom Meeting
Maeve Marnell Chair (End of Term October 2024 - coopted to Governance Subcommittee Dec 2024)	100%	-	100%	100%	100%
Sandra Patterson	100%	100%	-	50%	
Matt O Neill (Coopted P&P Member)				50%	
Claire Loftus (Coopted FGPSC Member)			75%		
John Scott	100%	-	100%	100%	
Andrew Talbot (coopted to Governance Subcommittee Dec 2024)					100%
Cathal Mullaghan	83%	75%	-	100%	
Shane Greer	67%	-	50%	100%	

Anne Murray (End of Term June 24 -coopted to Governance Subcommittee Dec 2024)	67%		100%	100%	100%
Patrick Mc Ilveen (appointed December 2024)	100%		-	100%	
Helen Smyth	100%	50%	-	100%	
Adele Kerr	83%	-	50%	-	
Bill Miscampbell (*co-optee)*	67%	-	100%		
Eamon Quinn Chair Appointed Chair June 25 *(co-optee)*	100%	-	100%	100%	100%
Pamela Algie (Appointed May 2024)	100%	0%	-	50%	
Colin Millar	100%	100%	-		100%
Patricia Douglas (End of Term April 2024)	100%	100%	-	50%	
Duncan Morrow	50%			50%	
Bernie Webster (appointed December 2024)	67%		100%	-	
Gavin Gray DE Rep (End of Term November 24)	100%	-	50%	-	
Ashleigh Moran	33%				
Nigel Arnold (Appointed April 2024)	100%	100%			

Performance of the Board 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025

The Board of Directors held five meetings including the Annual General Meeting (AGM November 2024.) It was agreed that the Board meetings would continue to focus on strategy and the future direction of NICIE in the changing educational environment and the Integrated Education Act which came into force in October 2022. The new Act requires DE to "support" as well as "encourage and facilitate" Integrated Education. It will require "identifying, assessing, monitoring, and aiming to meet the demand for the provision of Integrated Education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate and providing sufficient places in Integrated schools to aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education." NICIE has been supporting the Department to implement the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 and, in our role as a named body under section 3 of the Act, we have submitted all responses, when requested, within the required timescales. This included a response to the Draft Integrated Education Strategy in November 2024. We await the public consultation of same.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The chairperson Maeve Marnell came to the end of her tenure and was replaced by Eamon Quinn in June 2024.

During the year both chairpersons continued to review the attendance of Board Members for the previous 12 months and reiterated the need for attendance and participation. The Chairs were satisfied with the reasons for absence and ensured that proper processes were employed to address all absences and satisfied that all Board members continue on the Board. This was closely reviewed, monitored, and reported throughout the year, in my monthly meetings with the new Chair upon my appointment in August 2024. A few new directors replaced directors that had come to the end of their term. We were delighted to welcome these new directors to add their contributions to the proactive and dynamic Board.

A great deal of attention was directed towards the development of NICIE's new IT system following the successful move to NICIE's new premises in 2023. The new system was implemented in June 2024. Additionally, there was a focus on Diversity training. We commissioned a review of internal policies and practices related to the promotion of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). An EDI Strategy was developed and approved in June 2024 and is being implemented.

Most meetings continued to be online except for an in-person board strategy day which was held in June 2024. All new Directors received induction training to ensure that they were briefed accordingly and were aware of their duties. This included Corporate Governance training, which was held in February 2025 to all Board members during the year to ensure adherence and compliance with good practice.

The Chair will complete the annual appraisal of directors. The chairperson continued to assess the performance of individual Board members through arrangements determined by the Department. Board members will continue to be subject to ongoing performance appraisal, with a formal assessment being completed by the chair at the end of each financial year and prior to any re- appointment of individual members taking place. Feedback of the appraisal process was shared with Board members. The Terms of reference of all committees were all reviewed during the year.
The appraisals also formed part of the assessment of the Board's effectiveness and were reported accordingly. A Board Effectiveness Review had been conducted in November 2023 by the Independent Internal Auditor. Based on evidence reviewed and explanations obtained, the independent internal auditors concluded the Board of NICIE has demonstrated compliance with the guidance contained in the Northern Ireland Audit Office publication 'Board Effectiveness – Good practice Guide.'

It was recommended NICIE could consider developing a Conflict-of-Interest policy and reinstate asking board members and senior staff to formally complete declarations of interest, including nil returns annually. This year's report concluded that these minor recommendations has been implemented. This report has been shared with the Board of Directors and all recommendations by the Internal Auditor were implemented from the previous report during the year. The Board Effectiveness plan is regularly reviewed at Board and Policy and Planning Committee meetings. It was agreed in March 2025 that this function would move to the newly formed Governance Committee.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The previous Chair was also appraised this year through arrangements made by the DE and an appraisal for the current Chair will be commissioned by DE in April 2025.

I also had monthly 1-1 meetings with the Chair where we reviewed the committees and the strategy of NICIE and agreed agenda for Board meetings.

A training programme was implemented during the year for the directors.

The register of interests continued to be a standard agenda at all Board meetings to ensure that any areas of Board member conflict are addressed at the start of each meeting.

The Board reviews, through the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) report and a range of presentations and discussion papers, the ongoing work of NICIE and its implementation of its strategic plan and business plan. Each Senior Development Officer for Grow and Support attends one Board meeting per year to present on their area of responsibility in relation to the NICIE Business Plan. The Report Card is regularly updated and feedback from DE has been useful in improving how NICIE Staff and Directors approach Outcomes Based Accountability.

During the year, the Board reviewed reports from other sub committees including the annual Internal Audit report, annual financial statements, monthly summary extracts from the management accounts and approved the Annual Business Plan and associated budgets.
NICIE reviewed the progress on the existing strategic plan and drafted a business plan for 2025/26. A review was also undertaken of the effectiveness of reporting to the Board as part of the Board Effectiveness Review.

The Chairperson, Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer met the Senior Personnel within DE for Governance and Accountability meetings twice in this financial year. Position reports were forwarded prior to these meetings highlighting any areas of significant accountability and governance. It was agreed that all was in order in the current challenging financial climate and that budgets were being managed accordingly. NICIE continued to submit business cases and requests for additional resources. It was highlighted that NICIE was only in a position to manage its budget as a result of not replacing permanent staff who had retired/resigned.

NICIE has worked closely with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) to promote Integrated Education and is currently working with 11 schools at various stages of the Transformation process.

As part of ensuring that all Board meetings are managed in an efficient and timely manner, I ensure that the Accounting Officer/CEO Report is circulated prior to the Board meetings along with all relevant papers.

Committee Reports

Role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) oversees financial reporting and the effectiveness of financial and regulatory compliance, controls and systems reporting.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee formally met on 4 occasions during 2024-25 reviewed the Corporate Risk Register at each meeting and was satisfied that all risks were identified, and corrective action taken where feasible. Some of the key risks are highlighted further in this report.

The Committee throughout the year continued to review and update the Corporate Risk Register to assure members that all risks relating to working from home arrangements and business continuity were incorporated into the register and that all risks were managed and mitigated accordingly. The Business Continuity Plan was also updated and reviewed at all the ARAC meetings.

The register of conflicts continued to be a standard item on the ARAC agenda.

In addition, the Committee reviewed the results of the internal audit report and the implementation of previous year's audit recommendations. The Committee was also responsible for reviewing the annual statutory Directors Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31.3.2024 and will also be responsible for the reports to 31.3.2025.

It also reviewed several policies and documentation from DE and DoF, which were updated by DE during the current year to ensure best practice and that DE business case, tenders, and DoF Pay Remit guidance was adhered to.

A summary report from the ARAC was presented to the Board by the chair of the committee following each meeting during the year.

Representatives from the IMIE Team at DE also sat on this Committee this year, which assisted in giving additional assurance to the Committee that all audit requirements were adhered to and provided guidance. The ARAC Chair and the CEO also attended external training for Audit and Risk Committees convened by DE.

Finance, General Purposes and Staffing Committee (FGPSC)

This Committee continues to meet before the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors. It met 4 times during the current year. Its function is to focus more on the finance and personnel issues presented to the Board. This Committee also dealt with all issues relating to staff and premises.

FGPSC also continues to review staff policies throughout the year, ensuring that NICIE has covered all areas of staffing procedures and guidance.

The HR subcommittee also continued to meet where necessary during the year to dedicate more time to internal staffing issues and recruitment to ensure adequate time allocated to support the Finance Officer and me as CEO. This committee also included the Chair of NICIE. Progress was then reported accordingly to the relevant committee.

The budget for the monthly management statements were carefully reviewed by me and the Finance Officer prior to presentation to the FGPSC who then reviewed the financial and performance management of NICIE ensuring that all budgets and internal controls were adhered to for the year up to 31.3.2025.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

In this financial year, a significant amount of time was dedicated to managing staff resources and also the procurement and implementation of the new IT and telephone system.

Health and Safety and Accommodation is a standard item on the FGPSC agenda to ensure that the office was managed in accordance with government and health guidelines and that all staff were being managed and had support in terms of the ability to work from home, including pastoral care. To further support this objective, the Office Manager is completing advanced Health & Safety in the workplace training.

This committee was also responsible for ensuring that NICIE was fully compliant with business case requirements.
The FGPSC's remit also includes the awarding of tenders and ensuring that NICIE adheres to strict procurement procedures with the approval of DE. However, the committee continues to raise concerns again over the costs and time that NICIE incurred adhering to DoF Procurement guidance under Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD) when re-tendering for goods and services.

Policy and Planning Committee (P&P)

The Committee's remit during the current year included:

- The Independent Review of Education
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Implementation
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Consultation on the draft Strategy Action Plan
- The submission to Northern Ireland Affairs committee (NIAC) on Integrated Education
- Monitoring Board Effectiveness Action Plan
- Monitoring Progress of Strategic and Business Plans
- Education Authority Sectoral Support Presentation and discussion on Shared Education
- Monitoring of Communication and Outreach activities.

The Policy and Planning Committee has held two meetings during the year to formulate NICIE's policy position on various educational policies. Committee members provide constructive challenges and guidance in response to updates by a Senior Development Officer on key areas of work. It is also an opportunity for Directors to gain a better-detailed understanding of the context that NICIE is working within, including a presentation and submission regarding the draft Integrated Education Strategy.

Compliance with Corporate Governance

An annual review of the effectiveness of NICIE's governance structures, as set out in code (DAO/ (DoF) 02/2025), risk management and internal controls has been conducted, informed by staff, directors, independent internal and external auditors. The NICIE Board has assessed that it has effectively complied with the Corporate Governance Code (https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-02/daodof0225att.pdf)

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) sets out a broad framework within which the Council is required to operate, and the Financial Memorandum defines certain financial provisions which NICIE is required to observe. As Accounting Officer and CEO, I have ensured that the MSFM has been adhered to for the financial year 2024-2025 from the period since my appointment. NICIE is currently working with its DE sponsor branch on a Proportionate Autonomy Framework and are currently working towards a new Partnership Agreement which will in due course replace the MSFM framework and is due to be finalised in the first quarter of 2025-2026.

NICIE has continued to review its internal procedures to ensure that all services are reviewed and that business cases are submitted to the Irish Medium and Integrated Education (IMIE) Team in DE in a timely fashion and that all appropriate approvals are obtained before any expenditure is committed.

Training has also been given to all new staff during the year at staff meetings to ensure that controls are adhered to, and new staff are given induction training on arrival. Training needs have also been identified for new and existing directors and governance training has been organised and provided. Induction was provided for new directors and exit interviews/surveys were completed for all directors that left during the year.

All relevant Companies House and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland requirements have been updated.

NICIE continues to ensure that its governance arrangements are in place operating in accordance with best practice and that it continues to align its business aims and objectives to DE.

Assurance Reporting

As Accounting Officer, I am also responsible for preparing risk assurance statements and these reports provide assurance over areas of responsibility and confirm that risks are being managed.

Internal Audit

The scope of the internal audit plan for the current year by independent internal auditors Cavanagh Kelly was to review the controls in relation to the systems that NICIE had in place in relation to the following areas, including recommendations from last year's audit.

- Corporate Planning and Risk Management
- Budgetary Control
- Procurement and Tendering
- Safeguarding and Child Protection

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

There were some low-level priority 3 recommendations of improvement which the Board agreed to implement and which all have been implemented which included some minor changes to policies and updating information. The Internal Auditor was therefore able to give positive assurance to me as Accounting Officer that the Board's arrangements were satisfactory.

A review of the progress made by NICIE in implementing prior year adjustments was also undertaken and all prior year internal audit recommendations have been implemented.

External Auditor

There were no control deficiencies identified during the year to 31.3.2024 for the audit completed by SCC Chartered Accountants. There is unlikely to be any emphasis of matter or qualifications contained in the Audit report for 2024-2025.

Other Sources of Assurance

I have also relied on additional sources of assurance during the year, with regular reports from the staff, directors, NICIE Panel of Associates and independent advice from HR (Human Resource), legal experts and other relevant stakeholders as required.

NICIE also continues to report annually to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, Companies House, and The Pension Regulator.

Quality of Data Used by the Board

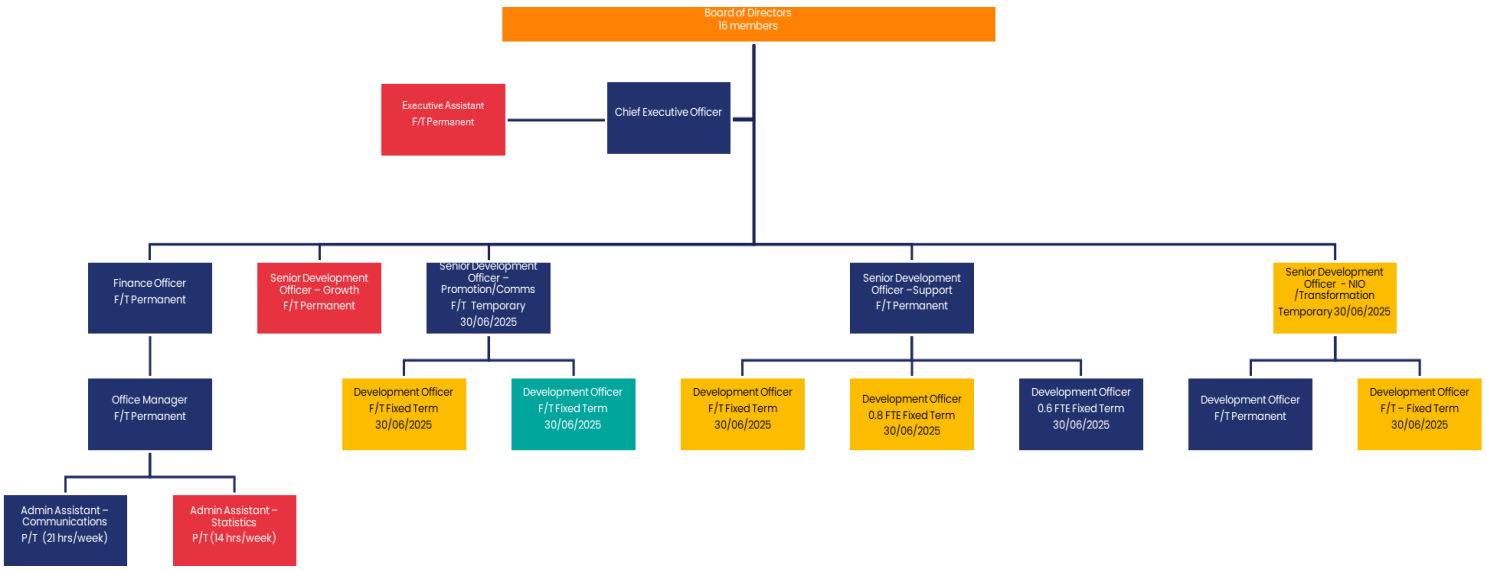
Senior Members of the NICIE Team and appropriately experienced officers or representatives of NICIE have supported all the committees. I regularly review and interrogate all data with Senior Management Team prior to any information being presented to the Board. These reports include monthly management accounts and budgets, which are prepared by NICIE's qualified Chartered Accountant and are also reviewed by the FGPSC who have additional finance experience. Senior Development Officers with much experience in the education sector, including reports compiled with various forums and relevant stakeholders, complete other NICIE reports. Significant effort has been placed on the development of activity reporting systems, including a data 'dashboard' which enables timely and accurate information to be recorded and analysed in support of NICIE objectives. An appropriately selected Panel of Associates who have been drawn from a select list based on skills and experience compile bespoke reports. Committee Members also reviewed these reports and data and sought clarification from officers on the information presented to them.

Additionally, our Internal Auditors Cavanagh Kelly independently compiled the internal audit report, and the External Auditors SCC Chartered Accountants, independently verified the Final Financial Statements. In addition, as part of the internal audit programme all the quality of data was assessed by ARAC and presented to the Board. It is my view and the view of the committees that the quality of the data used by NICIE is of an acceptable standard.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The staffing structure of NICIE for 2024-2025 is highlighted below:

NICIE ORGANISATIONAL CHART



	Post Vacant/No funding available		Northern Ireland Office Funded		Dept Education Funded

I have been reviewing and managing the limited staffing resources since my appointment as Accounting Officer in August 2024.

The lack of DE resources for staffing alongside one year budget allocations is putting increasing pressure on the existing staff team and our ability to fulfil our delivery of DE's statutory obligations.

Additionally, it is important to note and reiterate that the majority of NICIE's Development Team is made up of external funding posts which at present will end 31 March 2026.

Ministerial Directions

No Ministerial Directions were given for the year to 31 March 2025.

Health and Safety

I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all its duties under Health and Safety. Whilst NICIE has always been mindful of compliance to health and safety, a working group was set up with representatives from both staff and directors to review NICIE's hybrid policy and ensuring that the office environment was safe and managed accordingly. This was and continues to be reviewed to ensure that all risks are managed and mitigated, and that the NICIE staff are protected, and the office environment is clean and appropriately managed and that all health and safety requirements and legislation is adhered to.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

NICIE staff have all settled into their new office accommodation, a fully managed service government building with secure access and meets all health and safety requirements including disability access. The Office block has its own Staff guide for Health and Safety and all accommodation details.

The staff handbook continues to be reviewed, updated in line with legislation and appropriate guidance and circulated to all staff and training provided where relevant. NICIE continues to support all staff through the NICIE well-being programme, and this is managed through the NICIE health and wellbeing staff committee. Several activities including a staff team building day have been carried out during the year and staff are continuously reminded to access the free well-being programmes available to them.

Risk Assessment

Internal Controls and Risk Management

I, along with the directors acknowledge our responsibility for NICIE's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) reviewed the risks associated with the Council's activities. The Corporate Risk Register includes an evaluation of all levels of risk. Both inherent and residual risks were reviewed throughout the year with the committee and DE. NICIE had a Business Continuity Plan in place, which has also been reviewed and updated to manage all internal controls including hybrid working.

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reports to each Board meeting on any matters that need to be brought to their attention.

I, as Accounting Officer, continue to enforce and ensure that risk management is embedded and owned by the Board and all NICIE staff. This has now effectively been incorporated and embedded into all NICIE business plans and daily operations of NICIE. The corporate risk register, and risk management is viewed as a dynamic process which actively seeks to incorporate good practice. It is responsive and current and is managed through regular review of both internal developments and external factors.

In accordance with NICIE's Risk Management Policy / Strategy, Risks are identified, evaluated and managed to ensure that NICIE 's exposure is within an acceptable range. (from averse to open)

Risk Profile faced by NICIE.

The NICIE corporate risk register currently identifies four significant risks. These risks are reviewed quarterly by ARAC. These are also circulated to Board Members and Staff.

The first three risks relate to financial management and governance and some of the primary areas of concern for 2024/2025 are highlighted in the table below.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Management of Significant Risks

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure of DE/DoF to guarantee NICIE Pension Liability	Reported to BoD/External Auditor. Continue to monitor and liaise with DE/DoF of any potential increases regarding non-guarantee from NILGOSC (NICIE Pension provider) SDE covers Employers Liability	Ongoing
Failure to have adequate insurance in place.	Public Liability covered by DoF in James House Public Liability to be requested for each event where the venue requires it. Concerns over Directors Liability and potential claims against organisation	June 2025
Limited DE budget for parental ballots and financial support for Transforming schools.	Requested that IMIE apply for more financial support for the five new Transforming schools for the next five years from Monitoring Round.	March 2025 Ongoing
Failure to Strategically plan for IE (Integrated Education)	Ongoing engagement with DE regarding the Integrated Education Strategy. Engagement with Education Authority (EA) regarding Area Planning, Cross Directorate	Ongoing

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure to effectively implement the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022	meetings to regularly update on pertinent issues. Ensure Cases for Change are robust and reflect a robust evidence base to support Development proposals (DP) for approval; and Regular meetings with the DE Implementation Team/IMIE Bi-annual meetings with DE Governance and Risk (GAR) and DE Implementation Team Responded to consultation on the IE Act Strategy Action Plan, the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey proposed questions and Data proposals for measuring demand and reporting on progress of the Action Plan Engagement and Consultation Protocols in place between DE and NICIE	Ongoing

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure to ensure NICIE staffing complement to ensure NICIE can support DE to fulfil its statutory duty to promote, encourage, facilitate and support Integrated Education.	Five Business Cases submitted to IMIE to demonstrate NICIE's need to retain staff post March 2025. Reporting of the outcomes of NICIE staff team to DE and NICIE Board through the Business Plan Report Card. Careful drafting of NICIE Business Plan and NICIE Strategic Plan to ensure DE understands the need for an increase in NICIE's budget.	NICIE are aware that staff retention will be vital to meeting DE's statutory duty and the vision of a network of sustainable, high quality Integrated schools.

I am satisfied that these risks were managed accordingly, and that tolerable and considerable progress continues to mitigate these risks. NICIE have approached its sponsor Department IMIE for assistance and training in Risk Management with the aim to potentially streamline their current register.

One of the risks that continues to present the greatest challenge and highest risk to NICIE relates to the failure to measure and meet demand for Integrated Education, thus enabling parents who want an integrated school for their child to be able to access it. The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 means that NICIE will need to work in partnership with DE, statutory and other support bodies to ensure the effective implementation of the Act ensuring the work of NICIE complements the duties placed on those organisations to further the development of Integrated Education. The Integrated Education Strategy, although consulted upon with Section 3 bodies, was not published in the financial year 24/25. These delays potentially push back implementation on key activities.

It is important for NICIE to play its part in promoting Shared Education and encouraging Integrated schools to actively participate. NICIE continues to liaise with EA regarding supporting the delivery of the Peace Plus funded 'Aspire' Programme.

Through Area Planning, NICIE continues to encourage schools and support organisations to consider Integrated Education as an option in a time of economic constraints and the desire for educational provision in each area to remain as a choice for the whole community. Where there is no provision NICIE, in conjunction with parents and schools, must demonstrate unmet demand for such provision to be considered. This is extremely difficult in a time when the education budget constraints are focused on rationalization rather than growth. NICIE is acutely aware of the deficit in funding for education generally and is concerned with the challenges that that brings to enabling Integrated Education to grow. NICIE recognises the gap that exists for schools in local areas to

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

consider options for Integrated Education as a solution to ensure education provision in an area. NICIE is willing and able, given financial support, to fill this gap to encourage conversations as per Transformation/ new school development. This is in line with draft Integrated Education Strategy and again delays in publication and uncertainty about financial resourcing continues to present a challenge. NICIE is committed to ongoing engagement to implement commissioned activities in the finalised Integrated Education Strategy in line with budget allocation.

The removal of Fresh Start Agreement Funding for capital buildings continues to provide a challenge for schools who are in substandard accommodation. While we welcome the new builds that have been possible, we continue to advocate for additional capital funding to enable the 9 schools currently awaiting progression.

NICIE are grateful for the continued support from Northern Ireland Office and Irish Department of Foreign Affairs to help NICIE to promote, meet local demand for Integrated Education and support existing Integrated schools.

NICIE staff also assess internal and external risks of all activities, and the risk is reviewed and mitigated where feasible.

Fraud Risk

NICIE continues to review and implement its fraud policy during the year and has zero tolerance in respect of fraud. Internal controls were also reviewed and are clearly embedded within the organisation.

I have ensured that the NICIE Finance Officer is a member of the DE Education Sector Fraud forum. There were no instances of suspected fraud within NICIE during the year 2024-2025.

Raising Concerns at work (Whistle Blowing)

NICIE has a policy on Raising Concerns at work (Whistleblowing), which encourages staff to report any instances of unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or other actions that might compromise, in any way, the Council's reputation and integrity. There were no instances during 2024-2025.

Data Security breaches

There were no data security breaches or losses during the year.

General Data Protection Regulation

NICIE continues to maintain and review its GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) policies, current data governance processes, procedures, and control. NICIE staff also ensure that all archived materials were appropriately dealt with which included archiving, destroying, and returning materials to schools. NICIE's continues to review and adhere to its Retention and Disposal Policy to ensure that records are managed in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Government Funding Database

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

NICIE is not listed on the Government Funding Database as NICIE does not award grant funding **to** the community and voluntary sector.

Significant Governance Issues

There are no further significant governance issues.

Conclusion

The aim of this statement is to ensure that information is provided as to how governance within NICIE has been effective for the year to 31.3.2025 and identifies a range of significant governance issues that NICIE is facing during a period of significant change, uncertainty, and challenging financial circumstances.
NICIE will continue to ensure that it adheres to organisational needs and governance guidelines.

I can confirm that I will continue to review these issues and ensure that they are addressed. This governance statement was presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and formally approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Chair on 16th April 2025.

Signature of ARAC Chair

Sandra Patterson

Signature of Accounting Officer

Sean Pettis

Date of Signature 16th April 2025

Remuneration Policy and Staff report

The remuneration of all Council staff is determined by the NICVA National Joint Council for local authorities and other authorities of equivalent status. The National Joint Council's principal role is to reach agreement, based on shared values, on a national scheme of pay and conditions for local application throughout the UK.

The NICVA National Joint Council's guiding principles are to support and encourage:

- High quality services delivered by a well-trained, motivated workforce with security of employment. To this end employers are encouraged to provide training and development opportunities for employees**;**
- Equal opportunities in employment; equality as a core principle which underpins both service delivery and employment relations; and both the removal of all discrimination and the promotion of positive action;
- A flexible approach to providing services to the community, which meets the needs of employees as well as employers; and
- Stable industrial relations and negotiation and consultation between employers and recognised trade unions.

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Board and most senior management of the department.

Remuneration and pension entitlements (audited information)

	2024-2025					2023-2024				
	Salary £'000	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**	**Salary £**	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**
R Marshall *CEO (Resigned July 24)*	**25-30**	**100**	**-**	**4,000**	**30-35**	65-70	100	-	18,000	80-85
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	**45-50**	**100**	**-**	**9,000**	**55-60**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	**45-50**	**100**		**9,000**	**55-60**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer (Resigned*	**5-10**	**100**	**-**	**1,000**	**5-10**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55

April 2024)

S Pettis *CEO) Appointed August 2024*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**8,000**	**55-60**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer*	**45-50**	**100**	**-**	**9,000**	**60-65**	40-45	100	-	-	50-55
E Humme Senior Development Officer	**45-50**	**100**	**-**	**9,000**	**60-65**	40-45	100	-	10,000	

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension benefits

The value of pension benefits during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increase due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a track of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary and any allowances all of which are subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by NICIE and thus recorded in these financial statements.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and is treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

Bonuses

No bonuses were paid during the year to 31 March 2025 (2024: £nil).

Off payroll engagements

During the year, there were no off-payroll engagements (2024: none).

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Staff turnover

NICIE employee turnover rate is set out in the table below.

	April 2024 to March 2025		April 2023 to March 2024	
	Number of staff	% of headcount	Number of staff	% of headcount
Starters	4	30.8%	4	31.6
Leavers	4	30.8%	2	15.8

Pay Ratios

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid officer in NICIE in the financial year 2024-205 was £45,000 - £50,000 (2023-24, £65,000-£70,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the NICIE workforce is disclosed below.

2024-2025	**25th percentile**	**Median**	**75th percentile**
Total remuneration (£)	18,973	34,134	57,954
Pay ratio	1.3:1	1.08:1	1.04:1

2023-2024	**25th percentile**	**Median**	**75th percentile**
Total remuneration (£)	27,804	36,648	46,464
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £18,973,£34,134 and £57,954, respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £8,282 to £48,993 (2023-24, £25,119 to £67,105).

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Percentage Change in Remuneration

The percentage changes in respect of NICIE are shown in the following table.

Percentage change for:	**2024-25 v 2023-24**	**2023-24 v 2022-2023**
Average employee salary and allowances	7.14%	4.91%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	Nil	3.88%

No performance pay or bonuses were payable to the highest paid officer or employees in these years.

Pension entitlements

Officials	**Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31 March 2025 and related lump sum £'000**	**Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000**	**CETV at 31 March 2025 £'000**	**CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000**	**Real increase/ Decrease in CETV £'000**	**Employer contribution to partnership payment Nearest £100**
R Marshall *Chief Executive Officer(Retired July 24)*	11-15 No lump sum	0-2.5	199	180	14	-
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	11-15 No lump sum	0-2.5	197	169	21	-
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	16-20 Plus lump sum 10-15	0-2.5	339	305	25	-
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer (Retired April 2024)*	21-25 Plus lump sum 21-25	0-2.5	409	397	11	-
Sean Pettis *CEO* (Appointed	0-5 No lump sum	0-2.5	11	-	7	-

August 2024)

L Johnston *Senior Development Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	83	63	16	-
E Humme *Senior Development Officer*	0-5 No lump sum	0-2.5	60	40	16	-

Pension entitlements

NICIE is a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Pension scheme. The Scheme is a funded defined benefit scheme, with benefits earned up to 31 March 2015 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2015 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended) and "The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended).

The funded nature of the LDPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets.

Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31st March 2025 and the contributions to be paid until 31st March 2025 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Funds Rates and Adjustment Certificate. The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value ("CETV") is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued because of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-2004 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement, which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effects of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Staff cost (Audited)

	Permanently employed staff	**Temporary agency staff**	**Total 2025**	2024
			£	£
Wages and salaries	**566,359**	**-**	**566,359**	515,965
Social security costs	**52,072**	**-**	**52,072**	49,289
Other pension costs	**93,032**	**-**	**93,032**	93,701
	711,463		**711,463**	658,955
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			**(43,002)**	(40,507)
NIO Funded Staff			**(198,107)**	(157,105)
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation				
Current service cost			**97,000**	103,000
Past service cost/(gain)				
Contributions by the employer			**(93,000)**	(92,000)
Total Net costs			**474,354**	472,343

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the year was:	**13**	13

Some staff employed by the company in 2024 and 2025 had permanent fixed term contracts of employment. During the year, the charity incurred costs of £14,028 (2024: £0) relating to agency staff and secondees. The staff consists of 10 female and 3 male employees. The sickness absence rate for the year was 2025:146 days 4.6% (2024: 122 days 4.7%) The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure, and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

The Directors received **£0** for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2024: £0). **No** employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 for the current year due to start date August 2024 (2024: 1) and details are below.

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall (Retired July 2024)	**-**	67,815
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme. Roisin Marshall	**-**	12,765
	-	80,580

Compensation schemes – exit packages

The following section provides details of the exit packages paid by the company.

	Number of voluntary redundancies	**Total number of exit packages by cost band 2025**	**Total number of exit packages by cost band 2024**
< £10,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£10,000-£25,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total number of exit packages	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total resource cost	Nil	Nil	Nil

Eamon Quinn

Chair NICIE
Date 21/6/2025

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Regularity of expenditure

There were no losses or special payments made by the Council in the year. (2023/2024 – £nil)

Fees and Charges

There were no fees or charges made by the Council in the year. (2023/2024 - £nil)

Remote contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities requiring disclosure under Assembly reporting requirements. The Council had no significant remote contingent liabilities to report 2024-2025, (2023-2024 £nil). Note 17 provides further details regarding the contingent liabilities, which are included in the financial statements.

Sean Pettis
Chief Executive

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards. We have also audited the information in the Remuneration and staff report and the Assembly Accountability and audit report that is described in those reports as having been audited.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken during the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Directors has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
- In all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.
  The parts of the remuneration and staff report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with DoF directions made under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with DoF guidance.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law,) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. They are also responsible for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control, as the trustees determine is necessary, to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud, or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

The following are required to be considered:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and entity performance;
- results of our enquires of management, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- review of company policies and procedures relating to:
- identifying, evaluation and complying with laws and regulations and whether they are aware of instances of noncompliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have any knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

Because of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud is in relation to expenditure not being applied in line with intended purposes and the calculation and payment of salaries. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

Audit response to risks identified.

The current audit is conducted with professional scepticism using procedures that are in accordance with International Standards on Auditing.

In responding to the identified key audit matters above we obtained an understanding of the charity's objectives and funders requirements together with the salary calculation and processing process, we performed enquires of management and inspected relevant documents and calculations, verifying expenditures, completing a recalculation of salaries during the year, assessing the completeness and accuracy of disclosures within the financial statements and concurred the figures were materially accurate.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified include the following:

- reviewing the full financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerns of actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and significant component audit teams and remained alert to any indications of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities, which govern them. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sean G. Cavanagh
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of SCC Chartered Accountants Ltd

17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Incoming resources/income			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
- Voluntary income	3	**868,545**	892,295
Total incoming resources		**868,545**	892,295
Resources expended/expenditure			
Charitable activities			
- Development of Integrated Education and schools in Northern Ireland		**(939,166)**	(906,751)
Governance costs		**(13,380)**	(16,308)
Other resources expended			
- Other finance costs	6	**16,000**	4,000
Total resources expended		**(936,546)**	(919,059)
Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses	4	**(68,001)**	(26,764)
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension	12	**-**	7,000
Net movement in funds		**(68,001)**	(19,764)
Funds at 1 April		**141,534**	161,298
Funds at 31 March	14	**73,533**	141,534

All amounts above relate to the continuing restricted operations of the company.

There is no material difference between the net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses for the financial year stated above, and the historical cost equivalent.

The net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses is the net outgoing resources required by the Companies Act 2006 as opposed to that required by the Statement of Recommended Practice.

There are no changes in equity other than the results shown in the statement of financial position therefore a separate statement of changes in equity has not been presented.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

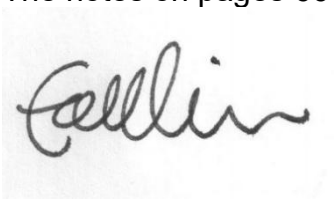
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Non-current assets			
Property, plant, and equipment	7	**9,218**	8,494
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	9	**48,748**	5,076
Cash and cash equivalents	10	**81,801**	178,879
		130,549	183,955
Total assets		**139,767**	192,449
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	**(66,234)**	(50,915)
Non-current assets less net current liabilities		**73,533**	141,534
Non-current liabilities			
Pension commitments as per Note 12	12	**-**	-
Total assets less liabilities		**73,533**	141,534
Reserves			
Restricted funds	14	**73,533**	141,534

The financial statements on pages 62 to 63 were approved by the Board of directors on 21 June 2025 and were signed on its behalf by: Mr Eamon Quinn, Chair of NICIE Board of Directors.

The notes on pages 66 to 81 form an integral part of these financial statements



Eamon Quinn
Chairperson

Sean Pettis
Chief Executive Officer

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Registered number: NI022427

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	**2025** **£**	2024 £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		**(92,623)**	57,527
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant, and equipment	7	**(4,455)**	(2,297)
Net cash inflow (outflow) from investing activities		**(4,455)**	(2,297)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		**(97,078)**	55,230
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**178,879**	123,649
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	10	**81,801**	178,879

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education

(Company limited by guarantee)

Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before recognised gains and losses	**(68,001)**	(19,764)
Depreciation on tangible fixed assets	**3,731**	3,642
Movement in trade and other receivables	**(43,672)**	55,154
Movement in trade and other payables	**15,319**	18,495
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	**-**	-
Other finance costs	**-**	-
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	**(92,623)**	57,527

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

1 Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, Accounting and Reporting by Charities; Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with International Financial Reporting standards and the principles of the 2021-22 *Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)* issued by the Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy, which is judged most appropriate to the particular circumstances of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education for giving a true and fair view, has been selected. The particular policies adopted by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the financial statements.

Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost.

New and amended standards adopted by the Company

The Company has adopted IFRS16 “Leases” from 1/4/2022, which has resulted in changes in the accounting policies and adjustments to the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Effective date and transitional provisions

"In accordance with the transitional provisions of IFRS16 as adapted and interpreted by the FReM, the Company has adopted the new guidance, applying a retrospective approach to recognise the cumulative effects of initially applying IFRS16 recognised at the date of initial application as an adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers’ equity."

Summary of the main changes introduced by the standard

The new standard sets out the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation, and disclosure of leases. All leases result in the lessee recognising the right to use an asset at the commencement date of the lease, and if lease payments are made over time recognising financing. Accordingly, IFRS16 eliminates the classification of leases as either operating leases or finance leases as required by IAS17 and, instead, introduces a single lessee accounting model. Lessees will be required to recognise: (a) assets and liabilities for all leases with a lease term of more than 12 months unless the underlying asset is of low value; and (b) depreciation of right- of-use assets separately from interest on lease liabilities in profit or loss. IFRS16 substantially carries forward the lessor accounting requirements from IAS17. Accordingly, a lessor continues to classify its leases as operating leases or finance leases and to account for those two types of leases differently. For sub leases, intermediate lessors should classify subleases based on the right-of-use as set from the headlease, rather than the underlying lease as set as it was under IAS17, thus there is increased likelihood that a sublease previously classified as operating lease will be classified as a finance lease under IFRS16.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

The effect from adoption of IFRS16 on the Company's financial statements

The company offices are currently James House under RPM on a rent-free licence agreement.

Going concern

The directors have received funding for the year ended March 2026, which has been confirmed from the Department of Education. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, which assumes that NICIE will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Property, plant, equipment, and depreciation

Property, plant, and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items. Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial year in which they are incurred.

For all assets depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less their estimated residual values, on a reducing balance basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets concerned, or over the life of project, whichever is earlier. The principal annual rates used are as follows:

Information technology : $33^{1}/_{3}\%$
Furniture and fittings : 20%

Trade and other receivables

Trade receivables are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business. If collection is expected in one year or less (or in the normal operating cycle of the business if longer), they are classified as current assets. If not, they are presented as non-current assets. Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Cash and cash equivalents

In the cash flow statement cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Trade payables are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade and other payables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Government grants

Grants that relate to specific revenue expenditure are credited to the statement of financial activities when received.

Taxation

The Company is registered as a charity for tax purposes and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of the company are exempt for value added tax purposes. The company therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

VAT

The company is not registered for VAT. All expenditure and capital purchase in the financial statements is stated inclusive of VAT.

Pension funding

Retirement benefits to employees of NICIE are provided by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee (“NILGOSC”) defined benefit scheme, which is externally funded and contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

In respect of this scheme, NICIE’s staff constitute only a small percentage of the overall membership. NICIE has no influence over the level of contributions.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Pension funding (continued)

In previous years NICIE's share of the NILGOSC scheme could not be identified and in keeping with such multi-employer schemes NICIE treated its pension cost as if it were a defined contribution (rather than a defined benefit) scheme. In late 2006, NILGOSC separated each of the employer scheme details and, as a result, NICIE has had to incorporate the year-end deficit on the scheme in its balance sheet and the movement on the scheme within the statement of financial activities.

The assets of the NILGOSC scheme are held separately from those of NICIE. Pension scheme assets are measured using market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability. The service cost and associated administration costs of NICIE's defined benefit pension scheme are charged to net outgoing resources before recognised gains. In addition, a retirement benefit interest charge on the net pension deficit is charged to the statement of financial activities as a finance cost. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised directly in statement of financial activities so that NICIE's balance sheet reflects the fair value of the scheme's surplus or deficit at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The significant accounting estimations and judgments of the Company relate to the pension assets, liabilities and associated pension surplus or deficit. The Company utilises the services of actuarists to help them value scheme assets and liabilities and provide the necessary disclosures of the Nilgosc pension scheme.

Incoming resources

Grants

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period, in which case they are deferred.

Other income

Other income, which excludes value added tax, is accounted for on the accrual's basis.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

Governance costs

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of its assets, which are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Bank interest

All interest is accounted for in the statement of financial activities on the accruals basis.

Operating leases

Accounting policies applied from 1 April 2025

Leases other than short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as right-of-use assets and corresponding liabilities at the date at which the leased assets are available for use by the Company.

Payments associated with all short-term leases and certain leases of all low-value assets are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure. The company applies the exemption for low-value assets on a lease-by-lease basis. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of less than 12 months or less. Low-value assets comprise computers, tablets, mobile phones and small items of office furniture.

Accounting policy applied until 31st March 2025

Leases in which a significant portion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases (net of any incentives received from the lessor) are charged to the net expenditure account on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Lease activities

The company as part of Reform of Public Property is under a rent-free licence agreement for five years. Additionally, it has a few low-value leases on items of office equipment.

Fund accounting

NICIE has one type of fund for which it is responsible. The definition of this fund is as follows:

Restricted funds

Restricted funds, subject to specific trusts, are those given to NICIE, which are to be expended for the specific objects specified by the donor.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

2 Statement of operating costs by operating segment

The trustees consider that NICIE acts as one operating segment and therefore no statement of operating costs by operating segment has been presented.

3 Voluntary income

	2025	2024
	£	£
Department of Education Northern Ireland	**653,212**	670,931
Northern Ireland Office	**170,000**	170,000
Integrated Education Fund	**-**	4,800
Donations	**2,331**	1,457
Recoveries in respect of outward secondments (Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)	**43,002**	45,067
	868,545	892,295

4 Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses

	2025	2024
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Staff costs (Note 5)	**715,463**	669,955
Depreciation of property, plant, and equipment (Note 7)	**3,731**	3,642
Fees payable to NICIE's auditors for the audit of the financial statements	**7,200**	7,200

5 Staff costs

	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**566,359**	515,965
Social security costs	**52,072**	49,289
Other pension costs	**93,032**	93,701
	711,463	658,955
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation		
Current service cost	**97,000**	103,000
Past service cost/(gain)	**-**	-
Contributions by the employer	**(93,000)**	(92,000)
	715,463	669,955

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

5 Staff costs (continued)

During the year, the charity incurred costs of £14,028 (2024: £330) relating to agency staff and secondees.

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year was:	**13**	13

The Directors received £0 for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2024: £0). No employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2024: one) and details are below.

	2025	2024
	£	£
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall (Retired July 2024)	**-**	67,185
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme.	**-**	12,765
	-	79,950

6 Other finance costs	**2025**	2024
	£	£
Interest income on pension scheme assets	**147,000**	130,000
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	**(131,000)**	(126,000)
	16,000	4,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

7 Property, plant, and equipment

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	59,680	26,761	86,441
Disposal	-	(575)	(575)
Additions	4,234	221	4,455
At 31 March 2025	**63,914**	**26,407**	**90,321**
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	51,290	26,657	77,947
Depreciation on Disposal	-	(575)	(575)
Charge for the year	3,700	31	3,731
At 31 March 2025	**54,990**	**26,113**	**81,103**
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2025	**8,924**	**294**	**9,218**
At 31 March 2024	8,390	104	8,494

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Disposal	-	(182)	(182)
Additions	2,142	155	2,297
At 31 March 2024	59,680	26,761	86,441
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Depreciation on Disposal	-	(182)	(182)
Charge for the year	3,591	51	3,642
At 31 March 2024	51,290	26,657	77,947
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2024	8,390	104	8,494
At 31 March 2023	9,839	-	9,839

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

8 Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education largely are met through, Grant-in-Aid provided by DE, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the NDPB's expected purchase and usage requirements and the NDPB is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity, or market risk.

9 Trade and other receivables

	2025	2024
	£	**£**
Trade receivables	**41,215**	1,276
Prepayments and accrued income	**7,533**	3,800
	48,748	5,076

The fair values of trade and other receivables are not materially different from the carrying values.

All of the charity's financial assets are classified as loans and receivables. The company has no assets that may be classified as held at fair value through profit and loss, derivatives used for hedging or available-for-sale

10 Cash and cash equivalents

	2025	2024
	£	**£**
Balance at 1 April	**178,879**	123,649
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	**(97,078)**	55,230
Balance at 31 March	**81,801**	178,879

The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial banks and cash in hand	**81,801**	178,879

11 Trade and other payables

	2025	2024
	£	**£**
Trade payables	58,837	39,219
Accruals and deferred income	7,397	11,696
	66,234	50,915

The fair value of trade and other payables are not materially different from their carrying value as the impact of discounting is not significant. There is no difference between the amounts shown above and the total contractual undiscounted cash flows of trade and other payables.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

12 Pension commitments

The net pension 'liability' shown below does not represent a shortfall, which requires short-term cash funding. The amount shown below is calculated to comply with the new Financial Reporting Standard, the specific requirements of which differ from the basis on which pension liabilities are actuarially calculated for the ongoing funding of the scheme. The Financial Reporting Standard requires:

(i) actuarial deficiencies to be recognised immediately as a "liability" in the financial statements rather than being spread forward over employees' remaining service lives;

(ii) the actuary, in valuing the scheme's liabilities, is required to use a bond yield as the discount rate for valuing future liabilities, rather than a rate that reflects the expected return on the scheme's particular asset portfolio, with the result of an apparent increase in the present value of future longer-term liabilities.

IAS 19 figures in relation to employees and ex-employees who are members of the NILGOSC pension scheme.

	2025	2024
Rate of increase in salaries	**4.0%**	4.1%
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	**2.5%**	2.6%
Discount rate	**5.8%**	4.8%
Inflation assumption	**2.5%**	2.6%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	**2.5%**	2.6%

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	2025 Years	2024 Years
Average expected future life at age 65 for:		
Male currently aged 65	**21.6**	21.7
Female currently aged 65	**24.5**	24.6
Male currently aged 45	**22.2**	22.7
Female currently aged 45	**25.2**	25.6

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

12 Pension commitments (continued)

The market value of assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return were:

Asset Allocation	Quoted %	Unquoted %	Total %	Value at 31 Mar 2025 £	Value at 31 Mar 2024 £
Equities	41.3%	0.0%	41.3%	1,320,774	1,214,820
Property	0.0%	9.5%	9.5%	303,810	284,580
Government Bonds	15.7%	0.0%	15.7%	502,086	459,000
Corporate Bonds	3.9%	0.0%	3.9%	124,722	140,760
Multi Asset Credit	13.0%	0.0%	13.0%	415,740	397,800
Cash	10.7%	0.0%	10.7%	342,186	379,440
Other	0.1%	5.8%	5.9%	188,682	183,600
Total market value of assets	**84.7%**	**15.3%**	**100%**	**3,198,000**	**3,060,000**
Present value of scheme liabilities				**2,443,000**	**2,773,000**
Unrecognised Surplus/Deficit in scheme				**(755,000)**	**(287,000)**
Net asset (liability) recognised on Statement of Financial Position				**-**	-

Reconciliation of present value of scheme liabilities

	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 April	**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**
Current service cost	**97,000**	**103,000**
Past service cost	**-**	**-**
Member contributions	**33,000**	**33,000**
Interest cost	**131,000**	**126,000**
Re-measurement on scheme liabilities	**(487,000)**	**(106,000)**
Benefits paid	**(104,000)**	**(98,000)**
At 31 March	**2,443,000**	**2,773,000**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Pension commitments (continued)

Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1 April	**3,060,000**	2,746,000
Expected return	**147,000**	130,000
Re-measurement on scheme assets	**(31,000)**	157,000
Employer contributions	**93,000**	92,000
Member contributions	**33,000**	33,000
Benefits paid	**(104,000)**	(98,000)
At 31 March	**3,198,000**	3,060,000

Scheme assets do not include any of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education's own financial instruments, or any property occupied by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the balance sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long-term real rates of return experienced in the respective markets.

Analysis of amount charged to statement of financial activities:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Current service cost	**97,000**	103,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Expected return	**(147,000)**	(130,000)
Interest cost	**131,000**	126,000
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**(755,000)**	(8,000)
Adjustment in respect of paragraph 64	**755,000**	287,000
Total operating charge/(credit)	**81,000**	378,000

The total service cost of £97,000 (2024: £103,000) is included within staff costs. The total contributions expected to be made by the scheme by NICIE in the year to 31st March 2025 are £126,000 (2024: £125,000)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Pension commitments (continued)

Sensitivity analysis

IAS19R requires the disclosure of the sensitivity of the results to the methods and assumptions used.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below.

Changes in assumptions at year ended 31 March 2025	Approximate % increase to employer liability	Approximate monetary amount (£'000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	1.5%	72
1 year decrease in member life expectancy	2.3%	71
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0.1%	7
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	1.4%	72

Employer Contribution Rates

The liabilities show the underlying commitment that NICIE has in the long term to pay retirement benefits. The total pension liability is £2,443,000 (2024 - £2,773,000) and results in an unrecognised asset of £755,000 (2024: £287,000). As per the scheme actuary the net asset/(liability) to be recorded on the Statement of Financial Position is £Nil (2024 £Nil).

For 2024/25, employers participating in the scheme contributed at the rate of 19% (2024 –19%).

Scheme Gains and Losses

Actuarial gains and losses represent the extent to which actual outcomes have differed from the assumptions, which were used in calculating IAS 19 figures.

For assets, the gain/loss is normally the difference between the actual and expected return on assets, and for liabilities, the gain/loss normally arises from the change in financial assumptions. These actuarial gains/losses are shown in the table below as experience gains and losses.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

Pension commitments (continued)

Amounts for current and previous four years:

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Scheme liabilities	**2,443,000**	2,773,000	2,715,000	3,405,000	3,394,000
Scheme assets	**3,198,000**	3,060,000	2,746,000	2,750,000	2,502,000
Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme	**755,000**	287,000	31,000	(655,000)	(892,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets					
Amount (£)	**(31,000)**	157,000	(95,000)	137,000	398,000
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities					
Amount (£)	**487,000**	106,000	886,000	251,000	(488,000)

13 Members liability

The liability of each member is limited to £10.

14 Reserves – restricted funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1 April	**141,534**	161,298
Net outgoing (losses)/resources before recognised losses	**(68,001)**	(19,764)
Actuarial re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**-**	-
At 31 March	**73,533**	141,534

At the year end there is no asset/liability to be recognised in respect of the NILGOSC pension fund.

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted fund	**2025 Total funds**	**2024 Total funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Fixed Assets	9,218	9,218	8,494
Current Assets	130,549	130,549	183,955
Current liabilities	(66,234)	(66,234)	(50,915)
Pension commitments	-	-	-
Net funds	73,533	73,533	141,534

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

16 Leases

The Company leases various tangible assets under non-cancellable operating lease arrangements.

As described in the notes the operating leases held include either short term or low value assets and as such no right of use asset nor corresponding lease liability has been recognised.

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure account:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Expenses relating to short term leases	**-**	-
Expenses relating to low-value assets	**-**	1,161
Total expenses related to leases	**-**	1,161

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of cash flows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cash outflow for leases (IFRS16) – operating activity	**-**	1,161
Total cash outflows	**-**	1,161

17 Contingent liabilities

The company has a contingent liability to repay revenue grants received if certain conditions are not fulfilled.

18 Capital commitments

At 31 March 2025, the company has **no** capital commitments (2024 - Nil).

19 Losses and special payments

At 31 March 2025, the company had **no** losses and special payments (2024: none).

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 (continued)

20 Related party transactions

NICIE is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by DE. DE is regarded as a related party. During the year, NICIE has had various transactions with the DE and with other entities for which DE is regarded as the parent Department.

None of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with NICIE during the year (2024: none). As per the register of interests maintained by NICIE, there were no conflicts of interest during the year (2024: none).

21 Ultimate controlling party

There is no ultimate controlling party.

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Accounts

Registered number: NI022427
Charity registered number: 100310

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(a company limited by guarantee)

Directors' report and financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
Under the requirements of the Department of Education/NICIE Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

On
22 June 2024

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Directors' Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Contents **Pages**

Reference and administrative details	2 - 3
Directors' report	4 - 20
Annual report	21
Chief Executive Officer's report	22 - 24
Annual Governance Statement	25 - 44
Remuneration and Staff report	45 - 51
Assembly Accountability and Audit Report	52
Independent auditors' report	53 - 57
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	58
Statement of financial position	59
Statement of cash flows	60
Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow/ (outflow) from Continuing operating activities	61
Notes to the financial statements	62 - 76

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Reference and administrative details

Directors/Trustees

Adele Kerr
Anne Murray
Ashleigh Moran
Barry Corrigan (Appointed November 2023, Resigned December 2023)
Bill Fletcher (Resigned June 2024)
Bill Miscampbell
Bob Hanna (Resigned February 2024)
Cathal Mullaghan
Colin Millar
Dr Anne Marie Telford (Resigned February 2024)
Duncan Morrow
Eamon Quinn (Vice Chair)
Gavin Gray
Helen Smyth (Secretary)
John Scott
Maeve Marnell (Chair)
Nigel Arnold (Appointed March 2024)
Patricia Douglas (Resigned May 2024)
Sandra Patterson
Shane Greer
Pamela Algie (Appointed June 2024)

Senior management members

Roisin Marshall (Chief Executive Officer)
Maureen Johnston (Finance Officer)
Cliodhna Scott Wills (Senior Development Officer)
Lorna McAlpine (Senior Development Officer)
Lynn Johnston (Senior Development Officer) Appointed July 2023
Emma Hume (Senior Development Officer) Appointed September 2023

Reference and administrative details (continued)

Registered and Principal office

James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Belfast BT7 2JB

Solicitors

Cleaver Fulton Rankin
50 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7FW

Bankers

First Trust Bank
33 – 35 University Road
Belfast
BT7 1ND

Independent auditors

SCC Chartered Accountants
17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

You may reuse this information (including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, please visit http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gis.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This Document is also available on our website at http://www.nicie.org.uk

Any Enquiries regarding this document should be sent to NICIE, James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, BT7 2JB.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

The directors, who are also trustees, present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, *Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice,* affordable to charities preparing their accounts. This is in accordance with the International Financial Reports standards and in accordance with the requirements and guidelines set out in the Government's Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and other guidance issued by the Department of Finance (DoF) in force for the financial year for which the financial statements are being presented.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standard as adopted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Reference and administrative details

Details of the registered office, directors, independent advisers, and other relevant information are given on page 2 and 3.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education ("NICIE") was incorporated in 1989 as a company limited by guarantee and is exempt from tax under Section 505(1) (c) of the Income and Corporation Act 1988 as a body established for charitable purposes only. NICIE was designated as a Non-Departmental Public Body ("NDPB") in February 2012. It is sponsored by the Department of Education ("DE"). The company's principal activity as defined in the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 is "to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated Education and schools for the public benefit".

Directors

All directors are members of NICIE. All directors are guarantors of the company with a maximum liability of £10.

Appointment of directors

NICIE directors are elected/appointed from six areas representative of all stakeholders. These comprise, involved in the provision of teaching, Principals, Schools, Trusts, Early Years and DE. Directors can serve two periods of between 2-4 years' subject to the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Director induction and training

The Company Secretary ensures that appropriate induction and training is given to all NICIE Board of Director ("BoD") members. Each new director is provided with an information pack about NICIE and their responsibilities and is given an opportunity to meet all staff. Details of the BoD structure is illustrated on page 31 of the NICIE Governance statement.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Organisation

The Board of Directors ("BoD") in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of NICIE and the Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) carries on the governance, management and conduct of the business and affairs of NICIE. The Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") is Roisin Marshall.

Funding

NICIE works in close collaboration with its principal funder DE. It is also supported by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and The Northern Ireland Office to promote the work of the organisation.

Risk management and internal control

The directors are responsible for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by NICIE.
The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures and a system of delegation and accountability.

It includes:

- A comprehensive budgeting system, with a strategic plan and an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the directors;
- Regular reviews by the directors of monthly and annual financial reports, which indicate financial performance against approved budget and forecast; and
- Monitoring progress against the strategic plan.

As part of the monitoring process, the directors have implemented a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review of the risks which NICIE may face, and actions taken to mitigate identified risks;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the organisation should any of those risks materialise.

Significant risks identified are in relation to the following areas:

- NICIE fails to deliver a balanced Resource and Capital Budget as a result of ineffective management of resources to ensure the delivery of the Department of Education's Strategic Priorities and NICIE's statutory duties and priorities within budget.
- Weakness and Ineffective governance & accountability arrangements.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

- Failure to exercise proper stewardship, and maximise the resources allocated to NICIE in line with Financial Memorandum and grant conditions where applicable, within a proper financial control framework under Non-Departmental Public Body, (NDPB) status.

- Failure to support, promote and grow Integrated Education due to inability to assess parental demand for integrated education.

A key element in the management of financial risk is the setting up of a reserves policy and its regular review by directors. Particular attention is also focused on non-financial risks arising from fires and the health and safety of all staff and visitors.

Objectives and activities of NICIE

During the year, NICIE continued to operate in the following Programme areas:

1. Development and support services, for which core funding was made available through DE. The key objectives for this Programme underpinned DE's Strategic Priorities and policies and included promoting the growth of Integrated provision through supporting parents' groups, supporting schools in the process of 'Transformation,' or interested in 'Transforming' and supporting existing Integrated schools regarding consolidation and expansion and in embedding 'Integration in practice.' NICIE worked with Integrated schools and other stakeholders in the process of Area planning. NICIE raised the level of debate about the role of Integrated Education by informing and influencing public opinion. NICIE promoted the characteristics of Integration in practice both in Integrated schools and across other schools. NICIE continues to strive to improve its internal capacity to be able to fulfil its Business Plan as agreed with DE.

2. The initiation and development of related work funded through the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA).

3. The implementation of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Grant to foster increased awareness and support for integrated education in Northern Ireland and encourage wider societal reconciliation between communities in the educational system

Achievements and performance

The statement of financial activities for NICIE.

All programmes are drawn up in accordance with best practice and link to the Strategic Aims of NICIE and are aligned to the business plan of DE. All programmes have detailed operational plans to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic and Business Plans and are monitored on a regular basis by the Board, Senior Management Team, and the external funding bodies.

Details of NICIE's activities during the year can be accessed online at www.nicie.org or by contacting NICIE at the registered address.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Financial Review

The full financial results of NICIE are set out in detail in the financial statements on pages 57 to 58. The net outgoing resources for the year before recognised gains and losses was £26,764 (2023: £5,770)

Performance

NICIE bases its operations strategically on a 3-year strategic plan and on an annual basis on a Business Plan, which is reported on a quarterly basis to the Board of Directors and DE. The Business Plan is set within the context of DE's business plan, and additionally, it includes related projects, which are funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and Northern Ireland office (NIO). NICIE reports on its operations in its Annual Report. NICIE has delivered on all its Business Plan commitments in this current year.

Reserves

NICIE receives grants from various sources that are spent on the activities as detailed in the respective Letters of Offer. Any unspent monies may be subject to claw-back by the grant provider.

The net liabilities at the year-end including the pension surplus is £141,534 (2023: £161,298). This includes a net pension liability of nil. (2023: £NIL). The company's funding for the year ended March 2024 has been confirmed from the DE. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. For further details of the pension commitment liability, please refer to note 12 of the financial statements (page 69) and the Remuneration report on pages 44-50.

Forward funding

NICIE has secured sufficient income from a variety of sources for the year 2024 - 2025 to offer assurance to the directors and stakeholders of its ability to operate for the next financial year. Major funding has been guaranteed from DE, with other project funds being made available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a grant from the Northern Ireland Office through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Strategic priorities, objectives, and activity

Our Vision

A society where children are educated together; confident to express their own identity and culture; respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

Our Mission

To promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education

Strategic Priorities 2022-2025

1. **Promote Integrated Education**

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

2. **Grow Integrated Education**

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

3. **Support Integrated Education**

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

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Introduction

This year has been an exceptional year for the Integrated Education movement in Northern Ireland: the environment in which NICIE is operating has changed. The implications of Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 are beginning to be analysed, interpreted, and felt by stakeholders across the complex educational landscape of Northern Ireland and this is bringing unprecedented opportunities for the growth of Integrated Education. Whilst we are delighted with these seismic shifts, it brings significant challenges for our small staff team.

In March 2024, we are a team of fourteen people (nine funded with Department of Education (DE) resource, four with resource from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and one funded with resource from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA):

NICIE Staff Team: March 2024
Chief Executive Officer: Roisin Marshall
Finance Officer: Maureen Johnston
Senior Development Officers: Lorna McAlpine, Cliodhna Scott-Wills, Lynn Johnston, Emma Hume
Development Officers: Laura Largey, Tiarnán McMeekin, Jessica Clarke, Mary Potter, Fiona Darrah.
Office Manager: Mark Roberts
Executive Assistant: Carol Black
Administration Officer: Michael Nicholl

In this last year, two part-time staff members left to spend more time with family and pursue other interests. Thank you, Alastair Rowan and Florence McCaw for the valued contributions you made in your five years of service. The additional NIO funding enabled us to recruit four new Development Officers and restructure our Senior Management Team in relation to strategic communications and support for transforming schools.

This report is structured into two sections, which work symbiotically to support, grow and promote Integrated Education. Firstly, it will summarise the operational school-focussed delivery activity of the NICIE Development team in the last year and secondly it will reflect on the collaborative, strategic and policy engagement work of the organisation. It will conclude by highlighting the key successes and reflecting on the challenges of the past year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Section 1
Operational activity to support, grow and promote Integrated Education

This section outlines the core operational activity of the NICIE Development Team. These activities work symbiotically to promote, grow and support Integrated Education. The impact of the global pandemic continues to alter how we deliver our services. Embracing a hybrid model has enabled more engagements with more people and more varied audiences in both virtual and in person spaces. The hybrid option, combined with the impact of the increasing public discussions in multiple arenas about the importance of educating children together, has had a profound impact on the demand for our expertise, knowledge, and services. In relation to our school-facing services, we continue to experience an increase in demand for all our services but this year the demand has been felt acutely from two sources: schools seeking to explore Transformation and existing Integrated schools seeking to develop their Integrated ethos.

1.1 Growing and promoting Integrated Education

The number of young people educated in Integrated schools this academic year (23/24) is 27,675, which represents an additional 492 since last year (22/23).

In the last 2.5 years, there have been seven new Integrated schools because of Transformation to Integrated status, with one of these taking place in the period of this report: Sion Mills Integrated Primary School in September 2023. Three schools' proposals were not approved (St. Anne's Primary School (PS), Donaghadee, Gillygooley PS, Omagh and Straid PS, Ballyclare).

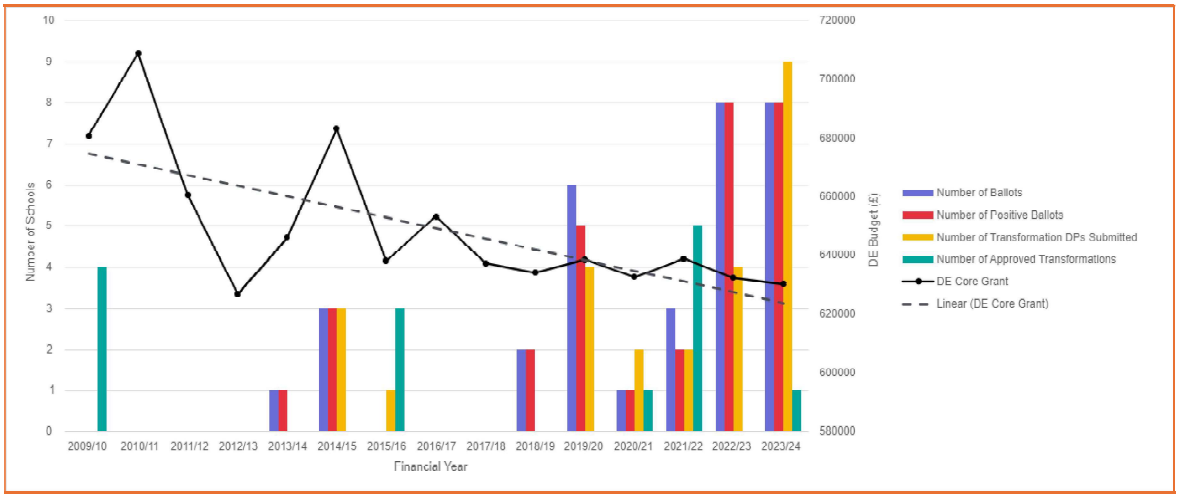
In the last 12 months, eight schools have completed ballots of their parental body, asking them whether they want their school to submit a proposal to become an Integrated school: Rathmore Primary School, Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College, Downshire Nursery School (NS), Ballyhenry PS, Culmore PS, Downshire PS and NU, Duneane PS and Killowen PS (Coleraine). We enjoy effective collaborative relationships with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and Education Authority (EA) partners in our work to support schools seeking to explore and/or start the Transformation journey.

We have supported nine schools (including three of those named above) to write and submit Development Proposals to Transform to Integrated status. In this year, the EA's Area Planning Team have provided draft Cases for Change for Governors of sustainable schools' that are seeking to Transform. Our team's resources would not have been sufficient to deliver these submissions without this writing and data provision support, alongside that of the of the EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) and the IEF. The EA then manages a 4-week pre-publication of the proposal, prior to a full 2-month public consultation by the DE, before the proposal makes its way to the Ministerial desk for decision-making.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

This collaborative activity and the additional funding sources secured have enabled us to cope with the rising demand to support schools seeking to Transform. As Fig 1 below shows, our core grant from DE is declining.

Fig 1 Graph showing data relating to Transformation of schools and DE core grant to NICIE since 2009



The sustainability of Integrated schools is a focus in all our activity. There are 15 schools that have passed a resolution to ballot and are yet to have a Ministerial decision, eleven of these are sustainable schools, in relation to enrolment numbers.

Alongside growth of Integrated Education because of school Transformations, this year has seen the approval of two new school projects: Approval for the creation of a new Post-Primary Grant Maintained Integrated School in the mid-Down area and for a new Post-Primary Controlled Integrated School in the Causeway area. Both projects incorporate an existing Integrated school (Blackwater Integrated College (IC) and North Coast IC) and are intended to create two new sustainable Integrated Colleges.

Three schools received approval to establish Nursery school places, which is an important aspect of Primary school sustainability: Rowandale Integrated Primary School (IPS), Drumlins IPS and Enniskillen IPS. Strangford IC's proposal to academically select 35% of pupils was approved. Including the approval of Sion Mills IPS's Transformation (mentioned above), this represents seven growth projects for Integrated Education.

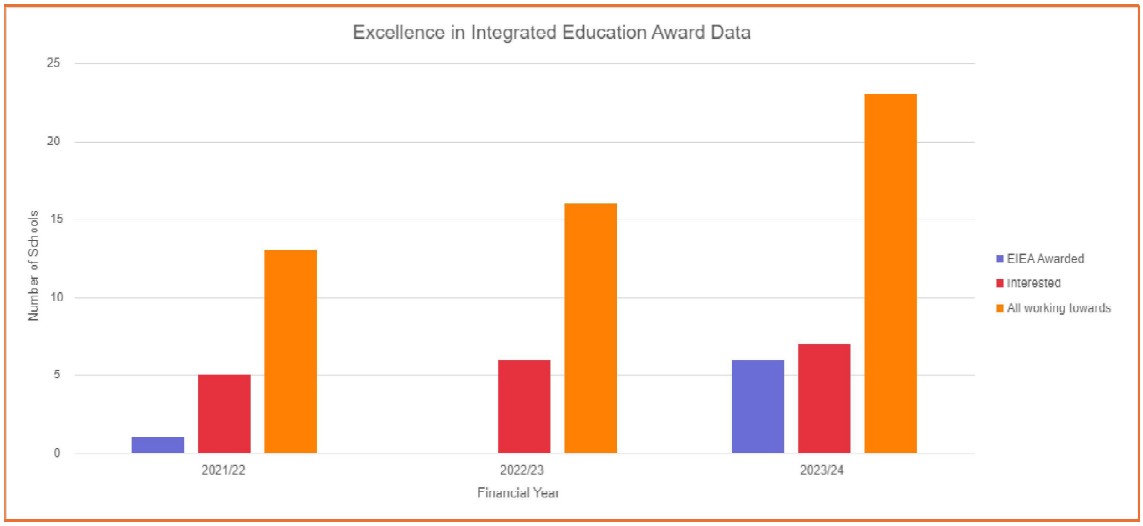
In our work to support sustainability of existing Integrated schools, NICIE supported Bridge IPS to submit a development proposal in the last year and EA (as the schools' Managing Authority) submitted a proposal for Cliftonville IPS, both in relation to establishment of a Nursery Unit. Including the nine Transformation proposals mentioned above, this makes eleven proposals submitted to EA to commence the pre-publication process in this financial year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

1.2 Supporting and promoting development of the Integrated Ethos

In 2023-24, three schools achieved renewal of their **Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA)**, including the first College to do so (Portadown IPS, Fort Hill IPS, New-Bridge IC), and three schools gained the Award for the first time (Carnlough IPS, Mill Strand IPS and Loughview IPS). The schools work through a self-evaluation and development process, based on the EIEA audit tool. Achievement of the EIEA is through external assessment, based on an evidence portfolio and two visits by the assessors. Each school receives an EIEA assessment report, including recommendations for further development of their Integrated ethos/practice.

Fig 2: Interest from existing Integrated schools in NICIE's Excellence in Integrated Education Award.



Of the 23 schools currently in their EIEA process, 15 are working towards the Award for the first time and 8 are working towards renewal (2 schools for the second time). Since the EIEA was established, 22 schools have achieved the Award at least once. Fig 2 below shows the increasing interest in the Award. We think that this is another impact of the 2022 Act, with existing Integrated schools seeking to reflect deeply on how their ethos contributes to the Act's description of the purpose and definition of Integrated Education.

In the last year, we have facilitated at least 81 sessions, with over 1900 participants, promoting and developing awareness of Integrated Education and the Integrated ethos.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Fig 3: Delivery of NICIE sessions related to Integrated Ethos development

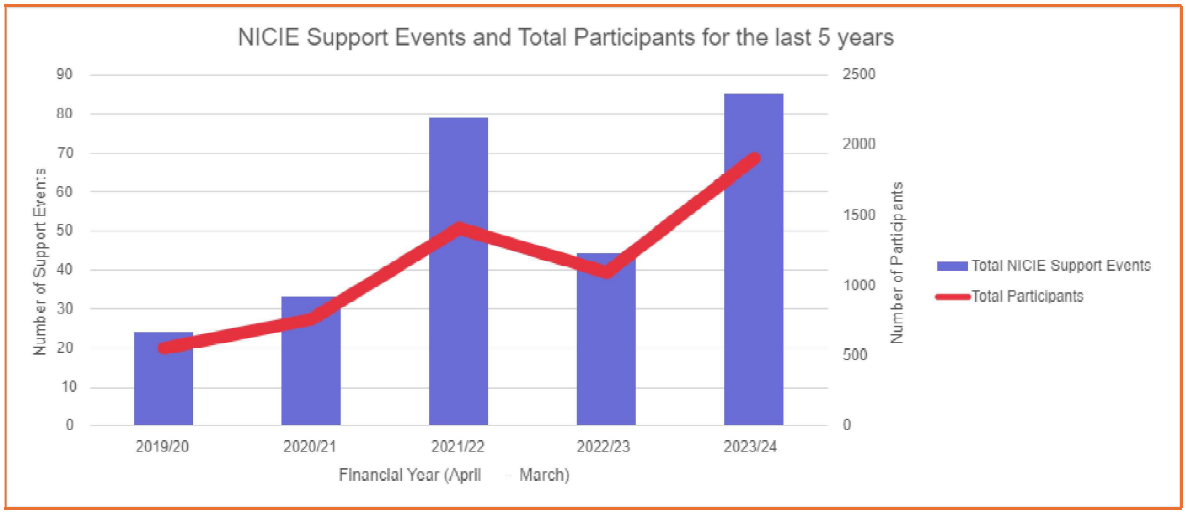


Fig 3 above shows the increasing demand for sessions focussed on the Integrated ethos. These sessions include:

- information and/or ethos development sessions to stakeholders in schools (parents, Governors and school staff at all levels) exploring and/or on the legal journey of school Transformation to Integrated status
- exploration of ethos and/or the EIEA and/or Anti-Bias in Education
- sessions to other audiences, international and local relating to Integrated Education, the Integrated ethos, Anti-Bias in Education and recent legislative developments

Following the DE approval for the establishment of a new Controlled Integrated College in the Causeway area, NICIE has worked in collaboration with the EA and the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC) in the setting up of a joint **Ethos Support Group** to work with the interim Board of Governors and the Principals of the existing schools (Coleraine College, Dunluce High School and North Coast Integrated College) to support the development of the Integrated ethos in the new school.

Framework for Integrated Education:

NICIE has continued to work with EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) to develop a Framework for Integrated Education. This is a self-evaluation tool which will support schools on their Integration journey whether a new/Transforming Integrated school or a long-established Integrated school. This then connects to the EIEA through which schools can focus their ongoing self-evaluation and development and achieve the externally assessed recognition of excellence.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

1.3 Communities for learning and sharing within Integrated Education

In the past year, we have facilitated five meetings of the NICIE Teachers' Committee, engaging 22 Integrated schools in the process. The Teachers' Committee lead on Integrated Education Month each year during March and in March 2024, the theme was 'Bias Busting'. Most Integrated schools engage in this annual campaign to celebrate and promote Integrated Education.

The Association of Principals in Integrated Schools (APTIS) has continued to be active this year with our support, hosting two conferences and two meetings, in which senior leaders from most Integrated schools participated.

The Vice-Principals' Forum, the Early Years' Forum, the Integrated Schools Finance Association (ISFA), and the GMI consultative forum have also met this year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Section 2

Strategic Collaboration and Policy Activity to support, grow and promote Integrated Education

Our core collaborative funding partner is the DE, enabling us to employ four of the nine staff in our Development Team and the wrap-around supports of senior and administrative staff and office services. We regularly meet with our sponsor colleagues, the **Irish Medium and Integrated Education branch within DE** and we have complied with all financial and governance requirements in relation to our status as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), a Limited Company and a Charity. Appropriate Financial and Management Reports were produced for senior management team, Finance and General Purposes Staffing Committee (FGPSC) and our Board of Directors throughout the year. An effective internal and external audit programme was delivered. Our full Board of Directors met on four occasions, with an additional eleven committee meetings.

We also work collaboratively with the **Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) Reconciliation Fund**, delivering on key performance indicators and targets agreed with each of these bodies. Our DFA project is in partnership with the IEF, enabling us to employ a member of our Development Team. Our NIO project also runs in tandem with an IEF project and this has enabled us to employ the other four members of our Development Team. Without this collaboration, we would not have been able to provide the necessary services to support the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Our NIO and DFA projects are completing in March 2025. Nineteen schools have moved to hold a parental ballot in the last three years, in comparison to ten in the previous ten years and new schools are coming forward to explore Transformation every month. The existing nine members of our Development Team are stretched to their limits meeting the current demand for our services, meaning that seeking additional resource is a priority.

As an NDPB and a sectoral support body, we represent Integrated Education at a wide range of forums, one of which is **Area Planning** meetings, facilitated by the Education Authority (EA) on behalf DE. Area Planning governance structures comprise a strategic Area Planning Steering Group (APSG), an operational Area Planning Working Group (APWG) and three Area Planning Local Groups (APLGs). NICIE has been present at all meetings throughout the year. In addition, Officers attended meetings relating to Specialist Provision in mainstream Schools, as this area of educational planning works to effectively respond to increasing demand. Through these attendances, we have supported the Area Planning process and worked collaboratively with partners to create a draft Operational Plan for the period 2024 to 2027. The Independent Review of Education, published in December 2023, points in the direction of enabling more children to be educated together and has suggested some methods by which this might be progressed. We look forward to working through these challenges with our Area Planning partners in the years ahead.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

The Department of Education launched A Strategy for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland and an associated Action Plan on 26th April 2023. **The Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022** requires DE to report to the NI Assembly annually on the progress of the Strategy and Action Plan. The DE has created and facilitated an Integrated Education Act Implementation Steering Group and an Integrated Education

Act Working group and NICIE has invested considerable resource in attending and engaging with these meetings and associated processes. The Act and the Action Plan places emphasis on NICIE's role as a consultee and this has required us to respond to increasing requests from DE and EA in relation to a variety of workstreams, including the review of the DE guidance to schools in relation to the Transformation process, 'Integration Works'.

NICIE has continued, when possible, to contribute to the **development of the educational system**, and/or represent the interests of Integrated schools and/or Integrated Education in a range of other forums, including: The Education Sector Managing Attendance Forum, Teachers' Pension Scheme Advisory Board, Admissions and Expulsion Appeals Panels, EA-led Community in Schools working group, Local Management of Schools (LMS), Pre School-Education Group (PEG), EA Cross Directorate Group for Integrated Education, Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD), End to End review of school improvement, End to end review of SEN, Sectoral CEO Forum. We actively participate on behalf of Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) Schools in Management Side of the Teachers Negotiating Council, Oversight Group, Schools Leaders Workload, Pensions and Managing Attendance Groups and other ad hoc workstreams as required. We have continued to take legal advice in relation to revision of GMI governance structures and a range of other issues associated with the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022.

We are collaborating as a community partner with Queen's University School of Psychology and have successfully obtained two funded PhD studentships planned to commence in September 2024. NICIE sits on four research steering groups in Partnership with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) exploring issues about religious balance, barriers to school Transformation to Integrated status, social attitudes in relation to pupils in schools and RE and the Integrated Ethos. The latter is a jointly funded project with IEF and the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS), which has appointed a researcher to produce guidance for Integrated primary schools about the teaching of Religious Education and related practice in the Integrated Education Primary school setting. We continue to be a partner in a project funded by the Standing Conference in Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS). This research is examining how prepared Teacher and Student teachers are to teach controversial issues.
We submitted responses during the public consultation period for seven potential new schools seeking to Transform to Integrated status and for two existing Integrated schools seeking to establish Nursery provision.

In January 2024, we submitted a written response to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Inquiry into Integrated Education and our CEO provided oral evidence to the Committee on 28th February.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Summary and Conclusion

This has been an exceptional year for NICIE and for the Integrated Education movement. This report has included the key achievements and outlined our current position. Alongside other public services in Northern Ireland, education, and Integrated Education, is experiencing the impact of chronic under-funding.

Whilst we were delighted to celebrate Roe Valley IPS's new school building this year, we were equally disappointed at the announcement in February 2024 that Fresh Start funding that was allocated for shared and Integrated school building projects is no longer available. We were also concerned with the lack of resource commitment in the DE's Integrated Education Strategy and associated Action Plan and the decreasing resource allocation for NICIE. When one considers the inflationary impacts, our core grant from DE has decreased by almost 50% since 2014/15[1]

We recognise that this is in the nature of public sector landscape in 2024 and we will continue to deliver services to the best of our ability with a passionate, talented and deeply committed staff team. We value our staff team and this year our team have invested time in a range of professional, personal and wellbeing development opportunities. Our team has invested in the deepening of our collaborative activity in the last few years and our productivity, reported above, is one indicator of our success in this regard.

[1] Using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation data from the Office for National Statistics

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Fixed assets

Details of the movement of fixed assets are set out in note 7 to the financial statements.

Donations

NICIE made no political donations during the year (2023: £nil)

Tax status

On 2 March 1989, NICIE was granted charitable status and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of NICIE are exempt for value added tax purposes. NICIE therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

Charitable status and public benefit

The company is a registered charity with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland under reference 100310. The directors have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

Disabled employees

NICIE gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment from disabled persons, having regard to their aptitude and abilities as well as Health and Safety factors.

Equality of Opportunity

NICIE follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service Policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement based on ability, qualification, and aptitude for work.

Employee involvement

It is the policy of NICIE to promote the understanding and involvement of all its employees in its aims and performance and it is committed to the continuing development of effective employee communication and consultation.

Sickness Absence

The sickness absence rate for the year was 146 days 4.6% (2023: 24.5 days .89%). The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Prompt Payment

NICIE is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with NICIE Financial Memorandum, the Confederation of British Industry's Better Practice Prompt Payers Code.

Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. In 2023/2024 NICIE paid 100% (2022/203: 100%) of its creditors within 30 days and no commission debt interest was paid or was due in respect of transactions in 2023/2024.

Statement of accounting officer and directors' responsibilities

The directors (who are also trustees of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education) are responsible for preparing the Directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law and Article 8(6) of the Financial Provisions (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 require the Chief Executive and directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the situation and of the surplus or deficit of NICIE for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Chief Executive and directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that NICIE will continue in business.

The Chief Executive (CEO) and directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of NICIE and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of NICIE and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The CEO is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of NICIE's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In addition, in appointing the Chief Executive of the NICIE as Accounting Officer for NICIE, the Department of Education has placed on the Chief Executive responsibilities including the regularity and propriety of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records. These are set out in the

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

"Accounting Officers" Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) issued by the Department of Finance. The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced, and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that they are fair, balanced, and understandable.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Accounting Officer and each of the Directors in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which NICIE's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that NICIE's auditors are aware of that information.

Small companies' exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small company's exemptions provided by the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013.

Independent auditors

The auditors, SCC Chartered Accountants, have been appointed as Independent Auditors through a tender process. A resolution concerning their reappointment for next year will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Board

Maeve Marnell
Chair **Date 22/06/2024**

Annual Report from the Chairperson for the year ended 31 March 2024

As the financial year draws to a close, I am pleased that we finally have an Assembly up and running and hopeful that this will have a positive impact on our budget for the coming year.
In 2023 our amazing staff rose above the challenges presented by our reduced budget and continued to work passionately and enthusiastically to meet our objectives of promoting, growing and supporting Integrated Education. Working with the principals, teachers, school staff, pupils and parents they demonstrated daily the positive societal impact that educating our children together can have.

In addition to our staff, I continue to be humbled by the huge sacrifice that our talented Board of Directors make to ensure good governance of the organisation and once again, with the expert support of our Finance Officer, Maureen Johnston, they have ensured that our budget has been managed efficiently and effectively.

I was pleased to continue work with the Department of Education on the Implementation of the Integrated Education Act. Working together with our partners in the IEF, AlumNI, APTIS as well as the Education Authority, CSSC and other sectoral support bodies, I feel confident that a cohesive strategy will be developed and we will continue to support the department to fulfil its duty to assess and aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education.

This year I am sad to say goodbye to our Senior Development Officer, Lorna McAlpine. Lorna has worked with NICIE for 27 years and the determination and tenacity she has demonstrated in the face of constant challenges and obstacles has been inspirational. She has had an enormous role in ensuring the development and growth of Integrated Education and we are so grateful for her immeasurable contribution.

It is also with great sadness that I say goodbye to our CEO, Roisin Marshall OBE. Roisin has led the organisation for 8.5 years with vision, positivity and unwavering enthusiasm. She has had a huge impact on the growth of Integrated Education through her unique ability to bring people together and create unity in seemingly impossible situations. Her ability to build and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders and see every challenge as an opportunity has been hugely beneficial to the development of NICIE and to the sector as a whole.

On behalf of the Board I want to thank Lorna and Roisin for their invaluable years of dedication and wish them every happiness in their retirement.

As my own term on the Board comes to an end I reflect back on the achievements of the last year in which more schools than ever are on the journey to transformation and am greatly optimistic for the future of Integrated Education. As we welcome a new CEO and a new Chair I am confident that we will continue to work positively with all our stakeholders and will achieve our mission of promoting reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 22/06/2024

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024

It has been both an honour and a privilege to have served for the last 8.5 years as the Chief Executive Officer of the Council for Integrated Education.

Most of you know I served my time with NICIE, both as a Development Officer and a Senior Development Officer between 2002 and 2007, having previously spent 12 years teaching in both primary and post primary schools, after which I was seconded to the North Eastern Education and Library Board to extend the work of the integrating Education Project. I am most grateful for the opportunity to have learned about Integrated Education from teachers, as a governor of my own children's schools and staff members and successive Boards of NICIE including the various Trust's members.

The first few years of my tenure, as the new Chief Executive Officer was to build relations with the Department of Education, the Education Authority (EA), the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), the AlumNI, products of Integrated education and supporters, the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC), the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Grammar Bodies Association (GBA), and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíchta (CnaG) , as well as the Transferors Representative Council (TRC), the Catholic Schools Trustee Service (CSTS) and the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA.)

Relationships have never been better between NICIE and these various organisations and that has also enabled us to promote, support and grow Integrated Education. This last year 23/24 has seen the highest number of strong, sustainable schools voting to Transform to Integrated Education.

It has been important to continue to access places in Integrated schools for those parents and carers who want that for their children and young people. Every place in an integrated school over the last 43 years has been hard fought for by parents, NICIE and IEF staff teams and more recently EA Sectoral Support and there have been many challenges along the way.

I want to pay tribute to the staff team in NICIE, who have always stepped up to provide support to enable Integrated schools to grow in size, existing schools to Transform and new schools to be developed. I want to pay particular credit to Senior Development Officer, Lorna McAlpine, who retires in April 2024 after 20+ years of service to the development of Integrated Education on a number of different levels. Lorna has been a source of wisdom, knowledge, understanding and expertise. I also want to pay tribute to Cliodhna Scott Wells, Senior Development Officer for Support within NICIE for her determination, knowledge, expertise, and skills to help support all of the Integrated schools.

I also want to pay particular tribute to Maureen Johnston, NICIE Finance Officer, who has worked tirelessly to ensure that NICIE runs as an effective organisation and that the budget is managed.

To all the other members of the NICIE staff team both past and present under my leadership, I want to say thank you for all of your support throughout my tenure.

There have been many challenges over my time as Chief Executive Officer, including COVID, the search for new premises, transition to a hybrid way of working, moving to new premises, managing a very challenging, limited budget in the face of increased demand for our services. However, NICIE, as a team, along with our very dedicated Board of Directors and specifically

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

our current Chair, Maeve Marnell, have worked collectively to ensure the continued development of Integrated Education over the last 8.5 years.

I want to pay tribute to both of the Chairs of directors throughout my time, Alan Henry, OBE and Maeve Marnell since the onslaught of COVID and the impact of this on the NICIE staff team, the Directors and the organisation as a whole who have consistently supported me as Chief Executive Officer in navigating all of the many challenges.

We lived through together, the Independent Review of Integrated Education, the passage of the Integrated Education Bill and the subsequent passing of the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022, coming into force in October 2022. The subsequent Integrated Education Strategy Action Plan and consultation of same has required NICIE as a collective organisation to ensure the very best outcomes for the leaders, staff and children and young people in Integrated Education.

NICIE values of inclusivity and diversity, enabling everyone to participate, and no one getting to dominate requires NICIE as an organisation to be thoughtful and considerate and enable everyone's voice to be heard.

The successive Ministers of Education over my tenure, the Permanent Secretaries and the officials in the Department of Education have had to get to know NICIE through their interaction with myself, members of our board and staff team. I am grateful for all of the support over the years when we presented robust cases for approval, and for the many approvals that were given.

In the words of Paulo Coehlo from The Alchemist 'One day you will wake up and there won't be any more time to do the thing you've always wanted to. Do it now.' He also says 'If you are brave enough to say goodbye life will reward you with a new hello.'

Looking forward to my retirement. One of my favourite poets sums it up.

The Sunlight on the Garden

The sunlight on the garden
Hardens and grows cold,
We cannot cage the minute
Within its nets of gold;
When all is told
We cannot beg for pardon.

Our freedom as free lances
Advances towards its end ;
The earth compels , upon it
Sonnets and birds descend ;
And soon , my friend ,
We shall have no time for dances.

The sky was good for flying
Defying the church bells
And every evil iron

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Siren and what it tells:

The earth compels,
We are dying, Egypt, dying.

And not expecting pardon
Hardened in hearts anew,
But glad to have sat under
Thunder and rain with you,
And grateful too
For sunlight on the garden.

Louis Macniece

Glad to have sat under thunder and rain with you all but grateful too, for sunlight on the garden. I will go back to poetry and song and maybe even a dance. Remembering to keep the main thing the main thing…good outcomes for children and young people…we are collectively responsible…thank you to all who have kept that as the main thing.

Roisin Marshall

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Department of Education (DE). NICIE was established in 1987 as an umbrella body to represent Integrated schools and to promote Integrated Education. NICIE was set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is supported through grant in aid by DE under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

The role of NICIE as defined in the Management Statement is '*to promote Integrated Education and to perform a wide range of roles in facilitating the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland for the public benefit.'*

The Governance Statement sets out the governance structures, risk management and internal control procedures that have operated within NICIE during the financial year 2023 to 2024.

The Annual Governance Statement has been produced in line with guidance issued by DoF in accordance with the guidance in Annex 3.1 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and forms part of the Statutory Accounts and is reviewed, considered, and approved by the Board of Directors (BoD).

This Governance statement reflected NICIE's activities and governance for the current financial year.

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I am committed to operating in accordance with best practice in business integrity and ethics and maintaining the highest standards of financial reporting and governance. I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of controls that supports the achievement of NICIE's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the NICIE assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned in the MPMNI.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

As Accounting Officer of a public body and designated NDPB, I am committed to governance excellence and to ensuring accountability and transparency for all decisions and activities. I am responsible to the Permanent Secretary of DE under the terms and conditions as set out in NICIE's Management Statement (incorporating the Financial Memorandum) (MSFM).

I am satisfied that I have delivered upon my responsibilities as NICIE Accounting Officer and thereby declare to the Departmental Accounting Officer of my fitness to act as Accounting Officer.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Strategic Objectives

NICIE launched its new three-year Strategic Plan 2022-2025 in April 2022.

This strategic plan aims to:

1. Promote Integrated Education

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

2. Grow Integrated Education

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

3. Support Integrated Education

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

NICIE's vision is a society where children are educated together, confident to express their own identity and culture; and respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

The NICIE mission is to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

The current strategic plan sets out clearly defined strategic objectives for the year 2023-2024. I have ensured that the aims and objectives have been implemented with all staff, Board of Directors (BoD) and relevant stakeholders during 2023-2024 and regularly reviewed.

The NICIE business plan aligned to DE's strategic priorities clearly set out NICIE aims and objectives for the year 2023-2024 and was monitored throughout the year.

Governance Framework

In partnership with the NICIE Board of Directors, I have a corporate responsibility for setting objectives, agreeing priorities, and implementing ministerial policy. The BoD, and I, as the NICIE Accounting Officer and the staff of NICIE, developed and agreed a business plan for the 2023-2024 year, which was formally approved by DE.

The Business Plan was regularly reviewed along with key risks associated with the delivery of NICIE's objectives throughout the year. A mid-term six-month evaluation report to 30.9.2023 and year end evaluation provided updated progress reports on the achievements of NICIE for the 12 months to 31.3.2024 to both the BoD and DE.

NICIE have been working within our current Development Team capacity to respond to the increasing demand for our services. This DE funded team currently consists of three Senior Development Officers and one Development Officer. NICIE have also been successful in obtaining restricted funding from the Northern Ireland Office to fund one Senior Development

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Officer and three Development Officers until 31 March 2025. The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs has also funded a Development Officer until 31 March 2025.

In the 2023/2024 school year, there were approximately 27,000 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools.
One Transforming school got approval in September 2023.Three small unsustainable schools were not approved for Transformation. Seven other Development Proposals were approved in 2023/24 including two for GMI Post Primaries and 3 for GMI Nursery units.

This year has seen a continued surge in schools requesting support from NICIE regarding consideration of Transformation to Integrated Status. In 2023/2024 seven cases for change have been submitted to EA processes for schools Transforming to IE status and have been published.

In addition, there are fourteen more cases for change in the process of being progressed with the Boards of Governors from each school of which 10 are sustainable. These are all schools, which are post-ballot and seeking to Transform to Integrated status. Six schools had successful parental ballots this year.

Development Proposals for significant change to the Integrated Schools sector

There are 2 development proposals awaiting Ministerial decision for Nursery units.

A proposal for the new Causeway Controlled Integrated College which NICIE has worked on in collaboration with the three schools; North Coast Integrated College, Dunluce College, and Coleraine College, CSSC (Controlled Schools Support Council), UU (Ulster University) and the Education Authority, has been approved by DE.

Structure of NICIE

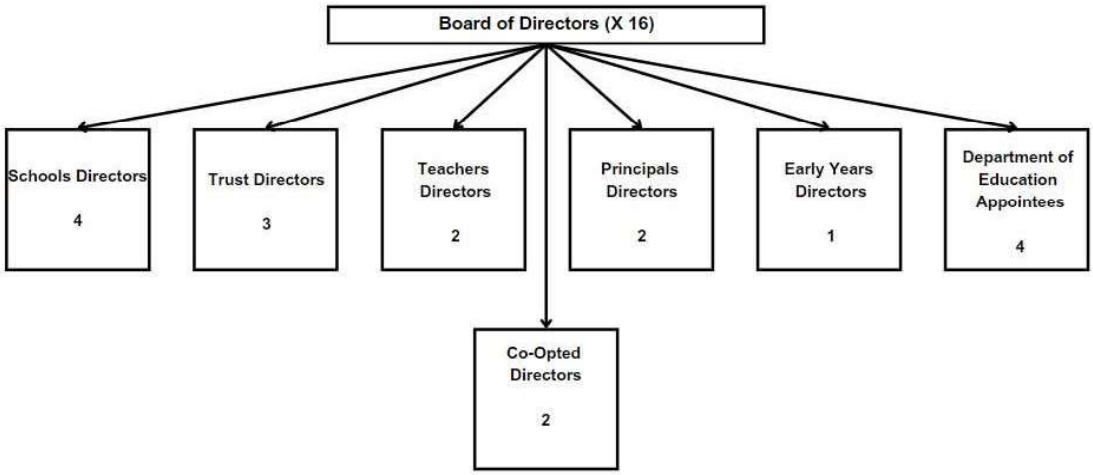
Board and Committees

The Board of Directors has a membership of 16 non-executive members including four DE appointees. There are currently two vacant DE Directors. The two vacant DE Directors will be filled through a forthcoming public appointments competition to be launched in the summer of 2024.

The role of the Board is to provide leadership to NICIE during the budget year, within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enable risk to be assessed and managed, to set NICIE's strategic aims, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet its objectives, provide oversight to set NICIE's values and standards and to ensure its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The current BoD structure is illustrated below:



NICIE is a constituent body of member organisations with seven categories of membership:

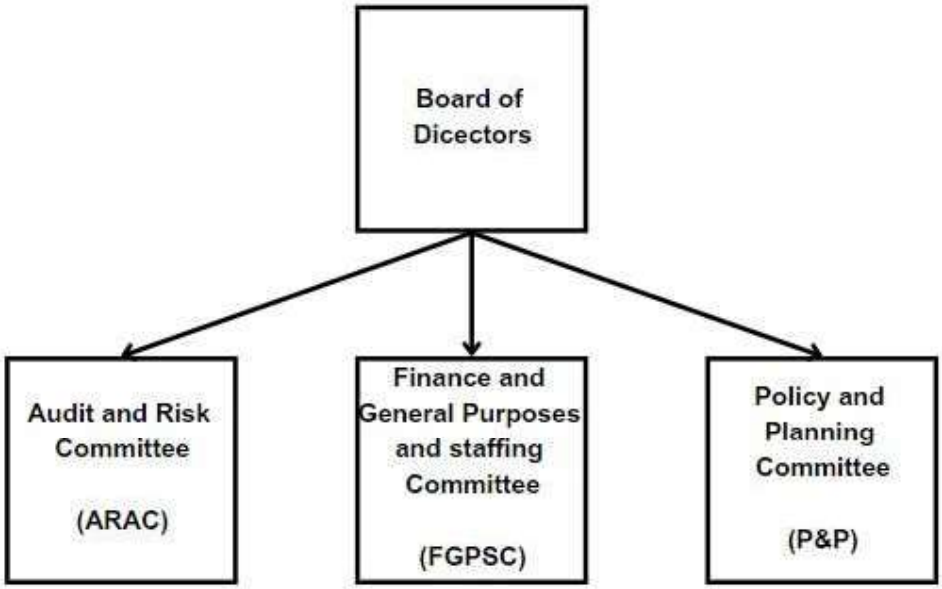
1. School members • 4 members to be elected at AGM	Those engaged in running a particular Integrated school.
2. Support members / Trust • 3 members to be elected at AGM	Organisations for the support and promotion of Integrated Education.
3. Teacher members	Representatives of teacher organisations. 2 members nominated by The Teachers Committee
4. Principal Member • 2 members nominated by APTIS (Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools)	Representatives of principals' association.
5. Early Years members • 1 member nominated by Teachers Committee	Those engaged in running pre-school provision in a particular Integrated school.
6. Co Opted • Up to 3 directors	To provide additional experience
7. Department of Education	4 people appointed by DE

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Board and Committees Structure

Three committees serve and report to the Board of Directors and are illustrated below.
The current directors and attendance records are recorded below. The Board structure and all directors were reviewed prior to the hybrid Annual General Meeting (AGM) including attendance records to ensure that the structure complied with NICIE's Articles of Association.

NICIE Board and Committees Structure:



Attendance at Meetings

Directors' attendance at meetings held during 2023-2024 is detailed below. Please note that some directors were not in post for the full financial year and joined the subcommittees during the year and the figures represent their percentage attendance based on when they joined.

Director/Member 2023-2024	Board of Directors 4 Zoom mtgs + AGM)	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee 4 Zoom mtgs	Finance, General Purposes & Staffing Committee 4 Zoom meetings	Policy and Planning Committee 2 Zoom mtgs
Maeve Marnell Chair	100%	-	100%	100%
Sandra Patterson	100%	100%	-	100%
Matt O Neill (Member)				50%
Claire Loftus			100%	

(Member)				
John Scott	100%	-	75%	100%
Attendance at Meetings Continued				
Cathal Mullaghan	100%	75%	-	
Shane Greer	75%	-	50%	50%
Anne Murray	75%		75%	100%
Dr Anne-Marie Telford (End of Term Feb 2024)	50%	50%	-	100%
Helen Smyth	100%	100%	-	50%
Adele Kerr	50%	-	75%	-
Bill Miscampbell (*co-optee)*	75%	-	100%	
Eamon Quinn *(co-optee)*	100%	-	-	100%
Bill Fletcher (appointed June 2023 Resigned December 2023)	100%	-	-	
Colin Millar	100%	100%	-	
Patricia Douglas	100%	100%	-	50%
Duncan Morrow	75%			100%
Bob Hanna DE Rep (Resigned Feb 2024)	100%	75%	-	-
Gavin Gray DE Rep	25%	-		-
Ashleigh Morrow	25%			
Nigel Arnold (Appointed March 2024)	100%			

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Performance of the Board 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

The Board of Directors held four meetings including the Annual General Meeting (AGM November 2023.) It was agreed that the Board meetings would continue to focus on strategy and the future direction of NICIE in the changing educational environment and the Integrated Education Act which came into force in October 2022. The new Act requires DE to "support" as well as "encourage and facilitate" Integrated Education. It will require "identifying, assessing, monitoring, and aiming to meet the demand for the provision of Integrated Education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate and providing sufficient places in Integrated schools to aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education." NICIE has been involved in the Consultation of the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Strategy Action Plan and consultation of same.

The chairperson continued to review the attendance of Board Members for the previous 12 months and reiterated the need for attendance and participation. The Chair was satisfied with the reasons for absence and ensured that proper processes were employed to address all absences and satisfied that all Board members continue on the Board. This was closely reviewed, monitored, and reported throughout the year, in my monthly meetings with the Chair. A few new directors replaced directors that had come to the end of their term. We were delighted to welcome these new directors to add their contributions to the proactive and dynamic Board.

A great deal of attention was directed to the move to NICIE's new office accommodation to ensure that it was affordable and the best option for NICIE.

Most meetings continued to be online though there were some hybrid meetings except for a board strategy day which was held in June 2023. All new Directors received induction training to ensure that they were briefed accordingly and were aware of their duties. This included the NICIE Corporate Governance guide, which was circulated to all Board members during the year to ensure adherence and compliance.

The Chair will complete the annual appraisal of directors. The chairperson continued to assess the performance of individual Board members through arrangements determined by the Department. Board members will continue to be subject to ongoing performance appraisal, with a formal assessment being completed by the chair at the end of each financial year and prior to any re- appointment of individual members taking place. Feedback of the appraisal process was shared with the Board and reported a positive working environment.

The Terms of reference of all committees were all reviewed during the year.

The appraisals also formed part of the assessment of the Board's effectiveness and were reported accordingly. A Board Effectiveness Review was carried out in November by the Independent Internal Auditor. The subsequent report had some minor recommendations, which will be added to the Board Effectiveness Action Plan for regular review by the Policy and Planning Committee.

The Chair was also appraised this year through arrangements made by the DE.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I also had monthly 1-1 meetings with the Chair where we reviewed the committees and the strategy of NICIE and agreed agenda for Board meetings.

A training programme was implemented during the year for the directors.

The register of interests continued to be a standard agenda at all Board meetings to ensure that any areas of Board member conflict are addressed at the start of each meeting.

The Board reviews, through the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) report and a range of presentations and discussion papers, the ongoing work of NICIE and its implementation of its strategic plan and business plan. Each Senior Development Officer for Grow and Support attends one Board meeting per year to present their report card on the NICIE Business Plan. The Report Card is regularly updated and feedback from DE has been useful in improving how NICIE Staff and Directors approach Outcomes Based Accountability.

During the year, the Board reviewed reports from other sub committees including the annual Internal Audit report, annual financial statements, monthly summary extracts from the management accounts and approved the Annual Business Plan and associated budgets.

NICIE reviewed the progress on the existing strategic plan and drafted a 2024-2025 business plan. A review was also undertaken of the effectiveness of reporting to the Board as part of the Board Effectiveness Review.

The Chairperson, Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer met the Permanent Secretary of DE for Governance and Accountability meetings twice in this financial year. Position reports were forwarded prior to these meetings highlighting any areas of significant accountability and governance. It was agreed that all was in order in the current challenging financial climate and that budgets were being managed accordingly. NICIE had hoped to be able to apply for Peace Plus Funding and were disappointed that this did not materialize.

NICIE has worked closely with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) to promote Integrated Education and is currently working with 20 schools at various stages of the Transformation process. One school successfully Transformed on 1st September 2023(Sion Mills Integrated Primary School).

As part of ensuring that all Board meetings are managed in an efficient and timely manner, I ensure that the Accounting Officer/CEO Report is circulated prior to the Board meetings along with all relevant papers.

Committee Reports

Role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) oversees financial reporting and the effectiveness of financial and regulatory compliance, controls and systems reporting.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee formally met on 4 occasions during 2023-2024 reviewed the Corporate Risk Register at each meeting and was satisfied that all risks were identified and corrective action taken where feasible. Some of the key risks are highlighted further in this report.

The Committee throughout the year continued to review and update the Corporate Risk Register to assure members that all risks relating to working from home arrangements and business continuity were incorporated into the register and that all risks were managed and mitigated accordingly. The Business Continuity Plan was also updated and reviewed at all the ARAC meetings.

There has been a new chairperson appointed for this committee as the existing chairperson has come to the end of their tenure as a DE Representative for NICIE.
The register of conflicts continued to be a standard item on the ARAC agenda.

In addition, the Committee reviewed the results of the internal audit report and the implementation of previous year's audit recommendations. The Committee was also responsible for reviewing the annual statutory Directors Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31.3.2023 and will also be responsible for the reports to 31.3.2024.

It also reviewed several policies and documentation from DE and DoF, which were updated by DE during the current year to ensure best practice and that DE business case, tenders, and DoF Pay Remit guidance was adhered to.

The NICIE ARAC Terms of Reference were also reviewed, and it was agreed that these would be reviewed every three years in line with the other committees in NICIE.

A summary report from the ARAC was presented to the Board by the chair of the committee following each meeting during the year.

Representatives from the IMIE Team at DE also sat on this Committee this year, which assisted in giving additional assurance to the Committee that all audit requirements were adhered to and provided guidance.

Finance, General Purposes and Staffing Committee (FGPSC)

This Committee continues to meet before the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors. It met 4 times during the current year. Its function is to focus more on the finance and personnel issues presented to the Board. This Committee also dealt with all issues relating to staff and premises.

FGPSC also continues to review staff policies throughout the year, ensuring that NICIE has covered all areas of staffing procedures and guidance.

The HR subcommittee also continued to meet where necessary during the year to dedicate more time to internal staffing issues and recruitment to ensure adequate time allocated to support the Finance Officer and me as CEO. This committee also included the Chair of NICIE. Progress was then reported accordingly to the relevant committee.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The budget for the monthly management statements were carefully reviewed by me and the Finance Officer prior to presentation to the FGPSC who then reviewed the financial and performance management of NICIE ensuring that all budgets and internal controls were adhered to for the year up to 31.3.2024.

In this Financial year a significant deal of time was dedicated to the move to new office accommodation ensuring that the accommodation was affordable and fit for the needs of all NICIE staff.

It is a legal requirement that all places of work have a health and safety policy, which staff should be made aware of and adhere to. I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all duties under Health and Safety legislation. This is a standard item on the FGPSC agenda to ensure that the office was managed in accordance with government and health guidelines and that all staff were being managed and had support in terms of the ability to work from home, including pastoral care.

This committee was also responsible for ensuring that NICIE was fully compliant with business case requirements.

The FGPSC's remit also includes the awarding of tenders and ensuring that NICIE adheres to strict procurement procedures with the approval of DE. However, the committee continues to raise concerns again over the costs and time that NICIE incurred adhering to DoF Procurement guidance under Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD) when retendering for goods and services.

Policy and Planning Committee (P&P)

The Committee's remit during the current year included:

- The Independent Review of Education
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Implementation
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Consultation on the Strategy Action Plan
- The submission to Northern Ireland Affairs committee (NIAC) on Integrated Education
- Monitoring Board Effectiveness Action Plan
- Monitoring Progress of Strategic and Business Plans
- Education Authority Sectoral Support Presentation and discussion on Shared Education

The Policy and Planning Committee has held two meetings during the year to formulate NICIE's policy position and various educational policies and legislation including Kellie Armstrong's Private Members' Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022. Committee members provide constructive challenges and guidance in response to updates by a Senior Development Officers on key areas of work. It is also an opportunity for Directors to gain a better-detailed understanding of the context that NICIE is working within, including a presentation and submission to the Independent Review of Education.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Compliance with Corporate Governance

An annual review of the effectiveness of NICIE's governance structures, as set out in the 2013 code (DAO/ (DFP) 10/12), risk management and internal controls has been conducted, informed by staff, directors, independent internal and external auditors. The NICIE Board has assessed that it has effectively complied with the Corporate Governance Code.

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) sets out a broad framework within which the Council is required to operate, and the Financial Memorandum defines certain financial provisions which NICIE is required to observe. As Accounting Officer and CEO, I have ensured that the MSFM has been adhered to for the financial year 2023-2024. NICIE is currently working with its DE sponsor branch on a Proportionate Autonomy Framework and are currently working towards a new Partnership Agreement, which will in due course replace the MSFM framework.

NICIE has continued to review its internal procedures to ensure that all services are reviewed and that business cases are submitted to the Irish Medium and Integrated Education (IMIE) Team in DE in a timely fashion and that all appropriate approvals are obtained before any expenditure is committed.

Training has also been given to all new staff during the year at staff meetings to ensure that controls are adhered to, and new staff are given induction training on arrival. Training needs have also been identified for new and existing directors and governance training has been organised and provided. Induction was provided for new directors and exit interviews/surveys were completed for all directors that left during the year.

All relevant Companies House and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland requirements have been updated.

NICIE continues to ensure that its governance arrangements are in place operating in accordance with best practice and that it continues to align its business aims and objectives to DE.

Assurance Reporting

As Accounting Officer, I am also responsible for preparing risk assurance statements and these reports provide assurance over areas of responsibility and confirm that risks are being managed.

Internal Audit

The scope of the internal audit plan for the current year by independent internal auditors Cavanagh Kelly was to review the controls in relation to the systems that NICIE had in place in relation to the following areas, including recommendations from last year's audit.

We commissioned an independent review of the board's effectiveness. This review has been based on the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) publication 'Board Effectiveness – A Good practice Guide' (the Guide) issued in June 2022 and took place in November and December 2023. The review considered relevant information and documentation for the 2023 and 2024 financial years. This review was completed in January 2024 and presented to NICIE's ARAC

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Board of Directors. The independent report concluded that NICIE had an effective Board with some minor recommendations for improvements.

Based on evidence reviewed and explanations obtained, the independent internal auditors concluded the Board of NICIE has demonstrated compliance with the guidance contained in the Northern Ireland Audit Office publication 'Board Effectiveness – Good practice Guide'.

It was recommended NICIE could consider developing a Conflict-of-Interest policy and reinstate asking board members and senior staff to formally complete declarations of interest, including nil returns annually.

There were some minor areas of improvement which the Board agreed to implement. The Internal Auditor was therefore able to give positive assurance to me as Accounting Officer that the Board's arrangements were satisfactory.

A review of the progress made by NICIE in implementing prior year adjustments was also undertaken and all prior year internal audit recommendations have been implemented.

External Auditor

NICIE's newly appointed External Auditors through a tender process are SCC Chartered Accountants. There were no control deficiencies identified during the year to 31.3.2023 for the audit completed by M.B.Mc Grady and company. There is unlikely to be any emphasis of matter or qualifications contained in the Audit report for 2023-2024.

Other Sources of Assurance

I have also relied on additional sources of assurance during the year, with regular reports from the staff, directors, NICIE Panel of Associates and independent advice from HR (Human Resource), legal experts and other relevant stakeholders.

NICIE also continues to report annually to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and Companies House.

Quality of Data Used by the Board

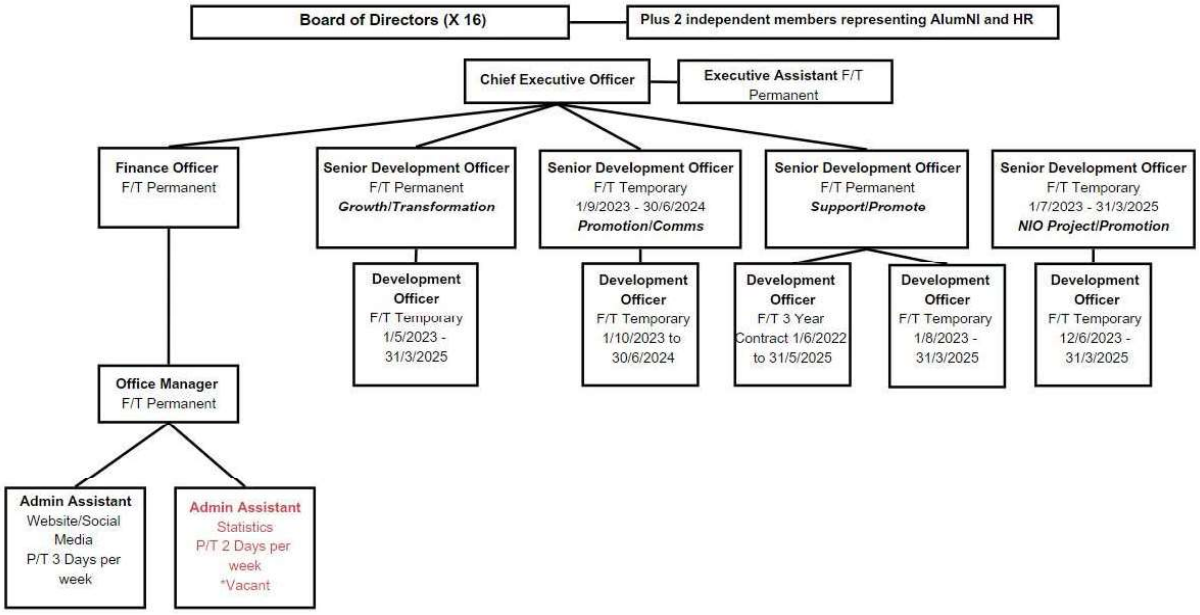
Senior Members of the NICIE Team and appropriately experienced officers or representatives of NICIE have supported all the committees. I regularly review and interrogate all data with Senior Management Team prior to any information being presented to the Board. These reports include monthly management accounts and budgets, which are prepared by NICIE's qualified Chartered Accountant and are also reviewed by the FGPSC who have additional finance experience. Senior Development Officers with much experience in the education sector, including reports compiled with various forums and relevant stakeholders, complete other NICIE reports. An appropriately selected Panel of Associates who have been drawn from a select list based on skills and experience compile bespoke reports. Committee Members also reviewed these reports and data and sought clarification from officers on the information presented to them.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Additionally, our Internal Auditors Cavanagh Kelly independently compiled the internal audit report, and the External Auditors S.S Cavanagh Accountants. independently verified the Final Financial Statements. In addition, as part of the internal audit programme all the quality of data was assessed by ARAC and presented to the Board. It is my view and the view of the committees that the quality of the data used by NICIE is of an acceptable standard.

The staffing structure of NICIE for 2023-2024 is highlighted below:

NICIE ORGANISATIONAL CHART



I would like to highlight that I am retiring from my position as CEO with effect from 31.7.2024 and a recruitment process is currently underway managed by NICIE's Human Resources Sub Committee. A panel has been commissioned including NICIE HR Provider and an observer from DE. The window for applications closed on the 2nd April 2024.

A long-standing member of NICIE Senior Development Team, is also retiring after almost 26 years. There is contingency planning in place in the short term to manage this.

Additionally, it is important to note that the majority of NICIE's Development Team is made up of external funding posts which will come to an end 31 March 2025.

Ministerial Directions

No Ministerial Directions were given for the year to 31 March 2024.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Heath and Safety

I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all its duties under Health and Safety. Whilst NICIE has always been mindful of compliance to health and safety, a working group was set up with representatives from both staff and directors to review NICIE's hybrid policy and ensuring that the office environment was safe and managed accordingly. This was and continues to be reviewed to ensure that all risks are managed and mitigated, and that the NICIE staff are protected, and the office environment is clean and appropriately managed and that all health and safety requirements and legislation is adhered to.

NICIE moved to new office accommodation during the year. This is a fully managed service government building with secure access and meets all health and safety requirements including disability access. The Office block has its own Staff guide for Health and Safety and all accommodation details

The staff handbook continues to be reviewed, updated in line with legislation and appropriate guidance and circulated to all staff and training provided where relevant. NICIE continues to support all staff through the NICIE well-being programme, and this is managed through the NICIE health and wellbeing sub-committee. Several activities including a staff team building day have been carried out during the year and staff are continuously reminded to access the free well-being programmes available to them.

Risk Assessment

Internal Controls and Risk Management

I, along with the directors acknowledge our responsibility for NICIE's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) reviewed the risks associated with the Council's activities. The Corporate Risk Register includes an evaluation of all levels of risk. Both inherent and residual risks were reviewed throughout the year with the committee and DE. NICIE had a Business Continuity Plan in place, which has also been reviewed and updated to manage all internal controls including hybrid working.

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reports to each Board meeting on any matters that need to be brought to their attention.

I, as Accounting Officer, continue to enforce and ensure that risk management is embedded and owned by the Board and all NICIE staff. This has now effectively been incorporated and embedded into all NICIE business plans and daily operations of NICIE. The corporate risk register and risk management is viewed as a dynamic process which actively seeks to incorporate good practice. It is responsive and current and is managed through regular review of both internal developments and external factors.

As a NDPB, NICIE has a low-risk appetite in relation to compliance, regulation, and our strategic aims which I anticipate will continue.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Risk Profile faced by NICIE.

The NICIE corporate risk register currently identifies four significant risks. These risks are reviewed quarterly by ARAC. These are also circulated to Board Members and Staff

The first three risks relate to financial management and governance and some of the primary areas of concern for 2023/2024 are highlighted in the table below.

Management of Significant Risks

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure of DE/DoF to guarantee NICIE Pension Liability	Reported to BoD/External Auditor. Continue to monitor and liaise with DE/DoF of any potential increases regarding non-guarantee from NILGOSC (NICIE Pension provider)	Ongoing
Potential Claims re employee grievances.	Solicitor and HR Providers contacted and ongoing liaison to mitigate against grievances and Industrial Tribunal claim. Potential for inescapable legal bill bid.	Ongoing
Failure to have adequate insurance in place.	DE covers Employers Liability Public Liability covered by DoF in James House Public Liability to be requested for each event where the venue requires it.	September 2023
Limited DE budget for parental ballots and financial support for Transforming schools.	Requested that IMIE apply for more financial support for the five new Transforming schools for the next five years from Monitoring Round.	March 2024

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure to Strategically plan for IE (Integrated Education)	Planning groups, articulating the out workings of the statutory duty, to the Education Authority (EA) Ensure Cases for Change are robust and reflect a robust evidence base to support Development proposals (DP) for approval; and Continue to work with the EA through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Protocols between NICIE and the EA and the Cross-Directorate Group (CDG). Support for development of IE by partnership between NICIE, EA, CSSC and DE Area Planning and IMIE to discuss and identify roles and responsibilities for each organisation in relation to Controlled Integrated Schools.	March 2024 Ongoing
Failure to effectively implement the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022	NICIE proactive members of the Steering and Working Groups of the DE Implementation Team Review and give feedback on draft Strategic Plan Review and give feedback on Reporting on support	Ongoing

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
	for IE from ALBs and other support bodies Regular meetings with the DE Implementation Team Quarterly meetings with DE Governance and Risk (GAR) and DE Implementation Team Responded to consultation on the IE Act Strategy Action Plan, the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey proposed questions and Data proposals for measuring demand and reporting on progress of the Action Plan Engagement and Consultation Protocols in place between DE and NICIE	
Failure to ensure NICIE staffing complement to ensure NICIE can support DE to fulfil its statutory duty to promote, encourage, facilitate and support Integrated Education.	Five Business Cases submitted to IMIE to demonstrate NICIE's need to retain staff post March 2025. Reporting of the outcomes of NICIE staff team to DE and NICIE Board through the NIIE Report Card. Careful drafting of NICIE Business Plan and NICIE Strategic Plan to ensure DE understands the need for an increase in NICIE's budget.	NICIE are aware that staff retention will be vital to meeting DE's statutory duty and the vision of a network of sustainable, high quality Integrated schools.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I am satisfied that these risks were managed accordingly, and that tolerable and considerable progress continues to mitigate these risks.

One of the risks that continues to present the greatest challenge to NICIE relates to the failure to meet demand for Integrated Education and thus enabling parents who want an Integrated school for their child to be able to access it. The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 means that NICIE will need to work in partnership with DE, statutory and other support bodies to ensure the effective implementation of the Act ensuring the work of NICIE complements the duties placed on those organisations to further the development of Integrated Education.

It is important for NICIE to play its part in promoting Shared Education and encouraging Integrated schools to actively participate. NICIE has also forwarded proposals to EA School Support team regarding Shared Learning Together EA PEACE PLUS application, and we are hopeful to be able to access staff to support Shared Learning Together.

Through Area Planning, NICIE continues to encourage schools and support organisations to consider Integrated Education as an option in a time of economic constraints and the desire for educational provision in each area to remain as a choice for the whole community. Where there is no provision NICIE, in conjunction with parents and schools, must demonstrate unmet demand for such provision to be considered. This is extremely difficult in a time when the education budget constraints suggest no more growth but rationalisation. NICIE is acutely aware of the deficit in funding for education generally and is concerned with the challenges that that brings to enabling Integrated Education to grow. NICIE recognises the gap that exists for schools in local areas to consider options for Integrated Education as a solution to ensure education provision in an area. NICIE is willing and able, given financial support, to fill this gap to encourage conversations as per Transformation/ new school development.

NICIE are aware of the requirement now for DE and EA to assess future demand for Integrated Education and so NICIE will contribute in whatever way it can to support.

We are also acutely aware of the Fresh Start Agreement Funding for capital buildings, which is enabling already existing Integrated schools that have sought so hard to be part of the educational landscape to survive into the future. NICIE wish to record the huge dismay regarding the decision to remove the ring fenced £150 million of Fresh Start Agreement funding for capital builds for Integrated and Shared Education. This has had a significant, adverse impact on 10 Integrated schools.

NICIE are grateful for the continued support from Northern Ireland Office and Irish Department of Foreign Affairs to help NICIE to promote, meet local demand for Integrated Education and support existing Integrated schools.

NICIE staff also assess internal and external risks of all activities, and the risk is reviewed and mitigated where feasible.

Fraud Risk

NICIE continues to review and implement its fraud policy during the year and has zero tolerance in respect of fraud. Internal controls were also reviewed and are clearly embedded within the organisation.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I have ensured that the NICIE Finance Officer is a member of the DE Education Sector Fraud forum. There were no instances of suspected fraud within NICIE during the year 2023-2024.

Raising Concerns at work (Whistle Blowing)

NICIE has a policy on Raising Concerns at work (Whistleblowing), which encourages staff to report any instances of unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or other actions that might compromise, in any way, the Council's reputation and integrity. There were no instances during 2023-2024.

Data Security breaches

There were no data security breaches or losses during the year.

General Data Protection Regulation

NICIE continues to maintain and review its GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) policies, current data governance processes, procedures, and control. NICIE staff also ensure that all archived materials were appropriately dealt with which included archiving, destroying, and returning materials to schools. NICIE's Retention and Disposal Policy was filed and agreed with the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) to ensure that records are managed in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Government Funding Database

NICIE is not listed on the Government Funding Database as NICIE does not award grant funding to the community and voluntary sector.

Significant Governance Issues

There are no further significant governance issues.

Conclusion

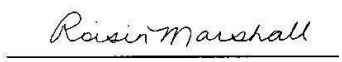
The aim of this statement is to ensure that information is provided as to how governance within NICIE has been effective for the year to 31.3.2024 and identifies a range of significant governance issues that NICIE is facing during a period of significant change, uncertainty, and challenging circumstances.

NICIE will continue to ensure that it adheres to organisational needs and governance guidelines.

I can confirm that I will continue to review these issues and ensure that they are addressed. This governance statement was presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and formally approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Chair on 24th April 2024.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Signature of Chair:



Signature of Accounting Officer

Date of Signature 24th April 2024

Remuneration Policy and Staff report

The remuneration of all Council staff is determined by the NICVA National Joint Council for local authorities and other authorities of equivalent status. The National Joint Council's principal role is to reach agreement, based on shared values, on a national scheme of pay and conditions for local application throughout the UK.

The NICVA National Joint Council's guiding principles are to support and encourage:

- High quality services delivered by a well-trained, motivated workforce with security of employment. To this end employer are encouraged to provide training and development opportunities for employees;
- Equal opportunities in employment; equality as a core principle which underpins both service delivery and employment relations; and both the removal of all discrimination and the promotion of positive action;
- A flexible approach to providing services to the community, which meets the needs of employees as well as employers; and
- Stable industrial relations and negotiation and consultation between employers and recognised trade unions.
-

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Board and most senior management of the department.

Remuneration and pension entitlements (audited information)

	2023-2024					2022-2023				
	Salary	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**	**Salary**	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**
	£'000					**£**				
R Marshall *CEO*	**65-70**	**100**	**-**	**18,000**	**80-85**	60-65	100	-	18,000	80-85
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**		**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	40-45
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
S Pettis *Senior Development Officer (Resigned May 2022)*	**40-45**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	1,00	50-55
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer (Appointed July 2023)*	**40-45**	**-**	**-**	**-**		-				
E Humme Senior Development Officer(Appointed September 2023)	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**10,000**						
		100		**10,000**						

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension benefits

The value of pension benefits during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increase due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a track of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary and any allowances all of which are subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by NICIE and thus recorded in these financial statements.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and is treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

Bonuses

No bonuses were paid during the year to 31 March 2024 (2023: £nil).

Off payroll engagements

During the year, there were no off-payroll engagements (2023: none).

Staff turnover

NICIE employee turnover rate is set out in the table below.

	April 2023 to March 2024		April 2022 to March 2023	
	Number of staff	% of headcount	Number of staff	% of headcount
Starters	4	31.6	1	8.33
Leavers	2	15.8	2	16.67

Pay Ratios

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid officer in NICIE in the financial year 2023-2024 was £65,000 - £70,000 (2022-23, £65,000-£70,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the NICIE workforce is disclosed below.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

2023-2024	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	27,840	36,648	46,464
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

2022-2023	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	28,126	35,961	44,539
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £27,840, £36,648 and £46,464 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £25,119 to £67,105 (2022-23, £22,777 to £64,676).

Percentage Change in Remuneration

The percentage changes in respect of NICIE are shown in the following table.

Percentage change for:	2023-24 v 2022-23	2022-23 v 2021-22
Average employee salary and allowances	4.91%	5.51%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	3.88%	3.01%

No performance pay or bonuses were payable to the highest paid officer or employees in these years.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension entitlements

Officials	Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31 March 2024 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2023 £'000	Real increase/ Decrease in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership payment Nearest £100
R Marshall *Chief Executive Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	180	125	22	-
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	169	122	16	-
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	10-15 Plus lump sum 10-15	0-2.5	305	236	15	-
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	16-20 Plus lump sum 15-20	0-2.5	413	353	7	-
Sean Pettis *Senior Development Officer* (Resigned May 2022)	0-5 No lump sum	0-2.5	0	21	0	-
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer (Appointed July 2023)* *E Humme* *Senior Development Officer(Appointed September 2023*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	63	52	6	

Pension entitlements

NICIE is a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Pension scheme. The Scheme is a funded defined benefit scheme, with benefits earned up to 31 March 2015 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2015 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended) and "The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended).

The funded nature of the LDPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets.

Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31st March 2023 and the contributions to

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

be paid until 31st March 2024 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Funds Rates and Adjustment Certificate. The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value ("CETV") is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued because of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-2004 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement, which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effects of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Staff cost (Audited)

	Permanently employed staff	**Temporary agency staff**	**Total 2024**	2023
			£	£
Wages and salaries	515,965	-	515,965	405,539
Social security costs	49,289	-	49,289	36,871
Other pension costs	93,701	-	93,701	74,127
	658,955		658,955	513,537
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			(40,507)	(40,501)
NIO Funded Staff			(157,105)	
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation				
Current service cost			103,000	161,000
Past service cost/(gain)				
Contributions by the employer			(92,000)	(74,000)
Total Net costs			472,343	560,036

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the year was:	**13**	10

Some staff employed by the company in 2024 and 2023 had permanent fixed term contracts of employment. During the year the charity incurred costs of £0 (2023: £0) relating to agency staff and secondees. The staff consists of 10 female and 3 male employees. The sickness absence rate for the year was 2024:122 days 4.7% (2023: 24.5 days /.89%. The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure, and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

The Directors received **£0** for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2023: £0). **One** employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2023: 1) and details are below.

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	67,185	65,915
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme. Roisin Marshall	12,765	12,612
	79,950	78,527

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Compensation schemes – exit packages

The following section provides details of the exit packages paid by the company.

	Number of voluntary redundancies	Total number of exit packages by cost band 2024	Total number of exit packages by cost band 2023
< £10,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£10,000-£25,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total number of exit packages	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total resource cost	Nil	Nil	Nil

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 22/06/2024

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Regularity of expenditure

There were no losses or special payments made by the Council in the year. (2022/23 – £nil)

Fees and Charges

There were no fees or charges made by the Council in the year. (2022/23 - £nil)

Remote contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities requiring disclosure under Assembly reporting requirements. The Council had no significant remote contingent liabilities to report 2023-24, (2022-23 £nil). Note 17 provides further details regarding the contingent liabilities, which are included in the financial statements.

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive
Date:22/06/2024 :

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards. We have also audited the information in the Remuneration and staff report and the Assembly Accountability and audit report that is described in those reports as having been audited.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken during the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Directors has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
- In all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.
  The parts of the remuneration and staff report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with DoF directions made under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with DoF guidance.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law,) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. They are also responsible for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control, as the trustees determine is necessary, to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud, or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

The following are required to be considered:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and entity performance;
- results of our enquires of management, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- review of company policies and procedures relating to:
  identifying, evaluation and complying with laws and regulations and whether they are aware of instances of noncompliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have any knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  -the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team and specific component audit teams regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

Because of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud is in relation to expenditure not being applied in line with intended purposes and the calculation and payment of salaries. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

Audit response to risks identified.

The current audit is conducted with professional scepticism using procedures that are in accordance with International Standards on Auditing.

In responding to the identified key audit matters above we obtained an understanding of the charity's objectives and funders requirements together with the salary calculation and processing process, we performed enquires of management and inspected relevant documents and calculations, verifying expenditures, completing a recalculation of salaries during the year, assessing the completeness and accuracy of disclosures within the financial statements and concurred the figures were materially accurate.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified include the following:

- reviewing the full financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerns of actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- obtained an understanding of provisions and held discussions with management to understand the basis of recognition or non-recognition of provisions; and

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and significant component audit teams and remained alert to any indications of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities, which govern them. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sean G Cavanagh

Sean G. Cavanagh
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of SCC Chartered Accountants Ltd Date: 22/06/2024

17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Incoming resources/income			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
- Voluntary income	3	**892,295**	793,399
Total incoming resources		**892,295**	793,399
Resources expended/expenditure			
Charitable activities			
- Development of Integrated Education and schools in Northern Ireland		**(906,751)**	(771,589)
Governance costs		**(16,308)**	(9,580)
Other resources expended			
- Other finance costs	6	**4,000**	(18,000)
Total resources expended		**(919,059)**	(799,169)
Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses		**(26,764)**	(5,770)
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension	12	**7,000**	760,000
Net movement in funds		**(19,764)**	754,230
Funds at 1 April		**161,298**	(592,932)
Funds at 31 March	14	**141,534**	161,298

All amounts above relate to the continuing restricted operations of the company.

There is no material difference between the net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses for the financial year stated above, and the historical cost equivalent.

The net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses is the net outgoing resources required by the Companies Act 2006 as opposed to that required by the Statement of Recommended Practice.

There are no changes in equity other than the results shown in the statement of financial position therefore a separate statement of changes in equity has not been presented.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Non-current assets			
Property, plant, and equipment	7	**8,494**	**9,839**
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	9	**5,076**	**60,230**
Cash and cash equivalents	10	**178,879**	**123,649**
		183,955	**183,879**
Total assets		**192,449**	**193,718**
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	**(50,915)**	**(32,420)**
Non-current assets less net current liabilities		**141,534**	**161,298**
Non-current liabilities			
Pension commitments as per Note 12	12	**(0)**	**(0)**
Total assets less liabilities		**141,534**	**161,298**
Reserves			
Restricted funds	14	**141,534**	**161,298**

The financial statements on pages 57 to 58 were approved by the Board of directors on 22 June 2024 and were signed on its behalf by: Mrs Maeve Marnell, Chair of NICIE Board of Directors.

The notes on pages 62 to 76 form an integral part of these financial statements

Maeve Marnell
Chairperson

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive Officer

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Registered number: NI022427
Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	**2024** **£**	2023 £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		**57,527**	52,868
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant, and equipment	7	**(2,297)**	(0)
Net cash inflow (outflow) from investing activities		**(2,297)**	(0)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		**55,230**	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**123,649**	70,781
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	15	**178,879**	123,649

Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before recognised gains and losses	**(19,764)**	**(5,770)**
Depreciation on tangible fixed assets	**3,642**	**4,919**
Loss on disposal of Assets		**2,481**
Movement in trade and other receivables	**55,154**	**(43,981)**
Movement in trade and other payables	**18,495**	**(9,781)**
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions		**87,000**
Other finance costs		**18,000**
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	**57,527**	**52,868**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, Accounting and Reporting by Charities; Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with International Financial Reporting standards and the principles of the 2021-22 *Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)* issued by the Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy, which is judged most appropriate to the particular circumstances of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education for giving a true and fair view, has been selected. The particular policies adopted by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the financial statements.

Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost.

New and amended standards adopted by the Company

The Company has adopted IFRS16 “Leases” from 1/4/2022, which has resulted in changes in the accounting policies and adjustments to the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Effective date and transitional provisions

"In accordance with the transitional provisions of IFRS16 as adapted and interpreted by the FReM, the Company has adopted the new guidance, applying a retrospective approach to recognise the cumulative effects of initially applying IFRS16 recognised at the date of initial application as an adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers’ equity."

Summary of the main changes introduced by the standard

The new standard sets out the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation, and disclosure of leases. All leases result in the lessee recognising the right to use an asset at the commencement date of the lease, and if lease payments are made over time recognising financing. Accordingly, IFRS16 eliminates the classification of leases as either operating leases or finance leases as required by IAS17 and, instead, introduces a single lessee accounting model. Lessees will be required to recognise: (a) assets and liabilities for all leases with a lease term of more than 12 months unless the underlying asset is of low value; and (b) depreciation of right- of- use assets separately from interest on lease liabilities in profit or loss. IFRS16 substantially carries forward the lessor accounting requirements from IAS17. Accordingly, a lessor continues to classify its leases as operating leases or finance leases and to account for those two types of leases differently. For sub leases, intermediate lessors should classify subleases based on the right-of-use as set from the headlease, rather than the underlying lease as set as it was under IAS17, thus there is increased likelihood that a sublease previously classified as operating lease will be classified as a finance lease under IFRS16.

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

The effect from adoption of IFRS16 on the Company's financial statements

The company previously held a lease on its premises at 25 College Gardens, which expired in August 2023, and NICIE moved to James House under RPM on a rent-free licence agreement. (LY *Note for info)Thereafter the company occupied the premises on a rolling month-to-month term and has notified the Landlords on 6th April 2023 their intention to vacate the property at 25 College Gardens. At the end of the current year the company had not completed on the new lease agreement for their new offices at James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue. As such the Company has implemented the new standard retrospectively with the cumulative effect of initial application recognised as at the date of initial application of IFRS16, i.e. 1 April 2022 with the corresponding adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers' equity as per IFRS16(C5(b)) and due to all leases being either short-term leases and leases of low-value assets there is no material change required to the opening balances with no corresponding change required in the opening balances of tax payers equity.*

Going concern

The directors have received funding for the year ended March 2024, which has been confirmed from the Department of Education. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, which assumes that NICIE will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Property, plant, equipment, and depreciation

Property, plant, and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items. Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial year in which they are incurred.

For all assets depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less their estimated residual values, on a reducing balance basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets concerned, or over the life of project, whichever is earlier. The principal annual rates used are as follows:
Information technology : $33^1/_3$%
Furniture and fittings : 20%

Trade and other receivables

Trade receivables are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business. If collection is expected in one year or less (or in the normal operating cycle of the business if longer), they are classified as current assets. If not, they are presented as non-current assets.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Trade and other receivables (continued)

Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

In the cash flow statement cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Trade payables are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade and other payables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Government grants

Grants that relate to specific revenue expenditure are credited to the statement of financial activities when received.

Taxation

The Company is registered as a charity for tax purposes and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of the company are exempt for value added tax purposes. The company therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

VAT

The company is not registered for VAT. All expenditure and capital purchase in the financial statements is stated inclusive of VAT.

Pension funding

Retirement benefits to employees of NICIE are provided by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee ("NILGOSC") defined benefit scheme, which is externally funded and contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

In respect of this scheme, NICIE's staff constitute only a small percentage of the overall membership. NICIE has no influence over the level of contributions.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Pension funding (continued)

In previous years NICIE's share of the NILGOSC scheme could not be identified and in keeping with such multi-employer schemes NICIE treated its pension cost as if it were a defined contribution (rather than a defined benefit) scheme. In late 2006, NILGOSC separated each of the employer scheme details and, as a result, NICIE has had to incorporate the year-end deficit on the scheme in its balance sheet and the movement on the scheme within the statement of financial activities.

The assets of the NILGOSC scheme are held separately from those of NICIE. Pension scheme assets are measured using market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability. The service cost and associated administration costs of NICIE's defined benefit pension scheme are charged to net outgoing resources before recognised gains. In addition, a retirement benefit interest charge on the net pension deficit is charged to the statement of financial activities as a finance cost. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised directly in statement of financial activities so that NICIE's balance sheet reflects the fair value of the scheme's surplus or deficit at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The significant accounting estimations and judgments of the Company relate to the pension assets, liabilities and associated pension surplus or deficit. The Company utilises the services of actuarists to help them value scheme assets and liabilities and provide the necessary disclosures of the Nilgosc pension scheme.

Incoming resources

Grants

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period, in which case they are deferred.

Other income

Other income, which excludes value added tax, is accounted for on the accrual's basis.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Governance costs
Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of its assets, which are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Bank interest

All interest is accounted for in the statement of financial activities on the accruals basis.

Operating leases

Accounting policies applied from 1 April 2023

Leases other than short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as right-of-use assets and corresponding liabilities at the date at which the leased assets are available for use by the Company.

Payments associated with all short-term leases and certain leases of all low-value assets are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure. The company applies the exemption for low-value assets on a lease-by-lease basis. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of less than 12 months or less. Low-value assets comprise computers, tablets, mobile phones and small items of office furniture.

Accounting policy applied until 31st March 2023

Leases in which a significant portion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases (net of any incentives received from the lessor) are charged to the net expenditure account on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Lease activities

The company leased its head office property until August 2023 when it moved to James House as part of Reform of Public Property under a rent-free licence agreement for five years. Additionally, it has a few low-value leases on items of office equipment

Fund accounting

NICIE has one type of fund for which it is responsible. The definition of this fund is as follows:

Restricted funds

Restricted funds, subject to specific trusts, are those given to NICIE, which are to be expended for the specific objects specified by the donor.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

2 Statement of operating costs by operating segment

The trustees consider that NICIE acts as one operating segment and therefore no statement of operating costs by operating segment has been presented.

3 Voluntary income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Department of Education Northern Ireland	670,931	632,167
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	170,000	18,473
Northern Ireland Office		
Integrated Education Fund	4,800	95,000
		-
Donations	1,497	7,258
Recoveries in respect of outward secondments	45,067	40,501
	892,295	793,399

4 Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses

	2024	2023
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Staff costs (Note 5)	669,955	600,537
Depreciation of property, plant, and equipment (Note 7)	3,642	4,919
Fees payable to NICIE's auditors for the audit of the financial statements	7,200	5,652
Operating lease rentals/ Licence Fee	-	19,100

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

5 Staff costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	515,965	402,539
Social security costs	49,289	36,871
Other pension costs	93,701	74,127
	658,955	513,537
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation		
Current service cost	103,000	161,000
Past service cost/(gain)	-	-
Contributions by the employer	(92,000)	(74,000)
	669,955	600,537

During the year the charity incurred costs of £330 (2023: £nil) relating to agency staff and secondees.

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year was:	**13**	10

The Directors received £0 for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2023: £0). One employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2023: one) and details are below.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	67,185	65,915
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme.	12,765	12,612
	79,950	78,527

6 Other finance costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Interest income on pension scheme assets	130,000	77,000
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(126,000)	(95,000)
	4,000	(18,000)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

7 Property, plant, and equipment

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Disposal	0	(182)	(182)
Additions	2,142	155	2,297
At 31 March 2024	59,680	26,761	86,441
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Depreciation on Disposal	0	(182)	(182)
Charge for the year	3,591	51	3,642
At 31 March 2024	51,290	26,657	77,947
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2024	**8,390**	**104**	**8,494**
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	59,369	29,269	88,638
Disposal	(1,831)	(2,481)	(4,312)
Additions	0	0	0
At 31 March 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	44,611	26,788	71,399
Depreciation on disposal	4,919	0	4,919
Charge for the year	(1,831)		(1,831)
At 31 March 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**
At 31 March 2022	**14,758**	**2,481**	**17,239**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

8 Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education largely are met through, Grant-in-Aid provided by DE, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the NDPB's expected purchase and usage requirements and the NDPB is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity, or market risk.

9 Trade and other receivables

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Trade receivables	1,276	7,184
Prepayments and accrued income	3,800	53,046
	5,076	60,230

The fair values of trade and other receivables are not materially different from the carrying values.

All of the charity's financial assets are classified as loans and receivables. The company has no assets that may be classified as held at fair value through profit and loss, derivatives used for hedging or available-for-sale.

10 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Balance at 1 April	123,649	70,781
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	55,230	52,868
Balance at 31 March	178,879	123,649
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial banks and cash in hand	178,879	123,649

11 Trade and other payables

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Trade payables	39,219	25,054
Accruals and deferred income	11,696	7,366
	50,915	32,420

The fair value of trade and other payables are not materially different from their carrying value as the impact of discounting is not significant. There is no difference between the amounts shown above and the total contractual undiscounted cash flows of trade and other payables.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

12 Pension commitments

The net pension 'liability' shown below does not represent a shortfall, which requires short-term cash funding. The amount shown below is calculated to comply with the new Financial Reporting Standard, the specific requirements of which differ from the basis on which pension liabilities are actuarially calculated for the ongoing funding of the scheme. The Financial Reporting Standard requires:

(i) actuarial deficiencies to be recognised immediately as a "liability" in the financial statements rather than being spread forward over employees' remaining service lives;

(ii) the actuary, in valuing the scheme's liabilities, is required to use a bond yield as the discount rate for valuing future liabilities, rather than a rate that reflects the expected return on the scheme's particular asset portfolio, with the result of an apparent increase in the present value of future longer-term liabilities.

IAS 19 figures in relation to employees and ex-employees who are members of the NILGOSC pension scheme.

	2024	2023
Rate of increase in salaries	**4.1%**	4.2%
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	**2.6%**	2.7%
Discount rate	**4.8%**	4.7%
Inflation assumption	**2.6%**	2.7%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	**2.6%**	2.7%

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	2024 Years	2023 Years
Average expected future life at age 65 for:		
Male currently aged 65	**21.7**	22.2
Female currently aged 65	**24.6**	25.0
Male currently aged 45	**22.7**	23.2
Female currently aged 45	**25.6**	26.0

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

The market value of assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return were:

Asset Allocation	Quoted %	Unquoted %	Total %	Value at 31 Mar 2024 £	Value at 31 Mar 2023 £
Equities	39.6%	0.1%	39.7%	1,214,820	1,098,400
Property	0%	9.3%	9.3%	284,580	307,552
Government Bonds	15.0%	0.0%	15.0%	459,000	565,676
Corporate Bonds	4.6%	0.0%	4.6%	140,760	82,380
Multi Asset Credit	13.0%	0.0%	13.0%	397,800	365,218
Cash	12.4%	0.0%	12.4%	379,440	178,490
Other	.2%	5.8%	6.0%	183,600	148,284
Total market value of assets	**84.8%**	**15.2%**	**100.%**	**3,060,000**	**2,746,000**
Present value of scheme liabilities				**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**
Unrecognised Surplus/Deficit in scheme				**(287,000)**	**(31,000)**
Net asset (liability) recognised on Statement of Financial Position				-	-

Reconciliation of present value of scheme liabilities

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 April	**2,715,000**	3,405,000
Current service cost	**103,000**	161,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Member contributions	**33,000**	26,000
Interest cost	**126,000**	95,000
Re-measurement on scheme liabilities	**(106,000)**	(886,000)
Benefits paid	**(98,000)**	(86,000)
At 31 March	**2,773,000**	2,715,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April	**2,746,000**	2,750,000
Expected return	**130,000**	77,000
Re-measurement on scheme assets	**157,000**	(95,000)
Employer contributions	**92,000**	74,000
Member contributions	**33,000**	26,000
Benefits paid	**(98,000)**	(86,000)
At 31 March	**3,060,000**	2,746,000

Scheme assets do not include any of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education's own financial instruments, or any property occupied by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the balance sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long-term real rates of return experienced in the respective markets.

Analysis of amount charged to statement of financial activities:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Current service cost	**103,000**	161,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Expected return	**(130,000)**	(77,000)
Interest cost	**126,000**	95,000
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**(8,000)**	(791,000)
Adjustment in respect of paragraph 64	**287,000**	31,000
Total operating charge/(credit)	**378,000**	(581,000)

The total service cost of £103,000 (2023: £161,000) is included within staff costs. The total contributions expected to be made by the scheme by NICIE in the year to 31st March 2024 are £125,000 (2023: £99,000)

Sensitivity analysis

IAS19R requires the disclosure of the sensitivity of the results to the methods and assumptions used.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

Changes in assumptions at year ended 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to employer liability	Approximate monetary amount (£'000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	1.7%	46
1 year decrease in member life expectancy	2.7%	73
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0.1%	3
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	1.6%	43

Employer Contribution Rates

The liabilities show the underlying commitment that NICIE has in the long term to pay retirement benefits. The total pension liability is £2,773,000 (2023 - £2,175,000) and results in an unrecognised asset of £287,000 (2023: £31,000). As per the scheme actuary the net asset/(liability) to be recorded on the Statement of Financial Position is £0 (2023 £0).

For 2023/24, employers participating in the scheme contributed at the rate of 19% (2023 –19%).

Scheme Gains and Losses

Actuarial gains and losses represent the extent to which actual outcomes have differed from the assumptions, which were used in calculating IAS 19 figures.

For assets, the gain/loss is normally the difference between the actual and expected return on assets, and for liabilities, the gain/loss normally arises from the change in financial assumptions. These actuarial gains/losses are shown in the table below as experience gains and losses.

Amounts for current and previous four years:

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
		£	**£**	£	£
Scheme liabilities	**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**	3,405,000	3,394,000	2,719,000
Scheme assets	**3,060,000**	**2,746,000**	2,750,000	2,502,000	2,011,000
Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme	**287,000**	**31,000**	(655,000)	(892,000)	(708,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets					
Amount (£)	**157,000**	**(95,000)**	137,000	398,000	(162,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities					
Amount (£)	**106,000**	**886,000**	251,000	(488,000)	330,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

13 Members liability

The liability of each member is limited to £10.

14 Reserves – restricted funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April	**161,298**	(592,932)
Net outgoing (losses)/resources before recognised losses	**(19,764)**	(5,770)
Actuarial re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme		760,000
At 31 March	**141,534**	161,298

At the year end there is no asset/liability to be recognised in respect of the NILGOSC pension fund.

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted fund	**2024 Total funds**	**2023 Total funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Fixed Assets	8,494	8,494	9,839
Current Assets	183,955	183,955	183,879
Current liabilities	(50,915)	(50,915)	(32,420)
Pension commitments	0	0	0
Net funds	141,534		161,298

16 Leases

The Company leases various tangible assets under non-cancellable operating lease arrangements.

As described in the notes the operating leases held include either short term or low value assets and as such no right of use asset nor corresponding lease liability has been recognised.

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure account:

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Leases (continued)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Expenses relating to short term leases	-	19,100
Expenses relating to low-value assets	1,161	1,866
Total expenses related to leases	1,161	20,966

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of cash flows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash outflow for leases (IFRS16) – operating activity	1,161	20,966
Total cash outflows	1,161	20,966

17 Contingent liabilities

The company has a contingent liability to repay revenue grants received if certain conditions are not fulfilled.

18 Capital commitments

At 31 March 2024, the company has no capital commitments (2023 £16,459 towards legal and all related moving costs to new accommodation James House).

19 Losses and special payments

At 31 March 2024, the company had no losses and special payments (2023: none).

20 Related party transactions

NICIE is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by DE. DE is regarded as a related party. During the year, NICIE has had various transactions with the DE and with other entities for which DE is regarded as the parent Department.

None of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with NICIE during the year (2023: none). As per the
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

register of interests maintained by NICIE, there were no conflicts of interest during the year (2023: none).

21 Ultimate controlling party

There is no ultimate controlling party.

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Annual report

Registered number: NI022427
Charity registered number: 100310

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(a company limited by guarantee)

Directors' report and financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
Under the requirements of the Department of Education/NICIE Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

On
22 June 2024

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Directors' Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Contents **Pages**

Reference and administrative details	2 - 3
Directors' report	4 - 20
Annual report	21
Chief Executive Officer's report	22 - 24
Annual Governance Statement	25 - 44
Remuneration and Staff report	45 - 51
Assembly Accountability and Audit Report	52
Independent auditors' report	53 - 57
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	58
Statement of financial position	59
Statement of cash flows	60
Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow/ (outflow) from Continuing operating activities	61
Notes to the financial statements	62 - 76

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Reference and administrative details

Directors/Trustees

Adele Kerr
Anne Murray
Ashleigh Moran
Barry Corrigan (Appointed November 2023, Resigned December 2023)
Bill Fletcher (Resigned June 2024)
Bill Miscampbell
Bob Hanna (Resigned February 2024)
Cathal Mullaghan
Colin Millar
Dr Anne Marie Telford (Resigned February 2024)
Duncan Morrow
Eamon Quinn (Vice Chair)
Gavin Gray
Helen Smyth (Secretary)
John Scott
Maeve Marnell (Chair)
Nigel Arnold (Appointed March 2024)
Patricia Douglas (Resigned May 2024)
Sandra Patterson
Shane Greer
Pamela Algie (Appointed June 2024)

Senior management members

Roisin Marshall (Chief Executive Officer)
Maureen Johnston (Finance Officer)
Cliodhna Scott Wills (Senior Development Officer)
Lorna McAlpine (Senior Development Officer)
Lynn Johnston (Senior Development Officer) Appointed July 2023
Emma Hume (Senior Development Officer) Appointed September 2023

Reference and administrative details (continued)

Registered and Principal office

James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Belfast BT7 2JB

Solicitors

Cleaver Fulton Rankin
50 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7FW

Bankers

First Trust Bank
33 – 35 University Road
Belfast
BT7 1ND

Independent auditors

SCC Chartered Accountants
17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

You may reuse this information (including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, please visit http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gis.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This Document is also available on our website at http://www.nicie.org.uk

Any Enquiries regarding this document should be sent to NICIE, James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, BT7 2JB.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

The directors, who are also trustees, present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, *Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice,* affordable to charities preparing their accounts. This is in accordance with the International Financial Reports standards and in accordance with the requirements and guidelines set out in the Government's Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and other guidance issued by the Department of Finance (DoF) in force for the financial year for which the financial statements are being presented.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standard as adopted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Reference and administrative details

Details of the registered office, directors, independent advisers, and other relevant information are given on page 2 and 3.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education ("NICIE") was incorporated in 1989 as a company limited by guarantee and is exempt from tax under Section 505(1) (c) of the Income and Corporation Act 1988 as a body established for charitable purposes only. NICIE was designated as a Non-Departmental Public Body ("NDPB") in February 2012. It is sponsored by the Department of Education ("DE"). The company's principal activity as defined in the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 is "to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated Education and schools for the public benefit".

Directors

All directors are members of NICIE. All directors are guarantors of the company with a maximum liability of £10.

Appointment of directors

NICIE directors are elected/appointed from six areas representative of all stakeholders. These comprise, involved in the provision of teaching, Principals, Schools, Trusts, Early Years and DE. Directors can serve two periods of between 2-4 years' subject to the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Director induction and training

The Company Secretary ensures that appropriate induction and training is given to all NICIE Board of Director ("BoD") members. Each new director is provided with an information pack about NICIE and their responsibilities and is given an opportunity to meet all staff. Details of the BoD structure is illustrated on page 31 of the NICIE Governance statement.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Organisation

The Board of Directors ("BoD") in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of NICIE and the Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) carries on the governance, management and conduct of the business and affairs of NICIE. The Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") is Roisin Marshall.

Funding

NICIE works in close collaboration with its principal funder DE. It is also supported by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and The Northern Ireland Office to promote the work of the organisation.

Risk management and internal control

The directors are responsible for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by NICIE.
The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures and a system of delegation and accountability.

It includes:

- A comprehensive budgeting system, with a strategic plan and an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the directors;
- Regular reviews by the directors of monthly and annual financial reports, which indicate financial performance against approved budget and forecast; and
- Monitoring progress against the strategic plan.

As part of the monitoring process, the directors have implemented a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review of the risks which NICIE may face, and actions taken to mitigate identified risks;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the organisation should any of those risks materialise.

Significant risks identified are in relation to the following areas:

- NICIE fails to deliver a balanced Resource and Capital Budget as a result of ineffective management of resources to ensure the delivery of the Department of Education's Strategic Priorities and NICIE's statutory duties and priorities within budget.
- Weakness and Ineffective governance & accountability arrangements.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

- Failure to exercise proper stewardship, and maximise the resources allocated to NICIE in line with Financial Memorandum and grant conditions where applicable, within a proper financial control framework under Non-Departmental Public Body, (NDPB) status.

- Failure to support, promote and grow Integrated Education due to inability to assess parental demand for integrated education.

A key element in the management of financial risk is the setting up of a reserves policy and its regular review by directors. Particular attention is also focused on non-financial risks arising from fires and the health and safety of all staff and visitors.

Objectives and activities of NICIE

During the year, NICIE continued to operate in the following Programme areas:

1. Development and support services, for which core funding was made available through DE. The key objectives for this Programme underpinned DE's Strategic Priorities and policies and included promoting the growth of Integrated provision through supporting parents' groups, supporting schools in the process of 'Transformation,' or interested in 'Transforming' and supporting existing Integrated schools regarding consolidation and expansion and in embedding 'Integration in practice.' NICIE worked with Integrated schools and other stakeholders in the process of Area planning. NICIE raised the level of debate about the role of Integrated Education by informing and influencing public opinion. NICIE promoted the characteristics of Integration in practice both in Integrated schools and across other schools. NICIE continues to strive to improve its internal capacity to be able to fulfil its Business Plan as agreed with DE.

2. The initiation and development of related work funded through the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA).

3. The implementation of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Grant to foster increased awareness and support for integrated education in Northern Ireland and encourage wider societal reconciliation between communities in the educational system

Achievements and performance

The statement of financial activities for NICIE.

All programmes are drawn up in accordance with best practice and link to the Strategic Aims of NICIE and are aligned to the business plan of DE. All programmes have detailed operational plans to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic and Business Plans and are monitored on a regular basis by the Board, Senior Management Team, and the external funding bodies.

Details of NICIE's activities during the year can be accessed online at www.nicie.org or by contacting NICIE at the registered address.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Financial Review

The full financial results of NICIE are set out in detail in the financial statements on pages 57 to 58. The net outgoing resources for the year before recognised gains and losses was £26,764 (2023: £5,770)

Performance

NICIE bases its operations strategically on a 3-year strategic plan and on an annual basis on a Business Plan, which is reported on a quarterly basis to the Board of Directors and DE. The Business Plan is set within the context of DE's business plan, and additionally, it includes related projects, which are funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and Northern Ireland office (NIO). NICIE reports on its operations in its Annual Report. NICIE has delivered on all its Business Plan commitments in this current year.

Reserves

NICIE receives grants from various sources that are spent on the activities as detailed in the respective Letters of Offer. Any unspent monies may be subject to claw-back by the grant provider.

The net liabilities at the year-end including the pension surplus is £141,534 (2023: £161,298). This includes a net pension liability of nil. (2023: £NIL). The company's funding for the year ended March 2024 has been confirmed from the DE. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. For further details of the pension commitment liability, please refer to note 12 of the financial statements (page 69) and the Remuneration report on pages 44-50.

Forward funding

NICIE has secured sufficient income from a variety of sources for the year 2024 - 2025 to offer assurance to the directors and stakeholders of its ability to operate for the next financial year. Major funding has been guaranteed from DE, with other project funds being made available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a grant from the Northern Ireland Office through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Strategic priorities, objectives, and activity

Our Vision

A society where children are educated together; confident to express their own identity and culture; respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

Our Mission

To promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education

Strategic Priorities 2022-2025

1. **Promote Integrated Education**

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

2. **Grow Integrated Education**

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

3. **Support Integrated Education**

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

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Introduction

This year has been an exceptional year for the Integrated Education movement in Northern Ireland: the environment in which NICIE is operating has changed. The implications of Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 are beginning to be analysed, interpreted, and felt by stakeholders across the complex educational landscape of Northern Ireland and this is bringing unprecedented opportunities for the growth of Integrated Education. Whilst we are delighted with these seismic shifts, it brings significant challenges for our small staff team.

In March 2024, we are a team of fourteen people (nine funded with Department of Education (DE) resource, four with resource from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and one funded with resource from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA):

NICIE Staff Team: March 2024
Chief Executive Officer: Roisin Marshall
Finance Officer: Maureen Johnston
Senior Development Officers: Lorna McAlpine, Cliodhna Scott-Wills, Lynn Johnston, Emma Hume
Development Officers: Laura Largey, Tiarnán McMeekin, Jessica Clarke, Mary Potter, Fiona Darrah.
Office Manager: Mark Roberts
Executive Assistant: Carol Black
Administration Officer: Michael Nicholl

In this last year, two part-time staff members left to spend more time with family and pursue other interests. Thank you, Alastair Rowan and Florence McCaw for the valued contributions you made in your five years of service. The additional NIO funding enabled us to recruit four new Development Officers and restructure our Senior Management Team in relation to strategic communications and support for transforming schools.

This report is structured into two sections, which work symbiotically to support, grow and promote Integrated Education. Firstly, it will summarise the operational school-focussed delivery activity of the NICIE Development team in the last year and secondly it will reflect on the collaborative, strategic and policy engagement work of the organisation. It will conclude by highlighting the key successes and reflecting on the challenges of the past year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Section 1
Operational activity to support, grow and promote Integrated Education

This section outlines the core operational activity of the NICIE Development Team. These activities work symbiotically to promote, grow and support Integrated Education. The impact of the global pandemic continues to alter how we deliver our services. Embracing a hybrid model has enabled more engagements with more people and more varied audiences in both virtual and in person spaces. The hybrid option, combined with the impact of the increasing public discussions in multiple arenas about the importance of educating children together, has had a profound impact on the demand for our expertise, knowledge, and services. In relation to our school-facing services, we continue to experience an increase in demand for all our services but this year the demand has been felt acutely from two sources: schools seeking to explore Transformation and existing Integrated schools seeking to develop their Integrated ethos.

1.1 Growing and promoting Integrated Education

The number of young people educated in Integrated schools this academic year (23/24) is 27,675, which represents an additional 492 since last year (22/23).

In the last 2.5 years, there have been seven new Integrated schools because of Transformation to Integrated status, with one of these taking place in the period of this report: Sion Mills Integrated Primary School in September 2023. Three schools' proposals were not approved (St. Anne's Primary School (PS), Donaghadee, Gillygooley PS, Omagh and Straid PS, Ballyclare).

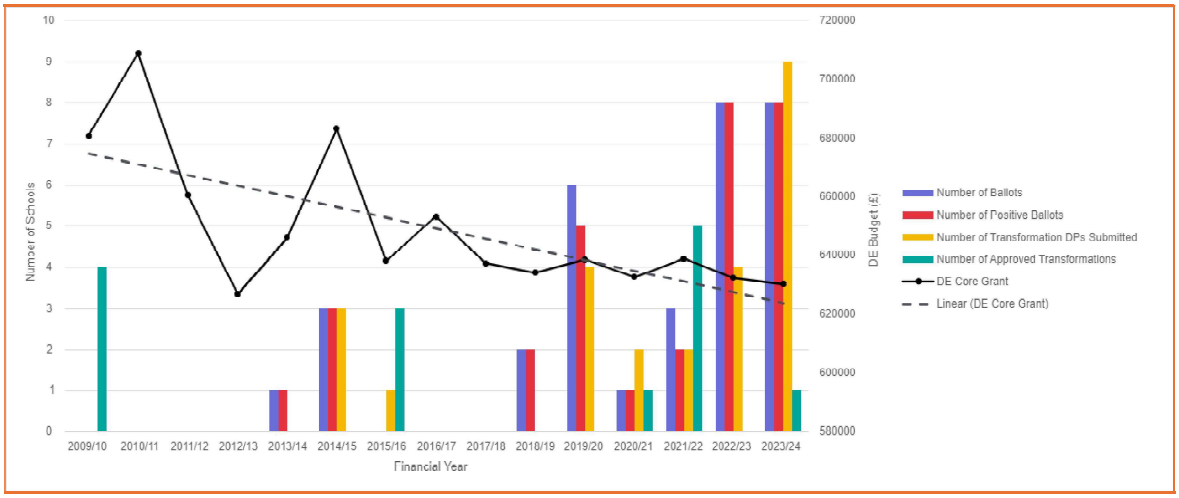
In the last 12 months, eight schools have completed ballots of their parental body, asking them whether they want their school to submit a proposal to become an Integrated school: Rathmore Primary School, Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College, Downshire Nursery School (NS), Ballyhenry PS, Culmore PS, Downshire PS and NU, Duneane PS and Killowen PS (Coleraine). We enjoy effective collaborative relationships with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and Education Authority (EA) partners in our work to support schools seeking to explore and/or start the Transformation journey.

We have supported nine schools (including three of those named above) to write and submit Development Proposals to Transform to Integrated status. In this year, the EA's Area Planning Team have provided draft Cases for Change for Governors of sustainable schools' that are seeking to Transform. Our team's resources would not have been sufficient to deliver these submissions without this writing and data provision support, alongside that of the of the EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) and the IEF. The EA then manages a 4-week pre-publication of the proposal, prior to a full 2-month public consultation by the DE, before the proposal makes its way to the Ministerial desk for decision-making.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

This collaborative activity and the additional funding sources secured have enabled us to cope with the rising demand to support schools seeking to Transform. As Fig 1 below shows, our core grant from DE is declining.

Fig 1 Graph showing data relating to Transformation of schools and DE core grant to NICIE since 2009



The sustainability of Integrated schools is a focus in all our activity. There are 15 schools that have passed a resolution to ballot and are yet to have a Ministerial decision, eleven of these are sustainable schools, in relation to enrolment numbers.

Alongside growth of Integrated Education because of school Transformations, this year has seen the approval of two new school projects: Approval for the creation of a new Post-Primary Grant Maintained Integrated School in the mid-Down area and for a new Post-Primary Controlled Integrated School in the Causeway area. Both projects incorporate an existing Integrated school (Blackwater Integrated College (IC) and North Coast IC) and are intended to create two new sustainable Integrated Colleges.

Three schools received approval to establish Nursery school places, which is an important aspect of Primary school sustainability: Rowandale Integrated Primary School (IPS), Drumlins IPS and Enniskillen IPS. Strangford IC's proposal to academically select 35% of pupils was approved. Including the approval of Sion Mills IPS's Transformation (mentioned above), this represents seven growth projects for Integrated Education.

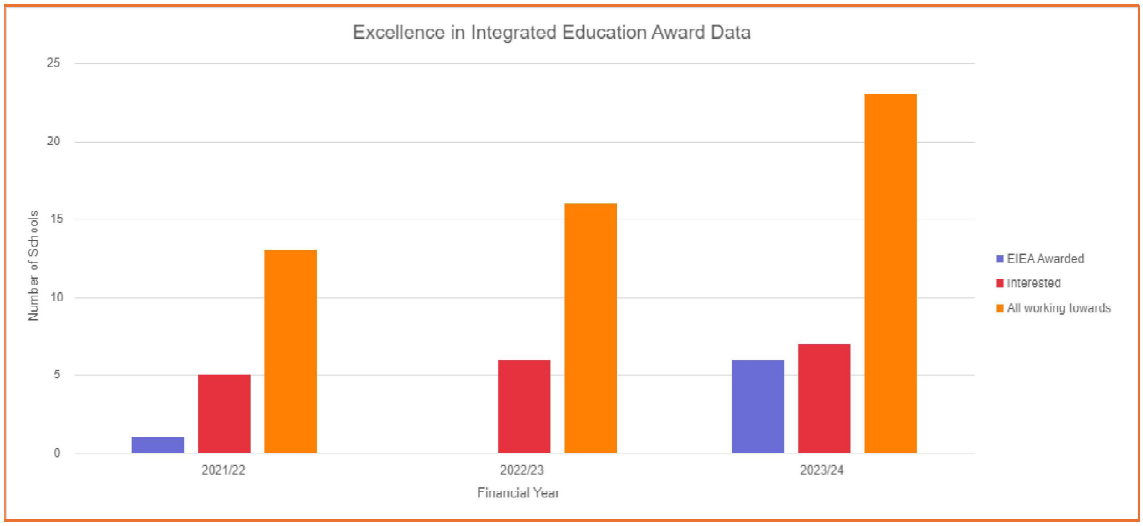
In our work to support sustainability of existing Integrated schools, NICIE supported Bridge IPS to submit a development proposal in the last year and EA (as the schools' Managing Authority) submitted a proposal for Cliftonville IPS, both in relation to establishment of a Nursery Unit. Including the nine Transformation proposals mentioned above, this makes eleven proposals submitted to EA to commence the pre-publication process in this financial year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

1.2 Supporting and promoting development of the Integrated Ethos

In 2023-24, three schools achieved renewal of their **Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA)**, including the first College to do so (Portadown IPS, Fort Hill IPS, New-Bridge IC), and three schools gained the Award for the first time (Carnlough IPS, Mill Strand IPS and Loughview IPS). The schools work through a self-evaluation and development process, based on the EIEA audit tool. Achievement of the EIEA is through external assessment, based on an evidence portfolio and two visits by the assessors. Each school receives an EIEA assessment report, including recommendations for further development of their Integrated ethos/practice.

Fig 2: Interest from existing Integrated schools in NICIE's Excellence in Integrated Education Award.



Of the 23 schools currently in their EIEA process, 15 are working towards the Award for the first time and 8 are working towards renewal (2 schools for the second time). Since the EIEA was established, 22 schools have achieved the Award at least once. Fig 2 below shows the increasing interest in the Award. We think that this is another impact of the 2022 Act, with existing Integrated schools seeking to reflect deeply on how their ethos contributes to the Act's description of the purpose and definition of Integrated Education.

In the last year, we have facilitated at least 81 sessions, with over 1900 participants, promoting and developing awareness of Integrated Education and the Integrated ethos.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Fig 3: Delivery of NICIE sessions related to Integrated Ethos development

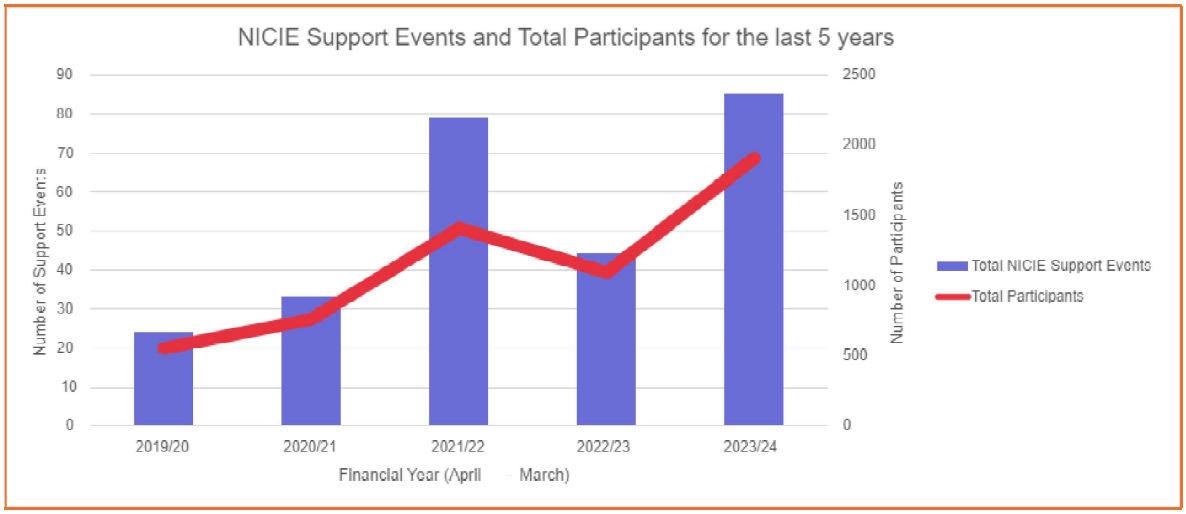


Fig 3 above shows the increasing demand for sessions focussed on the Integrated ethos. These sessions include:

- information and/or ethos development sessions to stakeholders in schools (parents, Governors and school staff at all levels) exploring and/or on the legal journey of school Transformation to Integrated status
- exploration of ethos and/or the EIEA and/or Anti-Bias in Education
- sessions to other audiences, international and local relating to Integrated Education, the Integrated ethos, Anti-Bias in Education and recent legislative developments

Following the DE approval for the establishment of a new Controlled Integrated College in the Causeway area, NICIE has worked in collaboration with the EA and the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC) in the setting up of a joint **Ethos Support Group** to work with the interim Board of Governors and the Principals of the existing schools (Coleraine College, Dunluce High School and North Coast Integrated College) to support the development of the Integrated ethos in the new school.

Framework for Integrated Education:

NICIE has continued to work with EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) to develop a Framework for Integrated Education. This is a self-evaluation tool which will support schools on their Integration journey whether a new/Transforming Integrated school or a long-established Integrated school. This then connects to the EIEA through which schools can focus their ongoing self-evaluation and development and achieve the externally assessed recognition of excellence.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

1.3 Communities for learning and sharing within Integrated Education

In the past year, we have facilitated five meetings of the NICIE Teachers' Committee, engaging 22 Integrated schools in the process. The Teachers' Committee lead on Integrated Education Month each year during March and in March 2024, the theme was 'Bias Busting'. Most Integrated schools engage in this annual campaign to celebrate and promote Integrated Education.

The Association of Principals in Integrated Schools (APTIS) has continued to be active this year with our support, hosting two conferences and two meetings, in which senior leaders from most Integrated schools participated.

The Vice-Principals' Forum, the Early Years' Forum, the Integrated Schools Finance Association (ISFA), and the GMI consultative forum have also met this year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Section 2

Strategic Collaboration and Policy Activity to support, grow and promote Integrated Education

Our core collaborative funding partner is the DE, enabling us to employ four of the nine staff in our Development Team and the wrap-around supports of senior and administrative staff and office services. We regularly meet with our sponsor colleagues, the **Irish Medium and Integrated Education branch within DE** and we have complied with all financial and governance requirements in relation to our status as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), a Limited Company and a Charity. Appropriate Financial and Management Reports were produced for senior management team, Finance and General Purposes Staffing Committee (FGPSC) and our Board of Directors throughout the year. An effective internal and external audit programme was delivered. Our full Board of Directors met on four occasions, with an additional eleven committee meetings.

We also work collaboratively with the **Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) Reconciliation Fund**, delivering on key performance indicators and targets agreed with each of these bodies. Our DFA project is in partnership with the IEF, enabling us to employ a member of our Development Team. Our NIO project also runs in tandem with an IEF project and this has enabled us to employ the other four members of our Development Team. Without this collaboration, we would not have been able to provide the necessary services to support the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Our NIO and DFA projects are completing in March 2025. Nineteen schools have moved to hold a parental ballot in the last three years, in comparison to ten in the previous ten years and new schools are coming forward to explore Transformation every month. The existing nine members of our Development Team are stretched to their limits meeting the current demand for our services, meaning that seeking additional resource is a priority.

As an NDPB and a sectoral support body, we represent Integrated Education at a wide range of forums, one of which is **Area Planning** meetings, facilitated by the Education Authority (EA) on behalf DE. Area Planning governance structures comprise a strategic Area Planning Steering Group (APSG), an operational Area Planning Working Group (APWG) and three Area Planning Local Groups (APLGs). NICIE has been present at all meetings throughout the year. In addition, Officers attended meetings relating to Specialist Provision in mainstream Schools, as this area of educational planning works to effectively respond to increasing demand. Through these attendances, we have supported the Area Planning process and worked collaboratively with partners to create a draft Operational Plan for the period 2024 to 2027. The Independent Review of Education, published in December 2023, points in the direction of enabling more children to be educated together and has suggested some methods by which this might be progressed. We look forward to working through these challenges with our Area Planning partners in the years ahead.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

The Department of Education launched A Strategy for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland and an associated Action Plan on 26th April 2023. **The Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022** requires DE to report to the NI Assembly annually on the progress of the Strategy and Action Plan. The DE has created and facilitated an Integrated Education Act Implementation Steering Group and an Integrated Education

Act Working group and NICIE has invested considerable resource in attending and engaging with these meetings and associated processes. The Act and the Action Plan places emphasis on NICIE's role as a consultee and this has required us to respond to increasing requests from DE and EA in relation to a variety of workstreams, including the review of the DE guidance to schools in relation to the Transformation process, 'Integration Works'.

NICIE has continued, when possible, to contribute to the **development of the educational system**, and/or represent the interests of Integrated schools and/or Integrated Education in a range of other forums, including: The Education Sector Managing Attendance Forum, Teachers' Pension Scheme Advisory Board, Admissions and Expulsion Appeals Panels, EA-led Community in Schools working group, Local Management of Schools (LMS), Pre School-Education Group (PEG), EA Cross Directorate Group for Integrated Education, Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD), End to End review of school improvement, End to end review of SEN, Sectoral CEO Forum. We actively participate on behalf of Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) Schools in Management Side of the Teachers Negotiating Council, Oversight Group, Schools Leaders Workload, Pensions and Managing Attendance Groups and other ad hoc workstreams as required. We have continued to take legal advice in relation to revision of GMI governance structures and a range of other issues associated with the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022.

We are collaborating as a community partner with Queen's University School of Psychology and have successfully obtained two funded PhD studentships planned to commence in September 2024. NICIE sits on four research steering groups in Partnership with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) exploring issues about religious balance, barriers to school Transformation to Integrated status, social attitudes in relation to pupils in schools and RE and the Integrated Ethos. The latter is a jointly funded project with IEF and the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS), which has appointed a researcher to produce guidance for Integrated primary schools about the teaching of Religious Education and related practice in the Integrated Education Primary school setting. We continue to be a partner in a project funded by the Standing Conference in Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS). This research is examining how prepared Teacher and Student teachers are to teach controversial issues.
We submitted responses during the public consultation period for seven potential new schools seeking to Transform to Integrated status and for two existing Integrated schools seeking to establish Nursery provision.

In January 2024, we submitted a written response to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Inquiry into Integrated Education and our CEO provided oral evidence to the Committee on 28th February.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Summary and Conclusion

This has been an exceptional year for NICIE and for the Integrated Education movement. This report has included the key achievements and outlined our current position. Alongside other public services in Northern Ireland, education, and Integrated Education, is experiencing the impact of chronic under-funding.

Whilst we were delighted to celebrate Roe Valley IPS's new school building this year, we were equally disappointed at the announcement in February 2024 that Fresh Start funding that was allocated for shared and Integrated school building projects is no longer available. We were also concerned with the lack of resource commitment in the DE's Integrated Education Strategy and associated Action Plan and the decreasing resource allocation for NICIE. When one considers the inflationary impacts, our core grant from DE has decreased by almost 50% since 2014/15[1]

We recognise that this is in the nature of public sector landscape in 2024 and we will continue to deliver services to the best of our ability with a passionate, talented and deeply committed staff team. We value our staff team and this year our team have invested time in a range of professional, personal and wellbeing development opportunities. Our team has invested in the deepening of our collaborative activity in the last few years and our productivity, reported above, is one indicator of our success in this regard.

[1] Using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation data from the Office for National Statistics

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Fixed assets

Details of the movement of fixed assets are set out in note 7 to the financial statements.

Donations

NICIE made no political donations during the year (2023: £nil)

Tax status

On 2 March 1989, NICIE was granted charitable status and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of NICIE are exempt for value added tax purposes. NICIE therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

Charitable status and public benefit

The company is a registered charity with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland under reference 100310. The directors have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

Disabled employees

NICIE gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment from disabled persons, having regard to their aptitude and abilities as well as Health and Safety factors.

Equality of Opportunity

NICIE follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service Policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement based on ability, qualification, and aptitude for work.

Employee involvement

It is the policy of NICIE to promote the understanding and involvement of all its employees in its aims and performance and it is committed to the continuing development of effective employee communication and consultation.

Sickness Absence

The sickness absence rate for the year was 146 days 4.6% (2023: 24.5 days .89%). The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Prompt Payment

NICIE is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with NICIE Financial Memorandum, the Confederation of British Industry's Better Practice Prompt Payers Code.

Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. In 2023/2024 NICIE paid 100% (2022/203: 100%) of its creditors within 30 days and no commission debt interest was paid or was due in respect of transactions in 2023/2024.

Statement of accounting officer and directors' responsibilities

The directors (who are also trustees of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education) are responsible for preparing the Directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law and Article 8(6) of the Financial Provisions (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 require the Chief Executive and directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the situation and of the surplus or deficit of NICIE for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Chief Executive and directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that NICIE will continue in business.

The Chief Executive (CEO) and directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of NICIE and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of NICIE and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The CEO is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of NICIE's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In addition, in appointing the Chief Executive of the NICIE as Accounting Officer for NICIE, the Department of Education has placed on the Chief Executive responsibilities including the regularity and propriety of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records. These are set out in the

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

"Accounting Officers" Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) issued by the Department of Finance. The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced, and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that they are fair, balanced, and understandable.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Accounting Officer and each of the Directors in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which NICIE's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that NICIE's auditors are aware of that information.

Small companies' exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small company's exemptions provided by the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013.

Independent auditors

The auditors, SCC Chartered Accountants, have been appointed as Independent Auditors through a tender process. A resolution concerning their reappointment for next year will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Board

Maeve Marnell
Chair **Date 22/06/2024**

Annual Report from the Chairperson for the year ended 31 March 2024

As the financial year draws to a close, I am pleased that we finally have an Assembly up and running and hopeful that this will have a positive impact on our budget for the coming year.
In 2023 our amazing staff rose above the challenges presented by our reduced budget and continued to work passionately and enthusiastically to meet our objectives of promoting, growing and supporting Integrated Education. Working with the principals, teachers, school staff, pupils and parents they demonstrated daily the positive societal impact that educating our children together can have.

In addition to our staff, I continue to be humbled by the huge sacrifice that our talented Board of Directors make to ensure good governance of the organisation and once again, with the expert support of our Finance Officer, Maureen Johnston, they have ensured that our budget has been managed efficiently and effectively.

I was pleased to continue work with the Department of Education on the Implementation of the Integrated Education Act. Working together with our partners in the IEF, AlumNI, APTIS as well as the Education Authority, CSSC and other sectoral support bodies, I feel confident that a cohesive strategy will be developed and we will continue to support the department to fulfil its duty to assess and aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education.

This year I am sad to say goodbye to our Senior Development Officer, Lorna McAlpine. Lorna has worked with NICIE for 27 years and the determination and tenacity she has demonstrated in the face of constant challenges and obstacles has been inspirational. She has had an enormous role in ensuring the development and growth of Integrated Education and we are so grateful for her immeasurable contribution.

It is also with great sadness that I say goodbye to our CEO, Roisin Marshall OBE. Roisin has led the organisation for 8.5 years with vision, positivity and unwavering enthusiasm. She has had a huge impact on the growth of Integrated Education through her unique ability to bring people together and create unity in seemingly impossible situations. Her ability to build and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders and see every challenge as an opportunity has been hugely beneficial to the development of NICIE and to the sector as a whole.

On behalf of the Board I want to thank Lorna and Roisin for their invaluable years of dedication and wish them every happiness in their retirement.

As my own term on the Board comes to an end I reflect back on the achievements of the last year in which more schools than ever are on the journey to transformation and am greatly optimistic for the future of Integrated Education. As we welcome a new CEO and a new Chair I am confident that we will continue to work positively with all our stakeholders and will achieve our mission of promoting reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 22/06/2024

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024

It has been both an honour and a privilege to have served for the last 8.5 years as the Chief Executive Officer of the Council for Integrated Education.

Most of you know I served my time with NICIE, both as a Development Officer and a Senior Development Officer between 2002 and 2007, having previously spent 12 years teaching in both primary and post primary schools, after which I was seconded to the North Eastern Education and Library Board to extend the work of the integrating Education Project. I am most grateful for the opportunity to have learned about Integrated Education from teachers, as a governor of my own children's schools and staff members and successive Boards of NICIE including the various Trust's members.

The first few years of my tenure, as the new Chief Executive Officer was to build relations with the Department of Education, the Education Authority (EA), the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), the AlumNI, products of Integrated education and supporters, the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC), the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Grammar Bodies Association (GBA), and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíchta (CnaG) , as well as the Transferors Representative Council (TRC), the Catholic Schools Trustee Service (CSTS) and the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA.)

Relationships have never been better between NICIE and these various organisations and that has also enabled us to promote, support and grow Integrated Education. This last year 23/24 has seen the highest number of strong, sustainable schools voting to Transform to Integrated Education.

It has been important to continue to access places in Integrated schools for those parents and carers who want that for their children and young people. Every place in an integrated school over the last 43 years has been hard fought for by parents, NICIE and IEF staff teams and more recently EA Sectoral Support and there have been many challenges along the way.

I want to pay tribute to the staff team in NICIE, who have always stepped up to provide support to enable Integrated schools to grow in size, existing schools to Transform and new schools to be developed. I want to pay particular credit to Senior Development Officer, Lorna McAlpine, who retires in April 2024 after 20+ years of service to the development of Integrated Education on a number of different levels. Lorna has been a source of wisdom, knowledge, understanding and expertise. I also want to pay tribute to Cliodhna Scott Wells, Senior Development Officer for Support within NICIE for her determination, knowledge, expertise, and skills to help support all of the Integrated schools.

I also want to pay particular tribute to Maureen Johnston, NICIE Finance Officer, who has worked tirelessly to ensure that NICIE runs as an effective organisation and that the budget is managed.

To all the other members of the NICIE staff team both past and present under my leadership, I want to say thank you for all of your support throughout my tenure.

There have been many challenges over my time as Chief Executive Officer, including COVID, the search for new premises, transition to a hybrid way of working, moving to new premises, managing a very challenging, limited budget in the face of increased demand for our services. However, NICIE, as a team, along with our very dedicated Board of Directors and specifically

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

our current Chair, Maeve Marnell, have worked collectively to ensure the continued development of Integrated Education over the last 8.5 years.

I want to pay tribute to both of the Chairs of directors throughout my time, Alan Henry, OBE and Maeve Marnell since the onslaught of COVID and the impact of this on the NICIE staff team, the Directors and the organisation as a whole who have consistently supported me as Chief Executive Officer in navigating all of the many challenges.

We lived through together, the Independent Review of Integrated Education, the passage of the Integrated Education Bill and the subsequent passing of the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022, coming into force in October 2022. The subsequent Integrated Education Strategy Action Plan and consultation of same has required NICIE as a collective organisation to ensure the very best outcomes for the leaders, staff and children and young people in Integrated Education.

NICIE values of inclusivity and diversity, enabling everyone to participate, and no one getting to dominate requires NICIE as an organisation to be thoughtful and considerate and enable everyone's voice to be heard.

The successive Ministers of Education over my tenure, the Permanent Secretaries and the officials in the Department of Education have had to get to know NICIE through their interaction with myself, members of our board and staff team. I am grateful for all of the support over the years when we presented robust cases for approval, and for the many approvals that were given.

In the words of Paulo Coehlo from The Alchemist 'One day you will wake up and there won't be any more time to do the thing you've always wanted to. Do it now.' He also says 'If you are brave enough to say goodbye life will reward you with a new hello.'

Looking forward to my retirement. One of my favourite poets sums it up.

The Sunlight on the Garden

The sunlight on the garden
Hardens and grows cold,
We cannot cage the minute
Within its nets of gold;
When all is told
We cannot beg for pardon.

Our freedom as free lances
Advances towards its end ;
The earth compels , upon it
Sonnets and birds descend ;
And soon , my friend ,
We shall have no time for dances.

The sky was good for flying
Defying the church bells
And every evil iron

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Siren and what it tells:

The earth compels,
We are dying, Egypt, dying.

And not expecting pardon
Hardened in hearts anew,
But glad to have sat under
Thunder and rain with you,
And grateful too
For sunlight on the garden.

Louis Macniece

Glad to have sat under thunder and rain with you all but grateful too, for sunlight on the garden. I will go back to poetry and song and maybe even a dance. Remembering to keep the main thing the main thing…good outcomes for children and young people…we are collectively responsible…thank you to all who have kept that as the main thing.

Roisin Marshall

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Department of Education (DE). NICIE was established in 1987 as an umbrella body to represent Integrated schools and to promote Integrated Education. NICIE was set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is supported through grant in aid by DE under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

The role of NICIE as defined in the Management Statement is '*to promote Integrated Education and to perform a wide range of roles in facilitating the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland for the public benefit.'*

The Governance Statement sets out the governance structures, risk management and internal control procedures that have operated within NICIE during the financial year 2023 to 2024.

The Annual Governance Statement has been produced in line with guidance issued by DoF in accordance with the guidance in Annex 3.1 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and forms part of the Statutory Accounts and is reviewed, considered, and approved by the Board of Directors (BoD).

This Governance statement reflected NICIE's activities and governance for the current financial year.

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I am committed to operating in accordance with best practice in business integrity and ethics and maintaining the highest standards of financial reporting and governance. I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of controls that supports the achievement of NICIE's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the NICIE assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned in the MPMNI.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

As Accounting Officer of a public body and designated NDPB, I am committed to governance excellence and to ensuring accountability and transparency for all decisions and activities. I am responsible to the Permanent Secretary of DE under the terms and conditions as set out in NICIE's Management Statement (incorporating the Financial Memorandum) (MSFM).

I am satisfied that I have delivered upon my responsibilities as NICIE Accounting Officer and thereby declare to the Departmental Accounting Officer of my fitness to act as Accounting Officer.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Strategic Objectives

NICIE launched its new three-year Strategic Plan 2022-2025 in April 2022.

This strategic plan aims to:

1. Promote Integrated Education

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

2. Grow Integrated Education

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

3. Support Integrated Education

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

NICIE's vision is a society where children are educated together, confident to express their own identity and culture; and respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

The NICIE mission is to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

The current strategic plan sets out clearly defined strategic objectives for the year 2023-2024. I have ensured that the aims and objectives have been implemented with all staff, Board of Directors (BoD) and relevant stakeholders during 2023-2024 and regularly reviewed.

The NICIE business plan aligned to DE's strategic priorities clearly set out NICIE aims and objectives for the year 2023-2024 and was monitored throughout the year.

Governance Framework

In partnership with the NICIE Board of Directors, I have a corporate responsibility for setting objectives, agreeing priorities, and implementing ministerial policy. The BoD, and I, as the NICIE Accounting Officer and the staff of NICIE, developed and agreed a business plan for the 2023-2024 year, which was formally approved by DE.

The Business Plan was regularly reviewed along with key risks associated with the delivery of NICIE's objectives throughout the year. A mid-term six-month evaluation report to 30.9.2023 and year end evaluation provided updated progress reports on the achievements of NICIE for the 12 months to 31.3.2024 to both the BoD and DE.

NICIE have been working within our current Development Team capacity to respond to the increasing demand for our services. This DE funded team currently consists of three Senior Development Officers and one Development Officer. NICIE have also been successful in obtaining restricted funding from the Northern Ireland Office to fund one Senior Development

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Officer and three Development Officers until 31 March 2025. The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs has also funded a Development Officer until 31 March 2025.

In the 2023/2024 school year, there were approximately 27,000 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools.
One Transforming school got approval in September 2023.Three small unsustainable schools were not approved for Transformation. Seven other Development Proposals were approved in 2023/24 including two for GMI Post Primaries and 3 for GMI Nursery units.

This year has seen a continued surge in schools requesting support from NICIE regarding consideration of Transformation to Integrated Status. In 2023/2024 seven cases for change have been submitted to EA processes for schools Transforming to IE status and have been published.

In addition, there are fourteen more cases for change in the process of being progressed with the Boards of Governors from each school of which 10 are sustainable. These are all schools, which are post-ballot and seeking to Transform to Integrated status. Six schools had successful parental ballots this year.

Development Proposals for significant change to the Integrated Schools sector

There are 2 development proposals awaiting Ministerial decision for Nursery units.

A proposal for the new Causeway Controlled Integrated College which NICIE has worked on in collaboration with the three schools; North Coast Integrated College, Dunluce College, and Coleraine College, CSSC (Controlled Schools Support Council), UU (Ulster University) and the Education Authority, has been approved by DE.

Structure of NICIE

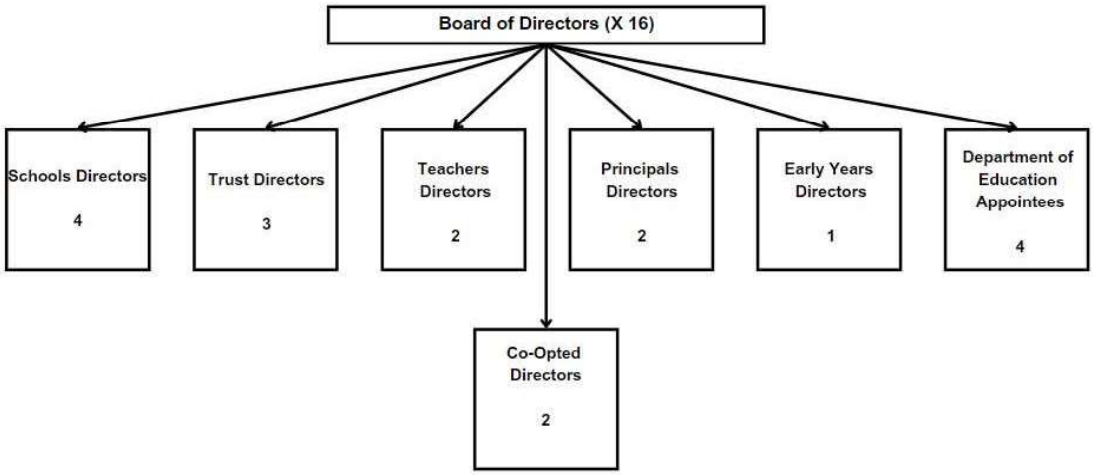
Board and Committees

The Board of Directors has a membership of 16 non-executive members including four DE appointees. There are currently two vacant DE Directors. The two vacant DE Directors will be filled through a forthcoming public appointments competition to be launched in the summer of 2024.

The role of the Board is to provide leadership to NICIE during the budget year, within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enable risk to be assessed and managed, to set NICIE's strategic aims, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet its objectives, provide oversight to set NICIE's values and standards and to ensure its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The current BoD structure is illustrated below:



NICIE is a constituent body of member organisations with seven categories of membership:

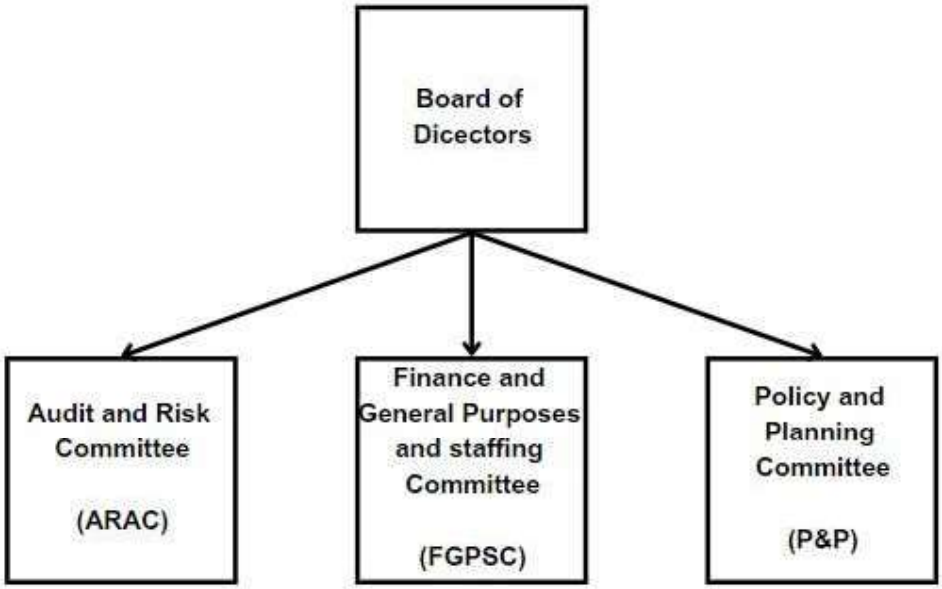
1. School members • 4 members to be elected at AGM	Those engaged in running a particular Integrated school.
2. Support members / Trust • 3 members to be elected at AGM	Organisations for the support and promotion of Integrated Education.
3. Teacher members	Representatives of teacher organisations. 2 members nominated by The Teachers Committee
4. Principal Member • 2 members nominated by APTIS (Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools)	Representatives of principals' association.
5. Early Years members • 1 member nominated by Teachers Committee	Those engaged in running pre-school provision in a particular Integrated school.
6. Co Opted • Up to 3 directors	To provide additional experience
7. Department of Education	4 people appointed by DE

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Board and Committees Structure

Three committees serve and report to the Board of Directors and are illustrated below.
The current directors and attendance records are recorded below. The Board structure and all directors were reviewed prior to the hybrid Annual General Meeting (AGM) including attendance records to ensure that the structure complied with NICIE's Articles of Association.

NICIE Board and Committees Structure:



Attendance at Meetings

Directors' attendance at meetings held during 2023-2024 is detailed below. Please note that some directors were not in post for the full financial year and joined the subcommittees during the year and the figures represent their percentage attendance based on when they joined.

Director/Member 2023-2024	Board of Directors 4 Zoom mtgs + AGM)	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee 4 Zoom mtgs	Finance, General Purposes & Staffing Committee 4 Zoom meetings	Policy and Planning Committee 2 Zoom mtgs
Maeve Marnell Chair	100%	-	100%	100%
Sandra Patterson	100%	100%	-	100%
Matt O Neill (Member)				50%
Claire Loftus			100%	

(Member)				
John Scott	100%	-	75%	100%
Attendance at Meetings Continued				
Cathal Mullaghan	100%	75%	-	
Shane Greer	75%	-	50%	50%
Anne Murray	75%		75%	100%
Dr Anne-Marie Telford (End of Term Feb 2024)	50%	50%	-	100%
Helen Smyth	100%	100%	-	50%
Adele Kerr	50%	-	75%	-
Bill Miscampbell (*co-optee)*	75%	-	100%	
Eamon Quinn *(co-optee)*	100%	-	-	100%
Bill Fletcher (appointed June 2023 Resigned December 2023)	100%	-	-	
Colin Millar	100%	100%	-	
Patricia Douglas	100%	100%	-	50%
Duncan Morrow	75%			100%
Bob Hanna DE Rep (Resigned Feb 2024)	100%	75%	-	-
Gavin Gray DE Rep	25%	-		-
Ashleigh Morrow	25%			
Nigel Arnold (Appointed March 2024)	100%			

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Performance of the Board 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

The Board of Directors held four meetings including the Annual General Meeting (AGM November 2023.) It was agreed that the Board meetings would continue to focus on strategy and the future direction of NICIE in the changing educational environment and the Integrated Education Act which came into force in October 2022. The new Act requires DE to "support" as well as "encourage and facilitate" Integrated Education. It will require "identifying, assessing, monitoring, and aiming to meet the demand for the provision of Integrated Education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate and providing sufficient places in Integrated schools to aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education." NICIE has been involved in the Consultation of the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Strategy Action Plan and consultation of same.

The chairperson continued to review the attendance of Board Members for the previous 12 months and reiterated the need for attendance and participation. The Chair was satisfied with the reasons for absence and ensured that proper processes were employed to address all absences and satisfied that all Board members continue on the Board. This was closely reviewed, monitored, and reported throughout the year, in my monthly meetings with the Chair. A few new directors replaced directors that had come to the end of their term. We were delighted to welcome these new directors to add their contributions to the proactive and dynamic Board.

A great deal of attention was directed to the move to NICIE's new office accommodation to ensure that it was affordable and the best option for NICIE.

Most meetings continued to be online though there were some hybrid meetings except for a board strategy day which was held in June 2023. All new Directors received induction training to ensure that they were briefed accordingly and were aware of their duties. This included the NICIE Corporate Governance guide, which was circulated to all Board members during the year to ensure adherence and compliance.

The Chair will complete the annual appraisal of directors. The chairperson continued to assess the performance of individual Board members through arrangements determined by the Department. Board members will continue to be subject to ongoing performance appraisal, with a formal assessment being completed by the chair at the end of each financial year and prior to any re- appointment of individual members taking place. Feedback of the appraisal process was shared with the Board and reported a positive working environment.

The Terms of reference of all committees were all reviewed during the year.

The appraisals also formed part of the assessment of the Board's effectiveness and were reported accordingly. A Board Effectiveness Review was carried out in November by the Independent Internal Auditor. The subsequent report had some minor recommendations, which will be added to the Board Effectiveness Action Plan for regular review by the Policy and Planning Committee.

The Chair was also appraised this year through arrangements made by the DE.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I also had monthly 1-1 meetings with the Chair where we reviewed the committees and the strategy of NICIE and agreed agenda for Board meetings.

A training programme was implemented during the year for the directors.

The register of interests continued to be a standard agenda at all Board meetings to ensure that any areas of Board member conflict are addressed at the start of each meeting.

The Board reviews, through the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) report and a range of presentations and discussion papers, the ongoing work of NICIE and its implementation of its strategic plan and business plan. Each Senior Development Officer for Grow and Support attends one Board meeting per year to present their report card on the NICIE Business Plan. The Report Card is regularly updated and feedback from DE has been useful in improving how NICIE Staff and Directors approach Outcomes Based Accountability.

During the year, the Board reviewed reports from other sub committees including the annual Internal Audit report, annual financial statements, monthly summary extracts from the management accounts and approved the Annual Business Plan and associated budgets.

NICIE reviewed the progress on the existing strategic plan and drafted a 2024-2025 business plan. A review was also undertaken of the effectiveness of reporting to the Board as part of the Board Effectiveness Review.

The Chairperson, Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer met the Permanent Secretary of DE for Governance and Accountability meetings twice in this financial year. Position reports were forwarded prior to these meetings highlighting any areas of significant accountability and governance. It was agreed that all was in order in the current challenging financial climate and that budgets were being managed accordingly. NICIE had hoped to be able to apply for Peace Plus Funding and were disappointed that this did not materialize.

NICIE has worked closely with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) to promote Integrated Education and is currently working with 20 schools at various stages of the Transformation process. One school successfully Transformed on 1st September 2023(Sion Mills Integrated Primary School).

As part of ensuring that all Board meetings are managed in an efficient and timely manner, I ensure that the Accounting Officer/CEO Report is circulated prior to the Board meetings along with all relevant papers.

Committee Reports

Role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) oversees financial reporting and the effectiveness of financial and regulatory compliance, controls and systems reporting.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee formally met on 4 occasions during 2023-2024 reviewed the Corporate Risk Register at each meeting and was satisfied that all risks were identified and corrective action taken where feasible. Some of the key risks are highlighted further in this report.

The Committee throughout the year continued to review and update the Corporate Risk Register to assure members that all risks relating to working from home arrangements and business continuity were incorporated into the register and that all risks were managed and mitigated accordingly. The Business Continuity Plan was also updated and reviewed at all the ARAC meetings.

There has been a new chairperson appointed for this committee as the existing chairperson has come to the end of their tenure as a DE Representative for NICIE.
The register of conflicts continued to be a standard item on the ARAC agenda.

In addition, the Committee reviewed the results of the internal audit report and the implementation of previous year's audit recommendations. The Committee was also responsible for reviewing the annual statutory Directors Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31.3.2023 and will also be responsible for the reports to 31.3.2024.

It also reviewed several policies and documentation from DE and DoF, which were updated by DE during the current year to ensure best practice and that DE business case, tenders, and DoF Pay Remit guidance was adhered to.

The NICIE ARAC Terms of Reference were also reviewed, and it was agreed that these would be reviewed every three years in line with the other committees in NICIE.

A summary report from the ARAC was presented to the Board by the chair of the committee following each meeting during the year.

Representatives from the IMIE Team at DE also sat on this Committee this year, which assisted in giving additional assurance to the Committee that all audit requirements were adhered to and provided guidance.

Finance, General Purposes and Staffing Committee (FGPSC)

This Committee continues to meet before the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors. It met 4 times during the current year. Its function is to focus more on the finance and personnel issues presented to the Board. This Committee also dealt with all issues relating to staff and premises.

FGPSC also continues to review staff policies throughout the year, ensuring that NICIE has covered all areas of staffing procedures and guidance.

The HR subcommittee also continued to meet where necessary during the year to dedicate more time to internal staffing issues and recruitment to ensure adequate time allocated to support the Finance Officer and me as CEO. This committee also included the Chair of NICIE. Progress was then reported accordingly to the relevant committee.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The budget for the monthly management statements were carefully reviewed by me and the Finance Officer prior to presentation to the FGPSC who then reviewed the financial and performance management of NICIE ensuring that all budgets and internal controls were adhered to for the year up to 31.3.2024.

In this Financial year a significant deal of time was dedicated to the move to new office accommodation ensuring that the accommodation was affordable and fit for the needs of all NICIE staff.

It is a legal requirement that all places of work have a health and safety policy, which staff should be made aware of and adhere to. I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all duties under Health and Safety legislation. This is a standard item on the FGPSC agenda to ensure that the office was managed in accordance with government and health guidelines and that all staff were being managed and had support in terms of the ability to work from home, including pastoral care.

This committee was also responsible for ensuring that NICIE was fully compliant with business case requirements.

The FGPSC's remit also includes the awarding of tenders and ensuring that NICIE adheres to strict procurement procedures with the approval of DE. However, the committee continues to raise concerns again over the costs and time that NICIE incurred adhering to DoF Procurement guidance under Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD) when retendering for goods and services.

Policy and Planning Committee (P&P)

The Committee's remit during the current year included:

- The Independent Review of Education
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Implementation
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Consultation on the Strategy Action Plan
- The submission to Northern Ireland Affairs committee (NIAC) on Integrated Education
- Monitoring Board Effectiveness Action Plan
- Monitoring Progress of Strategic and Business Plans
- Education Authority Sectoral Support Presentation and discussion on Shared Education

The Policy and Planning Committee has held two meetings during the year to formulate NICIE's policy position and various educational policies and legislation including Kellie Armstrong's Private Members' Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022. Committee members provide constructive challenges and guidance in response to updates by a Senior Development Officers on key areas of work. It is also an opportunity for Directors to gain a better-detailed understanding of the context that NICIE is working within, including a presentation and submission to the Independent Review of Education.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Compliance with Corporate Governance

An annual review of the effectiveness of NICIE's governance structures, as set out in the 2013 code (DAO/ (DFP) 10/12), risk management and internal controls has been conducted, informed by staff, directors, independent internal and external auditors. The NICIE Board has assessed that it has effectively complied with the Corporate Governance Code.

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) sets out a broad framework within which the Council is required to operate, and the Financial Memorandum defines certain financial provisions which NICIE is required to observe. As Accounting Officer and CEO, I have ensured that the MSFM has been adhered to for the financial year 2023-2024. NICIE is currently working with its DE sponsor branch on a Proportionate Autonomy Framework and are currently working towards a new Partnership Agreement, which will in due course replace the MSFM framework.

NICIE has continued to review its internal procedures to ensure that all services are reviewed and that business cases are submitted to the Irish Medium and Integrated Education (IMIE) Team in DE in a timely fashion and that all appropriate approvals are obtained before any expenditure is committed.

Training has also been given to all new staff during the year at staff meetings to ensure that controls are adhered to, and new staff are given induction training on arrival. Training needs have also been identified for new and existing directors and governance training has been organised and provided. Induction was provided for new directors and exit interviews/surveys were completed for all directors that left during the year.

All relevant Companies House and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland requirements have been updated.

NICIE continues to ensure that its governance arrangements are in place operating in accordance with best practice and that it continues to align its business aims and objectives to DE.

Assurance Reporting

As Accounting Officer, I am also responsible for preparing risk assurance statements and these reports provide assurance over areas of responsibility and confirm that risks are being managed.

Internal Audit

The scope of the internal audit plan for the current year by independent internal auditors Cavanagh Kelly was to review the controls in relation to the systems that NICIE had in place in relation to the following areas, including recommendations from last year's audit.

We commissioned an independent review of the board's effectiveness. This review has been based on the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) publication 'Board Effectiveness – A Good practice Guide' (the Guide) issued in June 2022 and took place in November and December 2023. The review considered relevant information and documentation for the 2023 and 2024 financial years. This review was completed in January 2024 and presented to NICIE's ARAC

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Board of Directors. The independent report concluded that NICIE had an effective Board with some minor recommendations for improvements.

Based on evidence reviewed and explanations obtained, the independent internal auditors concluded the Board of NICIE has demonstrated compliance with the guidance contained in the Northern Ireland Audit Office publication 'Board Effectiveness – Good practice Guide'.

It was recommended NICIE could consider developing a Conflict-of-Interest policy and reinstate asking board members and senior staff to formally complete declarations of interest, including nil returns annually.

There were some minor areas of improvement which the Board agreed to implement. The Internal Auditor was therefore able to give positive assurance to me as Accounting Officer that the Board's arrangements were satisfactory.

A review of the progress made by NICIE in implementing prior year adjustments was also undertaken and all prior year internal audit recommendations have been implemented.

External Auditor

NICIE's newly appointed External Auditors through a tender process are SCC Chartered Accountants. There were no control deficiencies identified during the year to 31.3.2023 for the audit completed by M.B.Mc Grady and company. There is unlikely to be any emphasis of matter or qualifications contained in the Audit report for 2023-2024.

Other Sources of Assurance

I have also relied on additional sources of assurance during the year, with regular reports from the staff, directors, NICIE Panel of Associates and independent advice from HR (Human Resource), legal experts and other relevant stakeholders.

NICIE also continues to report annually to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and Companies House.

Quality of Data Used by the Board

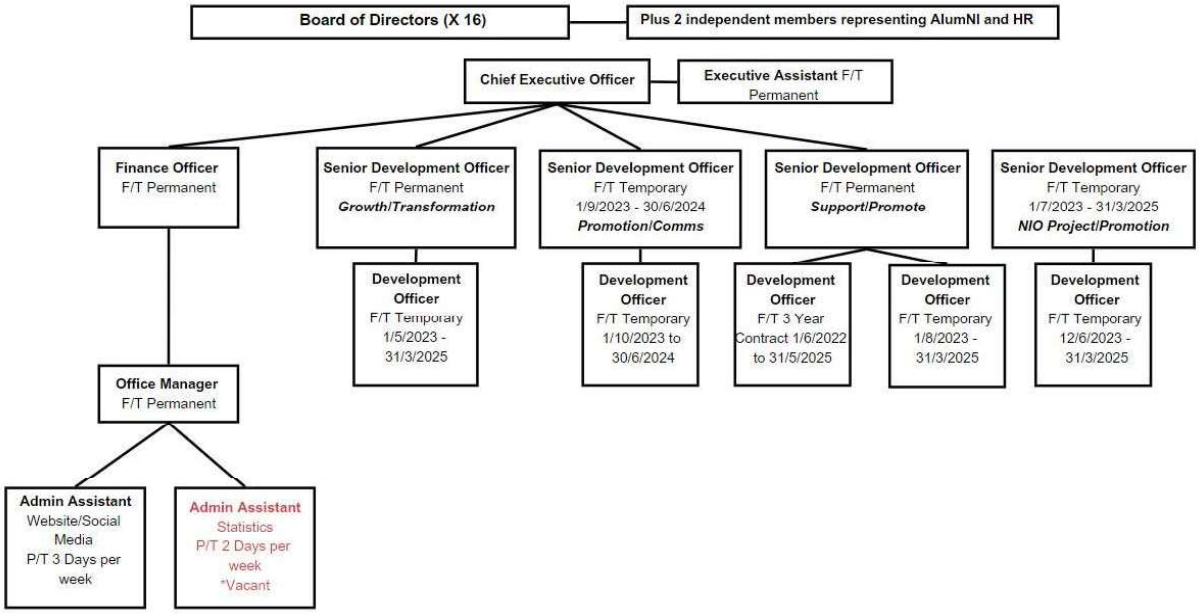
Senior Members of the NICIE Team and appropriately experienced officers or representatives of NICIE have supported all the committees. I regularly review and interrogate all data with Senior Management Team prior to any information being presented to the Board. These reports include monthly management accounts and budgets, which are prepared by NICIE's qualified Chartered Accountant and are also reviewed by the FGPSC who have additional finance experience. Senior Development Officers with much experience in the education sector, including reports compiled with various forums and relevant stakeholders, complete other NICIE reports. An appropriately selected Panel of Associates who have been drawn from a select list based on skills and experience compile bespoke reports. Committee Members also reviewed these reports and data and sought clarification from officers on the information presented to them.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Additionally, our Internal Auditors Cavanagh Kelly independently compiled the internal audit report, and the External Auditors S.S Cavanagh Accountants. independently verified the Final Financial Statements. In addition, as part of the internal audit programme all the quality of data was assessed by ARAC and presented to the Board. It is my view and the view of the committees that the quality of the data used by NICIE is of an acceptable standard.

The staffing structure of NICIE for 2023-2024 is highlighted below:

NICIE ORGANISATIONAL CHART



I would like to highlight that I am retiring from my position as CEO with effect from 31.7.2024 and a recruitment process is currently underway managed by NICIE's Human Resources Sub Committee. A panel has been commissioned including NICIE HR Provider and an observer from DE. The window for applications closed on the 2nd April 2024.

A long-standing member of NICIE Senior Development Team, is also retiring after almost 26 years. There is contingency planning in place in the short term to manage this.

Additionally, it is important to note that the majority of NICIE's Development Team is made up of external funding posts which will come to an end 31 March 2025.

Ministerial Directions

No Ministerial Directions were given for the year to 31 March 2024.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Heath and Safety

I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all its duties under Health and Safety. Whilst NICIE has always been mindful of compliance to health and safety, a working group was set up with representatives from both staff and directors to review NICIE's hybrid policy and ensuring that the office environment was safe and managed accordingly. This was and continues to be reviewed to ensure that all risks are managed and mitigated, and that the NICIE staff are protected, and the office environment is clean and appropriately managed and that all health and safety requirements and legislation is adhered to.

NICIE moved to new office accommodation during the year. This is a fully managed service government building with secure access and meets all health and safety requirements including disability access. The Office block has its own Staff guide for Health and Safety and all accommodation details

The staff handbook continues to be reviewed, updated in line with legislation and appropriate guidance and circulated to all staff and training provided where relevant. NICIE continues to support all staff through the NICIE well-being programme, and this is managed through the NICIE health and wellbeing sub-committee. Several activities including a staff team building day have been carried out during the year and staff are continuously reminded to access the free well-being programmes available to them.

Risk Assessment

Internal Controls and Risk Management

I, along with the directors acknowledge our responsibility for NICIE's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) reviewed the risks associated with the Council's activities. The Corporate Risk Register includes an evaluation of all levels of risk. Both inherent and residual risks were reviewed throughout the year with the committee and DE. NICIE had a Business Continuity Plan in place, which has also been reviewed and updated to manage all internal controls including hybrid working.

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reports to each Board meeting on any matters that need to be brought to their attention.

I, as Accounting Officer, continue to enforce and ensure that risk management is embedded and owned by the Board and all NICIE staff. This has now effectively been incorporated and embedded into all NICIE business plans and daily operations of NICIE. The corporate risk register and risk management is viewed as a dynamic process which actively seeks to incorporate good practice. It is responsive and current and is managed through regular review of both internal developments and external factors.

As a NDPB, NICIE has a low-risk appetite in relation to compliance, regulation, and our strategic aims which I anticipate will continue.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Risk Profile faced by NICIE.

The NICIE corporate risk register currently identifies four significant risks. These risks are reviewed quarterly by ARAC. These are also circulated to Board Members and Staff

The first three risks relate to financial management and governance and some of the primary areas of concern for 2023/2024 are highlighted in the table below.

Management of Significant Risks

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure of DE/DoF to guarantee NICIE Pension Liability	Reported to BoD/External Auditor. Continue to monitor and liaise with DE/DoF of any potential increases regarding non-guarantee from NILGOSC (NICIE Pension provider)	Ongoing
Potential Claims re employee grievances.	Solicitor and HR Providers contacted and ongoing liaison to mitigate against grievances and Industrial Tribunal claim. Potential for inescapable legal bill bid.	Ongoing
Failure to have adequate insurance in place.	DE covers Employers Liability Public Liability covered by DoF in James House Public Liability to be requested for each event where the venue requires it.	September 2023
Limited DE budget for parental ballots and financial support for Transforming schools.	Requested that IMIE apply for more financial support for the five new Transforming schools for the next five years from Monitoring Round.	March 2024

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure to Strategically plan for IE (Integrated Education)	Planning groups, articulating the out workings of the statutory duty, to the Education Authority (EA) Ensure Cases for Change are robust and reflect a robust evidence base to support Development proposals (DP) for approval; and Continue to work with the EA through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Protocols between NICIE and the EA and the Cross-Directorate Group (CDG). Support for development of IE by partnership between NICIE, EA, CSSC and DE Area Planning and IMIE to discuss and identify roles and responsibilities for each organisation in relation to Controlled Integrated Schools.	March 2024 Ongoing
Failure to effectively implement the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022	NICIE proactive members of the Steering and Working Groups of the DE Implementation Team Review and give feedback on draft Strategic Plan Review and give feedback on Reporting on support	Ongoing

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
	for IE from ALBs and other support bodies Regular meetings with the DE Implementation Team Quarterly meetings with DE Governance and Risk (GAR) and DE Implementation Team Responded to consultation on the IE Act Strategy Action Plan, the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey proposed questions and Data proposals for measuring demand and reporting on progress of the Action Plan Engagement and Consultation Protocols in place between DE and NICIE	
Failure to ensure NICIE staffing complement to ensure NICIE can support DE to fulfil its statutory duty to promote, encourage, facilitate and support Integrated Education.	Five Business Cases submitted to IMIE to demonstrate NICIE's need to retain staff post March 2025. Reporting of the outcomes of NICIE staff team to DE and NICIE Board through the NIIE Report Card. Careful drafting of NICIE Business Plan and NICIE Strategic Plan to ensure DE understands the need for an increase in NICIE's budget.	NICIE are aware that staff retention will be vital to meeting DE's statutory duty and the vision of a network of sustainable, high quality Integrated schools.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I am satisfied that these risks were managed accordingly, and that tolerable and considerable progress continues to mitigate these risks.

One of the risks that continues to present the greatest challenge to NICIE relates to the failure to meet demand for Integrated Education and thus enabling parents who want an Integrated school for their child to be able to access it. The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 means that NICIE will need to work in partnership with DE, statutory and other support bodies to ensure the effective implementation of the Act ensuring the work of NICIE complements the duties placed on those organisations to further the development of Integrated Education.

It is important for NICIE to play its part in promoting Shared Education and encouraging Integrated schools to actively participate. NICIE has also forwarded proposals to EA School Support team regarding Shared Learning Together EA PEACE PLUS application, and we are hopeful to be able to access staff to support Shared Learning Together.

Through Area Planning, NICIE continues to encourage schools and support organisations to consider Integrated Education as an option in a time of economic constraints and the desire for educational provision in each area to remain as a choice for the whole community. Where there is no provision NICIE, in conjunction with parents and schools, must demonstrate unmet demand for such provision to be considered. This is extremely difficult in a time when the education budget constraints suggest no more growth but rationalisation. NICIE is acutely aware of the deficit in funding for education generally and is concerned with the challenges that that brings to enabling Integrated Education to grow. NICIE recognises the gap that exists for schools in local areas to consider options for Integrated Education as a solution to ensure education provision in an area. NICIE is willing and able, given financial support, to fill this gap to encourage conversations as per Transformation/ new school development.

NICIE are aware of the requirement now for DE and EA to assess future demand for Integrated Education and so NICIE will contribute in whatever way it can to support.

We are also acutely aware of the Fresh Start Agreement Funding for capital buildings, which is enabling already existing Integrated schools that have sought so hard to be part of the educational landscape to survive into the future. NICIE wish to record the huge dismay regarding the decision to remove the ring fenced £150 million of Fresh Start Agreement funding for capital builds for Integrated and Shared Education. This has had a significant, adverse impact on 10 Integrated schools.

NICIE are grateful for the continued support from Northern Ireland Office and Irish Department of Foreign Affairs to help NICIE to promote, meet local demand for Integrated Education and support existing Integrated schools.

NICIE staff also assess internal and external risks of all activities, and the risk is reviewed and mitigated where feasible.

Fraud Risk

NICIE continues to review and implement its fraud policy during the year and has zero tolerance in respect of fraud. Internal controls were also reviewed and are clearly embedded within the organisation.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I have ensured that the NICIE Finance Officer is a member of the DE Education Sector Fraud forum. There were no instances of suspected fraud within NICIE during the year 2023-2024.

Raising Concerns at work (Whistle Blowing)

NICIE has a policy on Raising Concerns at work (Whistleblowing), which encourages staff to report any instances of unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or other actions that might compromise, in any way, the Council's reputation and integrity. There were no instances during 2023-2024.

Data Security breaches

There were no data security breaches or losses during the year.

General Data Protection Regulation

NICIE continues to maintain and review its GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) policies, current data governance processes, procedures, and control. NICIE staff also ensure that all archived materials were appropriately dealt with which included archiving, destroying, and returning materials to schools. NICIE's Retention and Disposal Policy was filed and agreed with the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) to ensure that records are managed in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Government Funding Database

NICIE is not listed on the Government Funding Database as NICIE does not award grant funding to the community and voluntary sector.

Significant Governance Issues

There are no further significant governance issues.

Conclusion

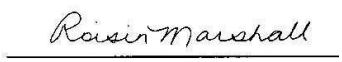
The aim of this statement is to ensure that information is provided as to how governance within NICIE has been effective for the year to 31.3.2024 and identifies a range of significant governance issues that NICIE is facing during a period of significant change, uncertainty, and challenging circumstances.

NICIE will continue to ensure that it adheres to organisational needs and governance guidelines.

I can confirm that I will continue to review these issues and ensure that they are addressed. This governance statement was presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and formally approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Chair on 24th April 2024.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Signature of Chair:



Signature of Accounting Officer

Date of Signature 24th April 2024

Remuneration Policy and Staff report

The remuneration of all Council staff is determined by the NICVA National Joint Council for local authorities and other authorities of equivalent status. The National Joint Council's principal role is to reach agreement, based on shared values, on a national scheme of pay and conditions for local application throughout the UK.

The NICVA National Joint Council's guiding principles are to support and encourage:

- High quality services delivered by a well-trained, motivated workforce with security of employment. To this end employer are encouraged to provide training and development opportunities for employees;
- Equal opportunities in employment; equality as a core principle which underpins both service delivery and employment relations; and both the removal of all discrimination and the promotion of positive action;
- A flexible approach to providing services to the community, which meets the needs of employees as well as employers; and
- Stable industrial relations and negotiation and consultation between employers and recognised trade unions.
-

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Board and most senior management of the department.

Remuneration and pension entitlements (audited information)

	2023-2024					2022-2023				
	Salary	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**	**Salary**	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**
	£'000					**£**				
R Marshall *CEO*	**65-70**	**100**	**-**	**18,000**	**80-85**	60-65	100	-	18,000	80-85
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**		**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	40-45
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
S Pettis *Senior Development Officer (Resigned May 2022)*	**40-45**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	1,00	50-55
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer (Appointed July 2023)*	**40-45**	**-**	**-**	**-**		-				
E Humme Senior Development Officer(Appointed September 2023)	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**10,000**						
		100		**10,000**						

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension benefits

The value of pension benefits during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increase due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a track of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary and any allowances all of which are subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by NICIE and thus recorded in these financial statements.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and is treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

Bonuses

No bonuses were paid during the year to 31 March 2024 (2023: £nil).

Off payroll engagements

During the year, there were no off-payroll engagements (2023: none).

Staff turnover

NICIE employee turnover rate is set out in the table below.

	April 2023 to March 2024		April 2022 to March 2023	
	Number of staff	% of headcount	Number of staff	% of headcount
Starters	4	31.6	1	8.33
Leavers	2	15.8	2	16.67

Pay Ratios

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid officer in NICIE in the financial year 2023-2024 was £65,000 - £70,000 (2022-23, £65,000-£70,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the NICIE workforce is disclosed below.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

2023-2024	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	27,840	36,648	46,464
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

2022-2023	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	28,126	35,961	44,539
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £27,840, £36,648 and £46,464 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £25,119 to £67,105 (2022-23, £22,777 to £64,676).

Percentage Change in Remuneration

The percentage changes in respect of NICIE are shown in the following table.

Percentage change for:	2023-24 v 2022-23	2022-23 v 2021-22
Average employee salary and allowances	4.91%	5.51%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	3.88%	3.01%

No performance pay or bonuses were payable to the highest paid officer or employees in these years.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension entitlements

Officials	Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31 March 2024 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2023 £'000	Real increase/ Decrease in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership payment Nearest £100
R Marshall *Chief Executive Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	180	125	22	-
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	169	122	16	-
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	10-15 Plus lump sum 10-15	0-2.5	305	236	15	-
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	16-20 Plus lump sum 15-20	0-2.5	413	353	7	-
Sean Pettis *Senior Development Officer* (Resigned May 2022)	0-5 No lump sum	0-2.5	0	21	0	-
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer (Appointed July 2023)* *E Humme* *Senior Development Officer(Appointed September 2023*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	63	52	6	

Pension entitlements

NICIE is a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Pension scheme. The Scheme is a funded defined benefit scheme, with benefits earned up to 31 March 2015 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2015 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended) and "The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended).

The funded nature of the LDPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets.

Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31st March 2023 and the contributions to

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

be paid until 31st March 2024 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Funds Rates and Adjustment Certificate. The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value ("CETV") is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued because of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-2004 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement, which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effects of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Staff cost (Audited)

	Permanently employed staff	**Temporary agency staff**	**Total 2024**	2023
			£	£
Wages and salaries	515,965	-	515,965	405,539
Social security costs	49,289	-	49,289	36,871
Other pension costs	93,701	-	93,701	74,127
	658,955		658,955	513,537
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			(40,507)	(40,501)
NIO Funded Staff			(157,105)	
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation				
Current service cost			103,000	161,000
Past service cost/(gain)				
Contributions by the employer			(92,000)	(74,000)
Total Net costs			472,343	560,036

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the year was:	**13**	10

Some staff employed by the company in 2024 and 2023 had permanent fixed term contracts of employment. During the year the charity incurred costs of £0 (2023: £0) relating to agency staff and secondees. The staff consists of 10 female and 3 male employees. The sickness absence rate for the year was 2024:122 days 4.7% (2023: 24.5 days /.89%. The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure, and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

The Directors received **£0** for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2023: £0). **One** employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2023: 1) and details are below.

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	67,185	65,915
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme. Roisin Marshall	12,765	12,612
	79,950	78,527

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Compensation schemes – exit packages

The following section provides details of the exit packages paid by the company.

	Number of voluntary redundancies	Total number of exit packages by cost band 2024	Total number of exit packages by cost band 2023
< £10,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£10,000-£25,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total number of exit packages	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total resource cost	Nil	Nil	Nil

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 22/06/2024

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Regularity of expenditure

There were no losses or special payments made by the Council in the year. (2022/23 – £nil)

Fees and Charges

There were no fees or charges made by the Council in the year. (2022/23 - £nil)

Remote contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities requiring disclosure under Assembly reporting requirements. The Council had no significant remote contingent liabilities to report 2023-24, (2022-23 £nil). Note 17 provides further details regarding the contingent liabilities, which are included in the financial statements.

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive
Date:22/06/2024 :

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards. We have also audited the information in the Remuneration and staff report and the Assembly Accountability and audit report that is described in those reports as having been audited.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken during the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Directors has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
- In all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.
  The parts of the remuneration and staff report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with DoF directions made under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with DoF guidance.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law,) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. They are also responsible for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control, as the trustees determine is necessary, to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud, or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

The following are required to be considered:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and entity performance;
- results of our enquires of management, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- review of company policies and procedures relating to:
  identifying, evaluation and complying with laws and regulations and whether they are aware of instances of noncompliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have any knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  -the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team and specific component audit teams regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

Because of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud is in relation to expenditure not being applied in line with intended purposes and the calculation and payment of salaries. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

Audit response to risks identified.

The current audit is conducted with professional scepticism using procedures that are in accordance with International Standards on Auditing.

In responding to the identified key audit matters above we obtained an understanding of the charity's objectives and funders requirements together with the salary calculation and processing process, we performed enquires of management and inspected relevant documents and calculations, verifying expenditures, completing a recalculation of salaries during the year, assessing the completeness and accuracy of disclosures within the financial statements and concurred the figures were materially accurate.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified include the following:

- reviewing the full financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerns of actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- obtained an understanding of provisions and held discussions with management to understand the basis of recognition or non-recognition of provisions; and

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and significant component audit teams and remained alert to any indications of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities, which govern them. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sean G Cavanagh

Sean G. Cavanagh
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of SCC Chartered Accountants Ltd Date: 22/06/2024

17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Incoming resources/income			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
- Voluntary income	3	**892,295**	793,399
Total incoming resources		**892,295**	793,399
Resources expended/expenditure			
Charitable activities			
- Development of Integrated Education and schools in Northern Ireland		**(906,751)**	(771,589)
Governance costs		**(16,308)**	(9,580)
Other resources expended			
- Other finance costs	6	**4,000**	(18,000)
Total resources expended		**(919,059)**	(799,169)
Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses		**(26,764)**	(5,770)
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension	12	**7,000**	760,000
Net movement in funds		**(19,764)**	754,230
Funds at 1 April		**161,298**	(592,932)
Funds at 31 March	14	**141,534**	161,298

All amounts above relate to the continuing restricted operations of the company.

There is no material difference between the net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses for the financial year stated above, and the historical cost equivalent.

The net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses is the net outgoing resources required by the Companies Act 2006 as opposed to that required by the Statement of Recommended Practice.

There are no changes in equity other than the results shown in the statement of financial position therefore a separate statement of changes in equity has not been presented.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Non-current assets			
Property, plant, and equipment	7	**8,494**	**9,839**
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	9	**5,076**	**60,230**
Cash and cash equivalents	10	**178,879**	**123,649**
		183,955	**183,879**
Total assets		**192,449**	**193,718**
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	**(50,915)**	**(32,420)**
Non-current assets less net current liabilities		**141,534**	**161,298**
Non-current liabilities			
Pension commitments as per Note 12	12	**(0)**	**(0)**
Total assets less liabilities		**141,534**	**161,298**
Reserves			
Restricted funds	14	**141,534**	**161,298**

The financial statements on pages 57 to 58 were approved by the Board of directors on 22 June 2024 and were signed on its behalf by: Mrs Maeve Marnell, Chair of NICIE Board of Directors.

The notes on pages 62 to 76 form an integral part of these financial statements

Maeve Marnell
Chairperson

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive Officer

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Registered number: NI022427
Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	**2024** **£**	2023 £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		**57,527**	52,868
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant, and equipment	7	**(2,297)**	(0)
Net cash inflow (outflow) from investing activities		**(2,297)**	(0)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		**55,230**	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**123,649**	70,781
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	15	**178,879**	123,649

Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before recognised gains and losses	**(19,764)**	**(5,770)**
Depreciation on tangible fixed assets	**3,642**	**4,919**
Loss on disposal of Assets		**2,481**
Movement in trade and other receivables	**55,154**	**(43,981)**
Movement in trade and other payables	**18,495**	**(9,781)**
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions		**87,000**
Other finance costs		**18,000**
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	**57,527**	**52,868**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, Accounting and Reporting by Charities; Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with International Financial Reporting standards and the principles of the 2021-22 *Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)* issued by the Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy, which is judged most appropriate to the particular circumstances of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education for giving a true and fair view, has been selected. The particular policies adopted by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the financial statements.

Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost.

New and amended standards adopted by the Company

The Company has adopted IFRS16 “Leases” from 1/4/2022, which has resulted in changes in the accounting policies and adjustments to the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Effective date and transitional provisions

"In accordance with the transitional provisions of IFRS16 as adapted and interpreted by the FReM, the Company has adopted the new guidance, applying a retrospective approach to recognise the cumulative effects of initially applying IFRS16 recognised at the date of initial application as an adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers’ equity."

Summary of the main changes introduced by the standard

The new standard sets out the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation, and disclosure of leases. All leases result in the lessee recognising the right to use an asset at the commencement date of the lease, and if lease payments are made over time recognising financing. Accordingly, IFRS16 eliminates the classification of leases as either operating leases or finance leases as required by IAS17 and, instead, introduces a single lessee accounting model. Lessees will be required to recognise: (a) assets and liabilities for all leases with a lease term of more than 12 months unless the underlying asset is of low value; and (b) depreciation of right- of- use assets separately from interest on lease liabilities in profit or loss. IFRS16 substantially carries forward the lessor accounting requirements from IAS17. Accordingly, a lessor continues to classify its leases as operating leases or finance leases and to account for those two types of leases differently. For sub leases, intermediate lessors should classify subleases based on the right-of-use as set from the headlease, rather than the underlying lease as set as it was under IAS17, thus there is increased likelihood that a sublease previously classified as operating lease will be classified as a finance lease under IFRS16.

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

The effect from adoption of IFRS16 on the Company's financial statements

The company previously held a lease on its premises at 25 College Gardens, which expired in August 2023, and NICIE moved to James House under RPM on a rent-free licence agreement. (LY *Note for info)Thereafter the company occupied the premises on a rolling month-to-month term and has notified the Landlords on 6th April 2023 their intention to vacate the property at 25 College Gardens. At the end of the current year the company had not completed on the new lease agreement for their new offices at James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue. As such the Company has implemented the new standard retrospectively with the cumulative effect of initial application recognised as at the date of initial application of IFRS16, i.e. 1 April 2022 with the corresponding adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers' equity as per IFRS16(C5(b)) and due to all leases being either short-term leases and leases of low-value assets there is no material change required to the opening balances with no corresponding change required in the opening balances of tax payers equity.*

Going concern

The directors have received funding for the year ended March 2024, which has been confirmed from the Department of Education. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, which assumes that NICIE will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Property, plant, equipment, and depreciation

Property, plant, and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items. Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial year in which they are incurred.

For all assets depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less their estimated residual values, on a reducing balance basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets concerned, or over the life of project, whichever is earlier. The principal annual rates used are as follows:
Information technology : $33^1/_3$%
Furniture and fittings : 20%

Trade and other receivables

Trade receivables are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business. If collection is expected in one year or less (or in the normal operating cycle of the business if longer), they are classified as current assets. If not, they are presented as non-current assets.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Trade and other receivables (continued)

Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

In the cash flow statement cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Trade payables are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade and other payables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Government grants

Grants that relate to specific revenue expenditure are credited to the statement of financial activities when received.

Taxation

The Company is registered as a charity for tax purposes and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of the company are exempt for value added tax purposes. The company therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

VAT

The company is not registered for VAT. All expenditure and capital purchase in the financial statements is stated inclusive of VAT.

Pension funding

Retirement benefits to employees of NICIE are provided by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee ("NILGOSC") defined benefit scheme, which is externally funded and contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

In respect of this scheme, NICIE's staff constitute only a small percentage of the overall membership. NICIE has no influence over the level of contributions.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Pension funding (continued)

In previous years NICIE's share of the NILGOSC scheme could not be identified and in keeping with such multi-employer schemes NICIE treated its pension cost as if it were a defined contribution (rather than a defined benefit) scheme. In late 2006, NILGOSC separated each of the employer scheme details and, as a result, NICIE has had to incorporate the year-end deficit on the scheme in its balance sheet and the movement on the scheme within the statement of financial activities.

The assets of the NILGOSC scheme are held separately from those of NICIE. Pension scheme assets are measured using market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability. The service cost and associated administration costs of NICIE's defined benefit pension scheme are charged to net outgoing resources before recognised gains. In addition, a retirement benefit interest charge on the net pension deficit is charged to the statement of financial activities as a finance cost. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised directly in statement of financial activities so that NICIE's balance sheet reflects the fair value of the scheme's surplus or deficit at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The significant accounting estimations and judgments of the Company relate to the pension assets, liabilities and associated pension surplus or deficit. The Company utilises the services of actuarists to help them value scheme assets and liabilities and provide the necessary disclosures of the Nilgosc pension scheme.

Incoming resources

Grants

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period, in which case they are deferred.

Other income

Other income, which excludes value added tax, is accounted for on the accrual's basis.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Governance costs
Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of its assets, which are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Bank interest

All interest is accounted for in the statement of financial activities on the accruals basis.

Operating leases

Accounting policies applied from 1 April 2023

Leases other than short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as right-of-use assets and corresponding liabilities at the date at which the leased assets are available for use by the Company.

Payments associated with all short-term leases and certain leases of all low-value assets are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure. The company applies the exemption for low-value assets on a lease-by-lease basis. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of less than 12 months or less. Low-value assets comprise computers, tablets, mobile phones and small items of office furniture.

Accounting policy applied until 31st March 2023

Leases in which a significant portion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases (net of any incentives received from the lessor) are charged to the net expenditure account on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Lease activities

The company leased its head office property until August 2023 when it moved to James House as part of Reform of Public Property under a rent-free licence agreement for five years. Additionally, it has a few low-value leases on items of office equipment

Fund accounting

NICIE has one type of fund for which it is responsible. The definition of this fund is as follows:

Restricted funds

Restricted funds, subject to specific trusts, are those given to NICIE, which are to be expended for the specific objects specified by the donor.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

2 Statement of operating costs by operating segment

The trustees consider that NICIE acts as one operating segment and therefore no statement of operating costs by operating segment has been presented.

3 Voluntary income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Department of Education Northern Ireland	670,931	632,167
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	170,000	18,473
Northern Ireland Office		
Integrated Education Fund	4,800	95,000
		-
Donations	1,497	7,258
Recoveries in respect of outward secondments	45,067	40,501
	892,295	793,399

4 Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses

	2024	2023
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Staff costs (Note 5)	669,955	600,537
Depreciation of property, plant, and equipment (Note 7)	3,642	4,919
Fees payable to NICIE's auditors for the audit of the financial statements	7,200	5,652
Operating lease rentals/ Licence Fee	-	19,100

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

5 Staff costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	515,965	402,539
Social security costs	49,289	36,871
Other pension costs	93,701	74,127
	658,955	513,537
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation		
Current service cost	103,000	161,000
Past service cost/(gain)	-	-
Contributions by the employer	(92,000)	(74,000)
	669,955	600,537

During the year the charity incurred costs of £330 (2023: £nil) relating to agency staff and secondees.

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year was:	**13**	10

The Directors received £0 for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2023: £0). One employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2023: one) and details are below.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	67,185	65,915
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme.	12,765	12,612
	79,950	78,527

6 Other finance costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Interest income on pension scheme assets	130,000	77,000
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(126,000)	(95,000)
	4,000	(18,000)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

7 Property, plant, and equipment

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Disposal	0	(182)	(182)
Additions	2,142	155	2,297
At 31 March 2024	59,680	26,761	86,441
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Depreciation on Disposal	0	(182)	(182)
Charge for the year	3,591	51	3,642
At 31 March 2024	51,290	26,657	77,947
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2024	**8,390**	**104**	**8,494**
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	59,369	29,269	88,638
Disposal	(1,831)	(2,481)	(4,312)
Additions	0	0	0
At 31 March 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	44,611	26,788	71,399
Depreciation on disposal	4,919	0	4,919
Charge for the year	(1,831)		(1,831)
At 31 March 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**
At 31 March 2022	**14,758**	**2,481**	**17,239**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

8 Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education largely are met through, Grant-in-Aid provided by DE, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the NDPB's expected purchase and usage requirements and the NDPB is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity, or market risk.

9 Trade and other receivables

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Trade receivables	1,276	7,184
Prepayments and accrued income	3,800	53,046
	5,076	60,230

The fair values of trade and other receivables are not materially different from the carrying values.

All of the charity's financial assets are classified as loans and receivables. The company has no assets that may be classified as held at fair value through profit and loss, derivatives used for hedging or available-for-sale.

10 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Balance at 1 April	123,649	70,781
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	55,230	52,868
Balance at 31 March	178,879	123,649
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial banks and cash in hand	178,879	123,649

11 Trade and other payables

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Trade payables	39,219	25,054
Accruals and deferred income	11,696	7,366
	50,915	32,420

The fair value of trade and other payables are not materially different from their carrying value as the impact of discounting is not significant. There is no difference between the amounts shown above and the total contractual undiscounted cash flows of trade and other payables.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

12 Pension commitments

The net pension 'liability' shown below does not represent a shortfall, which requires short-term cash funding. The amount shown below is calculated to comply with the new Financial Reporting Standard, the specific requirements of which differ from the basis on which pension liabilities are actuarially calculated for the ongoing funding of the scheme. The Financial Reporting Standard requires:

(i) actuarial deficiencies to be recognised immediately as a "liability" in the financial statements rather than being spread forward over employees' remaining service lives;

(ii) the actuary, in valuing the scheme's liabilities, is required to use a bond yield as the discount rate for valuing future liabilities, rather than a rate that reflects the expected return on the scheme's particular asset portfolio, with the result of an apparent increase in the present value of future longer-term liabilities.

IAS 19 figures in relation to employees and ex-employees who are members of the NILGOSC pension scheme.

	2024	2023
Rate of increase in salaries	**4.1%**	4.2%
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	**2.6%**	2.7%
Discount rate	**4.8%**	4.7%
Inflation assumption	**2.6%**	2.7%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	**2.6%**	2.7%

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	2024 Years	2023 Years
Average expected future life at age 65 for:		
Male currently aged 65	**21.7**	22.2
Female currently aged 65	**24.6**	25.0
Male currently aged 45	**22.7**	23.2
Female currently aged 45	**25.6**	26.0

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

The market value of assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return were:

Asset Allocation	Quoted %	Unquoted %	Total %	Value at 31 Mar 2024 £	Value at 31 Mar 2023 £
Equities	39.6%	0.1%	39.7%	1,214,820	1,098,400
Property	0%	9.3%	9.3%	284,580	307,552
Government Bonds	15.0%	0.0%	15.0%	459,000	565,676
Corporate Bonds	4.6%	0.0%	4.6%	140,760	82,380
Multi Asset Credit	13.0%	0.0%	13.0%	397,800	365,218
Cash	12.4%	0.0%	12.4%	379,440	178,490
Other	.2%	5.8%	6.0%	183,600	148,284
Total market value of assets	**84.8%**	**15.2%**	**100.%**	**3,060,000**	**2,746,000**
Present value of scheme liabilities				**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**
Unrecognised Surplus/Deficit in scheme				**(287,000)**	**(31,000)**
Net asset (liability) recognised on Statement of Financial Position				-	-

Reconciliation of present value of scheme liabilities

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 April	**2,715,000**	3,405,000
Current service cost	**103,000**	161,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Member contributions	**33,000**	26,000
Interest cost	**126,000**	95,000
Re-measurement on scheme liabilities	**(106,000)**	(886,000)
Benefits paid	**(98,000)**	(86,000)
At 31 March	**2,773,000**	2,715,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April	**2,746,000**	2,750,000
Expected return	**130,000**	77,000
Re-measurement on scheme assets	**157,000**	(95,000)
Employer contributions	**92,000**	74,000
Member contributions	**33,000**	26,000
Benefits paid	**(98,000)**	(86,000)
At 31 March	**3,060,000**	2,746,000

Scheme assets do not include any of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education's own financial instruments, or any property occupied by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the balance sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long-term real rates of return experienced in the respective markets.

Analysis of amount charged to statement of financial activities:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Current service cost	**103,000**	161,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Expected return	**(130,000)**	(77,000)
Interest cost	**126,000**	95,000
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**(8,000)**	(791,000)
Adjustment in respect of paragraph 64	**287,000**	31,000
Total operating charge/(credit)	**378,000**	(581,000)

The total service cost of £103,000 (2023: £161,000) is included within staff costs. The total contributions expected to be made by the scheme by NICIE in the year to 31st March 2024 are £125,000 (2023: £99,000)

Sensitivity analysis

IAS19R requires the disclosure of the sensitivity of the results to the methods and assumptions used.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

Changes in assumptions at year ended 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to employer liability	Approximate monetary amount (£'000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	1.7%	46
1 year decrease in member life expectancy	2.7%	73
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0.1%	3
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	1.6%	43

Employer Contribution Rates

The liabilities show the underlying commitment that NICIE has in the long term to pay retirement benefits. The total pension liability is £2,773,000 (2023 - £2,175,000) and results in an unrecognised asset of £287,000 (2023: £31,000). As per the scheme actuary the net asset/(liability) to be recorded on the Statement of Financial Position is £0 (2023 £0).

For 2023/24, employers participating in the scheme contributed at the rate of 19% (2023 –19%).

Scheme Gains and Losses

Actuarial gains and losses represent the extent to which actual outcomes have differed from the assumptions, which were used in calculating IAS 19 figures.

For assets, the gain/loss is normally the difference between the actual and expected return on assets, and for liabilities, the gain/loss normally arises from the change in financial assumptions. These actuarial gains/losses are shown in the table below as experience gains and losses.

Amounts for current and previous four years:

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
		£	**£**	£	£
Scheme liabilities	**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**	3,405,000	3,394,000	2,719,000
Scheme assets	**3,060,000**	**2,746,000**	2,750,000	2,502,000	2,011,000
Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme	**287,000**	**31,000**	(655,000)	(892,000)	(708,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets					
Amount (£)	**157,000**	**(95,000)**	137,000	398,000	(162,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities					
Amount (£)	**106,000**	**886,000**	251,000	(488,000)	330,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

13 Members liability

The liability of each member is limited to £10.

14 Reserves – restricted funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April	**161,298**	(592,932)
Net outgoing (losses)/resources before recognised losses	**(19,764)**	(5,770)
Actuarial re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme		760,000
At 31 March	**141,534**	161,298

At the year end there is no asset/liability to be recognised in respect of the NILGOSC pension fund.

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted fund	**2024 Total funds**	**2023 Total funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Fixed Assets	8,494	8,494	9,839
Current Assets	183,955	183,955	183,879
Current liabilities	(50,915)	(50,915)	(32,420)
Pension commitments	0	0	0
Net funds	141,534		161,298

16 Leases

The Company leases various tangible assets under non-cancellable operating lease arrangements.

As described in the notes the operating leases held include either short term or low value assets and as such no right of use asset nor corresponding lease liability has been recognised.

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure account:

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Leases (continued)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Expenses relating to short term leases	-	19,100
Expenses relating to low-value assets	1,161	1,866
Total expenses related to leases	1,161	20,966

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of cash flows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash outflow for leases (IFRS16) – operating activity	1,161	20,966
Total cash outflows	1,161	20,966

17 Contingent liabilities

The company has a contingent liability to repay revenue grants received if certain conditions are not fulfilled.

18 Capital commitments

At 31 March 2024, the company has no capital commitments (2023 £16,459 towards legal and all related moving costs to new accommodation James House).

19 Losses and special payments

At 31 March 2024, the company had no losses and special payments (2023: none).

20 Related party transactions

NICIE is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by DE. DE is regarded as a related party. During the year, NICIE has had various transactions with the DE and with other entities for which DE is regarded as the parent Department.

None of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with NICIE during the year (2023: none). As per the
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

register of interests maintained by NICIE, there were no conflicts of interest during the year (2023: none).

21 Ultimate controlling party

There is no ultimate controlling party.

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Annual return

Registered number: NI022427
Charity registered number: 100310

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(a company limited by guarantee)

Directors' report and financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
Under the requirements of the Department of Education/NICIE Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

On
22 June 2024

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Directors' Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Contents **Pages**

Reference and administrative details	2 - 3
Directors' report	4 - 20
Annual report	21
Chief Executive Officer's report	22 - 24
Annual Governance Statement	25 - 44
Remuneration and Staff report	45 - 51
Assembly Accountability and Audit Report	52
Independent auditors' report	53 - 57
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	58
Statement of financial position	59
Statement of cash flows	60
Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow/ (outflow) from Continuing operating activities	61
Notes to the financial statements	62 - 76

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Reference and administrative details

Directors/Trustees

Adele Kerr
Anne Murray
Ashleigh Moran
Barry Corrigan (Appointed November 2023, Resigned December 2023)
Bill Fletcher (Resigned June 2024)
Bill Miscampbell
Bob Hanna (Resigned February 2024)
Cathal Mullaghan
Colin Millar
Dr Anne Marie Telford (Resigned February 2024)
Duncan Morrow
Eamon Quinn (Vice Chair)
Gavin Gray
Helen Smyth (Secretary)
John Scott
Maeve Marnell (Chair)
Nigel Arnold (Appointed March 2024)
Patricia Douglas (Resigned May 2024)
Sandra Patterson
Shane Greer
Pamela Algie (Appointed June 2024)

Senior management members

Roisin Marshall (Chief Executive Officer)
Maureen Johnston (Finance Officer)
Cliodhna Scott Wills (Senior Development Officer)
Lorna McAlpine (Senior Development Officer)
Lynn Johnston (Senior Development Officer) Appointed July 2023
Emma Hume (Senior Development Officer) Appointed September 2023

Reference and administrative details (continued)

Registered and Principal office

James House
2-4 Cromac Avenue
Belfast BT7 2JB

Solicitors

Cleaver Fulton Rankin
50 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7FW

Bankers

First Trust Bank
33 – 35 University Road
Belfast
BT7 1ND

Independent auditors

SCC Chartered Accountants
17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

You may reuse this information (including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, please visit http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gis.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This Document is also available on our website at http://www.nicie.org.uk

Any Enquiries regarding this document should be sent to NICIE, James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, BT7 2JB.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

The directors, who are also trustees, present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, *Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice,* affordable to charities preparing their accounts. This is in accordance with the International Financial Reports standards and in accordance with the requirements and guidelines set out in the Government's Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and other guidance issued by the Department of Finance (DoF) in force for the financial year for which the financial statements are being presented.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standard as adopted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Reference and administrative details

Details of the registered office, directors, independent advisers, and other relevant information are given on page 2 and 3.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education ("NICIE") was incorporated in 1989 as a company limited by guarantee and is exempt from tax under Section 505(1) (c) of the Income and Corporation Act 1988 as a body established for charitable purposes only. NICIE was designated as a Non-Departmental Public Body ("NDPB") in February 2012. It is sponsored by the Department of Education ("DE"). The company's principal activity as defined in the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 is "to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated Education and schools for the public benefit".

Directors

All directors are members of NICIE. All directors are guarantors of the company with a maximum liability of £10.

Appointment of directors

NICIE directors are elected/appointed from six areas representative of all stakeholders. These comprise, involved in the provision of teaching, Principals, Schools, Trusts, Early Years and DE. Directors can serve two periods of between 2-4 years' subject to the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Director induction and training

The Company Secretary ensures that appropriate induction and training is given to all NICIE Board of Director ("BoD") members. Each new director is provided with an information pack about NICIE and their responsibilities and is given an opportunity to meet all staff. Details of the BoD structure is illustrated on page 31 of the NICIE Governance statement.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Organisation

The Board of Directors ("BoD") in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of NICIE and the Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) carries on the governance, management and conduct of the business and affairs of NICIE. The Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") is Roisin Marshall.

Funding

NICIE works in close collaboration with its principal funder DE. It is also supported by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and The Northern Ireland Office to promote the work of the organisation.

Risk management and internal control

The directors are responsible for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by NICIE.
The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures and a system of delegation and accountability.

It includes:

- A comprehensive budgeting system, with a strategic plan and an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the directors;
- Regular reviews by the directors of monthly and annual financial reports, which indicate financial performance against approved budget and forecast; and
- Monitoring progress against the strategic plan.

As part of the monitoring process, the directors have implemented a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review of the risks which NICIE may face, and actions taken to mitigate identified risks;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the organisation should any of those risks materialise.

Significant risks identified are in relation to the following areas:

- NICIE fails to deliver a balanced Resource and Capital Budget as a result of ineffective management of resources to ensure the delivery of the Department of Education's Strategic Priorities and NICIE's statutory duties and priorities within budget.
- Weakness and Ineffective governance & accountability arrangements.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

- Failure to exercise proper stewardship, and maximise the resources allocated to NICIE in line with Financial Memorandum and grant conditions where applicable, within a proper financial control framework under Non-Departmental Public Body, (NDPB) status.

- Failure to support, promote and grow Integrated Education due to inability to assess parental demand for integrated education.

A key element in the management of financial risk is the setting up of a reserves policy and its regular review by directors. Particular attention is also focused on non-financial risks arising from fires and the health and safety of all staff and visitors.

Objectives and activities of NICIE

During the year, NICIE continued to operate in the following Programme areas:

1. Development and support services, for which core funding was made available through DE. The key objectives for this Programme underpinned DE's Strategic Priorities and policies and included promoting the growth of Integrated provision through supporting parents' groups, supporting schools in the process of 'Transformation,' or interested in 'Transforming' and supporting existing Integrated schools regarding consolidation and expansion and in embedding 'Integration in practice.' NICIE worked with Integrated schools and other stakeholders in the process of Area planning. NICIE raised the level of debate about the role of Integrated Education by informing and influencing public opinion. NICIE promoted the characteristics of Integration in practice both in Integrated schools and across other schools. NICIE continues to strive to improve its internal capacity to be able to fulfil its Business Plan as agreed with DE.

2. The initiation and development of related work funded through the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA).

3. The implementation of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Grant to foster increased awareness and support for integrated education in Northern Ireland and encourage wider societal reconciliation between communities in the educational system

Achievements and performance

The statement of financial activities for NICIE.

All programmes are drawn up in accordance with best practice and link to the Strategic Aims of NICIE and are aligned to the business plan of DE. All programmes have detailed operational plans to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic and Business Plans and are monitored on a regular basis by the Board, Senior Management Team, and the external funding bodies.

Details of NICIE's activities during the year can be accessed online at www.nicie.org or by contacting NICIE at the registered address.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Financial Review

The full financial results of NICIE are set out in detail in the financial statements on pages 57 to 58. The net outgoing resources for the year before recognised gains and losses was £26,764 (2023: £5,770)

Performance

NICIE bases its operations strategically on a 3-year strategic plan and on an annual basis on a Business Plan, which is reported on a quarterly basis to the Board of Directors and DE. The Business Plan is set within the context of DE's business plan, and additionally, it includes related projects, which are funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) and Northern Ireland office (NIO). NICIE reports on its operations in its Annual Report. NICIE has delivered on all its Business Plan commitments in this current year.

Reserves

NICIE receives grants from various sources that are spent on the activities as detailed in the respective Letters of Offer. Any unspent monies may be subject to claw-back by the grant provider.

The net liabilities at the year-end including the pension surplus is £141,534 (2023: £161,298). This includes a net pension liability of nil. (2023: £NIL). The company's funding for the year ended March 2024 has been confirmed from the DE. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. For further details of the pension commitment liability, please refer to note 12 of the financial statements (page 69) and the Remuneration report on pages 44-50.

Forward funding

NICIE has secured sufficient income from a variety of sources for the year 2024 - 2025 to offer assurance to the directors and stakeholders of its ability to operate for the next financial year. Major funding has been guaranteed from DE, with other project funds being made available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a grant from the Northern Ireland Office through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Strategic priorities, objectives, and activity

Our Vision

A society where children are educated together; confident to express their own identity and culture; respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

Our Mission

To promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education

Strategic Priorities 2022-2025

1. **Promote Integrated Education**

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

2. **Grow Integrated Education**

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

3. **Support Integrated Education**

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

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Introduction

This year has been an exceptional year for the Integrated Education movement in Northern Ireland: the environment in which NICIE is operating has changed. The implications of Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 are beginning to be analysed, interpreted, and felt by stakeholders across the complex educational landscape of Northern Ireland and this is bringing unprecedented opportunities for the growth of Integrated Education. Whilst we are delighted with these seismic shifts, it brings significant challenges for our small staff team.

In March 2024, we are a team of fourteen people (nine funded with Department of Education (DE) resource, four with resource from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and one funded with resource from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA):

NICIE Staff Team: March 2024
Chief Executive Officer: Roisin Marshall
Finance Officer: Maureen Johnston
Senior Development Officers: Lorna McAlpine, Cliodhna Scott-Wills, Lynn Johnston, Emma Hume
Development Officers: Laura Largey, Tiarnán McMeekin, Jessica Clarke, Mary Potter, Fiona Darrah.
Office Manager: Mark Roberts
Executive Assistant: Carol Black
Administration Officer: Michael Nicholl

In this last year, two part-time staff members left to spend more time with family and pursue other interests. Thank you, Alastair Rowan and Florence McCaw for the valued contributions you made in your five years of service. The additional NIO funding enabled us to recruit four new Development Officers and restructure our Senior Management Team in relation to strategic communications and support for transforming schools.

This report is structured into two sections, which work symbiotically to support, grow and promote Integrated Education. Firstly, it will summarise the operational school-focussed delivery activity of the NICIE Development team in the last year and secondly it will reflect on the collaborative, strategic and policy engagement work of the organisation. It will conclude by highlighting the key successes and reflecting on the challenges of the past year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Section 1
Operational activity to support, grow and promote Integrated Education

This section outlines the core operational activity of the NICIE Development Team. These activities work symbiotically to promote, grow and support Integrated Education. The impact of the global pandemic continues to alter how we deliver our services. Embracing a hybrid model has enabled more engagements with more people and more varied audiences in both virtual and in person spaces. The hybrid option, combined with the impact of the increasing public discussions in multiple arenas about the importance of educating children together, has had a profound impact on the demand for our expertise, knowledge, and services. In relation to our school-facing services, we continue to experience an increase in demand for all our services but this year the demand has been felt acutely from two sources: schools seeking to explore Transformation and existing Integrated schools seeking to develop their Integrated ethos.

1.1 Growing and promoting Integrated Education

The number of young people educated in Integrated schools this academic year (23/24) is 27,675, which represents an additional 492 since last year (22/23).

In the last 2.5 years, there have been seven new Integrated schools because of Transformation to Integrated status, with one of these taking place in the period of this report: Sion Mills Integrated Primary School in September 2023. Three schools' proposals were not approved (St. Anne's Primary School (PS), Donaghadee, Gillygooley PS, Omagh and Straid PS, Ballyclare).

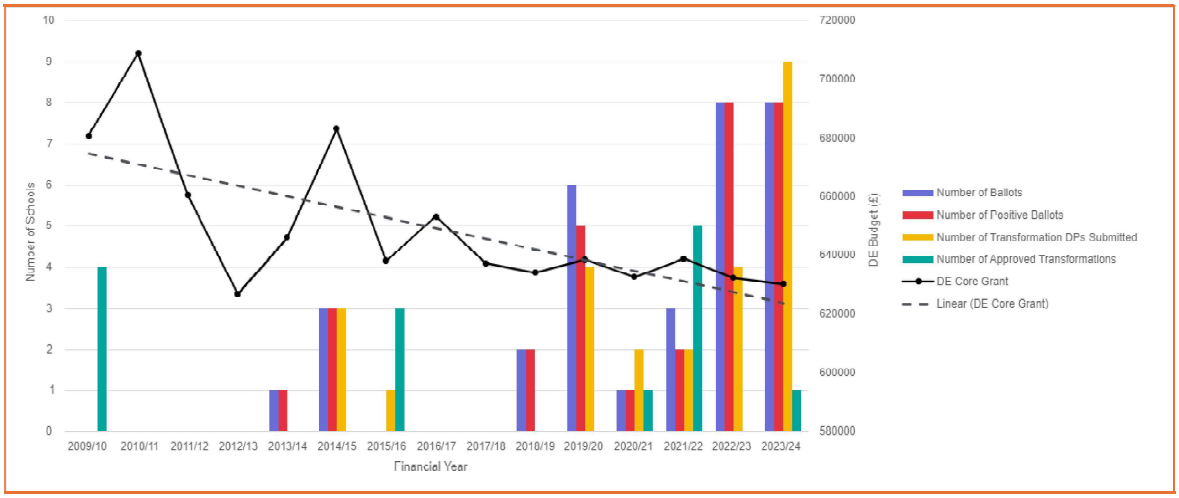
In the last 12 months, eight schools have completed ballots of their parental body, asking them whether they want their school to submit a proposal to become an Integrated school: Rathmore Primary School, Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College, Downshire Nursery School (NS), Ballyhenry PS, Culmore PS, Downshire PS and NU, Duneane PS and Killowen PS (Coleraine). We enjoy effective collaborative relationships with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and Education Authority (EA) partners in our work to support schools seeking to explore and/or start the Transformation journey.

We have supported nine schools (including three of those named above) to write and submit Development Proposals to Transform to Integrated status. In this year, the EA's Area Planning Team have provided draft Cases for Change for Governors of sustainable schools' that are seeking to Transform. Our team's resources would not have been sufficient to deliver these submissions without this writing and data provision support, alongside that of the of the EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) and the IEF. The EA then manages a 4-week pre-publication of the proposal, prior to a full 2-month public consultation by the DE, before the proposal makes its way to the Ministerial desk for decision-making.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

This collaborative activity and the additional funding sources secured have enabled us to cope with the rising demand to support schools seeking to Transform. As Fig 1 below shows, our core grant from DE is declining.

Fig 1 Graph showing data relating to Transformation of schools and DE core grant to NICIE since 2009



The sustainability of Integrated schools is a focus in all our activity. There are 15 schools that have passed a resolution to ballot and are yet to have a Ministerial decision, eleven of these are sustainable schools, in relation to enrolment numbers.

Alongside growth of Integrated Education because of school Transformations, this year has seen the approval of two new school projects: Approval for the creation of a new Post-Primary Grant Maintained Integrated School in the mid-Down area and for a new Post-Primary Controlled Integrated School in the Causeway area. Both projects incorporate an existing Integrated school (Blackwater Integrated College (IC) and North Coast IC) and are intended to create two new sustainable Integrated Colleges.

Three schools received approval to establish Nursery school places, which is an important aspect of Primary school sustainability: Rowandale Integrated Primary School (IPS), Drumlins IPS and Enniskillen IPS. Strangford IC's proposal to academically select 35% of pupils was approved. Including the approval of Sion Mills IPS's Transformation (mentioned above), this represents seven growth projects for Integrated Education.

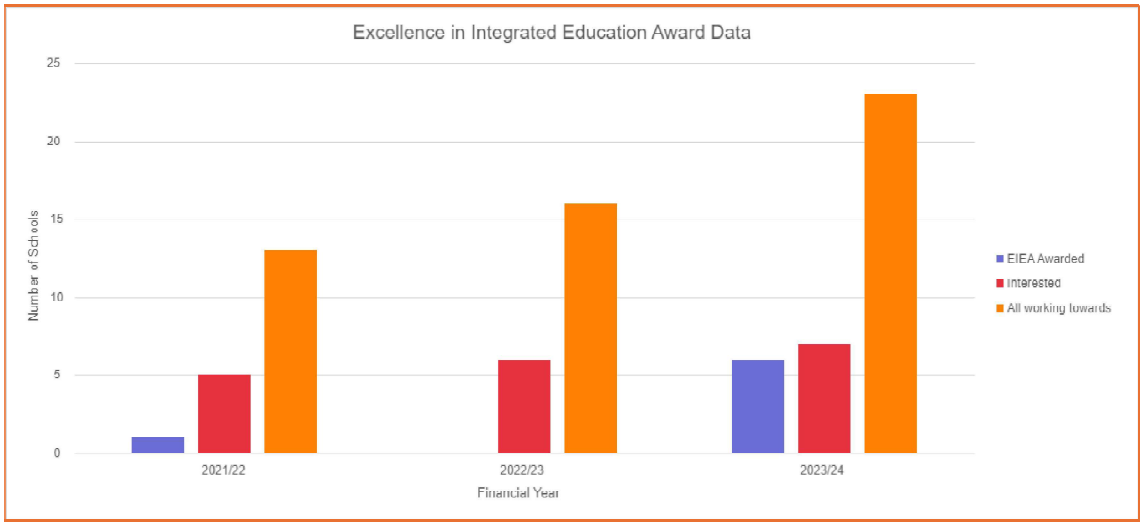
In our work to support sustainability of existing Integrated schools, NICIE supported Bridge IPS to submit a development proposal in the last year and EA (as the schools' Managing Authority) submitted a proposal for Cliftonville IPS, both in relation to establishment of a Nursery Unit. Including the nine Transformation proposals mentioned above, this makes eleven proposals submitted to EA to commence the pre-publication process in this financial year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

1.2 Supporting and promoting development of the Integrated Ethos

In 2023-24, three schools achieved renewal of their **Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA)**, including the first College to do so (Portadown IPS, Fort Hill IPS, New-Bridge IC), and three schools gained the Award for the first time (Carnlough IPS, Mill Strand IPS and Loughview IPS). The schools work through a self-evaluation and development process, based on the EIEA audit tool. Achievement of the EIEA is through external assessment, based on an evidence portfolio and two visits by the assessors. Each school receives an EIEA assessment report, including recommendations for further development of their Integrated ethos/practice.

Fig 2: Interest from existing Integrated schools in NICIE's Excellence in Integrated Education Award.



Of the 23 schools currently in their EIEA process, 15 are working towards the Award for the first time and 8 are working towards renewal (2 schools for the second time). Since the EIEA was established, 22 schools have achieved the Award at least once. Fig 2 below shows the increasing interest in the Award. We think that this is another impact of the 2022 Act, with existing Integrated schools seeking to reflect deeply on how their ethos contributes to the Act's description of the purpose and definition of Integrated Education.

In the last year, we have facilitated at least 81 sessions, with over 1900 participants, promoting and developing awareness of Integrated Education and the Integrated ethos.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Fig 3: Delivery of NICIE sessions related to Integrated Ethos development

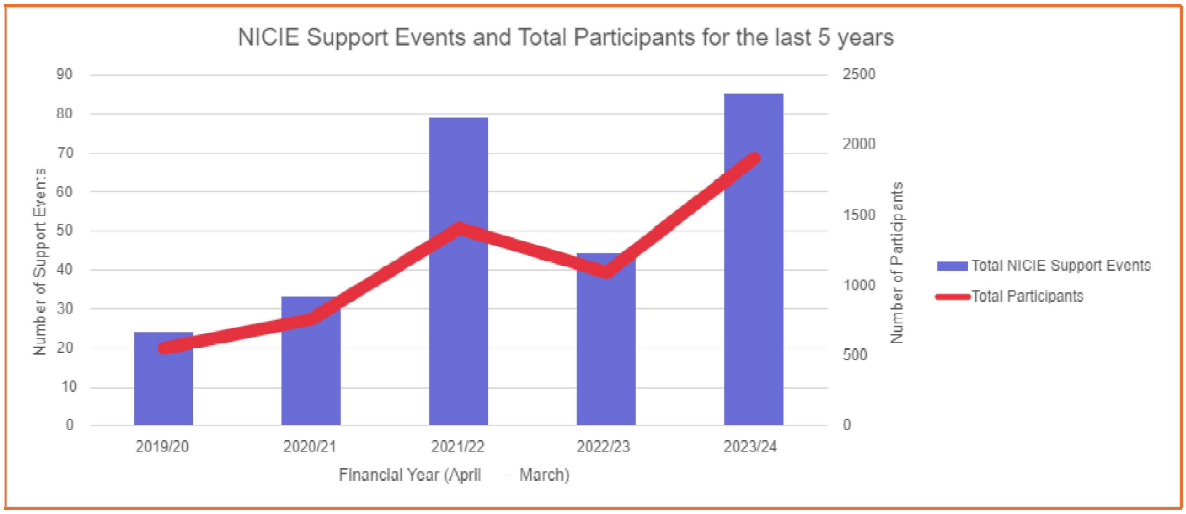


Fig 3 above shows the increasing demand for sessions focussed on the Integrated ethos. These sessions include:

- information and/or ethos development sessions to stakeholders in schools (parents, Governors and school staff at all levels) exploring and/or on the legal journey of school Transformation to Integrated status
- exploration of ethos and/or the EIEA and/or Anti-Bias in Education
- sessions to other audiences, international and local relating to Integrated Education, the Integrated ethos, Anti-Bias in Education and recent legislative developments

Following the DE approval for the establishment of a new Controlled Integrated College in the Causeway area, NICIE has worked in collaboration with the EA and the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC) in the setting up of a joint **Ethos Support Group** to work with the interim Board of Governors and the Principals of the existing schools (Coleraine College, Dunluce High School and North Coast Integrated College) to support the development of the Integrated ethos in the new school.

Framework for Integrated Education:

NICIE has continued to work with EA (Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team) to develop a Framework for Integrated Education. This is a self-evaluation tool which will support schools on their Integration journey whether a new/Transforming Integrated school or a long-established Integrated school. This then connects to the EIEA through which schools can focus their ongoing self-evaluation and development and achieve the externally assessed recognition of excellence.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

1.3 Communities for learning and sharing within Integrated Education

In the past year, we have facilitated five meetings of the NICIE Teachers' Committee, engaging 22 Integrated schools in the process. The Teachers' Committee lead on Integrated Education Month each year during March and in March 2024, the theme was 'Bias Busting'. Most Integrated schools engage in this annual campaign to celebrate and promote Integrated Education.

The Association of Principals in Integrated Schools (APTIS) has continued to be active this year with our support, hosting two conferences and two meetings, in which senior leaders from most Integrated schools participated.

The Vice-Principals' Forum, the Early Years' Forum, the Integrated Schools Finance Association (ISFA), and the GMI consultative forum have also met this year.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Section 2

Strategic Collaboration and Policy Activity to support, grow and promote Integrated Education

Our core collaborative funding partner is the DE, enabling us to employ four of the nine staff in our Development Team and the wrap-around supports of senior and administrative staff and office services. We regularly meet with our sponsor colleagues, the **Irish Medium and Integrated Education branch within DE** and we have complied with all financial and governance requirements in relation to our status as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), a Limited Company and a Charity. Appropriate Financial and Management Reports were produced for senior management team, Finance and General Purposes Staffing Committee (FGPSC) and our Board of Directors throughout the year. An effective internal and external audit programme was delivered. Our full Board of Directors met on four occasions, with an additional eleven committee meetings.

We also work collaboratively with the **Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA) Reconciliation Fund**, delivering on key performance indicators and targets agreed with each of these bodies. Our DFA project is in partnership with the IEF, enabling us to employ a member of our Development Team. Our NIO project also runs in tandem with an IEF project and this has enabled us to employ the other four members of our Development Team. Without this collaboration, we would not have been able to provide the necessary services to support the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland. Our NIO and DFA projects are completing in March 2025. Nineteen schools have moved to hold a parental ballot in the last three years, in comparison to ten in the previous ten years and new schools are coming forward to explore Transformation every month. The existing nine members of our Development Team are stretched to their limits meeting the current demand for our services, meaning that seeking additional resource is a priority.

As an NDPB and a sectoral support body, we represent Integrated Education at a wide range of forums, one of which is **Area Planning** meetings, facilitated by the Education Authority (EA) on behalf DE. Area Planning governance structures comprise a strategic Area Planning Steering Group (APSG), an operational Area Planning Working Group (APWG) and three Area Planning Local Groups (APLGs). NICIE has been present at all meetings throughout the year. In addition, Officers attended meetings relating to Specialist Provision in mainstream Schools, as this area of educational planning works to effectively respond to increasing demand. Through these attendances, we have supported the Area Planning process and worked collaboratively with partners to create a draft Operational Plan for the period 2024 to 2027. The Independent Review of Education, published in December 2023, points in the direction of enabling more children to be educated together and has suggested some methods by which this might be progressed. We look forward to working through these challenges with our Area Planning partners in the years ahead.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

The Department of Education launched A Strategy for Integrated Education in Northern Ireland and an associated Action Plan on 26th April 2023. **The Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022** requires DE to report to the NI Assembly annually on the progress of the Strategy and Action Plan. The DE has created and facilitated an Integrated Education Act Implementation Steering Group and an Integrated Education

Act Working group and NICIE has invested considerable resource in attending and engaging with these meetings and associated processes. The Act and the Action Plan places emphasis on NICIE's role as a consultee and this has required us to respond to increasing requests from DE and EA in relation to a variety of workstreams, including the review of the DE guidance to schools in relation to the Transformation process, 'Integration Works'.

NICIE has continued, when possible, to contribute to the **development of the educational system**, and/or represent the interests of Integrated schools and/or Integrated Education in a range of other forums, including: The Education Sector Managing Attendance Forum, Teachers' Pension Scheme Advisory Board, Admissions and Expulsion Appeals Panels, EA-led Community in Schools working group, Local Management of Schools (LMS), Pre School-Education Group (PEG), EA Cross Directorate Group for Integrated Education, Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD), End to End review of school improvement, End to end review of SEN, Sectoral CEO Forum. We actively participate on behalf of Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) Schools in Management Side of the Teachers Negotiating Council, Oversight Group, Schools Leaders Workload, Pensions and Managing Attendance Groups and other ad hoc workstreams as required. We have continued to take legal advice in relation to revision of GMI governance structures and a range of other issues associated with the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022.

We are collaborating as a community partner with Queen's University School of Psychology and have successfully obtained two funded PhD studentships planned to commence in September 2024. NICIE sits on four research steering groups in Partnership with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) exploring issues about religious balance, barriers to school Transformation to Integrated status, social attitudes in relation to pupils in schools and RE and the Integrated Ethos. The latter is a jointly funded project with IEF and the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS), which has appointed a researcher to produce guidance for Integrated primary schools about the teaching of Religious Education and related practice in the Integrated Education Primary school setting. We continue to be a partner in a project funded by the Standing Conference in Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS). This research is examining how prepared Teacher and Student teachers are to teach controversial issues.
We submitted responses during the public consultation period for seven potential new schools seeking to Transform to Integrated status and for two existing Integrated schools seeking to establish Nursery provision.

In January 2024, we submitted a written response to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee Inquiry into Integrated Education and our CEO provided oral evidence to the Committee on 28th February.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Summary and Conclusion

This has been an exceptional year for NICIE and for the Integrated Education movement. This report has included the key achievements and outlined our current position. Alongside other public services in Northern Ireland, education, and Integrated Education, is experiencing the impact of chronic under-funding.

Whilst we were delighted to celebrate Roe Valley IPS's new school building this year, we were equally disappointed at the announcement in February 2024 that Fresh Start funding that was allocated for shared and Integrated school building projects is no longer available. We were also concerned with the lack of resource commitment in the DE's Integrated Education Strategy and associated Action Plan and the decreasing resource allocation for NICIE. When one considers the inflationary impacts, our core grant from DE has decreased by almost 50% since 2014/15[1]

We recognise that this is in the nature of public sector landscape in 2024 and we will continue to deliver services to the best of our ability with a passionate, talented and deeply committed staff team. We value our staff team and this year our team have invested time in a range of professional, personal and wellbeing development opportunities. Our team has invested in the deepening of our collaborative activity in the last few years and our productivity, reported above, is one indicator of our success in this regard.

[1] Using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation data from the Office for National Statistics

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Fixed assets

Details of the movement of fixed assets are set out in note 7 to the financial statements.

Donations

NICIE made no political donations during the year (2023: £nil)

Tax status

On 2 March 1989, NICIE was granted charitable status and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of NICIE are exempt for value added tax purposes. NICIE therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

Charitable status and public benefit

The company is a registered charity with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland under reference 100310. The directors have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

Disabled employees

NICIE gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment from disabled persons, having regard to their aptitude and abilities as well as Health and Safety factors.

Equality of Opportunity

NICIE follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service Policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement based on ability, qualification, and aptitude for work.

Employee involvement

It is the policy of NICIE to promote the understanding and involvement of all its employees in its aims and performance and it is committed to the continuing development of effective employee communication and consultation.

Sickness Absence

The sickness absence rate for the year was 146 days 4.6% (2023: 24.5 days .89%). The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Prompt Payment

NICIE is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with NICIE Financial Memorandum, the Confederation of British Industry's Better Practice Prompt Payers Code.

Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. In 2023/2024 NICIE paid 100% (2022/203: 100%) of its creditors within 30 days and no commission debt interest was paid or was due in respect of transactions in 2023/2024.

Statement of accounting officer and directors' responsibilities

The directors (who are also trustees of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education) are responsible for preparing the Directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law and Article 8(6) of the Financial Provisions (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 require the Chief Executive and directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the situation and of the surplus or deficit of NICIE for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Chief Executive and directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that NICIE will continue in business.

The Chief Executive (CEO) and directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of NICIE and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of NICIE and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The CEO is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of NICIE's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In addition, in appointing the Chief Executive of the NICIE as Accounting Officer for NICIE, the Department of Education has placed on the Chief Executive responsibilities including the regularity and propriety of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records. These are set out in the

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

"Accounting Officers" Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) issued by the Department of Finance. The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced, and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that they are fair, balanced, and understandable.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Accounting Officer and each of the Directors in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which NICIE's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that NICIE's auditors are aware of that information.

Small companies' exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small company's exemptions provided by the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013.

Independent auditors

The auditors, SCC Chartered Accountants, have been appointed as Independent Auditors through a tender process. A resolution concerning their reappointment for next year will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Board

Maeve Marnell
Chair **Date 22/06/2024**

Annual Report from the Chairperson for the year ended 31 March 2024

As the financial year draws to a close, I am pleased that we finally have an Assembly up and running and hopeful that this will have a positive impact on our budget for the coming year.
In 2023 our amazing staff rose above the challenges presented by our reduced budget and continued to work passionately and enthusiastically to meet our objectives of promoting, growing and supporting Integrated Education. Working with the principals, teachers, school staff, pupils and parents they demonstrated daily the positive societal impact that educating our children together can have.

In addition to our staff, I continue to be humbled by the huge sacrifice that our talented Board of Directors make to ensure good governance of the organisation and once again, with the expert support of our Finance Officer, Maureen Johnston, they have ensured that our budget has been managed efficiently and effectively.

I was pleased to continue work with the Department of Education on the Implementation of the Integrated Education Act. Working together with our partners in the IEF, AlumNI, APTIS as well as the Education Authority, CSSC and other sectoral support bodies, I feel confident that a cohesive strategy will be developed and we will continue to support the department to fulfil its duty to assess and aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education.

This year I am sad to say goodbye to our Senior Development Officer, Lorna McAlpine. Lorna has worked with NICIE for 27 years and the determination and tenacity she has demonstrated in the face of constant challenges and obstacles has been inspirational. She has had an enormous role in ensuring the development and growth of Integrated Education and we are so grateful for her immeasurable contribution.

It is also with great sadness that I say goodbye to our CEO, Roisin Marshall OBE. Roisin has led the organisation for 8.5 years with vision, positivity and unwavering enthusiasm. She has had a huge impact on the growth of Integrated Education through her unique ability to bring people together and create unity in seemingly impossible situations. Her ability to build and maintain relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders and see every challenge as an opportunity has been hugely beneficial to the development of NICIE and to the sector as a whole.

On behalf of the Board I want to thank Lorna and Roisin for their invaluable years of dedication and wish them every happiness in their retirement.

As my own term on the Board comes to an end I reflect back on the achievements of the last year in which more schools than ever are on the journey to transformation and am greatly optimistic for the future of Integrated Education. As we welcome a new CEO and a new Chair I am confident that we will continue to work positively with all our stakeholders and will achieve our mission of promoting reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 22/06/2024

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024

It has been both an honour and a privilege to have served for the last 8.5 years as the Chief Executive Officer of the Council for Integrated Education.

Most of you know I served my time with NICIE, both as a Development Officer and a Senior Development Officer between 2002 and 2007, having previously spent 12 years teaching in both primary and post primary schools, after which I was seconded to the North Eastern Education and Library Board to extend the work of the integrating Education Project. I am most grateful for the opportunity to have learned about Integrated Education from teachers, as a governor of my own children's schools and staff members and successive Boards of NICIE including the various Trust's members.

The first few years of my tenure, as the new Chief Executive Officer was to build relations with the Department of Education, the Education Authority (EA), the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), the AlumNI, products of Integrated education and supporters, the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC), the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Grammar Bodies Association (GBA), and Comhairle na Gaelscolaíchta (CnaG) , as well as the Transferors Representative Council (TRC), the Catholic Schools Trustee Service (CSTS) and the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA.)

Relationships have never been better between NICIE and these various organisations and that has also enabled us to promote, support and grow Integrated Education. This last year 23/24 has seen the highest number of strong, sustainable schools voting to Transform to Integrated Education.

It has been important to continue to access places in Integrated schools for those parents and carers who want that for their children and young people. Every place in an integrated school over the last 43 years has been hard fought for by parents, NICIE and IEF staff teams and more recently EA Sectoral Support and there have been many challenges along the way.

I want to pay tribute to the staff team in NICIE, who have always stepped up to provide support to enable Integrated schools to grow in size, existing schools to Transform and new schools to be developed. I want to pay particular credit to Senior Development Officer, Lorna McAlpine, who retires in April 2024 after 20+ years of service to the development of Integrated Education on a number of different levels. Lorna has been a source of wisdom, knowledge, understanding and expertise. I also want to pay tribute to Cliodhna Scott Wells, Senior Development Officer for Support within NICIE for her determination, knowledge, expertise, and skills to help support all of the Integrated schools.

I also want to pay particular tribute to Maureen Johnston, NICIE Finance Officer, who has worked tirelessly to ensure that NICIE runs as an effective organisation and that the budget is managed.

To all the other members of the NICIE staff team both past and present under my leadership, I want to say thank you for all of your support throughout my tenure.

There have been many challenges over my time as Chief Executive Officer, including COVID, the search for new premises, transition to a hybrid way of working, moving to new premises, managing a very challenging, limited budget in the face of increased demand for our services. However, NICIE, as a team, along with our very dedicated Board of Directors and specifically

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

our current Chair, Maeve Marnell, have worked collectively to ensure the continued development of Integrated Education over the last 8.5 years.

I want to pay tribute to both of the Chairs of directors throughout my time, Alan Henry, OBE and Maeve Marnell since the onslaught of COVID and the impact of this on the NICIE staff team, the Directors and the organisation as a whole who have consistently supported me as Chief Executive Officer in navigating all of the many challenges.

We lived through together, the Independent Review of Integrated Education, the passage of the Integrated Education Bill and the subsequent passing of the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022, coming into force in October 2022. The subsequent Integrated Education Strategy Action Plan and consultation of same has required NICIE as a collective organisation to ensure the very best outcomes for the leaders, staff and children and young people in Integrated Education.

NICIE values of inclusivity and diversity, enabling everyone to participate, and no one getting to dominate requires NICIE as an organisation to be thoughtful and considerate and enable everyone's voice to be heard.

The successive Ministers of Education over my tenure, the Permanent Secretaries and the officials in the Department of Education have had to get to know NICIE through their interaction with myself, members of our board and staff team. I am grateful for all of the support over the years when we presented robust cases for approval, and for the many approvals that were given.

In the words of Paulo Coehlo from The Alchemist 'One day you will wake up and there won't be any more time to do the thing you've always wanted to. Do it now.' He also says 'If you are brave enough to say goodbye life will reward you with a new hello.'

Looking forward to my retirement. One of my favourite poets sums it up.

The Sunlight on the Garden

The sunlight on the garden
Hardens and grows cold,
We cannot cage the minute
Within its nets of gold;
When all is told
We cannot beg for pardon.

Our freedom as free lances
Advances towards its end ;
The earth compels , upon it
Sonnets and birds descend ;
And soon , my friend ,
We shall have no time for dances.

The sky was good for flying
Defying the church bells
And every evil iron

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024 (continued)

Siren and what it tells:

The earth compels,
We are dying, Egypt, dying.

And not expecting pardon
Hardened in hearts anew,
But glad to have sat under
Thunder and rain with you,
And grateful too
For sunlight on the garden.

Louis Macniece

Glad to have sat under thunder and rain with you all but grateful too, for sunlight on the garden. I will go back to poetry and song and maybe even a dance. Remembering to keep the main thing the main thing…good outcomes for children and young people…we are collectively responsible…thank you to all who have kept that as the main thing.

Roisin Marshall

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Department of Education (DE). NICIE was established in 1987 as an umbrella body to represent Integrated schools and to promote Integrated Education. NICIE was set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is supported through grant in aid by DE under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

The role of NICIE as defined in the Management Statement is '*to promote Integrated Education and to perform a wide range of roles in facilitating the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland for the public benefit.'*

The Governance Statement sets out the governance structures, risk management and internal control procedures that have operated within NICIE during the financial year 2023 to 2024.

The Annual Governance Statement has been produced in line with guidance issued by DoF in accordance with the guidance in Annex 3.1 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and forms part of the Statutory Accounts and is reviewed, considered, and approved by the Board of Directors (BoD).

This Governance statement reflected NICIE's activities and governance for the current financial year.

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I am committed to operating in accordance with best practice in business integrity and ethics and maintaining the highest standards of financial reporting and governance. I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of controls that supports the achievement of NICIE's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the NICIE assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned in the MPMNI.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

As Accounting Officer of a public body and designated NDPB, I am committed to governance excellence and to ensuring accountability and transparency for all decisions and activities. I am responsible to the Permanent Secretary of DE under the terms and conditions as set out in NICIE's Management Statement (incorporating the Financial Memorandum) (MSFM).

I am satisfied that I have delivered upon my responsibilities as NICIE Accounting Officer and thereby declare to the Departmental Accounting Officer of my fitness to act as Accounting Officer.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Strategic Objectives

NICIE launched its new three-year Strategic Plan 2022-2025 in April 2022.

This strategic plan aims to:

1. Promote Integrated Education

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

2. Grow Integrated Education

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

3. Support Integrated Education

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

NICIE's vision is a society where children are educated together, confident to express their own identity and culture; and respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

The NICIE mission is to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

The current strategic plan sets out clearly defined strategic objectives for the year 2023-2024. I have ensured that the aims and objectives have been implemented with all staff, Board of Directors (BoD) and relevant stakeholders during 2023-2024 and regularly reviewed.

The NICIE business plan aligned to DE's strategic priorities clearly set out NICIE aims and objectives for the year 2023-2024 and was monitored throughout the year.

Governance Framework

In partnership with the NICIE Board of Directors, I have a corporate responsibility for setting objectives, agreeing priorities, and implementing ministerial policy. The BoD, and I, as the NICIE Accounting Officer and the staff of NICIE, developed and agreed a business plan for the 2023-2024 year, which was formally approved by DE.

The Business Plan was regularly reviewed along with key risks associated with the delivery of NICIE's objectives throughout the year. A mid-term six-month evaluation report to 30.9.2023 and year end evaluation provided updated progress reports on the achievements of NICIE for the 12 months to 31.3.2024 to both the BoD and DE.

NICIE have been working within our current Development Team capacity to respond to the increasing demand for our services. This DE funded team currently consists of three Senior Development Officers and one Development Officer. NICIE have also been successful in obtaining restricted funding from the Northern Ireland Office to fund one Senior Development

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Officer and three Development Officers until 31 March 2025. The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs has also funded a Development Officer until 31 March 2025.

In the 2023/2024 school year, there were approximately 27,000 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools.
One Transforming school got approval in September 2023.Three small unsustainable schools were not approved for Transformation. Seven other Development Proposals were approved in 2023/24 including two for GMI Post Primaries and 3 for GMI Nursery units.

This year has seen a continued surge in schools requesting support from NICIE regarding consideration of Transformation to Integrated Status. In 2023/2024 seven cases for change have been submitted to EA processes for schools Transforming to IE status and have been published.

In addition, there are fourteen more cases for change in the process of being progressed with the Boards of Governors from each school of which 10 are sustainable. These are all schools, which are post-ballot and seeking to Transform to Integrated status. Six schools had successful parental ballots this year.

Development Proposals for significant change to the Integrated Schools sector

There are 2 development proposals awaiting Ministerial decision for Nursery units.

A proposal for the new Causeway Controlled Integrated College which NICIE has worked on in collaboration with the three schools; North Coast Integrated College, Dunluce College, and Coleraine College, CSSC (Controlled Schools Support Council), UU (Ulster University) and the Education Authority, has been approved by DE.

Structure of NICIE

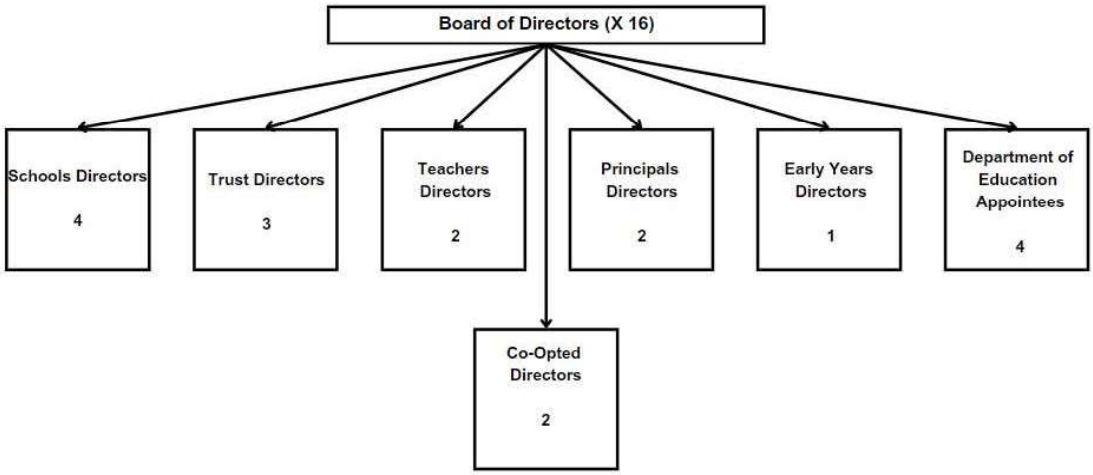
Board and Committees

The Board of Directors has a membership of 16 non-executive members including four DE appointees. There are currently two vacant DE Directors. The two vacant DE Directors will be filled through a forthcoming public appointments competition to be launched in the summer of 2024.

The role of the Board is to provide leadership to NICIE during the budget year, within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enable risk to be assessed and managed, to set NICIE's strategic aims, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet its objectives, provide oversight to set NICIE's values and standards and to ensure its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The current BoD structure is illustrated below:



NICIE is a constituent body of member organisations with seven categories of membership:

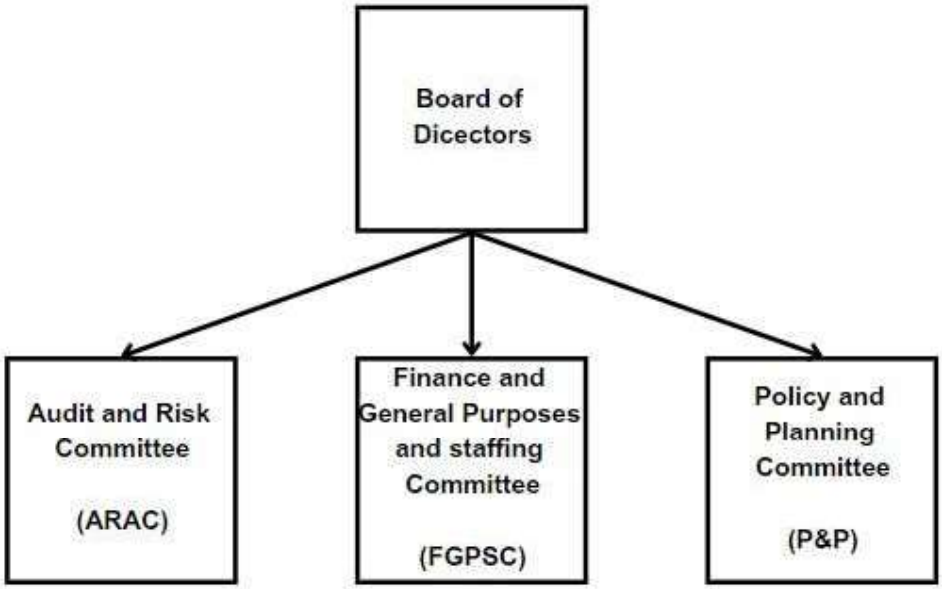
1. School members • 4 members to be elected at AGM	Those engaged in running a particular Integrated school.
2. Support members / Trust • 3 members to be elected at AGM	Organisations for the support and promotion of Integrated Education.
3. Teacher members	Representatives of teacher organisations. 2 members nominated by The Teachers Committee
4. Principal Member • 2 members nominated by APTIS (Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools)	Representatives of principals' association.
5. Early Years members • 1 member nominated by Teachers Committee	Those engaged in running pre-school provision in a particular Integrated school.
6. Co Opted • Up to 3 directors	To provide additional experience
7. Department of Education	4 people appointed by DE

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Board and Committees Structure

Three committees serve and report to the Board of Directors and are illustrated below.
The current directors and attendance records are recorded below. The Board structure and all directors were reviewed prior to the hybrid Annual General Meeting (AGM) including attendance records to ensure that the structure complied with NICIE's Articles of Association.

NICIE Board and Committees Structure:



Attendance at Meetings

Directors' attendance at meetings held during 2023-2024 is detailed below. Please note that some directors were not in post for the full financial year and joined the subcommittees during the year and the figures represent their percentage attendance based on when they joined.

Director/Member 2023-2024	Board of Directors 4 Zoom mtgs + AGM)	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee 4 Zoom mtgs	Finance, General Purposes & Staffing Committee 4 Zoom meetings	Policy and Planning Committee 2 Zoom mtgs
Maeve Marnell Chair	100%	-	100%	100%
Sandra Patterson	100%	100%	-	100%
Matt O Neill (Member)				50%
Claire Loftus			100%	

(Member)				
John Scott	100%	-	75%	100%
Attendance at Meetings Continued				
Cathal Mullaghan	100%	75%	-	
Shane Greer	75%	-	50%	50%
Anne Murray	75%		75%	100%
Dr Anne-Marie Telford (End of Term Feb 2024)	50%	50%	-	100%
Helen Smyth	100%	100%	-	50%
Adele Kerr	50%	-	75%	-
Bill Miscampbell (*co-optee)*	75%	-	100%	
Eamon Quinn *(co-optee)*	100%	-	-	100%
Bill Fletcher (appointed June 2023 Resigned December 2023)	100%	-	-	
Colin Millar	100%	100%	-	
Patricia Douglas	100%	100%	-	50%
Duncan Morrow	75%			100%
Bob Hanna DE Rep (Resigned Feb 2024)	100%	75%	-	-
Gavin Gray DE Rep	25%	-		-
Ashleigh Morrow	25%			
Nigel Arnold (Appointed March 2024)	100%			

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Performance of the Board 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

The Board of Directors held four meetings including the Annual General Meeting (AGM November 2023.) It was agreed that the Board meetings would continue to focus on strategy and the future direction of NICIE in the changing educational environment and the Integrated Education Act which came into force in October 2022. The new Act requires DE to "support" as well as "encourage and facilitate" Integrated Education. It will require "identifying, assessing, monitoring, and aiming to meet the demand for the provision of Integrated Education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate and providing sufficient places in Integrated schools to aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education." NICIE has been involved in the Consultation of the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Strategy Action Plan and consultation of same.

The chairperson continued to review the attendance of Board Members for the previous 12 months and reiterated the need for attendance and participation. The Chair was satisfied with the reasons for absence and ensured that proper processes were employed to address all absences and satisfied that all Board members continue on the Board. This was closely reviewed, monitored, and reported throughout the year, in my monthly meetings with the Chair. A few new directors replaced directors that had come to the end of their term. We were delighted to welcome these new directors to add their contributions to the proactive and dynamic Board.

A great deal of attention was directed to the move to NICIE's new office accommodation to ensure that it was affordable and the best option for NICIE.

Most meetings continued to be online though there were some hybrid meetings except for a board strategy day which was held in June 2023. All new Directors received induction training to ensure that they were briefed accordingly and were aware of their duties. This included the NICIE Corporate Governance guide, which was circulated to all Board members during the year to ensure adherence and compliance.

The Chair will complete the annual appraisal of directors. The chairperson continued to assess the performance of individual Board members through arrangements determined by the Department. Board members will continue to be subject to ongoing performance appraisal, with a formal assessment being completed by the chair at the end of each financial year and prior to any re- appointment of individual members taking place. Feedback of the appraisal process was shared with the Board and reported a positive working environment.

The Terms of reference of all committees were all reviewed during the year.

The appraisals also formed part of the assessment of the Board's effectiveness and were reported accordingly. A Board Effectiveness Review was carried out in November by the Independent Internal Auditor. The subsequent report had some minor recommendations, which will be added to the Board Effectiveness Action Plan for regular review by the Policy and Planning Committee.

The Chair was also appraised this year through arrangements made by the DE.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I also had monthly 1-1 meetings with the Chair where we reviewed the committees and the strategy of NICIE and agreed agenda for Board meetings.

A training programme was implemented during the year for the directors.

The register of interests continued to be a standard agenda at all Board meetings to ensure that any areas of Board member conflict are addressed at the start of each meeting.

The Board reviews, through the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) report and a range of presentations and discussion papers, the ongoing work of NICIE and its implementation of its strategic plan and business plan. Each Senior Development Officer for Grow and Support attends one Board meeting per year to present their report card on the NICIE Business Plan. The Report Card is regularly updated and feedback from DE has been useful in improving how NICIE Staff and Directors approach Outcomes Based Accountability.

During the year, the Board reviewed reports from other sub committees including the annual Internal Audit report, annual financial statements, monthly summary extracts from the management accounts and approved the Annual Business Plan and associated budgets.

NICIE reviewed the progress on the existing strategic plan and drafted a 2024-2025 business plan. A review was also undertaken of the effectiveness of reporting to the Board as part of the Board Effectiveness Review.

The Chairperson, Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer met the Permanent Secretary of DE for Governance and Accountability meetings twice in this financial year. Position reports were forwarded prior to these meetings highlighting any areas of significant accountability and governance. It was agreed that all was in order in the current challenging financial climate and that budgets were being managed accordingly. NICIE had hoped to be able to apply for Peace Plus Funding and were disappointed that this did not materialize.

NICIE has worked closely with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) to promote Integrated Education and is currently working with 20 schools at various stages of the Transformation process. One school successfully Transformed on 1st September 2023(Sion Mills Integrated Primary School).

As part of ensuring that all Board meetings are managed in an efficient and timely manner, I ensure that the Accounting Officer/CEO Report is circulated prior to the Board meetings along with all relevant papers.

Committee Reports

Role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) oversees financial reporting and the effectiveness of financial and regulatory compliance, controls and systems reporting.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee formally met on 4 occasions during 2023-2024 reviewed the Corporate Risk Register at each meeting and was satisfied that all risks were identified and corrective action taken where feasible. Some of the key risks are highlighted further in this report.

The Committee throughout the year continued to review and update the Corporate Risk Register to assure members that all risks relating to working from home arrangements and business continuity were incorporated into the register and that all risks were managed and mitigated accordingly. The Business Continuity Plan was also updated and reviewed at all the ARAC meetings.

There has been a new chairperson appointed for this committee as the existing chairperson has come to the end of their tenure as a DE Representative for NICIE.
The register of conflicts continued to be a standard item on the ARAC agenda.

In addition, the Committee reviewed the results of the internal audit report and the implementation of previous year's audit recommendations. The Committee was also responsible for reviewing the annual statutory Directors Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31.3.2023 and will also be responsible for the reports to 31.3.2024.

It also reviewed several policies and documentation from DE and DoF, which were updated by DE during the current year to ensure best practice and that DE business case, tenders, and DoF Pay Remit guidance was adhered to.

The NICIE ARAC Terms of Reference were also reviewed, and it was agreed that these would be reviewed every three years in line with the other committees in NICIE.

A summary report from the ARAC was presented to the Board by the chair of the committee following each meeting during the year.

Representatives from the IMIE Team at DE also sat on this Committee this year, which assisted in giving additional assurance to the Committee that all audit requirements were adhered to and provided guidance.

Finance, General Purposes and Staffing Committee (FGPSC)

This Committee continues to meet before the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors. It met 4 times during the current year. Its function is to focus more on the finance and personnel issues presented to the Board. This Committee also dealt with all issues relating to staff and premises.

FGPSC also continues to review staff policies throughout the year, ensuring that NICIE has covered all areas of staffing procedures and guidance.

The HR subcommittee also continued to meet where necessary during the year to dedicate more time to internal staffing issues and recruitment to ensure adequate time allocated to support the Finance Officer and me as CEO. This committee also included the Chair of NICIE. Progress was then reported accordingly to the relevant committee.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

The budget for the monthly management statements were carefully reviewed by me and the Finance Officer prior to presentation to the FGPSC who then reviewed the financial and performance management of NICIE ensuring that all budgets and internal controls were adhered to for the year up to 31.3.2024.

In this Financial year a significant deal of time was dedicated to the move to new office accommodation ensuring that the accommodation was affordable and fit for the needs of all NICIE staff.

It is a legal requirement that all places of work have a health and safety policy, which staff should be made aware of and adhere to. I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all duties under Health and Safety legislation. This is a standard item on the FGPSC agenda to ensure that the office was managed in accordance with government and health guidelines and that all staff were being managed and had support in terms of the ability to work from home, including pastoral care.

This committee was also responsible for ensuring that NICIE was fully compliant with business case requirements.

The FGPSC's remit also includes the awarding of tenders and ensuring that NICIE adheres to strict procurement procedures with the approval of DE. However, the committee continues to raise concerns again over the costs and time that NICIE incurred adhering to DoF Procurement guidance under Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD) when retendering for goods and services.

Policy and Planning Committee (P&P)

The Committee's remit during the current year included:

- The Independent Review of Education
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Implementation
- The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 Consultation on the Strategy Action Plan
- The submission to Northern Ireland Affairs committee (NIAC) on Integrated Education
- Monitoring Board Effectiveness Action Plan
- Monitoring Progress of Strategic and Business Plans
- Education Authority Sectoral Support Presentation and discussion on Shared Education

The Policy and Planning Committee has held two meetings during the year to formulate NICIE's policy position and various educational policies and legislation including Kellie Armstrong's Private Members' Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022. Committee members provide constructive challenges and guidance in response to updates by a Senior Development Officers on key areas of work. It is also an opportunity for Directors to gain a better-detailed understanding of the context that NICIE is working within, including a presentation and submission to the Independent Review of Education.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Compliance with Corporate Governance

An annual review of the effectiveness of NICIE's governance structures, as set out in the 2013 code (DAO/ (DFP) 10/12), risk management and internal controls has been conducted, informed by staff, directors, independent internal and external auditors. The NICIE Board has assessed that it has effectively complied with the Corporate Governance Code.

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) sets out a broad framework within which the Council is required to operate, and the Financial Memorandum defines certain financial provisions which NICIE is required to observe. As Accounting Officer and CEO, I have ensured that the MSFM has been adhered to for the financial year 2023-2024. NICIE is currently working with its DE sponsor branch on a Proportionate Autonomy Framework and are currently working towards a new Partnership Agreement, which will in due course replace the MSFM framework.

NICIE has continued to review its internal procedures to ensure that all services are reviewed and that business cases are submitted to the Irish Medium and Integrated Education (IMIE) Team in DE in a timely fashion and that all appropriate approvals are obtained before any expenditure is committed.

Training has also been given to all new staff during the year at staff meetings to ensure that controls are adhered to, and new staff are given induction training on arrival. Training needs have also been identified for new and existing directors and governance training has been organised and provided. Induction was provided for new directors and exit interviews/surveys were completed for all directors that left during the year.

All relevant Companies House and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland requirements have been updated.

NICIE continues to ensure that its governance arrangements are in place operating in accordance with best practice and that it continues to align its business aims and objectives to DE.

Assurance Reporting

As Accounting Officer, I am also responsible for preparing risk assurance statements and these reports provide assurance over areas of responsibility and confirm that risks are being managed.

Internal Audit

The scope of the internal audit plan for the current year by independent internal auditors Cavanagh Kelly was to review the controls in relation to the systems that NICIE had in place in relation to the following areas, including recommendations from last year's audit.

We commissioned an independent review of the board's effectiveness. This review has been based on the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) publication 'Board Effectiveness – A Good practice Guide' (the Guide) issued in June 2022 and took place in November and December 2023. The review considered relevant information and documentation for the 2023 and 2024 financial years. This review was completed in January 2024 and presented to NICIE's ARAC

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Board of Directors. The independent report concluded that NICIE had an effective Board with some minor recommendations for improvements.

Based on evidence reviewed and explanations obtained, the independent internal auditors concluded the Board of NICIE has demonstrated compliance with the guidance contained in the Northern Ireland Audit Office publication 'Board Effectiveness – Good practice Guide'.

It was recommended NICIE could consider developing a Conflict-of-Interest policy and reinstate asking board members and senior staff to formally complete declarations of interest, including nil returns annually.

There were some minor areas of improvement which the Board agreed to implement. The Internal Auditor was therefore able to give positive assurance to me as Accounting Officer that the Board's arrangements were satisfactory.

A review of the progress made by NICIE in implementing prior year adjustments was also undertaken and all prior year internal audit recommendations have been implemented.

External Auditor

NICIE's newly appointed External Auditors through a tender process are SCC Chartered Accountants. There were no control deficiencies identified during the year to 31.3.2023 for the audit completed by M.B.Mc Grady and company. There is unlikely to be any emphasis of matter or qualifications contained in the Audit report for 2023-2024.

Other Sources of Assurance

I have also relied on additional sources of assurance during the year, with regular reports from the staff, directors, NICIE Panel of Associates and independent advice from HR (Human Resource), legal experts and other relevant stakeholders.

NICIE also continues to report annually to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and Companies House.

Quality of Data Used by the Board

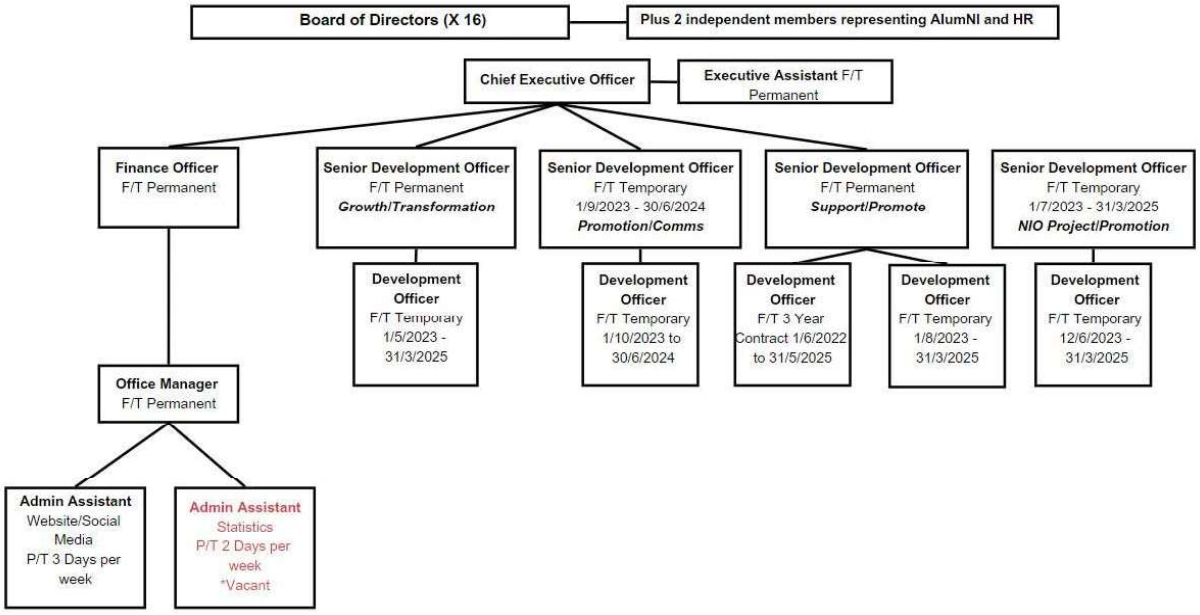
Senior Members of the NICIE Team and appropriately experienced officers or representatives of NICIE have supported all the committees. I regularly review and interrogate all data with Senior Management Team prior to any information being presented to the Board. These reports include monthly management accounts and budgets, which are prepared by NICIE's qualified Chartered Accountant and are also reviewed by the FGPSC who have additional finance experience. Senior Development Officers with much experience in the education sector, including reports compiled with various forums and relevant stakeholders, complete other NICIE reports. An appropriately selected Panel of Associates who have been drawn from a select list based on skills and experience compile bespoke reports. Committee Members also reviewed these reports and data and sought clarification from officers on the information presented to them.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Additionally, our Internal Auditors Cavanagh Kelly independently compiled the internal audit report, and the External Auditors S.S Cavanagh Accountants. independently verified the Final Financial Statements. In addition, as part of the internal audit programme all the quality of data was assessed by ARAC and presented to the Board. It is my view and the view of the committees that the quality of the data used by NICIE is of an acceptable standard.

The staffing structure of NICIE for 2023-2024 is highlighted below:

NICIE ORGANISATIONAL CHART



I would like to highlight that I am retiring from my position as CEO with effect from 31.7.2024 and a recruitment process is currently underway managed by NICIE's Human Resources Sub Committee. A panel has been commissioned including NICIE HR Provider and an observer from DE. The window for applications closed on the 2nd April 2024.

A long-standing member of NICIE Senior Development Team, is also retiring after almost 26 years. There is contingency planning in place in the short term to manage this.

Additionally, it is important to note that the majority of NICIE's Development Team is made up of external funding posts which will come to an end 31 March 2025.

Ministerial Directions

No Ministerial Directions were given for the year to 31 March 2024.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Heath and Safety

I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all its duties under Health and Safety. Whilst NICIE has always been mindful of compliance to health and safety, a working group was set up with representatives from both staff and directors to review NICIE's hybrid policy and ensuring that the office environment was safe and managed accordingly. This was and continues to be reviewed to ensure that all risks are managed and mitigated, and that the NICIE staff are protected, and the office environment is clean and appropriately managed and that all health and safety requirements and legislation is adhered to.

NICIE moved to new office accommodation during the year. This is a fully managed service government building with secure access and meets all health and safety requirements including disability access. The Office block has its own Staff guide for Health and Safety and all accommodation details

The staff handbook continues to be reviewed, updated in line with legislation and appropriate guidance and circulated to all staff and training provided where relevant. NICIE continues to support all staff through the NICIE well-being programme, and this is managed through the NICIE health and wellbeing sub-committee. Several activities including a staff team building day have been carried out during the year and staff are continuously reminded to access the free well-being programmes available to them.

Risk Assessment

Internal Controls and Risk Management

I, along with the directors acknowledge our responsibility for NICIE's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) reviewed the risks associated with the Council's activities. The Corporate Risk Register includes an evaluation of all levels of risk. Both inherent and residual risks were reviewed throughout the year with the committee and DE. NICIE had a Business Continuity Plan in place, which has also been reviewed and updated to manage all internal controls including hybrid working.

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reports to each Board meeting on any matters that need to be brought to their attention.

I, as Accounting Officer, continue to enforce and ensure that risk management is embedded and owned by the Board and all NICIE staff. This has now effectively been incorporated and embedded into all NICIE business plans and daily operations of NICIE. The corporate risk register and risk management is viewed as a dynamic process which actively seeks to incorporate good practice. It is responsive and current and is managed through regular review of both internal developments and external factors.

As a NDPB, NICIE has a low-risk appetite in relation to compliance, regulation, and our strategic aims which I anticipate will continue.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Risk Profile faced by NICIE.

The NICIE corporate risk register currently identifies four significant risks. These risks are reviewed quarterly by ARAC. These are also circulated to Board Members and Staff

The first three risks relate to financial management and governance and some of the primary areas of concern for 2023/2024 are highlighted in the table below.

Management of Significant Risks

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure of DE/DoF to guarantee NICIE Pension Liability	Reported to BoD/External Auditor. Continue to monitor and liaise with DE/DoF of any potential increases regarding non-guarantee from NILGOSC (NICIE Pension provider)	Ongoing
Potential Claims re employee grievances.	Solicitor and HR Providers contacted and ongoing liaison to mitigate against grievances and Industrial Tribunal claim. Potential for inescapable legal bill bid.	Ongoing
Failure to have adequate insurance in place.	DE covers Employers Liability Public Liability covered by DoF in James House Public Liability to be requested for each event where the venue requires it.	September 2023
Limited DE budget for parental ballots and financial support for Transforming schools.	Requested that IMIE apply for more financial support for the five new Transforming schools for the next five years from Monitoring Round.	March 2024

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure to Strategically plan for IE (Integrated Education)	Planning groups, articulating the out workings of the statutory duty, to the Education Authority (EA) Ensure Cases for Change are robust and reflect a robust evidence base to support Development proposals (DP) for approval; and Continue to work with the EA through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Protocols between NICIE and the EA and the Cross-Directorate Group (CDG). Support for development of IE by partnership between NICIE, EA, CSSC and DE Area Planning and IMIE to discuss and identify roles and responsibilities for each organisation in relation to Controlled Integrated Schools.	March 2024 Ongoing
Failure to effectively implement the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022	NICIE proactive members of the Steering and Working Groups of the DE Implementation Team Review and give feedback on draft Strategic Plan Review and give feedback on Reporting on support	Ongoing

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
	for IE from ALBs and other support bodies Regular meetings with the DE Implementation Team Quarterly meetings with DE Governance and Risk (GAR) and DE Implementation Team Responded to consultation on the IE Act Strategy Action Plan, the Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey proposed questions and Data proposals for measuring demand and reporting on progress of the Action Plan Engagement and Consultation Protocols in place between DE and NICIE	
Failure to ensure NICIE staffing complement to ensure NICIE can support DE to fulfil its statutory duty to promote, encourage, facilitate and support Integrated Education.	Five Business Cases submitted to IMIE to demonstrate NICIE's need to retain staff post March 2025. Reporting of the outcomes of NICIE staff team to DE and NICIE Board through the NIIE Report Card. Careful drafting of NICIE Business Plan and NICIE Strategic Plan to ensure DE understands the need for an increase in NICIE's budget.	NICIE are aware that staff retention will be vital to meeting DE's statutory duty and the vision of a network of sustainable, high quality Integrated schools.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I am satisfied that these risks were managed accordingly, and that tolerable and considerable progress continues to mitigate these risks.

One of the risks that continues to present the greatest challenge to NICIE relates to the failure to meet demand for Integrated Education and thus enabling parents who want an Integrated school for their child to be able to access it. The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 means that NICIE will need to work in partnership with DE, statutory and other support bodies to ensure the effective implementation of the Act ensuring the work of NICIE complements the duties placed on those organisations to further the development of Integrated Education.

It is important for NICIE to play its part in promoting Shared Education and encouraging Integrated schools to actively participate. NICIE has also forwarded proposals to EA School Support team regarding Shared Learning Together EA PEACE PLUS application, and we are hopeful to be able to access staff to support Shared Learning Together.

Through Area Planning, NICIE continues to encourage schools and support organisations to consider Integrated Education as an option in a time of economic constraints and the desire for educational provision in each area to remain as a choice for the whole community. Where there is no provision NICIE, in conjunction with parents and schools, must demonstrate unmet demand for such provision to be considered. This is extremely difficult in a time when the education budget constraints suggest no more growth but rationalisation. NICIE is acutely aware of the deficit in funding for education generally and is concerned with the challenges that that brings to enabling Integrated Education to grow. NICIE recognises the gap that exists for schools in local areas to consider options for Integrated Education as a solution to ensure education provision in an area. NICIE is willing and able, given financial support, to fill this gap to encourage conversations as per Transformation/ new school development.

NICIE are aware of the requirement now for DE and EA to assess future demand for Integrated Education and so NICIE will contribute in whatever way it can to support.

We are also acutely aware of the Fresh Start Agreement Funding for capital buildings, which is enabling already existing Integrated schools that have sought so hard to be part of the educational landscape to survive into the future. NICIE wish to record the huge dismay regarding the decision to remove the ring fenced £150 million of Fresh Start Agreement funding for capital builds for Integrated and Shared Education. This has had a significant, adverse impact on 10 Integrated schools.

NICIE are grateful for the continued support from Northern Ireland Office and Irish Department of Foreign Affairs to help NICIE to promote, meet local demand for Integrated Education and support existing Integrated schools.

NICIE staff also assess internal and external risks of all activities, and the risk is reviewed and mitigated where feasible.

Fraud Risk

NICIE continues to review and implement its fraud policy during the year and has zero tolerance in respect of fraud. Internal controls were also reviewed and are clearly embedded within the organisation.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

I have ensured that the NICIE Finance Officer is a member of the DE Education Sector Fraud forum. There were no instances of suspected fraud within NICIE during the year 2023-2024.

Raising Concerns at work (Whistle Blowing)

NICIE has a policy on Raising Concerns at work (Whistleblowing), which encourages staff to report any instances of unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or other actions that might compromise, in any way, the Council's reputation and integrity. There were no instances during 2023-2024.

Data Security breaches

There were no data security breaches or losses during the year.

General Data Protection Regulation

NICIE continues to maintain and review its GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) policies, current data governance processes, procedures, and control. NICIE staff also ensure that all archived materials were appropriately dealt with which included archiving, destroying, and returning materials to schools. NICIE's Retention and Disposal Policy was filed and agreed with the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) to ensure that records are managed in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Government Funding Database

NICIE is not listed on the Government Funding Database as NICIE does not award grant funding to the community and voluntary sector.

Significant Governance Issues

There are no further significant governance issues.

Conclusion

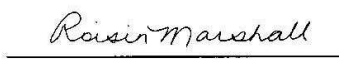
The aim of this statement is to ensure that information is provided as to how governance within NICIE has been effective for the year to 31.3.2024 and identifies a range of significant governance issues that NICIE is facing during a period of significant change, uncertainty, and challenging circumstances.

NICIE will continue to ensure that it adheres to organisational needs and governance guidelines.

I can confirm that I will continue to review these issues and ensure that they are addressed. This governance statement was presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and formally approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Chair on 24th April 2024.

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (continued)

Signature of Chair:



Signature of Accounting Officer

Date of Signature 24th April 2024

Remuneration Policy and Staff report

The remuneration of all Council staff is determined by the NICVA National Joint Council for local authorities and other authorities of equivalent status. The National Joint Council's principal role is to reach agreement, based on shared values, on a national scheme of pay and conditions for local application throughout the UK.

The NICVA National Joint Council's guiding principles are to support and encourage:

- High quality services delivered by a well-trained, motivated workforce with security of employment. To this end employer are encouraged to provide training and development opportunities for employees;
- Equal opportunities in employment; equality as a core principle which underpins both service delivery and employment relations; and both the removal of all discrimination and the promotion of positive action;
- A flexible approach to providing services to the community, which meets the needs of employees as well as employers; and
- Stable industrial relations and negotiation and consultation between employers and recognised trade unions.
-

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Board and most senior management of the department.

Remuneration and pension entitlements (audited information)

	2023-2024					2022-2023				
	Salary	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**	**Salary**	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**
	£'000					**£**				
R Marshall *CEO*	**65-70**	**100**	**-**	**18,000**	**80-85**	60-65	100	-	18,000	80-85
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**		**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	40-45
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	12,000	50-55
S Pettis *Senior Development Officer (Resigned May 2022)*	**40-45**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	1,00	50-55
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer (Appointed July 2023)*	**40-45**	**-**	**-**	**-**		-				
E Humme Senior Development Officer(Appointed September 2023)	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**10,000**						
		100		**10,000**						

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension benefits

The value of pension benefits during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increase due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a track of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary and any allowances all of which are subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by NICIE and thus recorded in these financial statements.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and is treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

Bonuses

No bonuses were paid during the year to 31 March 2024 (2023: £nil).

Off payroll engagements

During the year, there were no off-payroll engagements (2023: none).

Staff turnover

NICIE employee turnover rate is set out in the table below.

	April 2023 to March 2024		April 2022 to March 2023	
	Number of staff	% of headcount	Number of staff	% of headcount
Starters	4	31.6	1	8.33
Leavers	2	15.8	2	16.67

Pay Ratios

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid officer in NICIE in the financial year 2023-2024 was £65,000 - £70,000 (2022-23, £65,000-£70,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the NICIE workforce is disclosed below.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

2023-2024	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	27,840	36,648	46,464
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

2022-2023	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	28,126	35,961	44,539
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £27,840, £36,648 and £46,464 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £25,119 to £67,105 (2022-23, £22,777 to £64,676).

Percentage Change in Remuneration

The percentage changes in respect of NICIE are shown in the following table.

Percentage change for:	2023-24 v 2022-23	2022-23 v 2021-22
Average employee salary and allowances	4.91%	5.51%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	3.88%	3.01%

No performance pay or bonuses were payable to the highest paid officer or employees in these years.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension entitlements

Officials	Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31 March 2024 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2023 £'000	Real increase/ Decrease in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership payment Nearest £100
R Marshall *Chief Executive Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	180	125	22	-
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	169	122	16	-
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	10-15 Plus lump sum 10-15	0-2.5	305	236	15	-
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	16-20 Plus lump sum 15-20	0-2.5	413	353	7	-
Sean Pettis *Senior Development Officer* (Resigned May 2022)	0-5 No lump sum	0-2.5	0	21	0	-
L Johnston *Senior Development Officer (Appointed July 2023)* *E Humme* *Senior Development Officer(Appointed September 2023*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	63	52	6	

Pension entitlements

NICIE is a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Pension scheme. The Scheme is a funded defined benefit scheme, with benefits earned up to 31 March 2015 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2015 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended) and "The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended).

The funded nature of the LDPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets.

Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31st March 2023 and the contributions to

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

be paid until 31st March 2024 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Funds Rates and Adjustment Certificate. The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value ("CETV") is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued because of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-2004 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement, which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effects of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Staff cost (Audited)

	Permanently employed staff	**Temporary agency staff**	**Total 2024**	2023
			£	£
Wages and salaries	515,965	-	515,965	405,539
Social security costs	49,289	-	49,289	36,871
Other pension costs	93,701	-	93,701	74,127
	658,955		658,955	513,537
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			(40,507)	(40,501)
NIO Funded Staff			(157,105)	
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation				
Current service cost			103,000	161,000
Past service cost/(gain)				
Contributions by the employer			(92,000)	(74,000)
Total Net costs			472,343	560,036

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the year was:	**13**	10

Some staff employed by the company in 2024 and 2023 had permanent fixed term contracts of employment. During the year the charity incurred costs of £0 (2023: £0) relating to agency staff and secondees. The staff consists of 10 female and 3 male employees. The sickness absence rate for the year was 2024:122 days 4.7% (2023: 24.5 days /.89%. The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure, and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

The Directors received **£0** for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2023: £0). **One** employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2023: 1) and details are below.

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	67,185	65,915
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme. Roisin Marshall	12,765	12,612
	79,950	78,527

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Compensation schemes – exit packages

The following section provides details of the exit packages paid by the company.

	Number of voluntary redundancies	Total number of exit packages by cost band 2024	Total number of exit packages by cost band 2023
< £10,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£10,000-£25,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total number of exit packages	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total resource cost	Nil	Nil	Nil

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 22/06/2024

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Regularity of expenditure

There were no losses or special payments made by the Council in the year. (2022/23 – £nil)

Fees and Charges

There were no fees or charges made by the Council in the year. (2022/23 - £nil)

Remote contingent liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities requiring disclosure under Assembly reporting requirements. The Council had no significant remote contingent liabilities to report 2023-24, (2022-23 £nil). Note 17 provides further details regarding the contingent liabilities, which are included in the financial statements.

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive
Date:22/06/2024 :

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards. We have also audited the information in the Remuneration and staff report and the Assembly Accountability and audit report that is described in those reports as having been audited.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken during the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Directors has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
- In all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.
  The parts of the remuneration and staff report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with DoF directions made under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with DoF guidance.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law,) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. They are also responsible for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control, as the trustees determine is necessary, to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud, or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

The following are required to be considered:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and entity performance;
- results of our enquires of management, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- review of company policies and procedures relating to:
  identifying, evaluation and complying with laws and regulations and whether they are aware of instances of noncompliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have any knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  -the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team and specific component audit teams regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

Because of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud is in relation to expenditure not being applied in line with intended purposes and the calculation and payment of salaries. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

Audit response to risks identified.

The current audit is conducted with professional scepticism using procedures that are in accordance with International Standards on Auditing.

In responding to the identified key audit matters above we obtained an understanding of the charity's objectives and funders requirements together with the salary calculation and processing process, we performed enquires of management and inspected relevant documents and calculations, verifying expenditures, completing a recalculation of salaries during the year, assessing the completeness and accuracy of disclosures within the financial statements and concurred the figures were materially accurate.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified include the following:

- reviewing the full financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerns of actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- obtained an understanding of provisions and held discussions with management to understand the basis of recognition or non-recognition of provisions; and

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee) (continued)

- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and significant component audit teams and remained alert to any indications of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities, which govern them. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sean G Cavanagh

Sean G. Cavanagh
Senior Statutory Auditor
For and on behalf of SCC Chartered Accountants Ltd Date: 22/06/2024

17 College Street
Armagh
BT61 9BT

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Incoming resources/income			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
- Voluntary income	3	**892,295**	793,399
Total incoming resources		**892,295**	793,399
Resources expended/expenditure			
Charitable activities			
- Development of Integrated Education and schools in Northern Ireland		**(906,751)**	(771,589)
Governance costs		**(16,308)**	(9,580)
Other resources expended			
- Other finance costs	6	**4,000**	(18,000)
Total resources expended		**(919,059)**	(799,169)
Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses		**(26,764)**	(5,770)
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension	12	**7,000**	760,000
Net movement in funds		**(19,764)**	754,230
Funds at 1 April		**161,298**	(592,932)
Funds at 31 March	14	**141,534**	161,298

All amounts above relate to the continuing restricted operations of the company.

There is no material difference between the net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses for the financial year stated above, and the historical cost equivalent.

The net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses is the net outgoing resources required by the Companies Act 2006 as opposed to that required by the Statement of Recommended Practice.

There are no changes in equity other than the results shown in the statement of financial position therefore a separate statement of changes in equity has not been presented.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Non-current assets			
Property, plant, and equipment	7	**8,494**	**9,839**
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	9	**5,076**	**60,230**
Cash and cash equivalents	10	**178,879**	**123,649**
		183,955	**183,879**
Total assets		**192,449**	**193,718**
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	**(50,915)**	**(32,420)**
Non-current assets less net current liabilities		**141,534**	**161,298**
Non-current liabilities			
Pension commitments as per Note 12	12	**(0)**	**(0)**
Total assets less liabilities		**141,534**	**161,298**
Reserves			
Restricted funds	14	**141,534**	**161,298**

The financial statements on pages 57 to 58 were approved by the Board of directors on 22 June 2024 and were signed on its behalf by: Mrs Maeve Marnell, Chair of NICIE Board of Directors.

The notes on pages 62 to 76 form an integral part of these financial statements

Maeve Marnell
Chairperson

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive Officer

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Registered number: NI022427
Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	**2024** **£**	2023 £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		**57,527**	52,868
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant, and equipment	7	**(2,297)**	(0)
Net cash inflow (outflow) from investing activities		**(2,297)**	(0)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		**55,230**	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**123,649**	70,781
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	15	**178,879**	123,649

Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before recognised gains and losses	**(19,764)**	**(5,770)**
Depreciation on tangible fixed assets	**3,642**	**4,919**
Loss on disposal of Assets		**2,481**
Movement in trade and other receivables	**55,154**	**(43,981)**
Movement in trade and other payables	**18,495**	**(9,781)**
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions		**87,000**
Other finance costs		**18,000**
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	**57,527**	**52,868**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, Accounting and Reporting by Charities; Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with International Financial Reporting standards and the principles of the 2021-22 *Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)* issued by the Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy, which is judged most appropriate to the particular circumstances of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education for giving a true and fair view, has been selected. The particular policies adopted by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the financial statements.

Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost.

New and amended standards adopted by the Company

The Company has adopted IFRS16 “Leases” from 1/4/2022, which has resulted in changes in the accounting policies and adjustments to the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Effective date and transitional provisions

"In accordance with the transitional provisions of IFRS16 as adapted and interpreted by the FReM, the Company has adopted the new guidance, applying a retrospective approach to recognise the cumulative effects of initially applying IFRS16 recognised at the date of initial application as an adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers’ equity."

Summary of the main changes introduced by the standard

The new standard sets out the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation, and disclosure of leases. All leases result in the lessee recognising the right to use an asset at the commencement date of the lease, and if lease payments are made over time recognising financing. Accordingly, IFRS16 eliminates the classification of leases as either operating leases or finance leases as required by IAS17 and, instead, introduces a single lessee accounting model. Lessees will be required to recognise: (a) assets and liabilities for all leases with a lease term of more than 12 months unless the underlying asset is of low value; and (b) depreciation of right- of- use assets separately from interest on lease liabilities in profit or loss. IFRS16 substantially carries forward the lessor accounting requirements from IAS17. Accordingly, a lessor continues to classify its leases as operating leases or finance leases and to account for those two types of leases differently. For sub leases, intermediate lessors should classify subleases based on the right-of-use as set from the headlease, rather than the underlying lease as set as it was under IAS17, thus there is increased likelihood that a sublease previously classified as operating lease will be classified as a finance lease under IFRS16.

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

The effect from adoption of IFRS16 on the Company's financial statements

The company previously held a lease on its premises at 25 College Gardens, which expired in August 2023, and NICIE moved to James House under RPM on a rent-free licence agreement. (LY *Note for info)Thereafter the company occupied the premises on a rolling month-to-month term and has notified the Landlords on 6th April 2023 their intention to vacate the property at 25 College Gardens. At the end of the current year the company had not completed on the new lease agreement for their new offices at James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue. As such the Company has implemented the new standard retrospectively with the cumulative effect of initial application recognised as at the date of initial application of IFRS16, i.e. 1 April 2022 with the corresponding adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers' equity as per IFRS16(C5(b)) and due to all leases being either short-term leases and leases of low-value assets there is no material change required to the opening balances with no corresponding change required in the opening balances of tax payers equity.*

Going concern

The directors have received funding for the year ended March 2024, which has been confirmed from the Department of Education. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, which assumes that NICIE will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Property, plant, equipment, and depreciation

Property, plant, and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items. Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial year in which they are incurred.

For all assets depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less their estimated residual values, on a reducing balance basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets concerned, or over the life of project, whichever is earlier. The principal annual rates used are as follows:
Information technology : $33^1/_3$%
Furniture and fittings : 20%

Trade and other receivables

Trade receivables are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business. If collection is expected in one year or less (or in the normal operating cycle of the business if longer), they are classified as current assets. If not, they are presented as non-current assets.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Trade and other receivables (continued)

Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

In the cash flow statement cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Trade payables are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade and other payables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Government grants

Grants that relate to specific revenue expenditure are credited to the statement of financial activities when received.

Taxation

The Company is registered as a charity for tax purposes and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of the company are exempt for value added tax purposes. The company therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

VAT

The company is not registered for VAT. All expenditure and capital purchase in the financial statements is stated inclusive of VAT.

Pension funding

Retirement benefits to employees of NICIE are provided by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee ("NILGOSC") defined benefit scheme, which is externally funded and contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

In respect of this scheme, NICIE's staff constitute only a small percentage of the overall membership. NICIE has no influence over the level of contributions.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Pension funding (continued)

In previous years NICIE's share of the NILGOSC scheme could not be identified and in keeping with such multi-employer schemes NICIE treated its pension cost as if it were a defined contribution (rather than a defined benefit) scheme. In late 2006, NILGOSC separated each of the employer scheme details and, as a result, NICIE has had to incorporate the year-end deficit on the scheme in its balance sheet and the movement on the scheme within the statement of financial activities.

The assets of the NILGOSC scheme are held separately from those of NICIE. Pension scheme assets are measured using market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability. The service cost and associated administration costs of NICIE's defined benefit pension scheme are charged to net outgoing resources before recognised gains. In addition, a retirement benefit interest charge on the net pension deficit is charged to the statement of financial activities as a finance cost. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised directly in statement of financial activities so that NICIE's balance sheet reflects the fair value of the scheme's surplus or deficit at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The significant accounting estimations and judgments of the Company relate to the pension assets, liabilities and associated pension surplus or deficit. The Company utilises the services of actuarists to help them value scheme assets and liabilities and provide the necessary disclosures of the Nilgosc pension scheme.

Incoming resources

Grants

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period, in which case they are deferred.

Other income

Other income, which excludes value added tax, is accounted for on the accrual's basis.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Governance costs
Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of its assets, which are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Bank interest

All interest is accounted for in the statement of financial activities on the accruals basis.

Operating leases

Accounting policies applied from 1 April 2023

Leases other than short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as right-of-use assets and corresponding liabilities at the date at which the leased assets are available for use by the Company.

Payments associated with all short-term leases and certain leases of all low-value assets are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure. The company applies the exemption for low-value assets on a lease-by-lease basis. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of less than 12 months or less. Low-value assets comprise computers, tablets, mobile phones and small items of office furniture.

Accounting policy applied until 31st March 2023

Leases in which a significant portion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases (net of any incentives received from the lessor) are charged to the net expenditure account on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Lease activities

The company leased its head office property until August 2023 when it moved to James House as part of Reform of Public Property under a rent-free licence agreement for five years. Additionally, it has a few low-value leases on items of office equipment

Fund accounting

NICIE has one type of fund for which it is responsible. The definition of this fund is as follows:

Restricted funds

Restricted funds, subject to specific trusts, are those given to NICIE, which are to be expended for the specific objects specified by the donor.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

2 Statement of operating costs by operating segment

The trustees consider that NICIE acts as one operating segment and therefore no statement of operating costs by operating segment has been presented.

3 Voluntary income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Department of Education Northern Ireland	670,931	632,167
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	170,000	18,473
Northern Ireland Office		
Integrated Education Fund	4,800	95,000
		-
Donations	1,497	7,258
Recoveries in respect of outward secondments	45,067	40,501
	892,295	793,399

4 Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses

	2024	2023
	£	£
This is stated after charging:		
Staff costs (Note 5)	669,955	600,537
Depreciation of property, plant, and equipment (Note 7)	3,642	4,919
Fees payable to NICIE's auditors for the audit of the financial statements	7,200	5,652
Operating lease rentals/ Licence Fee	-	19,100

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

5 Staff costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	515,965	402,539
Social security costs	49,289	36,871
Other pension costs	93,701	74,127
	658,955	513,537
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation		
Current service cost	103,000	161,000
Past service cost/(gain)	-	-
Contributions by the employer	(92,000)	(74,000)
	669,955	600,537

During the year the charity incurred costs of £330 (2023: £nil) relating to agency staff and secondees.

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year was:	**13**	10

The Directors received £0 for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2023: £0). One employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2023: one) and details are below.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	67,185	65,915
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme.	12,765	12,612
	79,950	78,527

6 Other finance costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Interest income on pension scheme assets	130,000	77,000
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(126,000)	(95,000)
	4,000	(18,000)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

7 Property, plant, and equipment

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Disposal	0	(182)	(182)
Additions	2,142	155	2,297
At 31 March 2024	59,680	26,761	86,441
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Depreciation on Disposal	0	(182)	(182)
Charge for the year	3,591	51	3,642
At 31 March 2024	51,290	26,657	77,947
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2024	**8,390**	**104**	**8,494**
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**

	Information technology £	Furniture and fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	59,369	29,269	88,638
Disposal	(1,831)	(2,481)	(4,312)
Additions	0	0	0
At 31 March 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	44,611	26,788	71,399
Depreciation on disposal	4,919	0	4,919
Charge for the year	(1,831)		(1,831)
At 31 March 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**
At 31 March 2022	**14,758**	**2,481**	**17,239**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

8 Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education largely are met through, Grant-in-Aid provided by DE, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the NDPB's expected purchase and usage requirements and the NDPB is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity, or market risk.

9 Trade and other receivables

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Trade receivables	1,276	7,184
Prepayments and accrued income	3,800	53,046
	5,076	60,230

The fair values of trade and other receivables are not materially different from the carrying values.

All of the charity's financial assets are classified as loans and receivables. The company has no assets that may be classified as held at fair value through profit and loss, derivatives used for hedging or available-for-sale.

10 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Balance at 1 April	123,649	70,781
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	55,230	52,868
Balance at 31 March	178,879	123,649
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial banks and cash in hand	178,879	123,649

11 Trade and other payables

	2024	2023
	£	**£**
Trade payables	39,219	25,054
Accruals and deferred income	11,696	7,366
	50,915	32,420

The fair value of trade and other payables are not materially different from their carrying value as the impact of discounting is not significant. There is no difference between the amounts shown above and the total contractual undiscounted cash flows of trade and other payables.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

12 Pension commitments

The net pension 'liability' shown below does not represent a shortfall, which requires short-term cash funding. The amount shown below is calculated to comply with the new Financial Reporting Standard, the specific requirements of which differ from the basis on which pension liabilities are actuarially calculated for the ongoing funding of the scheme. The Financial Reporting Standard requires:

(i) actuarial deficiencies to be recognised immediately as a "liability" in the financial statements rather than being spread forward over employees' remaining service lives;

(ii) the actuary, in valuing the scheme's liabilities, is required to use a bond yield as the discount rate for valuing future liabilities, rather than a rate that reflects the expected return on the scheme's particular asset portfolio, with the result of an apparent increase in the present value of future longer-term liabilities.

IAS 19 figures in relation to employees and ex-employees who are members of the NILGOSC pension scheme.

	2024	2023
Rate of increase in salaries	**4.1%**	4.2%
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	**2.6%**	2.7%
Discount rate	**4.8%**	4.7%
Inflation assumption	**2.6%**	2.7%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	**2.6%**	2.7%

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	2024 Years	2023 Years
Average expected future life at age 65 for:		
Male currently aged 65	**21.7**	22.2
Female currently aged 65	**24.6**	25.0
Male currently aged 45	**22.7**	23.2
Female currently aged 45	**25.6**	26.0

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

The market value of assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return were:

Asset Allocation	Quoted %	Unquoted %	Total %	Value at 31 Mar 2024 £	Value at 31 Mar 2023 £
Equities	39.6%	0.1%	39.7%	1,214,820	1,098,400
Property	0%	9.3%	9.3%	284,580	307,552
Government Bonds	15.0%	0.0%	15.0%	459,000	565,676
Corporate Bonds	4.6%	0.0%	4.6%	140,760	82,380
Multi Asset Credit	13.0%	0.0%	13.0%	397,800	365,218
Cash	12.4%	0.0%	12.4%	379,440	178,490
Other	.2%	5.8%	6.0%	183,600	148,284
Total market value of assets	**84.8%**	**15.2%**	**100.%**	**3,060,000**	**2,746,000**
Present value of scheme liabilities				**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**
Unrecognised Surplus/Deficit in scheme				**(287,000)**	**(31,000)**
Net asset (liability) recognised on Statement of Financial Position				-	-

Reconciliation of present value of scheme liabilities

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 April	**2,715,000**	3,405,000
Current service cost	**103,000**	161,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Member contributions	**33,000**	26,000
Interest cost	**126,000**	95,000
Re-measurement on scheme liabilities	**(106,000)**	(886,000)
Benefits paid	**(98,000)**	(86,000)
At 31 March	**2,773,000**	2,715,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April	**2,746,000**	2,750,000
Expected return	**130,000**	77,000
Re-measurement on scheme assets	**157,000**	(95,000)
Employer contributions	**92,000**	74,000
Member contributions	**33,000**	26,000
Benefits paid	**(98,000)**	(86,000)
At 31 March	**3,060,000**	2,746,000

Scheme assets do not include any of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education's own financial instruments, or any property occupied by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the balance sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long-term real rates of return experienced in the respective markets.

Analysis of amount charged to statement of financial activities:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Current service cost	**103,000**	161,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Expected return	**(130,000)**	(77,000)
Interest cost	**126,000**	95,000
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**(8,000)**	(791,000)
Adjustment in respect of paragraph 64	**287,000**	31,000
Total operating charge/(credit)	**378,000**	(581,000)

The total service cost of £103,000 (2023: £161,000) is included within staff costs. The total contributions expected to be made by the scheme by NICIE in the year to 31st March 2024 are £125,000 (2023: £99,000)

Sensitivity analysis

IAS19R requires the disclosure of the sensitivity of the results to the methods and assumptions used.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pension commitments (continued)

Changes in assumptions at year ended 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to employer liability	Approximate monetary amount (£'000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	1.7%	46
1 year decrease in member life expectancy	2.7%	73
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0.1%	3
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	1.6%	43

Employer Contribution Rates

The liabilities show the underlying commitment that NICIE has in the long term to pay retirement benefits. The total pension liability is £2,773,000 (2023 - £2,175,000) and results in an unrecognised asset of £287,000 (2023: £31,000). As per the scheme actuary the net asset/(liability) to be recorded on the Statement of Financial Position is £0 (2023 £0).

For 2023/24, employers participating in the scheme contributed at the rate of 19% (2023 –19%).

Scheme Gains and Losses

Actuarial gains and losses represent the extent to which actual outcomes have differed from the assumptions, which were used in calculating IAS 19 figures.

For assets, the gain/loss is normally the difference between the actual and expected return on assets, and for liabilities, the gain/loss normally arises from the change in financial assumptions. These actuarial gains/losses are shown in the table below as experience gains and losses.

Amounts for current and previous four years:

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
		£	**£**	£	£
Scheme liabilities	**2,773,000**	**2,715,000**	3,405,000	3,394,000	2,719,000
Scheme assets	**3,060,000**	**2,746,000**	2,750,000	2,502,000	2,011,000
Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme	**287,000**	**31,000**	(655,000)	(892,000)	(708,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets					
Amount (£)	**157,000**	**(95,000)**	137,000	398,000	(162,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities					
Amount (£)	**106,000**	**886,000**	251,000	(488,000)	330,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

13 Members liability

The liability of each member is limited to £10.

14 Reserves – restricted funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 April	**161,298**	(592,932)
Net outgoing (losses)/resources before recognised losses	**(19,764)**	(5,770)
Actuarial re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme		760,000
At 31 March	**141,534**	161,298

At the year end there is no asset/liability to be recognised in respect of the NILGOSC pension fund.

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted fund	**2024 Total funds**	**2023 Total funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Fixed Assets	8,494	8,494	9,839
Current Assets	183,955	183,955	183,879
Current liabilities	(50,915)	(50,915)	(32,420)
Pension commitments	0	0	0
Net funds	141,534		161,298

16 Leases

The Company leases various tangible assets under non-cancellable operating lease arrangements.

As described in the notes the operating leases held include either short term or low value assets and as such no right of use asset nor corresponding lease liability has been recognised.

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure account:

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Leases (continued)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Expenses relating to short term leases	-	19,100
Expenses relating to low-value assets	1,161	1,866
Total expenses related to leases	1,161	20,966

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of cash flows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash outflow for leases (IFRS16) – operating activity	1,161	20,966
Total cash outflows	1,161	20,966

17 Contingent liabilities

The company has a contingent liability to repay revenue grants received if certain conditions are not fulfilled.

18 Capital commitments

At 31 March 2024, the company has no capital commitments (2023 £16,459 towards legal and all related moving costs to new accommodation James House).

19 Losses and special payments

At 31 March 2024, the company had no losses and special payments (2023: none).

20 Related party transactions

NICIE is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by DE. DE is regarded as a related party. During the year, NICIE has had various transactions with the DE and with other entities for which DE is regarded as the parent Department.

None of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with NICIE during the year (2023: none). As per the
Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

register of interests maintained by NICIE, there were no conflicts of interest during the year (2023: none).

21 Ultimate controlling party

There is no ultimate controlling party.

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Accounts

Registered number: NI022427
Charity registered number: 100310

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(a company limited by guarantee)

Directors' report and financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2023

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
Under the requirements of the Department of Education/NICIE Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

On
24th June 2023

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Directors' Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Contents **Pages**

Reference and administrative details	2 - 3
Directors' report	4 - 17
Annual report	18
Chief Executive Officer's report	19 - 22
Annual Governance Statement	23 - 41
Remuneration and Staff report	42 - 45
Assembly Accountability and Audit Report	46
Independent auditors' report	47 - 51
Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account)	52
Statement of financial position	53
Statement of cash flows	54
Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow/ (outflow) from Continuing operating activities	55
Notes to the financial statements	55 - 69

Reference and administrative details

Directors/Trustees

Cathy McIver- Resigned June 2022
Dr Anne Marie Telford
Eamon Quinn (Vice Chair)
Ewa Szlachta - Resigned June 2022
Maeve Marnell (Chair)
Patricia Douglas
John Scott
Cathal Mullaghan
Helen Smyth (Secretary)
Bill Fletcher
Duncan Morrow
Bill Miscampbell
Shane Greer
Adele Kerr
Anne Murray
Colin Millar
Bob Hanna
Gavin Gray
Sandra Patterson – Appointed October 2022
Ashleigh Moran Appointed October 2022

Senior management members

Roisin Marshall (Chief Executive Officer)
Maureen Johnston (Finance Officer)
Cliodhna Scott Wills (Senior Development Officer)
Lorna McAlpine (Senior Development Officer)
Sean Pettis (Senior Development Officer) Resigned April 2022

Reference and administrative details (continued)

Registered and Principal office

25 College Gardens
Belfast
BT9 6BS

Solicitors

Cleaver Fulton Rankin
50 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7FW

Bankers

First Trust Bank
33 – 35 University Road
Belfast
BT7 1ND

Independent auditors

M.B. McGrady & Co
Rathmore House
52 St. Patricks Avenue
Downpatrick
BT30 6DS

You may reuse this information (including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, please visit http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or email psi@nationalarchives.gis.gov.uk. Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This Document is also available on our website at http://www.nicie.org.uk

Any Enquiries regarding this document should be sent to NICIE, 25 College Gardens, Belfast, BT9 6BS

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

The directors, who are also trustees, present their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, *Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice,* affordable to charities preparing their accounts. This is in accordance with the International Financial Reports standards and in accordance with the requirements and guidelines set out in the Government's Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and other guidance issued by the Department of Finance (DoF) in force for the financial year for which the financial statements are being presented.

The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standard as adopted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Reference and administrative details

Details of the registered office, directors, independent advisers, and other relevant information are given on page 2 and 3.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education ("NICIE") was incorporated in 1989 as a company limited by guarantee and is exempt from tax under Section 505(1) (c) of the Income and Corporation Act 1988 as a body established for charitable purposes only. NICIE was designated as a Non-Departmental Public Body ("NDPB") in February 2012. It is sponsored by the Department of Education ("DE"). The company's principal activity as defined in the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 is "to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated Education and schools for the public benefit".

Directors

All directors are members of NICIE. All directors are guarantors of the company with a maximum liability of £10.

Appointment of directors

NICIE directors are elected/appointed from six areas representative of all stakeholders. These comprise, involved in the provision of teaching, Principals, Schools, Trusts, Early Years and DE. Directors can serve two periods of between 2-4 years' subject to the terms of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Director induction and training

The Company Secretary ensures that appropriate induction and training is given to all NICIE Board of Director ("BoD") members. Each new director is provided with an information pack about NICIE and their responsibilities and is given an opportunity to meet all staff. Details of the BoD structure is illustrated on page 31 of the NICIE Governance statement.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Organisation

The governance, management and conduct of the business and affairs of NICIE are carried on by the Board of Directors ("BoD") in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of NICIE and the Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum). The Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") is Roisin Marshall.

Funding

NICIE works in close collaboration with its principal funder DE. It is also supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland, and The Northern Ireland Office to promote the work of the organisation.

Risk management and internal control

The directors are responsible for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by NICIE.
The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures and a system of delegation and accountability.

It includes:

- A comprehensive budgeting system, with a strategic plan and an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the directors;
- Regular reviews by the directors of monthly and annual financial reports, which indicate financial performance against approved budget and forecast; and
- Monitoring progress against the strategic plan.

As part of the monitoring process, the directors have implemented a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review of the risks which NICIE may face, and actions taken to mitigate identified risks;
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified; and
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the organisation should any of those risks materialise.

Significant risks identified are in relation to the following areas:

- NICIE fails to deliver a balanced Resource and Capital Budget as a result of ineffective management of resources to ensure the delivery of the Department of Education's Strategic Priorities and NICIE's statutory duties and priorities within budget.
- Weakness and Ineffective governance & accountability arrangements.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

- Failure to exercise proper stewardship, and maximise the resources allocated to NICIE in line with Financial Memorandum and grant conditions where applicable, within a proper financial control framework under Non-Departmental Public Body, (NDPB) status.

- Failure to support, promote and grow Integrated Education due to inability to assess parental demand for integrated education.

A key element in the management of financial risk is the setting up of a reserves policy and its regular review by directors. Particular attention is also focused on non-financial risks arising from fires and the health and safety of all staff and visitors.

Objectives and activities of NICIE

During the year, NICIE continued to operate in the following Programme areas:

1. Development and support services, for which core funding was made available through DE. The key objectives for this Programme underpinned DE's Strategic Priorities and policies and included promoting the growth of Integrated provision through supporting parents' groups, supporting schools in the process of 'Transformation,' or interested in 'Transforming' and supporting existing Integrated schools regarding consolidation and expansion and in embedding 'Integration in practice.' NICIE worked with Integrated schools and other stakeholders in the process of Area planning. NICIE raised the level of debate about the role of Integrated Education by informing and influencing public opinion. NICIE promoted the characteristics of Integration in practice both in Integrated schools and across other schools. NICIE continues to strive to improve its internal capacity to be able to fulfill its Business Plan as agreed with DE.

2. The initiation and development of related work funded through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ireland (DFA).

3. The recruitment of additional Staff through Northern Ireland Office Grant due to start in the new financial year 2023-2024.

Achievements and performance

The statement of financial activities for NICIE.

All programmes are drawn up in accordance with best practice and link to the Strategic Aims of NICIE and are aligned to the business plan of DE. All programmes have detailed operational plans to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic and Business Plans and are monitored on a regular basis by the Board, Senior Management Team, and the external funding bodies.

Details of NICIE's activities during the year can be accessed online at www.nicie.org or by contacting NICIE at the registered address.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Financial Review

The full financial results of NICIE are set out in detail in the financial statements on pages 50 to 65. The net outgoing resources for the year before recognised gains and losses was £5,770 (2022: £144,698)

Performance

NICIE bases its operations strategically on a 3-year strategic plan and on an annual basis on a Business Plan, which is reported on a quarterly basis to the Board of Directors and DE. The Business Plan is set within the context of DE's business plan, and additionally, it includes related projects which are funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFA). NICIE reports on its operations in its Annual Report. NICIE has delivered on all its Business Plan commitments in this current year except one: 'We will initiate a collaboration with ETI to develop the EIEA with a view to including measures that contribute to tackling disadvantage and underachievement (through ongoing analysis of all pupils, FSME pupils and non-FSME pupils within the integrated sector of attendance and level 2 and level 3 outcomes and how these compare with other sectors.) This was due to limited resources and other priorities.

Reserves

NICIE receives grants from various sources that are spent on the activities as detailed in the respective Letters of Offer. Any unspent monies may be subject to claw-back by the grant provider.

The net liabilities at the year-end including the pension surplus is £161,298 (2022: £592,932). This includes a net pension liability of nil. (2022: £655,000). The company's funding for the year ended March 2023 has been confirmed from the DE. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. For further details of the pension commitment liability, please refer to note 12 of the financial statements (page 60) and the Remuneration report on pages 39-44.

Forward funding

NICIE has secured sufficient income from a variety of sources for the year 2023 - 2024 to offer assurance to the directors and stakeholders of its ability to operate for the next financial year. Major funding has been guaranteed from DE, with other project funds being made available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and a grant from the Northern Ireland Office through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Strategic priorities, objectives, and activity

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) began a new strategic plan 2022-2025.

Vision

A society where children are educated together; confident to express their own identity and culture; respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

Mission

To promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Strategic Priorities (specific Action statements) 2022-2025

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

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

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

Strategic Priority 1 Action Plan
Promote Integrated Education to create measurable change in awareness and understanding, leading to an increase in demand for Integrated schools.

NICIE actions related to Outcome 1:

Work has been ongoing regarding the Promotion of Integrated Education. NICIE employed a part time Communications Development Officer tasked with increasing public awareness. This person was recruited in July 2022 but resigned December 2022 due to personal circumstances.

Communication Strategy

Work across the period has culminated in a Communication Strategy that is aligned to the NICIE Strategic Plan for 2022-25. The plan will enable NICIE's online communication to promote Integrated Education more cohesively, working in partnership with the IEF, Integrated schools and other partners.

NICIE also supported Integrated schools to further advance their communication activities through providing three training sessions in December 2022 focussed on creating messages and utilising social media advertising. A new website for NICIE has now been launched alongside new branding and a suite of key messages.

Social Media Engagement

Of particular note has been the launch of two campaigns: #40YearsIntegrated and #ChooseIntegrated. Due to the resignation of the Communications Development Officer, the latter has not had the resource dedicated to it to support Integrated schools during the open admissions period in 2022/23 but it will become an annual campaign to better inform the public about Integrated Education and the schools that provide it.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

40th Anniversary of Integrated Education

The 40th Anniversary Steering Group met across the year to support the planning and coordination of events. The group was made up of representatives from IEF, AlumNI, Lagan Integrated College, Fort Hill Integrated P.S (Primary School), Cedar Integrated P.S, The Association of Principals in Integrated Schools (APTIS) and NICIE. Receipt of £23,500 from the

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund, which has supported several initiatives across the anniversary year was very welcome.

The 40th Anniversary of Integrated Education was formally launched in September 2021 and ended in October 2022 culminating in the launch of a children's book, The Bees and The Wind written by Amelia Kai at the Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS) Conference in October 2022. Other initiatives across the year included the 'Great Integrated Bake-Off' and 'Images of Integration', a photographic exhibition exploring Integration through the perspectives of young people and a large-scale event for pupils took place at Belfast City Hall June 2022.

Integration Works

The IEF with NICIE as a partner successfully applied to the Department of Foreign Affair's 'Strategic Partnership Fund', which has provided €333,180 across three years to further develop NICIE's work supporting Transformation. The project began on 1 May 2022 and will end on 31 April 2025.

Advocacy and Policy Promotion

With the passage of the Integrated Education Bill and the Independent Review of Education, there was considerable work involved in advocacy and policy promotion over the last year. The Integrated Education (NI) Act gained Royal Assent on 26 April 2022 and came into force on 26 October 2022.

Strategic Priority 2 Action Plan
Support the growth and development of Integrated Education to be an accessible option in all geographical areas in Northern Ireland

NICIE actions related to Priority 2

There are three types of Area Planning meeting coordinated by the Education Authority, 'Local,' three of which happen monthly, 'Working' and 'Steering' meetings, which occur, bi-monthly. NICIE officers have attended all meetings this past year. NICIE has also participated in three sub-groups, which were formed to consider specific areas/issues in schooling in the Belfast/Newtownabbey area, the Mid and East Antrim area, and the Coleraine district. A subgroup of the Area Planning Working Group (APWG) has addressed collaboration.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

There are 27,183 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools; 104 in Nursery schools, 11,956 in primary schools and 15,123 in post-primary schools.

The number enrolled has increased by nearly 1,400 pupils compared to last year and by nearly 4,100 pupils from 2017/18. (DE Statistical Bulletin 2022/23).

Despite there having been numerous proposals completed and submitted for Ministerial or Permanent Secretary decisions, there were no decisions made in 2022/2023 on existing Integrated school proposals or Transformation proposals.

However, with the implementation of the Integrated Education Act 2022, DE Area Planning officials asked all the dozen schools with live proposals how their Cases for Change met the new definitions in the IE Act. NICIE held information sessions for the schools involved and sent out templates to help the schools devise responses and reviewed the draft responses before they were submitted to DE.

This year continued to see significant interest from schools interested in Transformation to Integrated status resulting in seven parental ballots for Transformation, all of which voted positively to continue the process. NICIE development staff have been working closely with these schools alongside the six who got approval in the two previous years. These Transformed schools have to be supported by NICIE for 5 years post approval. This has involved Officer attendance at Transformation Action Group meetings, Boards of Governors presentations and support sessions with Principals for the purpose of information giving, advising on process and whole school ethos development. Eight schools were supported by NICIE to submit Cases for Change /Action Plans for Transformation to Integrated status.

NICIE provided four commentaries to the Department of Education on Transformation Development Proposals across this year. Two schools, Bangor Central Nursery and Glengormley High opened as Integrated schools, with new names, Bangor Integrated Nursery School, and Integrated College Glengormley, in September 2022.

In 2022/23 NICIE has also supported another two Integrated Primary schools develop proposals for nursery unit provision, Bridge and Omagh IPSs. One of these has completed the consultation stage and a commentary has been submitted to DE. Two other schools one Primary and one Post-primary have been supported to produce Cases for Change and a commentary has been written for one of them in next financial year. The other will be submitted next year as the process requires.

NICIE officers have continued to work with a parent group and the Blackwater Board of Governors in Mid-Down. Over 840 Expressions of Interest forms have been collected from the public in the local area. A Case for Change was submitted to EA in September 2020, it was published in May 2021 with the objection period closing in September 2021. There has been no ministerial decision made on this proposal.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

NICIE has worked in collaboration with the Education Authority and the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC) to assess the potential of developing a new school in the Coleraine area. The proposals for the closure of three schools: Coleraine and Dunluce Colleges and North Coast IC and the opening of
the new Causeway Controlled Integrated College were published on 9 March 2022 and a NICIE commentary was submitted to DE in May 2022. No decision has been made.

Area Planning work has focused on the development of the Area Planning Operational Plan 1 which runs from 2022 to 2024. More recently, the meetings have concentrated on the development of Special Provision in Mainstream Schools (SPiMs). This is a response to a crisis situation where mainstream schools are being asked to set up special units to ensure that every child has a school place by September 2023 and beyond.

Fresh Start Capital building is ongoing, with nine schools: Enniskillen IPS; Strangford IC; Rowandale IPS; Newbridge IC; Mill Strand IPS; Roe Valley IPS; Millennium IPS; Phoenix IPS and Shimna IC. Hazelwood, IC Dungannon, Slemish and Drumragh IC are also due major Capital builds. More recently, Sperrin and Malone ICs were included in the Ministerial list for Executive capital in 2022. Several sod cutting ceremonies have taken place in the last few months at Phoenix IPS, Newbridge, Shimna, and Ulidia Integrated Colleges.

Strategic Outcome 3 Action Plan
Support the development of the Integrated Ethos to help governors and leaders to advance sustainable and exemplary Integrated and Transforming schools.

NICIE actions related to Outcome 3

NICIE continued to organise and facilitate meetings for the Principals of Integrated schools (APTIS). These meetings remained online and took place once a month. The online nature of the meetings encourages high attendance. On average 29 participants per session.

NICIE had previously commissioned two Associates to carry out a survey of Grant maintained Integrated (GMI) School Principals to ascertain their satisfaction with NICIE representation and to see what areas of further support they would like from NICIE. A set of recommendations came from the report and form an Action Plan, which will be implemented as appropriate and when resources are available over the next year. We have formed a GMI Consultative Group of Principals from GMI primary and post-primary schools. This is a specific group for GMI Schools to help NICIE to represent and support GMI schools effectively at various forums.

The training offer from NICIE increased this year with a training programme sent to all Integrated schools. Along with organised training, we also respond to individual school requests.
The offer included:

- Visioning for Recruitment
- Roles and Responsibilities as GMI Governors
- Governance
- Integrating Governor

- Parental Involvement
- Introduction to Anti-Bias for Parents/Governors/Teachers/General
- Introduction to the Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA)
- Integration Coordinator Training
- Anti-Bias 3-day session
- Teachers New to Integrated Education
- Bespoke school training sessions
- Ad hoc sessions

Excellence in Integrated Education Award (EIEA): Schools continue to be supported through the Excellence in Integrated Education Award. Seventeen schools are progressing through the process and seven are preparing for renewal of the Award.

As well as APTIS meeting once per month with an average attendance of 29 members representing 29 schools per meeting, the following NICIE **committees and forums** continued to meet and develop. A two-day conference was held in October with 63 schools represented. The AGM took place in March 2023.

VP (Vice Principal) Forum due to school pressures and absences only met once in this school year.

Teachers' Committee due to a change in structure the planning panel met several times, and 3 sessions were organised for all teachers. Work was prepared and shared with all schools on the theme of 'The Big Picture', for this year's Integrated Education month.

Early Years' Forum met once to respond to the Early Year consultation on school starting age and to plan for the year ahead.

Integrated Schools Finance Association (ISFA): continued support to schools re Finance and meetings with EA and other relevant support bodies and facilitation of GMI school finance related issues.

In March 2023, NICIE organised a Seminar for Governors in Grant Maintained Integrated schools.

NICIE represents Integrated Education on the following cross-sector stakeholder committees that meet quarterly or more frequently as required:

- Teachers Negotiating Council (TNC) and associated Oversight group and work streams from teachers' pay deal
- EA-led Community in Schools working group
- Educational Stakeholders Forum
- School Complaints Procedure Review
- The General Teaching Council for NI (GTCNI)

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

- The Performance Review and Staff Development (PRSD) Committee led by EA The EA Pre-school Education Group (PEG)
- Area Planning groups (strategic group, working group and local groups).
- EA admissions appeal panels
- COVID-19 groups developed to bring together those organisations that represent schools: CEO (Chief Executive Officer) forum, DE Communications, DE Key Workers Group, Cross Organisation forum with reference to the COVID-19 Link Officers assigned to schools.

NICIE was part of a group of organisations, North and South, that were successful in securing funding from the SCoTENS (Standing Conference in Teacher Education North and South). This research is examining how prepared Teacher and Student teachers are for teaching controversial issues.

NICIE has continued to build a **closer working relationship with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF)**. Both CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) meet on a regular basis and The Integration Works Group formalises this where senior staff from both organisations meet to discuss collaborative opportunities and joint working. This has involved twelve formal meetings and numerous additional, ad hoc meetings between individual officers working on school Transformations and other joint projects.

NICIE CEO and Finance Officer meet regularly with the **Department of Education** (**DE) Irish Medium and Integrated Education (IMIE Branch).** This partnership works very effectively.

NICIE has worked collaboratively with **EA and CCMS (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools)** and ongoing contact has been established to support NICIE in taking schools through the process of organising parental ballots and drafting Cases for Change following successful ballots as appropriate.

Regular meetings have taken place with the EA **Shared Education and Sectoral Support Team,** and they have developed a support programme for schools who want to examine the religious balance in their enrolments of Catholic, Protestant and Other. This was the first year of a 3-year programme, which supports schools in identifying the areas they wish to develop and produce an Action Plan that allows them to build on the excellent work they already do whilst identifying the gaps that need addressed. There are three schools involved in this programme. One final session took place this year.

The Council has supported the Integrated schools in awareness raising of the Integrated Education (NI) Act throughout 2022/23. NICIE has contributed to the DE Implementation Team Steering and Working Groups.

NICIE has actively participated on behalf of Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) Schools in Management Side of the Teachers Negotiating Council, Oversight Group, Schools Leaders

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Workload, Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR) development of new website, Pensions and Managing Attendance Groups.

The **Annual Report & Accounts for 2021/2022** were audited, submitted to DE and relevant statutory bodies. Appropriate Financial and Management Reports were produced for senior management team, Finance and General Purposes Staffing Committee (FGPSC) and BoD throughout the year. A comprehensive internal and external audit programme was established and successfully delivered. All Returns were forwarded to DE/ Department of Finance in line with guidance. There were no breaches of public pay policy. One hundred percent of all non-disputed invoices were paid within 30 days of term date. Payment of all non-disputed invoices within 10 working days was maximised. A review and implementation of NICIE/DE Financial Memorandum/Management Statement was carried out.

Governance continued to be reviewed and the chairperson carried out an annual appraisal of all directors All Board and Committee meetings took place remotely as scheduled apart from one meeting in June 2022.

The Terms of Reference for the three sub committees were distributed and reviewed. New Directors were recruited and appointed by DE, with induction, and training delivered by NICIE personnel. NICIE's Corporate Risk Register was developed in line with the 2022/23 business plan, aligned to DE's Risk Management Strategy, routinely reviewed, and revised and action plans for improvement monitored throughout the year.

A Board Effectiveness Action Plan was monitored throughout the year and Committee Effectiveness surveys were carried out for the ARAC and FGPSC Committees.

Staff and Board Development and Training continued throughout the year. Five staff policies were developed, reviewed, amended, agreed with staff, approved by the FGPSC, and then brought to the Board for ratification.

Project Team Meetings between all Development and Senior Development Officers took place fortnightly.

Business Cases were submitted through IMIE for DE approval. Internal Business Cases within delegated limits were submitted and approval was given. Staff appraisals were completed.

The Board and staff reviewed the Strategic Plan, the business plan was monitored quarterly, and a new business plan for 2023/2024 was approved.

Additional Bids for funding were submitted to The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ireland (DFA) in partnership with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) and was successful.

A NICIE hybrid working Policy has been established and piloted and will be reviewed in April 2023.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

NICIE's Well-Being group worked on a plan of activity for the year. This included a suite of health and well-being activities.

Fixed assets

Details of the movement of fixed assets are set out in note 7 to the financial statements.

Donations

NICIE made no political donations during the year (2022: £nil)

Tax status

On 2 March 1989, NICIE was granted charitable status and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of NICIE are exempt for value added tax purposes. NICIE therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

Charitable status and public benefit

The company is a registered charity with the Charities Commission in Northern Ireland under reference 100310. The directors have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

Disabled employees

NICIE gives full and fair consideration to applications for employment from disabled persons, having regard to their aptitude and abilities as well as Health and Safety factors.

Equality of Opportunity

NICIE follows the Northern Ireland Civil Service Policy that all eligible persons shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement based on ability, qualification, and aptitude for work.

Employee involvement

It is the policy of NICIE to promote the understanding and involvement of all its employees in its aims and performance and it is committed to the continuing development of effective employee communication and consultation.

Sickness Absence

The sickness absence rate for the year was 24.5 days .89% (2022: 15 days .006%). The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Prompt Payment

NICIE is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with NICIE Financial Memorandum, the Confederation of British Industry's Better Practice Prompt Payers Code. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. In 2022/2023 NICIE paid 100% (2021/2022: 100%) of its creditors within 30 days and no commission debt interest was paid or was due in respect of transactions in 2022/2023.

Statement of accounting officer and directors' responsibilities

The directors (who are also trustees of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education) are responsible for preparing the Directors' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law and Article 8(6) of the Financial Provisions (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 require the Chief Executive and directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the situation and of the surplus or deficit of NICIE for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Chief Executive and directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that NICIE will continue in business.

The Chief Executive (CEO) and directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of NICIE and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of NICIE and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The CEO is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of NICIE's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In addition, in appointing the Chief Executive of the NICIE as Accounting Officer for NICIE, the Department of Education has placed on the Chief Executive responsibilities including the regularity and propriety of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records. These are set out in the

"Accounting Officers" Management Statement (incorporating the financial memorandum) issued by the Department of Finance. The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced, and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that they are fair, balanced, and understandable.

Directors' report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the Accounting Officer and each of the Directors in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which NICIE's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that NICIE's auditors are aware of that information.

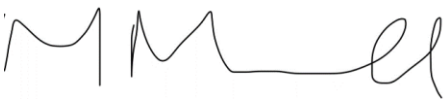
Small companies' exemption

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small company's exemptions provided by the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013**.**

Independent auditors

The auditors, MB McGrady & Co, have been appointed as Independent Auditors through a tender process. A resolution concerning their reappointment for next year will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

By order of the Board



Maeve Marnell
Chair **Date 24.6.2023**

Annual Report from the Chairperson for the year ended 31 March 2023

This year has presented challenges right across the education sector and the lack of an assembly and the ongoing budgetary constraints have made achieving our strategic aims and objectives particularly difficult.

On a positive note, we welcome the opportunity to work with the Implementation Team for the Integrated Education Act. We are providing assistance to the Department as it works to meet its statutory obligation to develop a strategy for Integrated Education and are hopeful that this strategy will have a positive impact on ensuring that the Department assesses and meets the demand for Integrated Education going forward.
We are encouraged that more schools than ever are currently on the journey to becoming Integrated and we feel confident that, if resources are made available, the Integrated Education Act will result in those numbers continuing to grow.

Throughout the year our passionate and dedicated staff have continued to work with our schools to ensure that they achieve excellence in educating our children and young people and to help them to grow to meet increasing demand. I continue to be hugely impressed by the resilience demonstrated by our principals, teachers and other school staff as they overcome such challenging circumstances and our wonderful pupils continue to be a constant source of inspiration.

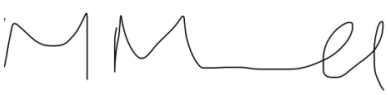
I feel privileged to work with an extremely talented Board of directors who give so generously of their time and expertise to ensure good governance of the organisation and who, with the expert support of our Finance Officer, Maureen Johnston, have ensured that our budget has been managed efficiently and effectively.

This year our CEO, Roisin Marshall, continued to provide visionary leadership to the organisation, overcoming obstacles and hurdles to ensure that our staff stayed focused on achieving the objectives set out in our business plan.

In addition, I am grateful for the positive relationship we have with our stakeholders: the IEF, APTIS, the AlumNI, our sponsor department in DE as well as the EA and other sectoral support bodies, as we work together to secure a better future for all our children.

As we move forward into the next financial year we must not let financial limitations hamper our vision of ensuring that every parent who wants to send their child to an Integrated school has the opportunity to do so.

We owe it to our children to rise above the political and financial challenges and continue to work with all our stakeholders to achieve our overall goal of promoting peace in Northern Ireland through educating our children and young people together.



Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date: 24th June 2023

Chief Executive Officer's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2023

The joint Integrated Education event organised by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) hosted by the Secretary of State and the Tánaiste on Tuesday 6 April to mark the 25th anniversary of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement reminded all who were in the room that Integrated Education had positively contributed to education and also peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. It spelled a very positive end to 2022/23.

We have come a long way in those 25 years from 40 schools in 1998 to 70 schools in 2023.

In the last 10 years, the number of children attending Integrated schools has risen by 16,000 to 27,183.

We witnessed, with the passage of the Integrated Education Bill throughout 2021/22 and subsequent Royal Assent on 26 April 2022, that many of the political parties understood the importance of educating our children together. Some even recognised that one way of doing that was to further develop Integrated Education to give more parents access to that for their children.

I think many people recognised that this is about giving our children and young people, a message that Northern Ireland can be shared, not shared out, that we can live, play, and work together, all day in the same space. All of this is, of course is predicated on parental choice, but a choice is not a choice if it does not exist or if it only exists as an option only for some parents.

I want to personally thank the Department of Education in NI, the Northern Ireland Office, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and TRADE for all of their support to NICIE over many years.

The presence of so many principals, governors, and staff from Integrated schools on the 6 April 2023 in W5 to mark the contribution of Integrated Education to the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement was testament to their understanding of the role that they have all played.

NICIE are grateful for the Fresh Start capital funding of £500 million for Shared and Integrated Education, which was vital to ensuring that schools who had struggled to be established and those who had transformed over the last 40 years, as well as shared education campuses, could continue to develop.

I am confident that Integrated Education will continue to develop and continue to give voice to the message that it is possible and desirable for those from Catholic, Protestant, other Christian and those of other faiths, cultures, and communities, those of different abilities and those of different socioeconomic backgrounds to be educated in the same school. Integrated Education will continue to enable us to find the words to talk about how we can live well together, disagree amicably, and demonstrate it every day.

The Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), the Integrated Education Fund (IEF), the Association for Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools (APTIS) and the Integrated AlumNI will continue to remind politicians, our partners in DE, and in other educational support bodies that Integrated Education challenges all of us, personally, including the families and children and young people. It is also one way for citizens in NI to find new ways to communicate and understand what we have been through and are still going through as a society. We have made peace since 1998…now we as a society are beginning to build peace. Integrated Education has led the way in that conversation for the last 25 years.

There are 27,183 pupils enrolled in Integrated schools in 2023; 104 in Nursery schools, 11,956 in primary schools and 15,123 in post-primary schools.

The number enrolled has increased by nearly 1,400 pupils compared to last year and by nearly 4,100 pupils from 2017/18. (DE Statistical Bulletin 2022/23).

This year continued to see significant interest from schools interested in Transformation to Integrated status resulting in five parental ballots for Transformation, all of which voted positively to continue the process. Two schools, Bangor Central Nursery and Glengormley High opened as Integrated schools, with new names, Bangor Integrated Nursery School, and Integrated College, Glengormley, in September 2022.

Fresh Start Capital building is ongoing, with nine schools: Enniskillen Integrated Primary School (IPS); Strangford IC; Rowandale IPS; Newbridge IC; Millstrand IPS; Roe Valley IPS; Millennium IPS; Phoenix IPS and Shimna IC. Hazelwood, IC Dungannon, Slemish and Drumragh IC are also due major builds. More recently Sperrin and Malone ICs were added to the Executive Capital list.

Several sod-cutting ceremonies with DE Permanent Secretary, Mark Browne, as special guest, have taken place in the last few months at Phoenix IPS, Newbridge, Shimna, and Ulidia Integrated Colleges.

2023 year was another challenging year for schools in the wider education system in Northern Ireland. NICIE has had to continue to adapt and evolve over the last 12 months and in doing so has demonstrated the flexibility and agility in managing its internal operations to provide leadership and support to Integrated schools. NICIE has had to carefully manage its very limited budget to ensure delivery of the Department of Education's statutory duty to 'encourage facilitate and support Integrated Education.'

Challenges and opportunities

The external operating environment remained extremely challenging this year. NICIE continued to deliver its programme of work in an effective and economical manner within the constraints of significant budgetary pressures. Financial challenges have continued to adversely impact on the wider education sector and NICIE continued to collaborate with partners in Area Planning to work towards a more integrated education system. The staff of NICIE, with a Development Team of five full-time equivalent members of staff, must be commended for their collaborative working with educational partners especially the Integrated Education Fund and the Education Authority Sectoral Support Team. The tangible benefits of this approach are being realised in terms of the professional levels of support that NICIE continues to provide to Integrated schools. This collaboration helps to support long established, recently transformed, new schools being developed or transforming schools in terms of leadership; governance; sustainability; the Integrated ethos; teacher professional learning and staff development; guidance in addressing financial challenges; industrial relations and area planning. All of this helps to ensure the very best outcomes for children and young people in Integrated schools.

The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 has brought a sense of optimism for the future development of Integrated Education rather than the reliance of parents and school communities having to do all the heavy lifting themselves. For many years, NICIE has been asking the question 'Who is strategically planning for Integrated Education?' For over 30 years, NICIE has been responding to the demand for Integrated Education from parents and school communities, on a very limited budget, which has significantly decreased, over the last 13 years. It is imperative that future strategic planning for Integrated Education is appropriately

funded and resourced.

In a mature society, it remains essential that parents, carers and learners have a right to ensure that their religious and philosophical beliefs are respected during their children's education Article 2 of the First Protocol: Right to education | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com). It is incumbent on the education sector to enable further development of Integrated Education in the short, medium, and long-term so that every parent, carer, or learner who would like that experience is enabled to access it in the future.

NICIE welcomed the opportunity to engage with the panel leading on the Independent Review of Education. There was significant engagement with the panel, and we look forward to the final report later in 2023.

NICIE look forward in 2023/24 to moving to new premises, which are fit for purpose and accessible to the NICIE staff team. It is vital for staff to have a collaborative space, which has been eroded since the onslaught of COVID in 2020 and the need for staff to work from home. NICIE has developed a hybrid working policy, which enables staff to manage their precious time in a way which enables maximum productivity.

The financial challenges and constraints in the education system are set to get worse and as we move into the 2023/24 period, these challenges are increasing, placing further pressure on the school system that is only beginning to emerge from the pandemic. I can however, with confidence, report that NICIE Officers continue to be proactive in working with school leaders and governors to address these challenges and will continue to do so as far as resources allow. Very often, it has been the tangible support provided by the NICIE team, that has made the important difference in helping schools to manage difficult situations and progress with practical and positive interventions and solutions.

Performance delivery

NICIE has delivered on the majority of targets and actions within the 22/23 Business Plan. NICIE are in the second year of a three-year strategic plan. A robust approach to risk management has complemented our work. The Corporate Risk Register and Risk Management Framework clearly underpinned the strategic decisions taken by the Board of Directors and the corresponding operational activity of NICIE. The delivery of the key actions of NICIE is supported by a clearly defined organisational structure, which provides clarity in terms of decision-making by the extremely dedicated Board of Directors. I have been ably supported by NICIE's Senior Management Team, who themselves provide effective and visible leadership, across their respective responsibilities. Together, with a very professional and dedicated staff within NICIE, I firmly believe that NICIE continues to positively support, challenge, and guide the established Integrated schools as well as those Transforming and those interested in Transforming to Integrated status.

NICIE are dedicated to ensuring their collaboration with DE and the Education Authority in relation to all Integrated schools is strengthened even more over the next year especially as the Strategy for the Integrated Education (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 begins to be implemented. NICIE are also determined that partnership working between NICIE, the Education Authority, and the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC) in respect of established Controlled Integrated schools is further developed to ensure the very best outcomes for the children and young people in these schools.

NICIE remains committed to working in partnership with all the key educational support bodies and Teacher Unions in relation to the Industrial Action by teachers and leaders in schools and the quest for better pay for teachers and school leaders. We will also play our part in ensuring the smooth implementation of the Fair Employment and Treatment Order by 2024.

NICIE remain committed to our mission of promoting peace and reconciliation through Integrated Education, enabling children and young people to learn together for a shared future.

Chief Executive Officer of NICIE

NICIE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of the Department of Education (DE). NICIE was established in 1987 as an umbrella body to represent integrated schools and to promote Integrated Education. NICIE was set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and is supported through grant in aid by DE under the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

The role of NICIE as defined in the Management Statement is '*to promote integrated education and to perform a wide range of roles in facilitating the development of Integrated Education in Northern Ireland for the public benefit.'*

The Governance Statement sets out the governance structures, risk management and internal control procedures that have operated within NICIE during the financial year 2022 to 2023.

The Annual Governance Statement has been produced in line with guidance issued by the Department of Finance (DoF) in accordance with the guidance in Annex 3.1 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and forms part of the Statutory Accounts and is reviewed, considered, and approved by the Board of Directors (BoD).

This Governance statement reflected NICIE's activities and governance for the current financial year.

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I am committed to operating in accordance with best practice in business integrity and ethics and maintaining the highest standards of financial reporting and governance. I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of controls that supports the achievement of NICIE's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the NICIE assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned in the MPMNI.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised, the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively, and economically.

As Accounting Officer of a public body and designated NDPB, I am committed to governance excellence and to ensuring accountability and transparency for all decisions and activities. I am responsible to the Permanent Secretary of DE under the terms and conditions as set out in NICIE's Management Statement (incorporating the Financial Memorandum) (MSFM).

Strategic Objectives

NICIE launched its new three-year Strategic Plan 2022-2025 in April 2022.

This new strategic plan aims to:

1. Promote Integrated Education

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

2. Grow Integrated Education

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

3. Support Integrated Education

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

NICIE Vision is a society where children are educated together, confident to express their own identity and culture; and respectful of, and prepared to engage with, the identity and culture of others.

The NICIE mission is to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland through Integrated Education.

The current strategic plan sets out clearly defined strategic objectives for the year 2022-2023. I have ensured that the aims and objectives have been implemented with all staff, Board of Directors (BoD) and relevant stakeholders during 2022-2023 and regularly reviewed.

The NICIE business plan aligned to DE's strategic priorities clearly set out NICIE aims and objectives for the year 2022-2023 and was monitored throughout the year while noting contingency planning and significant changes in working arrangements due to the ongoing pandemic.

Governance Framework
In partnership with the NICIE Board of Directors, I have a corporate responsibility for setting objectives, agreeing priorities, and implementing ministerial policy. The BoD, and I, as the NICIE Accounting Officer and the staff of NICIE, developed and agreed a business plan for the 2022-2023 year, which was formally approved by DE.

The Business Plan was regularly reviewed along with key risks associated with the delivery of NICIE's objectives throughout the year. A mid-term six-month evaluation report to 30.9.2022 and year end evaluation provided updated progress reports on the achievements of NICIE for the 12 months to 31.3.2023 to both the BoD and DE.

NICIE has been working within our current Development Team capacity to respond to the increasing demand for our services. This team consists of two Senior Development Officers and three Development Officers.

In the 2022/23 school year, there were 27,183 pupils enrolled in integrated schools. This year has seen a continued surge in schools requesting support from NICIE regarding consideration of Transformation to Integrated Status. In the 22/23 four cases for change have been submitted to DE via the EA processes between 21st June 2022 and 20th February 2023. Two of these were for schools seeking to transform to become an Integrated school: Gillygooley PS (PRIMARY

SCHOOL) submitted to EA Aug 2022 and Magherafelt Nursery (submitted to EA Jan 2023). Two of these are for growth in existing Integrated schools: Millennium Integrated Primary School (IPS) increase of admission number, submitted to EA January 2023 and Bridge IPS (establishment of Nursery unit, submitted to EA in February 2023).

In addition, there are four more cases for change in the process of being written with the Boards of Governors from each school. These are all schools which are post-ballot and seeking to Transform to Integrated status: Lurgan Model PS, St. Eugene's PS (Tircur), St. Eugene's PS (Victoria Bridge) and Cairnshill PS. We anticipate that one of these will be sent to EA before the end of March 2023 and the other three will be sent before the end of June 2023.

Development Proposals for significant change to the Integrated Schools sector

There are 12 development proposals awaiting the Ministerial decision, including two proposals relating to the newly proposed Mid-Down Integrated College, and five for Nursery units.

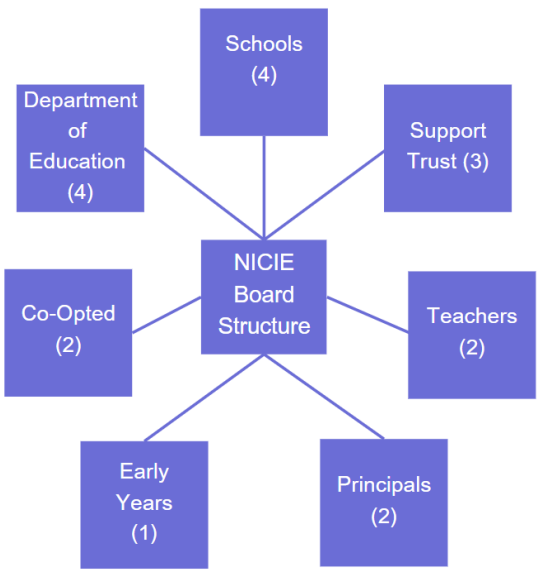
A proposal for the new Causeway Controlled Integrated College which NICIE has worked on in collaboration with the three schools; North Coast Integrated College, Dunluce College, and Coleraine College, CSSC (Controlled Schools Support Council), UU (Ulster University) and the Education Authority, still awaits Ministerial decision.

Structure of NICIE

Board and Committees

The Board of Directors has a membership of up to 20 non-executive members including four DE appointees. Two DE vacancies have now been filled. The role of the Board is to provide leadership to NICIE during the budget year, within a framework of prudent and effective controls, which enable risk to be assessed and managed, to set NICIE's strategic aims, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet its objectives, provide oversight to set NICIE's values and standards and to ensure its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

The current BoD structure is illustrated below:



The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

NICIE is a constituent body of member organisations with seven categories of membership:

1. School members • 4 members to be elected at AGM	Those engaged in running a particular integrated school.
2. Support members / Trust • 3 members to be elected at AGM	Organisations for the support and promotion of integrated education.
3. Teacher members	Representatives of teacher organisations. 2 members nominated by The Teachers Committee
4. Principal Member • 2 members nominated by APTIS (Association of Principal Teachers in Integrated Schools)	Representatives of principals' association.
5. Early Years members • 1 member nominated by Teachers Committee	Those engaged in running pre-school provision in a particular integrated school.
6. Co Opted • Up to 3 directors	To provide additional experience
7. Department of Education	4 people appointed by the Department of Education

Board and Committees Structure

Three committees serve and report to the Board of Directors and are illustrated below.

The current directors and attendance records are recorded below. The Board structure and all directors were reviewed prior to the virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October including attendance records to ensure that the structure complied with NICIE's Articles of Association.

NICIE Board and Committees Structure

Attendance at Meetings

Directors' attendance at meetings held during 2022-2023 is detailed below. Please note that some directors were not in post for the full financial year and joined the subcommittees during the year and the figures represent their percentage attendance based on when they joined.

Director/Member 2022/2023	Board of Directors 4 Zoom mtgs + AGM)	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee 4 Zoom mtgs	Finance, General Purposes & Staffing Committee 4 Zoom meetings	Policy and Planning Committee 2 Zoom mtgs
Maeve Marnell Chair	100%	-	100%	100%
Sandra Patterson Appointed July 2022	100%	100%	-	100%
Ashleigh Moran Resigned July 2022	66.6%	-		100%
John Scott	50%	-	50%	50%
Cathal Mullaghan	100%	100%	-	100%-
Shane Greer	100%	-	75%	50%
Anne Murray	100%		75%	50%
Dr Anne-Marie Telford	100%	100%	-	100%
Helen Smyth	100%	100%	-	100%
Adele Kerr	75%	-	66.6%	-
Bill Miscampbell (*co-optee)*	100%	-	100%	
Eamon Quinn *(co-optee)*	100%	-	-	100%
Bill Fletcher	100%	-	-	100%
Colin Millar	75%	75%	-	
Patricia Douglas	100%	100%	-	100%
Duncan Morrow	75%			100%
Bob Hanna DE Rep	50%	100%	-	-
Gavin Gray DE Rep	100%	-	75%	-

Performance of the Board 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023

The Board of Directors held four regular meetings and an extraordinary board meeting was also held on 14th September 2022 regarding the new accommodation recommendation. At the virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM October 2022.) It was agreed that the Board meetings would continue to focus on strategy and the future direction of NICIE in the changing educational environment and the Integrated Education Act, which came into force in October 2022. The new Act requires the Department of Education to "support" as well as "encourage and facilitate" Integrated Education. It will require "identifying, assessing, monitoring, and aiming to meet the demand for the provision of Integrated Education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate and providing sufficient places in Integrated schools to aim to meet the demand for Integrated Education."

The chairperson continued to review the attendance of Board Members for the previous 12 months and reiterated the need for attendance and participation. This was closely reviewed, monitored, and reported throughout the year, in my monthly meetings with the Chair. A few new directors replaced directors that had come to the end of their term. We were delighted to welcome these new directors to add their contributions to the proactive and dynamic Board.

Most meetings continued to be online except for board strategy day, which was held on 25th June 2022. All new Directors received induction training to ensure that they were briefed accordingly and were aware of their duties. This included the NICIE Corporate Governance guide, which was circulated to all Board members during the year to ensure adherence and compliance.

The Chair has undertaken and completed the annual appraisal of directors. The chairperson continued to assess the performance of individual Board members through arrangements determined by the Department. Board members will continue to be subject to ongoing performance appraisal, with a formal assessment being completed by the chair at the end of each financial year and prior to any re- appointment of individual members taking place. Feedback of the appraisal process was shared with the Board and reported a positive working environment.

The appraisals also formed part of the assessment of the Board's effectiveness and were reported accordingly. A Board Effectiveness Review was carried out in July 2020. The subsequent report had several recommendations, which now form part of an ongoing action plan. It was reviewed and monitored by a designated Board member and reported on at each Policy and Planning subcommittee meeting.

Recommendations implemented include:

- Importance of quality of information given to the Board for effective decision making
- streamlining reporting for Board meetings;
- better utilisation of the knowledge, skills, insight, and judgement of experienced Board representatives by focusing on the important governance and strategic issues;
- new timetables of meetings established;
- reporting schedules aligned with Board and Committee meetings with an annual meeting cycle;
- all input documents and agendas for Board and Committee meetings issued a minimum of 7 days before meeting;
- Minute of meeting to be issued to Committee/Board members a max of 30 working days after meeting and finally time allowed on the agenda for check-in and check-out with all board members and what members found of value at Board meetings is noted.

In 2022-23, each of the Committees reviewed their effectiveness against a range of criteria and made recommendations, which are being implemented. The ARAC effectiveness survey was based on the guides from the National Audit Office on how to assess effectiveness of audit & risk committees.

The Chair was also appraised this year through arrangements made by the Department of Education.

A skills and community background audit was undertaken during the year to identify any gaps in Board skills/diversity.

I also had monthly 1-1 meetings with the Chair where we reviewed the committees and the strategy of NICIE and agreed agenda for Board meetings.

A training programme was implemented during the year for the directors and included Corporate Governance and Recruitment training.

The register of interests continued to be a standard agenda at all Board meetings to ensure that any areas of Board member conflict are addressed at the start of each meeting.

The Board reviews, through the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) report and a range of presentations and discussion papers, the ongoing work of NICIE and its implementation of its strategic plan and business plan. Each Senior Development Officer for Grow and Support attends one Board meeting per year to present their report card on the NICIE Business Plan. The Report Cards are regularly updated and feedback from DE, particularly A Turning the Curve Session, has been useful in improving how NICIE Staff and Directors approach Outcomes Based Accountability.

During the year, the Board reviewed reports from other sub committees including the annual Internal Audit report, annual financial statements, monthly summary extracts from the management accounts and approved the Annual Business Plan and associated budgets.

NICIE reviewed the progress on the strategic plan 2022-2025 and drafted a new business plan. A review was also undertaken of the effectiveness of reporting to the Board as part of the Board Effectiveness Review.

The Chairperson, Finance Officer and Chief Executive Officer met the Permanent Secretary of DE for Governance and Accountability meetings twice in this financial year. Position reports were forwarded prior to these meetings highlighting any areas of significant accountability and governance. It was agreed that all was in order in the current challenging financial climate and that budgets were being managed accordingly.

NICIE has worked closely with the IEF to promote Integrated Education and is currently working with 20 schools at various stages of the Transformation process. Two schools Transformed on 1st September 2022, Bangor Nursery School, and Integrated College Glengormley.

As part of ensuring that all Board meetings are managed in an efficient and timely manner, I ensure that the Accounting Officer/CEO Report is circulated prior to the Board meetings along with all relevant papers.

Committee Reports

Role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) oversees financial reporting and the effectiveness of financial and regulatory compliance, controls and systems reporting.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee formally met on 4 occasions during 2022-2023, reviewed the Corporate Risk Register at each meeting and was satisfied that all risks were identified, and corrective action taken where feasible. Some of the key risks are highlighted further in this report.

The Committee throughout the year continued to review and update the Corporate Risk Register to assure members that all risks relating to working from home arrangements and business continuity were incorporated into the register and that all risks were managed and mitigated accordingly. The Business Continuity Plan was also updated and reviewed at all the ARAC meetings.

The register of conflicts continued to be a standard item on the ARAC agenda.

In addition, the Committee reviewed the results of the internal audit report and the implementation of previous year's audit recommendations. The Committee was also responsible for reviewing the annual statutory Directors Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31.3.2022 and will be responsible for the reports to 31.3.2023.

It also reviewed several policies and documentation from DE and the Department of Finance (DoF), which were updated by DE during the current year to ensure best practice and that DE business case, tenders, and DoF Pay Remit guidance was adhered to.

The NICIE ARAC Terms of Reference were also reviewed, and it was agreed that these would be reviewed every three years in line with the other committees in NICIE.

A summary report from the ARAC was presented to the Board by the chair of the committee following each meeting during the year.

Representatives from the IMIE Team at DE also sat on this Committee this year, which assisted in giving additional assurance to the Committee that all audit requirements were adhered to and provided guidance.

Finance, General Purposes and Staffing Committee (FGPSC)

This Committee continues to meet before the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors. It met 4 times during the current year. Its function is to focus more on the finance and personnel issues presented to the Board. This Committee also dealt with all issues relating to staff and premises.

FGPSC also continues to review staff policies throughout the year, ensuring that NICIE has covered all areas of staffing procedures and guidance.

The HR subcommittee also continued to meet where necessary during the year to dedicate more time to internal staffing issues and recruitment to ensure adequate time allocated to

support the Finance Officer and me as CEO. This committee also included the Chair of NICIE. Progress was then reported accordingly to the relevant committee.

The budget for the monthly management statements were carefully reviewed by me and the Finance Officer prior to presentation to the FGPSC who then reviewed the financial and performance management of NICIE ensuring that all budgets and internal controls were adhered to for the year up to 31.3.2023.

It is a legal requirement that all places of work have a health and safety policy, which staff should be made aware of and adhere to. I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all duties under Health and Safety legislation. This is a standard item on the FGPSC agenda to ensure that the office was managed in accordance with government and health guidelines and that all staff were being managed and had support in terms of the ability to work from home, including pastoral care.

This committee was also responsible for ensuring that NICIE was fully compliant with business case requirements.

The FGPSC's remit also includes the awarding of tenders and ensuring that NICIE adheres to strict procurement procedures with the approval of DE. However, the committee raised concerns again over the costs and time that NICIE incurred adhering to Department of Finance Procurement guidance under Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD) when retendering for goods and services over £5k.

Policy and Planning Committee (P&P)

The Committee's remit during the current year included :

- The formulation of pro-active campaigning to raise the profile for Integrated Education.
- Kellie Armstrong's Private Members' Integrated Education Bill and subsequently the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022
- The Independent Review of Integrated Education
- Monitoring Board Effectiveness Action Plan
- Monitoring Progress of Strategic and Business Plans

The Policy and Planning Committee has held two meetings during the year to formulate NICIE's policy position and various educational policies and legislation including Kellie Armstrong's Private Members' Integrated Education Bill. Committee members provide constructive challenges and guidance in response to updates by a Senior Development Officer on key areas of work. It is also an opportunity for Directors to gain a better-detailed understanding of the context that NICIE is working within, including a presentation and submission to the Independent Review of Education.

Compliance with Corporate Governance

An annual review of the effectiveness of NICIE's governance structures, as set out in the 2013 code (DAO/ (DFP) 10/12), risk management and internal controls has been conducted, informed by staff, directors, independent internal and external auditors. The NICIE Board has assessed that it has effectively complied with the Corporate Governance Code.

The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) sets out a broad framework within which the Council is required to operate, and the Financial Memorandum defines certain financial provisions which NICIE is required to observe. As Accounting Officer and CEO, I have ensured that the MSFM has been adhered to for the financial year 2022-2023.

NICIE has continued to review its internal procedures and thus ensuring that all services are reviewed and that business cases are submitted to the Irish Medium and Integrated Education (IMIE) Team in DE in a timely fashion and that all appropriate approvals are obtained before any expenditure is committed. However, I must highlight that there was one non-compliance issue during the financial year regarding retrospective expenditure of Panel of Associate. Internal control and additional controls have been implemented to ensure that this does not re-occur.

Training has also been given to all new staff during the year at Staff Meetings to ensure that controls are adhered to, and new staff are given induction training on arrival. Training needs have also been identified for new and existing directors and governance training has been organised and provided. Inductions was provided for new directors and exit interviews/surveys were completed for all directors that left during the year.

All relevant Companies House and Charity Commission NI (Northern Ireland) requirements have been updated.
NICIE continues to ensure that its governance arrangements are in place operating in accordance with best practice and that it continues to align its business aims and objectives to DE.

Assurance Reporting

As Accounting Officer, I am also responsible for preparing risk assurance statements and these reports provide assurance over areas of responsibility and confirm that risks are being managed.

Internal Audit

The scope of the internal audit plan for the current year by independent internal auditors Cavanagh Kelly was to review the controls in relation to the systems that NICIE had in place in relation to the following areas, including recommendations from last year's audit.

- Human Resource Management
- Staff Recruitment
- Absence and Sickness Monitoring
- Hybrid Working Policy

The audit completed by the internal auditors found the internal control systems to be operating in a satisfactory manner with one minor area of improvement. The Internal Auditor was therefore able to give positive assurance to me as Accounting Officer that the Board's risk management, control and governance arrangements were satisfactory.

A review of the progress made by NICIE in implementing prior year adjustments was also undertaken and all prior year internal audit recommendations have been implemented.

External Auditor

The company's External Auditors are M.B. Mc Grady and Co. There were no control deficiencies identified during the year to 31.3.2023. There is unlikely to be any emphasis of matter or qualifications contained in the Audit report for 2022-2023.

Other Sources of Assurance

I have also relied on additional sources of assurance during the year, with regular reports from the staff, directors, NICIE Panel of Associates and independent advice from HR (Human Resource) and legal experts and other relevant stakeholders.

NICIE also continues to report annually to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and Companies House.

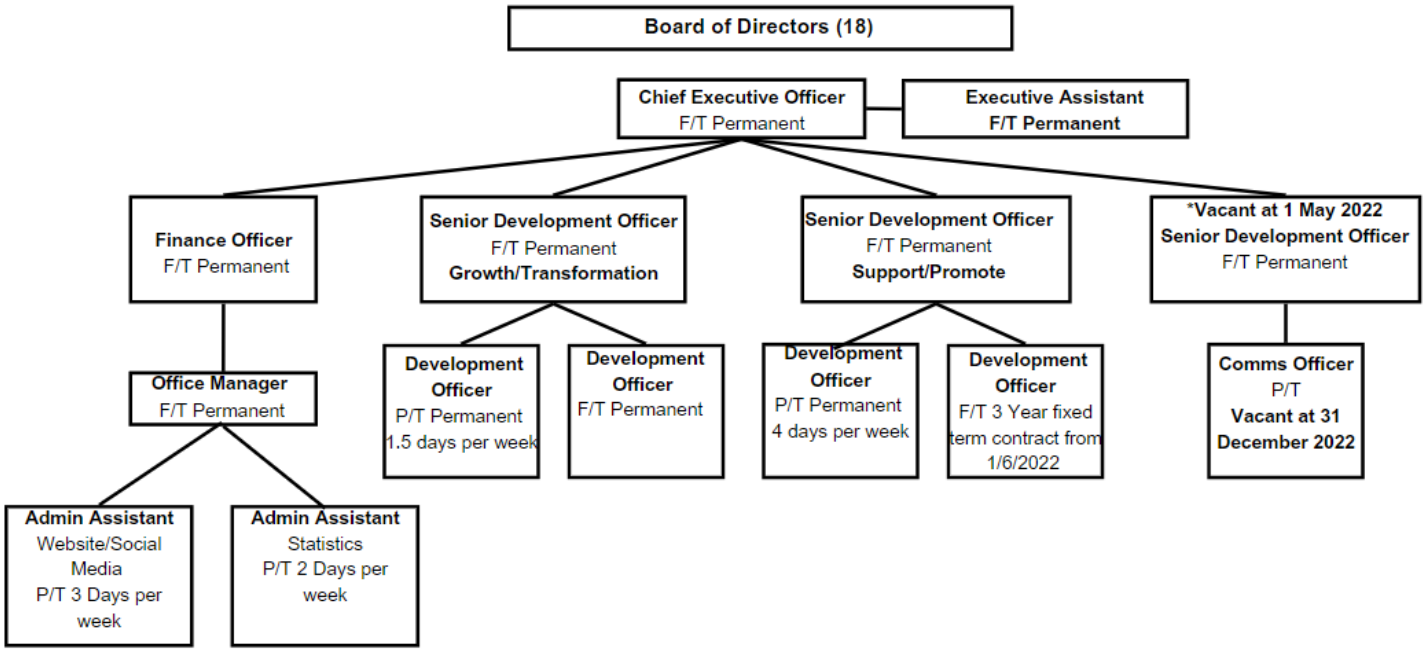
Quality of Data Used by the Board

Senior Members of the NICIE Team and appropriately experienced officers or representatives of NICIE has supported all the committees. I regularly review and interrogate all data with Senior Management Team prior to any information being presented to the Board. These reports include monthly management accounts and budgets, which are prepared by NICIE's Chartered Accountant and are also reviewed by the FGPSC, who have additional finance experience. Senior Development Officers with much experience in the education sector, including reports compiled with various forums and relevant stakeholders, complete other NICIE reports. An appropriately selected Panel of Associates who have been drawn from a select list based on skills and experience compile bespoke reports. Committee Members also reviewed these reports and data and sought clarification from officers on the information presented to them.

Additionally, our Internal Auditors Cavanagh Kelly independently compiled the internal audit report, and the External Auditors M.B. Mc Grady and Co. independently verified the Final Financial Statements. In addition, as part of the internal audit programme all the quality of data was assessed by ARAC and presented to the Board. It is my view and the view of the committees that the quality of the data used by NICIE is of an acceptable standard.

The staffing structure of NICIE for 2022/2023 is highlighted below:

NICIE ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Ministerial Directions

No Ministerial directions were given for the year to 31 March 2023.

Heath and Safety

I am satisfied that a fit-for-purpose health and safety policy is in place and is reviewed regularly. I am also satisfied that the organisation has complied with all its duties under Health and Safety. Whilst NICIE has always been mindful of compliance to health and safety, a working group was set up with representatives from both staff and directors to review return to office/ working from home and ensuring that the office environment was safe and managed accordingly. This was and continues to be reviewed to ensure that all risks are managed and mitigated, and that the NICIE staff are protected, and the office environment is clean and appropriately managed and that all health and safety requirements and legislation is adhered to. The existing premises College Gardens accommodation is not accessible for those with mobility issues, which forms part of the reason for NICIE's objective need for new premises.

The staff handbook continues to be reviewed, updated in line with legislation and appropriate guidance and circulated to all staff and training provided where relevant. NICIE continues to support all staff through the NICIE well-being programme, and this is managed through the NICIE health and wellbeing sub-committee. Several virtual activities have been carried out during the year and staff are continuously reminded to access the free wellbeing programmes available to them.

Risk Assesment

Internal Controls and Risk Management

I, along with the directors, acknowledge our responsibility for NICIE's system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) reviewed the risks associated with the Council's activities. The Corporate Risk Register includes an evaluation of all levels of risk. Both inherent and residual risks were reviewed throughout the year with the committee and DE (Department of Education) and some risks were decreased. NICIE had a Business Continuity Plan in place, which has also been reviewed and updated to manage all internal controls including remote working.

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reports to each Board meeting on any matters that need to be brought to their attention.

I, as Accounting Officer, continue to enforce and ensure that risk management is embedded and owned by the Board and all NICIE staff. This has now effectively been incorporated and embedded into all NICIE business plans and daily operations of NICIE. The corporate risk register and risk management is viewed as a dynamic process which actively seeks to incorporate good practice. It is responsive and current and is managed through regular review of both internal developments and external factors.

As a NDPB, NICIE has a low-risk appetite in relation to compliance, regulation, and our strategic aims which I anticipate will continue.

Risk Profile faced by NICIE.

The NICIE corporate risk register currently identifies four significant risks. These risks are reviewed quarterly by ARAC. These are also circulated to Board Members and Staff

The first three risks relate to financial management and governance and some of the primary areas of concern for 2022/2023 are highlighted in the table below.

Management of Significant Risks

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure of DE/DoF to guarantee NICIE Pension Liability	Reported to BoD/External Auditor. Continue to monitor and liaise with DE/DoF of any potential increases regarding non-guarantee from NILGOSC (NICIE Pension provider)	Completed June 2022

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Potential NIPSA Claim re employee damages.	NIPSA is taking actions on behalf of members regarding changes to regulations to pension rules re age discrimination. Solicitors contacted and ongoing liaison to mitigate against claim. Potential for inescapable legal bill bid.	Ongoing
Failure to have adequate insurance in place.	Insurance clarified in letter to Chair and details on file re potential claims other than contents Insurance cover. Noted in CRR Submit business case re future Insurance re potential move.	September 2022
Failure to find a solution to NICIE accommodation to meet staff needs.	Engagement with DoF (Department of Finance) James House project team re potential move to new location. Business case currently with DoF/DE for approval	NICIE awaiting Business Case approval.
Limited DE budget for parental ballots and financial support for Transforming schools.	Requested that IMIE apply for more financial support for the five new Transforming schools for the next five years from Monitoring Round.	March 2023
Failure to Strategically plan for IE (Integrated Education)	Continue to represent the Integrated schools at Area Planning groups, articulating the out workings of the statutory duty, to the Education	Ongoing

Description of Risk	Remedial action taken	Projected Time scale to resolve the issue
Failure to effectively implement the Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022	Authority (EA) Ensure Cases for Change are robust and reflect a robust evidence base to support Development proposals (DP) for approval; and Continue to work with the EA through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Protocols between NICIE and the EA and the Cross-Directorate Group (CDG). Support for development of IE by partnership between NICIE, EA, CSSC and DE Area Planning and IMIE to discuss and identify roles and responsibilities for each organisation in relation to Controlled Integrated Schools. NICIE proactive members of the IE Act Steering and Working Groups Review and give feedback on draft Strategic Plan Review and give feedback on Reporting on support for IE from ALBs and other support bodies Regular meetings with the DE Implementation Team Quarterly meetings with DE and DE Implementation Team	Ongoing

I am satisfied that these risks were managed accordingly, and that tolerable and considerable progress continues to mitigate these risks.
One of the risks that continues to present the greatest challenge to NICIE relates to the failure to meet demand for Integrated Education and thus enabling parents who want an Integrated school for their child to be able to access it. The Integrated Education (NI) Act 2022 means that NICIE will need to work in partnership with DE, statutory and other support bodies to ensure the effective implementation of the Act ensuring the work of NICIE complements the duties placed on those organisations to further the development of Integrated Education.

It is important for NICIE to play its part in promoting Shared Education and encouraging integrated schools to actively participate.

Through Area Planning, NICIE continues to encourage schools and support organisations to consider Integrated Education as an option in a time of economic constraints and the desire for educational provision in each area to remain as a choice for the whole community. Where there is no integrated provision NICIE, in conjunction with parents and schools, must demonstrate unmet demand for such provision to be considered. This is extremely difficult in a time when the education budget constraints suggest no more growth but rationalisation. NICIE is acutely aware of the deficit in funding for education generally and is concerned with the challenges that that brings to enabling Integrated Education to grow. NICIE recognises the gap that exists for schools in local areas to consider options for Integrated Education as a solution to ensure education provision in an area. NICIE is willing and able, given financial support, to fill this gap to encourage conversations as per Transformation/ new school development.

NICIE are aware of the requirement now for DE and EA to assess future demand for Integrated Education and so NICIE will contribute in whatever way it can to support.

We are also acutely aware of the Fresh Start Agreement Funding for capital buildings, which is enabling already existing integrated schools that have sought so hard to be part of the educational landscape to survive into the future. NICIE acknowledges the huge commitment that the Treasury, NIO (Northern Ireland Office), and DE have made to this.

NICIE are grateful for the extra £435K from NIO to help NICIE to promote, meet local demand for Integrated Education and support existing integrated schools.

NICIE staff also assess internal and external risks of all activities, and the risk is reviewed and mitigated where feasible.

Fraud Risk

NICIE continues to review and implement its fraud policy during the year and has zero tolerance in respect of fraud. Internal controls were also reviewed and are clearly embedded within the organisation.

I have ensured that the NICIE Finance Officer is a member of the DE Education Sector Fraud forum. There were no instances of suspected fraud within NICIE during the year 2022-2023.

Raising Concerns at work (Whistle Blowing)

NICIE has a policy on Raising Concerns at work (Whistleblowing), which encourages staff to report any instances of unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or other actions that might compromise, in any way, the Council’s reputation and integrity. There were no instances during

2022-2023.

Data Security breaches

There were no data security breaches or losses during the year.

General Data Protection Regulation

NICIE continues to maintain and review its GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) policies, current data governance processes, procedures, and control. NICIE staff also ensure that all archived materials were appropriately dealt with which includes archiving, destroying, and returning materials to schools. NICIE's Retention and Disposal Policy was filed and agreed with the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) to ensure that records are managed in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Government Funding DataBase

NICIE is not listed on the Government Funding Database as NICIE does not award grant funding to the community and voluntary sector.

EU-EXIT

NICIE has not been impacted and is not aware of any future potential issues re EU (European Union) -Exit other than potential external European funding.

Significant Governance Issues

There are no further significant governance issues.

Conclusion

The aim of this statement is to ensure that information is provided as to how governance within NICIE has worked for the year to 31.3.2023 and identifies a range of significant governance issues that NICIE is facing during a period of significant change, uncertainty, and challenging circumstances.

NICIE will continue to ensure that it adheres to organisational needs and governance guidelines.

I can confirm that I will continue to review these issues and ensure that they are addressed. This governance statement was presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and formally approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Chair on 3.4.2023.

Anne Marie Telford

Dr Anne Marie Telford Chair

Roisin Marshall

Signature of Accounting Officer
Date of Signature 3.4.2023

Remuneration Policy and Staff report

The remuneration of all Council staff is determined by the NICVA National Joint Council for local authorities and other authorities of equivalent status. The National Joint Council's principal role is to reach agreement, based on shared values, on a national scheme of pay and conditions for local application throughout the UK.

The NICVA National Joint Council's guiding principles are to support and encourage:

- High quality services delivered by a well-trained, motivated workforce with security of employment. To this end employer are encouraged to provide training and development opportunities for employees**;**
- Equal opportunities in employment; equality as a core principle which underpins both service delivery and employment relations; and both the removal of all discrimination and the promotion of positive action;
- A flexible approach to providing services to the community, which meets the needs of employees as well as employers; and
- Stable industrial relations and negotiation and consultation between employers and recognised trade unions.

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Board and most senior management of the department.

Remuneration and pension entitlements (audited information)

	2022-2023					2021-2022				
	Salary £'000	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**	**Salary £**	**Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)**	**Bonus**	**Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**	**Total (£'000)**
R Marshall *CEO*	**65-70**	**100**	**-**	**18,000**	**80-85**	60-65	100	-	17,000	80-85
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	11,000	50-55
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**		**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	10,000	40-45
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**12,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	9,000	50-55
S Pettis *Senior Development Officer (Resigned May 2022)*	**40-45**	**100**	**-**	**1,000**	**50-55**	40-45	100	-	13,000	50-55

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension benefits

The value of pension benefits during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increase due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a track of pension rights.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary and any allowances all of which are subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by NICIE and thus recorded in these financial statements.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and is treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

Bonuses

No bonuses were paid during the year to 31 March 2023 (2022: £nil).

Off payroll engagements

During the year, there were no off-payroll engagements (2022: none).

Staff turnover

NICIE employee turnover rate is set out in the table below.

	April 2022 to March 2023		**April 2021 to March 2022**	
	Number of staff	% of headcount	Number of staff	% of headcount
Starters	1	8.33	-	-
Leavers	2	16.67	-	-

Pay Ratios

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid officer in NICIE in the financial year 2022-2023 was £65,000 - £70,000 (2021-22, £60,000-£65,000). The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the NICIE workforce is disclosed below.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

2022-2023	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	28,126	35,961	44,539
Pay ratio	2.34:1	1.83:1	1.48:1

2021-2022	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile
Total remuneration (£)	25,736	34,038	43,853
Pay ratio	2.43:1	1.84:1	1.43:1

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The values for the salary component of remuneration for the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile were £27,809, £34,722 and £44,539 respectively.

Remuneration ranged from £22,777 to £67,500 (2021-22, £20,444 to £62,500).

Percentage Change in Remuneration

The percentage changes in respect of NICIE are shown in the following table.

Percentage change for:	2022-23 v 2021-22	2021-22 v 2020-21
Average employee salary and allowances	5.51%	1.1%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	3.01%	1.7%

No performance pay or bonuses were payable to the highest paid officer or employees in these years.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Pension entitlements

Officials	Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31 March 2022 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2023 £'000	CETV at 31 March 2022 £'000	Real increase/ Decrease in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership payment Nearest £100
R Marshall *Chief Executive Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	125	102	7	-
M Johnston *Finance Officer*	6-10 No lump sum	0-2.5	122	104	4	-
C Scott Wills *Senior Development Officer*	10-15 Plus lump sum 10-15	0-2.5	236	211	1	-
L McAlpine *Senior Development Officer*	16-20 Plus lump sum 15-20	0-2.5	353	333	-17	-
Sean Pettis *Senior Development Officer* (Resigned May 2022)	0-5 No lump sum	0-2.5	21	20	-3	-

Pension entitlements

NICIE is a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Pension scheme. The Scheme is a funded defined benefit scheme, with benefits earned up to 31 March 2015 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31 March 2015 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended) and "The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" (as amended).

The funded nature of the LDPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets.

Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in "The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014" and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31st March 2022 and the contributions to be paid until 31st March 2023 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Funds Rates and Adjustment Certificate. The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age.

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value ("CETV") is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued because of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-2004 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement, which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effects of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

Staff cost (Audited)

	Permanently employed staff	**Temporary agency staff**	**Total 2023**	2022
			£	£
Wages and salaries	402,539	-	402,539	454,316
Social security costs	36,871	-	36,871	41,658
Other pension costs	74,127	-	74,127	84,556
	513,537		513,537	580,530
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			(40,501)	(92,855)
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation				
Current service cost			161,000	216,000
Past service cost/(gain)				
Contributions by the employer			(74,000)	(83,000)
Total Net costs			560,036	620,675

Remuneration and Staff report (continued)

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company during the year was:	**10**	10

Some staff employed by the company in 2023 and 2022 had permanent fixed term contracts of employment. During the year the charity incurred costs of £0 (2022: £0) relating to agency staff and secondees. The staff consists of 10 female and 4 male employees. The sickness absence rate for the year was 2023:122 days 4.7% (2022: 24.5 days /.89%. The Directors and Management work continuously to reduce this figure, and this is reviewed at BOD meetings and FGPSC.

The Directors received **£0** for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2022: £0). **One** employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2022: 1) and details are below.

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	65,915	63,990
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme. Roisin Marshall	12,612	12,236
	78,527	76,226

Compensation schemes – exit packages

The following section provides details of the exit packages paid by the company.

	Number of voluntary redundancies	**Total number of exit packages by cost band 2023**	**Total number of exit packages by cost band 2022**
< £10,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
£10,000-£25,000	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total number of exit packages	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total resource cost	Nil	Nil	Nil

Maeve Marnell
Chair NICIE
Date 24.6.2023

Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Regularity of expenditure
There were no losses or special payments made by the Council in the year. (2021/22 – £nil)

Fees and Charges
There were no fees or charges made by the Council in the year. (2021/22 - £nil)

Remote contingent liabilities
There were no contingent liabilities requiring disclosure under Assembly reporting requirements. The Council had no significant remote contingent liabilities to report 2022-23, (2021-22 £nil). Note 17 provides further details regarding the contingent liabilities, which are included in the financial statements.

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive
24.6.2023

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Opinion
We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards. We have also audited the information in the Remuneration and staff report and the Assembly Accountability and audit report that is described in those reports as having been audited.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern
In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.
Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.
Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information
The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken during the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Directors has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
- In all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.
  The parts of the remuneration and staff report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with DoF directions made under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with DoF guidance.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Responsibilities of directors
As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law,) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. They are also responsible for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control, as the trustees determine is necessary, to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud, or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

The following are required to be considered:
- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and entity performance;
- results of our enquires of management, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- review of company policies and procedures relating to:
  identifying, evaluation and complying with laws and regulations and whether they are aware of instances of noncompliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have any knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  -the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team and specific component audit teams regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Because of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud is in relation to expenditure not being applied in line with intended purposes and the calculation and payment of salaries. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

Audit response to risks identified.
The current audit is conducted with professional scepticism using procedures that are in accordance with International Standards on Auditing.

In responding to the identified key audit matters above we obtained an understanding of the charity's objectives and funders requirements together with the salary calculation and processing process, we performed enquires of management and inspected relevant documents and calculations, verifying expenditures, completing a recalculation of salaries during the year, assessing the completeness and accuracy of disclosures within the financial statements and concurred the figures were materially accurate.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified include the following:

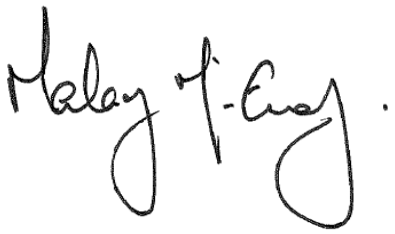
- reviewing the full financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerns of actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- obtained an understanding of provisions and held discussions with management to understand the basis of recognition or non-recognition of provisions; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and significant component audit teams and remained alert to any indications of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.
In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities, which govern them. A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mr Malachy McGrady (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of M.B.Mc Grady & Co
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
52 St Patricks Avenue
Downpatrick, Co. Down
BT30 6DS

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
(Company limited by guarantee)

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Incoming resources/income			
Incoming resources from generated funds			
- Voluntary income	3	**793,399**	763,266
Total incoming resources		**793,399**	763,266
Resources expended/expenditure			
Charitable activities			
- Development of Integrated Education and schools in Northern Ireland		**(771,589)**	(880,449)
Governance costs		**(9,580)**	(9,515)
Other resources expended			
- Other finance costs	6	**(18,000)**	(18,000)
Total resources expended		**(799,169)**	(907,964)
Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses	4	**(5,770)**	(144,698)
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension	12	**760,000**	388,000
Net movement in funds		**754,230**	243,302
Funds at 1 April		**(592,932)**	(836,234)
Funds at 31 March	14	**161,298**	(592,932)

All amounts above relate to the continuing restricted operations of the company.

There is no material difference between the net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses for the financial year stated above, and the historical cost equivalent.

The net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses is the net outgoing resources required by the Companies Act 2006 as opposed to that required by the Statement of Recommended Practice.

There are no changes in equity other than the results shown in the statement of financial position therefore a separate statement of changes in equity has not been presented.

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Non-current assets			
Property, plant, and equipment	7	**9,839**	**17,239**
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	9	**60,230**	**16,249**
Cash and cash equivalents	10	**123,649**	**70,781**
		183,879	**87,030**
Total assets		**193,718**	**104,269**
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	**(32,420)**	**(42,201)**
Non-current assets less net current liabilities		**161,298**	**62,068**
Non-current liabilities			
Pension commitments as per Note 12	12	**(0)**	**(655,000)**
Total assets less liabilities		**161,298**	**(592,932)**
Reserves			
Restricted funds	14	**161,298**	**(592,932)**

The financial statements on pages 52 to 53 were approved by the Board of directors on 24.6.2023 and were signed on its behalf by: Mrs Maeve Marnell, Chair of NICIE Board of Directors.

The notes on pages 54 to 69 form an integral part of these financial statements

Maeve Marnell
Chairperson

Roisin Marshall
Chief Executive Officer

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education Registered number: NI022427
Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities		**52,868**	8,925
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant, and equipment	7	**(0)**	(5,885)
Net cash inflow (outflow) from investing activities		**(0)**	(5,885)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year			3,040
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		**70,781**	67,741
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	15	**123,649**	70,781

Reconciliation of net outgoing reserves to net cash inflow from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before recognised gains and losses	**(5,770)**	(144,698)
Depreciation on tangible fixed assets	**4,919**	6,073
Loss on disposal of Assets	**2,481**	
Movement in trade and other receivables	**(43,981)**	(11,827)
Movement in trade and other payables	**(9,781)**	8,377
Difference between pension charge and cash contributions	**87,000**	133,000
Other finance costs	**18,000**	18,000
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	**52,868**	8,925

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, Accounting and Reporting by Charities; Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with International Financial Reporting standards and the principles of the 2021-22 *Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)* issued by the Department of Finance. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy, which is judged most appropriate to the particular circumstances of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education for giving a true and fair view, has been selected. The particular policies adopted by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the financial statements.

Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost.

New and amended standards adopted by the Company

The Company has adopted IFRS16 “Leases” from 1/4/2022, which has resulted in changes in the accounting policies and adjustments to the amounts recognised in the financial statements.

Effective date and transitional provisions
"In accordance with the transitional provisions of IFRS16 as adapted and interpreted by the FReM, the Company has adopted the new guidance, applying a retrospective approach to recognise the cumulative effects of initially applying IFRS16 recognised at the date of initial application as an adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers’ equity."

Summary of the main changes introduced by the standard
The new standard sets out the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation, and disclosure of leases. All leases result in the lessee recognising the right to use an asset at the commencement date of the lease, and if lease payments are made over time, also recognising financing. Accordingly, IFRS16 eliminates the classification of leases as either operating leases or finance leases as required by IAS17 and, instead, introduces a single lessee accounting model. Lessees will be required to recognise: (a) assets and liabilities for all leases with a lease term of more than 12 months unless the underlying asset is of low value; and (b) depreciation of right- of- use assets separately from interest on lease liabilities in profit or loss. IFRS16 substantially carries forward the lessor accounting requirements from IAS17. Accordingly, a lessor continues to classify its leases as operating leases or finance leases and to account for those two types of leases differently. For sub leases, intermediate lessors should classify subleases based on the right-of-use as set from the headlease, rather than the underlying lease as set as it was under IAS17, thus there is increased likelihood that a sublease previously classified as operating lease will be classified as a finance lease under IFRS16.

Statement of accounting policies (continued)

The effect from adoption of IFRS16 on the Company's financial statements

The company held a 3-year lease on its premises at 25 College Gardens which expired on 22nd February 2022. Thereafter the company occupied the premises on a rolling month to month term and has notified the Landlords on 6th April 2023 their intention to vacate the property at 25 College Gardens. At the end of the current year the company had not completed on the new lease agreement for their new offices at James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue. As such the Company has implemented the new standard retrospectively with the cumulative effect of initial application recognised as at the date of initial application of IFRS16, i.e. 1 April 2022 with the corresponding adjustment to the opening balances of taxpayers' equity as per IFRS16(C5(b)) and due to all leases being either short-term leases and leases of low-value assets there is no material change required to the opening balances with no corresponding change required in the opening balances of tax payers equity.

Going concern

The directors have received funding for the year ended March 2023, which has been confirmed from the Department of Education. The company is in a net current asset position with funding secured sufficient to meet liabilities as they fall due in the period of 12 months from approval of the financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, which assumes that NICIE will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Property, plant, equipment, and depreciation

Property, plant, and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items. Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial year in which they are incurred.

For all assets depreciation is calculated to write off the cost less their estimated residual values, on a reducing balance basis over the expected useful economic lives of the assets concerned, or over the life of project, whichever is earlier. The principal annual rates used are as follows:
Information technology : $33^1/_3$%
Furniture and fittings : 20%

Trade and other receivables

Trade receivables are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business. If collection is expected in one year or less (or in the normal operating cycle of the business if longer), they are classified as current assets. If not, they are presented as non-current assets.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Trade and other receivables (continued)

Trade receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

In the cash flow statement cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Trade and other payables

Trade payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Trade payables are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade and other payables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Government grants

Grants that relate to specific revenue expenditure are credited to the statement of financial activities when received.

Taxation

The Company is registered as a charity for tax purposes and is exempt from corporation tax on its activities. The activities of the company are exempt for value added tax purposes. The company therefore does not have to account for value added tax on its income nor is it able to recover the value added tax element of expenditure.

VAT

The company is not registered for VAT. All expenditure and capital purchase in the financial statements is stated inclusive of VAT.

Pension funding

Retirement benefits to employees of NICIE are provided by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee (“NILGOSC”) defined benefit scheme, which is externally funded and contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme.

In respect of this scheme, NICIE’s staff constitute only a small percentage of the overall membership. NICIE has no influence over the level of contributions.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Pension funding (continued)

In previous years NICIE's share of the NILGOSC scheme could not be identified and in keeping with such multi-employer schemes NICIE treated its pension cost as if it were a defined contribution (rather than a defined benefit) scheme. In late 2006, NILGOSC separated each of the employer scheme details and, as a result, NICIE has had to incorporate the year-end deficit on the scheme in its balance sheet and the movement on the scheme within the statement of financial activities.

The assets of the NILGOSC scheme are held separately from those of NICIE. Pension scheme assets are measured using market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability. The service cost and associated administration costs of NICIE's defined benefit pension scheme are charged to net outgoing resources before recognised gains. In addition, a retirement benefit interest charge on the net pension deficit is charged to the statement of financial activities as a finance cost. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised directly in statement of financial activities so that NICIE's balance sheet reflects the fair value of the scheme's surplus or deficit at the balance sheet date.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The significant accounting estimations and judgments of the Company relate to the pension assets, liabilities and associated pension surplus or deficit. The Company utilises the services of actuarists to help them value scheme assets and liabilities and provide the necessary disclosures of the Nilgosc pension scheme.

Incoming resources

Grants

Revenue grants are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate to a specified future period, in which case they are deferred.

Other income

Other income, which excludes value added tax, is accounted for on the accrual's basis.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Governance costs
Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of its assets, which are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Bank interest

All interest is accounted for in the statement of financial activities on the accruals basis.

Operating leases

Accounting policies applied from 1 April 2022
Leases other than short-term leases and leases of low-value assets are recognised as right-of-use assets and corresponding liabilities at the date at which the leased assets are available for use by the Company.

Payments associated with all short-term leases and certain leases of all low-value assets are recognised on a straight-line basis as an expense in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure. The company applies the exemption for low-value assets on a lease-by-lease basis. Short-term leases are leases with a lease term of less than 12 months or less. Low-value assets comprise computers, tablets, mobile phones and small items of office furniture.

Accounting policy applied until 31st March 2022
Leases in which a significant portion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made under operating leases (net of any incentives received from the lessor) are charged to the net expenditure account on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Lease activities
The company leased its head office property on a 3-year lease until February 2022. Subsequent to this it occupied the property on a rolling month to month basis with notice to quit notified to the landlord on 6th April 2023. Additionally it has a few low-value leases on items of office equipment

Fund accounting

NICIE has one type of fund for which it is responsible. The definition of this fund is as follows:

Restricted funds

Restricted funds, subject to specific trusts, are those given to NICIE, which are to be expended for the specific objects specified by the donor.

2 Statement of operating costs by operating segment

The trustees consider that NICIE acts as one operating segment and therefore no statement of operating costs by operating segment has been presented.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

3 Voluntary income

	2023 £	2022 £
Department of Education Northern Ireland	632,167	638,653
Department of Foreign Affairs and Traded	18,473	17,510
Northern Ireland Office	95,000	-
Donations	7,258	14,248
Recoveries in respect of outward secondments	40,501	92,855
	793,399	763,266

4 Net outgoing resources before recognised gains and losses

	2023 £	2022 £
This is stated after charging:		
Staff costs (Note 5)	600,537	713,530
Depreciation of property, plant, and equipment (Note 7)	4,919	6,073
Fees payable to NICIE's auditors for the audit of the financial statements	5,652	5,652
Operating lease rentals	19,100	19,100

5 Staff costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	402,539	454,316
Social security costs	36,871	41,658
Other pension costs	74,127	84,556
	513,537	580,530
IAS 19 – Actuarial valuation		
Current service cost	161,000	216,000
Past service cost/(gain)	-	-
Contributions by the employer	(74,000)	(83,000)
	600,537	713,530

During the year the charity incurred costs of £0 (2021: £nil) relating to agency staff and secondees.

	Number	Number
The average monthly number of persons employed by the company (including directors) during the year was:	**10**	10

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Directors received £0 for reimbursement of expenses during the year (2022: £0). One employee falls in emoluments band over £60,000 (2022: one) and details are below.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Chief Executives' remuneration – Roisin Marshall	65,915	63,990
Company pension contributions to NILGOSC pension scheme.	12,612	12,236
	78,527	76,226

6 Other finance costs	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Interest income on pension scheme assets	77,000	53,000
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(95,000)	(71,000)
	(18,000)	(18,000)

7 Property, plant, and equipment

	Information technology	**Furniture and fittings**	**Total**
	£	**£**	**£**
Cost			
At 1 April 2022	59,369	29,269	88,638
Disposal	(1,831)	(2,481)	(4,312)
Additions	0	0	0
At 31 March 2023	57,538	26,788	84,326
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2022	44,611	26,788	71,399
Depreciation on Disposal	4,919	0	4,919
Charge for the year	(1,831)		(1,831)
At 31 March 2023	47,699	26,788	74,487
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2023	**9,839**	**0**	**9,839**
At 31 March 2022	**14,758**	**2,481**	**17,239**

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Information technology	Furniture and fittings	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	54,160	28,593	82,753
Disposal			
Additions	5,209	676	5,885
At 31 March 2022	59,369	29,269	88,638
Accumulated depreciation			
At 1 April 2021	39,009	26,317	65,326
Depreciation on disposal			
Charge for the year	5,602	471	6,073
At 31 March 2022	44,611	26,788	71,399
Net book amount			
At 31 March 2022	**14,758**	**2,481**	**17,239**
At 31 March 2021	15,151	2,276	17,427

8 Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education largely are met through, Grant-in-Aid provided by DE, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the NDPB's expected purchase and usage requirements and the NDPB is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity, or market risk.

9 Trade and other receivables

	2023	2022
	£	**£**
Trade receivables	7,184	7,664
Prepayments and accrued income	53,046	8,585
	60,230	16,249

The fair values of trade and other receivables are not materially different from the carrying values.

All of the charity's financial assets are classified as loans and receivables. The company has no assets that may be classified as held at fair value through profit and loss, derivatives used for hedging or available-for-sale

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

10 Cash and cash equivalents

	2023	2022
	£	**£**
Balance at 1 April	70,781	67,741
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	52,868	3,040
Balance at 31 March	123,649	70,781

The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial banks and cash in hand	123,649	70,781

11 Trade and other payables

	2023	2022
	£	**£**
Trade payables	25,054	15,857
Accruals and deferred income	7,366	26,344
	32,420	42,201

The fair value of trade and other payables are not materially different from their carrying value as the impact of discounting is not significant. There is no difference between the amounts shown above and the total contractual undiscounted cash flows of trade and other payables.

12 Pension commitments

The net pension 'liability' shown below does not represent a shortfall, which requires short-term cash funding. The amount shown below is calculated to comply with the new Financial Reporting Standard, the specific requirements of which differ from the basis on which pension liabilities are actuarially calculated for the ongoing funding of the scheme. The Financial Reporting Standard requires:

(i) actuarial deficiencies to be recognised immediately as a "liability" in the financial statements rather than being spread forward over employees' remaining service lives;

(ii) the actuary, in valuing the scheme's liabilities, is required to use a bond yield as the discount rate for valuing future liabilities, rather than a rate that reflects the expected return on the scheme's particular asset portfolio, with the result of an apparent increase in the present value of future longer-term liabilities.

IAS 19 figures in relation to employees and ex-employees who are members of the NILGOSC pension scheme.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Pension commitments (continued)

	2023	2022
Rate of increase in salaries	**4.2%**	4.6%
Rate of increase in pensions in payment	**2.7%**	3.1%
Discount rate	**4.7%**	2.8%
Inflation assumption	**2.7%**	3.1%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	**2.7%**	3.1%

The mortality assumptions used were as follows:

	2023 Years	2022 Years
Average expected future life at age 65 for:		
Male currently aged 65	**22.2**	21.8
Female currently aged 65	**25.0**	25.0
Male currently aged 45	**23.2**	23.2
Female currently aged 45	**26.0**	26.4

The market value of assets in the scheme and the expected rate of return were:

Asset Allocation	**Quoted %**	**Unquoted %**	**Total %**	**Value at 31 Mar 2023 £**	**Value at 31 Mar 2022 £**
Equities	39.9%	0.1%	40.0%	1,098,400	1,179,750
Property	0%	11.2%	11.2%	307,552	275,000
Government Bonds	20.6%	0.0%	20.6%	565,676	679,250
Corporate Bonds	3.0%	0.0%	3.0%	82,380	60,500
Multi Asset Credit	13.3%	0.0%	13.3%	365,218	360,250
Cash	6.5%	0.0%	6.5%	178,490	110,000
Other	.6%	4.8%	5.4%	148,284	85,250
Total market value of assets	**83.9%**	**16.1%**	**100.%**	**2,746,000**	2,750,000
Present value of scheme liabilities				**2,715,000**	3,405,000
Unrecognised Surplus/Deficit in scheme				**(31,000)**	-
Net asset (liability) recognised on Statement of Financial Position				**-**	655,000

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Pension commitments (continued)

Reconciliation of present value of scheme liabilities

	2023	2022
	£	£
At 1 April	**3,405,000**	3,394,000
Current service cost	**161,000**	216,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Member contributions	**26,000**	29,000
Interest cost	**95,000**	71,000
Re-measurement on scheme liabilities	**(886,000)**	(251,000)
Benefits paid	**(86,000)**	(54,000)
At 31 March	**2,715,000**	3,405,000

Reconciliation of fair value of scheme assets

	2023	2022
	£	£
At 1 April	**2,750,000**	2,502,000
Expected return	**77,000**	53,000
Re-measurement on scheme assets	**(95,000)**	137,000
Employer contributions	**74,000**	83,000
Member contributions	**26,000**	29,000
Benefits paid	**(86,000)**	(54,000)
At 31 March	**2,746,000**	2,750,000

Scheme assets do not include any of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education's own financial instruments, or any property occupied by The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.
The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the balance sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long-term real rates of return experienced in the respective markets.

Analysis of amount charged to statement of financial activities:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Current service cost	**161,000**	216,000
Past service cost	**-**	-
Expected return	**(77,000)**	(53,000)
Interest cost	**95,000**	71,000
Re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**(791,000)**	(388,000)
Adjustment in respect of paragraph 64	**31,000**	-
Total operating charge/(credit)	**(581,000)**	(154,000)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Pension commitments (continued)

The total service cost of £161,000 (2022: £216,000) is included within staff costs. The total contributions expected to be made by the scheme by NICIE in the year to 31st March 2023 are £99,000

Sensitivity analysis
IAS19R requires the disclosure of the sensitivity of the results to the methods and assumptions used.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below.

Changes in assumptions at year ended 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to employer liability	Approximate monetary amount (£'000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	1.7%	46
1 year decrease in member life expectancy	2.7%	73
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0.1%	3
0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate	1.6%	43

Employer Contribution Rates
The liabilities show the underlying commitment that NICIE has in the long term to pay retirement benefits. The total pension liability is £2,715,000 (2022 - £3,405,000) and results in an unrecognised asset of (£31,000). As per the scheme actuary the net asset/(liability) to be recorded on the Statement of Financial Position is £0 (2022 (£655,000)).

For 2022/23, employers participating in the scheme contributed at the rate of 19.5% (2022 – 19.5%).

Scheme Gains and Losses
Actuarial gains and losses represent the extent to which actual outcomes have differed from the assumptions, which were used in calculating IAS 19 figures.

For assets, the gain/loss is normally the difference between the actual and expected return on assets, and for liabilities, the gain/loss normally arises from the change in financial assumptions. These actuarial gains/losses are shown in the table below as experience gains and losses.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Pension commitments (continued)

Amounts for current and previous four years:

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
		£	**£**	£	£
Scheme liabilities	**2,715,000**	3,405,000	3,394,000	2,719,000	2,861,000
Scheme assets	**2,746,000**	2,750,000	2,502,000	2,011,000	2,084,000
Surplus/(Deficit) in scheme	**31,000**	(655,000)	(892,000)	(708,000)	(777,000)
Experience adjustments on scheme assets					
Amount (£)	**(95,000)**	137,000	398,000	(162,000)	89,000
Experience adjustments on scheme liabilities					
Amount (£)	**886,000**	251,000	(488,000)	330,000	(51,000)

13 Members liability

The liability of each member is limited to £10.

14 Reserves – restricted funds

	2023	2022
	£	£
At 1 April	**(592,932)**	(836,234)
Net outgoing (losses)/resources before recognised losses	**(5,770)**	(144,698)
Actuarial re-measurement on defined benefit pension scheme	**760,000**	388,000
At 31 March	**161,298**	(592,932)

At the year end there is no asset/liability to be recognised in respect of the NILGOSC pension fund. The net liabilities at the previous year-end include a liability of £655,000 in respect of pension scheme liabilities of the NILGOSC pension fund.

15 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted fund	**2023 Total funds**	**2022 Total funds**
	£	**£**	**£**
Fixed Assets	9,839	9,839	17,239
Current Assets	183,879	183,879	87,030
Current liabilities	(32,420)	(32,420)	(42,201)
Pension commitments	0	0	(655,000)
Net funds	161,298	161,298	(592,932)

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

16 Leases

The Company leases various tangible assets under non-cancellable operating lease arrangements.
As described in the notes the operating leases held include either short term or low value assets and as such no right of use asset nor corresponding lease liability has been recognised.

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of comprehensive net expenditure account:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Expenses relating to short term leases	**19,100**	19,100
Expenses relating to low-value assets	**1,866**	1,879
Total expenses related to leases	**20,966**	20,979

The following amounts are recognised in the Statement of cash flows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash outflow for leases (IFRS16) – operating activity	**20,966**	**20,979**
Total cash outflows	**20,966**	**20,979**

17 Contingent liabilities

The company has a contingent liability to repay revenue grants received if certain conditions are not fulfilled.

18 Capital commitments

At 31 March 2023, the company had capital commitments of £16,459 towards legal and all related moving costs to new accommodation James House (2022: none).

19 Losses and special payments

At 31 March 2023, the company had **no** losses and special payments (2022: none).

20 Related party transactions

NICIE is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by DE. DE is regarded as a related party. During the year, NICIE has had various transactions with the DE and with other entities for which DE is regarded as the parent Department.
None of the board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties have undertaken any material transactions with NICIE during the year (2022: none). As per the register of interests maintained by NICIE, there were no conflicts of interest during the year (2022: none).

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

21 Ultimate controlling party

There is no ultimate controlling party.

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Annual report

Chairperson's report 2022-2023

This year has presented challenges right across the education sector and the lack of an assembly and the ongoing budgetary constraints have made achieving our strategic aims and objectives particularly difficult.
On a positive note, we have welcomed the opportunity to work with the Implementation Team for the Integrated Education Act. We are providing assistance to the Department as it works to meet its statutory obligation to develop a strategy for Integrated Education and are hopeful that this strategy will have a positive impact on ensuring that the Department assesses and meets the demand for Integrated Education going forward.
We are encouraged that more schools than ever are currently on the journey to becoming Integrated and we feel confident that, if resources are made available, the Integrated Education Act will result in those numbers continuing to grow.

Throughout the year our passionate and dedicated staff have continued to work with our schools to ensure that they achieve excellence in educating our children and young people and to help them to grow to meet increasing demand. I continue to be hugely impressed by the resilience demonstrated by our principals, teachers and other school staff as they overcome such challenging circumstances and our wonderful pupils continue to be a constant source of inspiration.

I feel privileged to work with an extremely talented Board of directors who give so generously of their time and expertise to ensure good governance of the organisation and who, with the expert support of our Finance Officer, Maureen Johnston, have ensured that our budget has been managed efficiently and effectively.
This year our CEO, Roisin Marshall, continued to provide visionary leadership to the organisation, overcoming obstacles and hurdles to ensure that our staff stayed focused on achieving the objectives set out in our business plan.

In addition, I am grateful for the positive relationship we have with our stakeholders: the IEF, APTIS, the AlumNI, our sponsor department in DE as well as the EA and other sectoral support bodies, as we work together to secure a better future for all our children.

As we move forward into the next financial year we must not let financial limitations hamper our vision of ensuring that every parent who wants to send their child to an Integrated school has the opportunity to do so.
We owe it to our children to rise above the political and financial challenges and continue to work with all our stakeholders to achieve our overall goal of promoting peace in Northern Ireland through educating our children and young people together.

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education

Northern Ireland - Charity number 100310

Annual return

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards. We have also audited the information in the Remuneration and staff report and the Assembly Accountability and audit report that is described in those reports as having been audited.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken during the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Directors for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Directors has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.
- In all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.
  The parts of the remuneration and staff report and Assembly Accountability Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with DoF directions made under the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with DoF guidance.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Responsibilities of directors
As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law,) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. They are also responsible for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control, as the trustees determine is necessary, to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud, or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable,
matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements
Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

The following are required to be considered:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and entity performance;
- results of our enquires of management, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- review of company policies and procedures relating to:
  identifying, evaluation and complying with laws and regulations and whether they are aware of instances of noncompliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have any knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  -the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team and specific component audit teams regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

Because of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud is in relation to expenditure not being applied in line with intended purposes and the calculation and payment of salaries. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

Audit response to risks identified.

The current audit is conducted with professional scepticism using procedures that are in accordance with International Standards on Auditing.

In responding to the identified key audit matters above we obtained an understanding of the charity's objectives and funders requirements together with the salary calculation and processing process, we performed enquires of management and inspected relevant documents and calculations, verifying expenditures, completing a recalculation of salaries during the year, assessing the completeness and accuracy of disclosures within the financial statements and concurred the figures were materially accurate.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified include the following:

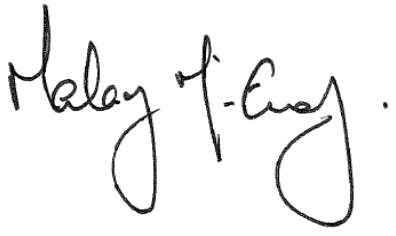
- reviewing the full financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management concerns of actual and potential litigation and claims;

- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- obtained an understanding of provisions and held discussions with management to understand the basis of recognition or non-recognition of provisions; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and significant component audit teams and remained alert to any indications of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.
In addition, we are required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions conform to the authorities, which govern them.
A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Independent auditors' report to the directors of The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (company limited by guarantee)

Use of our report
This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mr Malachy McGrady (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of M.B.Mc Grady & Co
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
52 St Patricks Avenue
Downpatrick, Co. Down
BT30 6DS