

## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: Sharing from the Start

#### THEME:

Shared Education

#### FUNDING (ERDF + Match):

€4,256,007.31

#### MATCH FUNDERS:

Department of  
Education &  
Department of  
Education & Skills

#### LEAD PARTNER:

Early Years

#### PROJECT PARTNERS:

Fermanagh Trust  
National Childhood  
Network

#### PROJECT CONTACT:

[audreyr@early-years.org](mailto:audreyr@early-years.org)

**Start Date:** 01/03/2017

**End Date:** 31/03/2022



[www.sharingfromthestart.org](http://www.sharingfromthestart.org)



[@earlyyearsorg](https://twitter.com/earlyyearsorg)

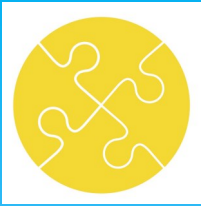
The Sharing from the Start project involves early year's settings throughout Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland forming cross-community and/or cross-border partnerships. The children will take part in joint curricular classes, to improve their educational outcomes and promote good relations.

Funding is being used to enable pre-schools to take part in shared education projects improving educational outcomes and cross-community cohesion, inclusion and diversity. The project is led by Early Years, in collaboration with the National Childhood Network and the Fermanagh Trust.

Speaking at the project launch Siobhan Fitzpatrick, former Chief Executive Officer, Early Years said **“All the research shows that helping children understand the importance of enjoying good relations with friends from different communities is critical to building stronger, better communities both now and into the future. We are very excited about the Sharing from the Start Project. We believe it will contribute significantly to the Shared Education agenda and our objective of making sharing a reality for all preschool children in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland.”**



(Back L-R) Denise McCormilla NCN, Lauri McCusker Fermanagh Trust. (Front L-R) Alison Chambers Department of Education, Ian McKenna Department of Education and Skills, Mark Feeney SEUPB and Siobhan Fitzpatrick Early Years. With children from Ardstraw Playgroup and Little Flower Playgroup.



## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: Sharing from the Start

#### THEME:

Shared Education

#### FUNDING (ERDF + Match):

€4,256,007.31

#### MATCH FUNDERS:

Department of  
Education &  
Department of  
Education & Skills

#### LEAD PARTNER:

Early Years

#### PROJECT PARTNERS:

Fermanagh Trust  
National Childhood  
Network

#### PROJECT CONTACT:

[audreyr@early-years.org](mailto:audreyr@early-years.org)

Start Date: 01/03/2017

End Date: 31/03/2022



[www.sharingfromthestart.org](http://www.sharingfromthestart.org)



[@earlyyearsorg](https://twitter.com/earlyyearsorg)

Research shows that children develop prejudices from an early age, which further highlights the need for shared education to improve community relations. The Sharing from the Start project will place a strong emphasis on developing and deepening reconciliation between divided communities, increase tolerance and respect and increase social cohesion.

Eileen Owens, leader at Loughinisland Playgroup commented: ***“Through Sharing From The Start we have been able to have these exciting opportunities for the children where they have learned so much and had lots of fun along the way.”***

Judy McSherry leader at Crossgar Pre-school added: ***“It’s great for the children to make so many new friends and by working together we are able to do so much more and learn from each other. We are so encouraged as well by the support of parents and the wider community.”***

Quote from a parent: ***“This is a very worthwhile project. Teaching children from a young age that we are all different but we are all the same. Even though they don’t realise now, the learning will kick in as they grow and develop .”***



#### Project Key Outputs:

- 99 schools involved in shared education.
- 157 teachers trained with the capacity to facilitate shared education.
- 9,914 participants in shared education classrooms.