



**Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in  
Education (CRED):  
Findings from the 2014 Young Life and Times Survey  
and Comparisons with the 2012 Survey Findings**

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## **Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
Introduction	3
Aims and objectives of the research	3
Methodology	4
Characteristics of the respondents	8
 <b>Main findings</b>	
 <b>Appendix</b>	
- CRED questions asked within 2014 Young Life and Times Survey	26

## **Introduction**

This project feeds into a wider programme of the Department of Education (DE) for Northern Ireland to:

1. Measure the success of the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) policy. The aim of this policy is to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available;

DE regularly assesses the effectiveness of schools and other youth settings in encouraging understanding of groups covered in Section 75 of the 1998 Northern Ireland Act. In 2012 DE commissioned ARK to develop a suite of questions to be included in the 2012 Young Life and Times (YLT) survey, which recorded the experiences of young people in relation to CRED. This module in the 2012 YLT survey provided a baseline level of success and effectiveness of CRED (Devine, 2013). In 2014 the same questions were again placed in the YLT survey, and this publication reports the findings, where appropriate comparing these with the findings of the 2012 YLT survey.

The aims of this research are:

1. To assess the effectiveness of the CRED policy amongst young people living in Northern Ireland and compare this with the previous results from the 2012 YLT survey.

## **Methodology**

### *What is the Young Life and Times Survey?*

The Young Life and Times (YLT) survey is a constituent part of ARK (Access, Research, Knowledge), a joint resource by Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University providing access to social and political information on Northern Ireland ([www.ark.ac.uk](http://www.ark.ac.uk)). The aim of the YLT survey is to record the views of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland on a range of issues such as community relations, health, politics, sectarianism and education. In its current format the YLT survey has been undertaken since 2003, making it the longest running annual large-scale cross-sectional survey of young people in the British Isles.

### *Sample*

The survey sample was taken from the Child Benefit Register. Since 2004, a statutory instrument and explanatory memorandum (Tax Credits (Provision of Information) (Evaluation and Statistical Studies) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004) is in place which allows ARK to access the Child Benefit Register for the YLT survey.

Child Benefit is a benefit for people bringing up children and is paid for each child. Therefore, the Child Benefit Register contains information on all children for whom Child Benefit is claimed. Until March 2013 this was a universal benefit, but in April 2013 legislation came into place which introduced means testing with regard to Child Benefit payments. Higher earners are now no longer entitled to receive Child Benefit. This resulted in a potential significant change to the YLT sampling strategy. Alternative universal or random sample frames for YLT (such as the GP register) were considered prior to the 2013 survey but found unsuitable or unworkable. However, consultations with HMRC, who administer Child Benefit payments across the UK, revealed that the names and addresses of those 16-year olds affected by the Child Benefit Payment changes and those whose parents opted out of receiving Child Benefit are still held at HMRC, for example, in order to issue National Insurance Cards. Thus, the sample of 16-year olds available to ARK for the YLT survey remained potentially universal and unaffected by the legislative changes. According to HMRC, in 2014 only 185 eligible families from Northern Ireland had opted out of receiving Child Benefit payments, which makes the Child Benefit Register an almost 100 percent accurate random sample of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland.

The sample for the 2014 survey was provided to ARK directly by HMRC. Due to an increase in the number of funders, and subsequently a higher number of questions, for the first time we needed to run a split survey (i.e. not everybody would be asked all questions). To account for this and to fulfil our obligations to our funders, we

increased our sample size. Thus, for the first time one quarter of all eligible 16-year olds, namely all respondents with birthdays from January-March, were invited to take part in YLT.

**Table 1: 2015 YLT survey content by funder and questionnaire version**

Module	Funder	Purple version	Orange version
<b>Background questions</b>	Split among all funders	✓	✓
<b>Community relations</b>	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFMNI)	✓	✓
<b>Relationships and Sexuality Education and attitudes to LGBT people</b>	Department of Education (DE)	✓	✓
<b>Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Education (CRED)</b>	Department of Education (DE)		✓
<b>Children’s rights in education*</b>	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)		✓
<b>Autism*</b>	Centre for Behaviour Analysis (Queen’s University Belfast)	✓	
<b>Attitudes to integrated education*</b>	Integrated Education Fund (IEF)	✓	

\* **Note:** The modules on autism, Rights in Education and attitudes to integrated education were also included in the 2014 Kids Life and Times (KLT) survey. For more details, visit [www.ark.ac.uk/klf](http://www.ark.ac.uk/klf).

### *Fieldwork methods*

Fieldwork was conducted from October to December 2014. An initial letter was sent in September 2014 to all eligible 16-year olds and provided an introduction to the survey. Recipients of the letter were given the opportunity to say if they did not want to participate in the survey. In October 2014, a second letter with a paper questionnaire and FREEPOST return envelope was then posted out to all 16-year olds who had not opted out of the survey. A reminder letter containing another paper

questionnaire and FREEPOST envelope was sent to all who had not responded by the start of November 2014.

Respondents could choose one of three methods for completing the questionnaire:

- They could complete the paper questionnaire and post it back in the pre-stamped envelope;
- They could complete the questionnaire online – inputting their personal identifier to enter that part of the YLT website;
- They could take part by phone, having quoted their identification number and check letter.

### *Survey Content*

Given that the 2014 survey was a split survey, two questionnaires were produced; in the paper versions these were orange and purple. While the majority of questions were the same in both questionnaires, some modules were only included in one survey version (see Table 1). Respondents randomly received either the orange or purple survey questionnaire.

### *Response rate*

5,692 names of eligible respondents were on the database of Child Benefit recipients received from HMRC. Forty-six initial letters or questionnaires were returned because the addressee had moved or was unknown at the address we were given. This leaves an overall sample of 5,642 eligible respondents in total.

Thirteen young people or their parents opted out of completing the 2014 YLT survey at different stages. Commonly this was because the young person suffered from a moderate or severe learning disability or mental illness which did not allow him or her to comprehend or answer the questions.

Overall 1,939 completed questionnaires were received by the end of the fieldwork period. This represents a response rate of 34.4 percent. This total number of responses excludes nine duplicate completions (either online and paper, or two paper completions), which were removed when the datasets were cleaned.

Table 2 shows that the most popular mode of completing the survey remains postal/paper completion. The Table also shows that the response rate among those who received a purple questionnaire version was higher. Telephone responses were offered as in every year, but no phone completions at all were recorded in 2014.

**Table 2: Mode of survey completion by survey version**

	<b>Orange</b>	<b>Purple</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Surveys sent out</b>	2,846	2,846	5,692
<b>Addressee unknown</b>	12	34	46
<b>Paper</b>	777	867	1,644
<b>Online</b>	128	167	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>1,034</b>	<b>1,939</b>
<b>Response rate</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>36.8%</b>	<b>34.4%</b>

## Characteristics of the respondents

Before we report the main findings of the two DE modules, in this section of the report we summarise some key background characteristics of the respondents to the 2014 YLT survey. Due to rounding, column totals in the tables below do not always sum to 100 percent.

Missing responses, that is, where the respondent did not answer a question, were removed for the analysis. In closed questions missing responses typically make up no more than two percentage points of the total YLT population, depending on the type of question asked. In open questions, this figure can be significantly higher, however, YLT survey respondents tend to respond to open questions very well and often write quite extensive comments.

### Gender

For the first time the YLT survey included 'other' categories in addition to 'male and 'female' when respondents were asked what sex/gender they were. Namely we asked whether they were male to female or female to male transgender or whether they identified as something else. Overall ten respondents chose one of these other categories (Table 3). This figure is too small to undertake any meaningful statistical analysis, however, the fact that 16-year olds said they were something other than male or female justifies the inclusion of these categories.

**Table 3: Sex of respondents**

	%
<b>Males</b>	41
<b>Females</b>	59
<b>Transgender/Other</b>	<1

### Disability

Ten percent of respondents said they had a physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more with 68 percent of these respondents saying that this condition affected their ability to carry day-to day activities a little or a lot.

### Area of living and number of years lived in Northern Ireland

Just slightly over one in five respondents (22%) lived in a large city or in a city's outskirts. Over one third of respondents (37%) lived either in a village or in a home in the countryside, confirming the fact that Northern Ireland remains a region with a significant rural population (Table 4).

**Table 4: Where respondents live**

	<b>%</b>
<b>A big city</b>	8
<b>The suburbs or outskirts of a big city</b>	13
<b>A small city or town</b>	42
<b>A country village</b>	17
<b>A farm or home in the county</b>	20
<b>Don't know</b>	<1

Respondents had lived for an average of 15.4 years in Northern Ireland, so in fact the large majority of respondents (91%) had lived in Northern Ireland for all their life.

Ethnicity

**Table 5: Ethnic group (recoded open responses)**

	<b>%</b>
<b>White/Caucasian</b>	65
<b>Catholic/Irish Catholic/Roman Catholic</b>	6
<b>White Irish</b>	4
<b>White British</b>	4
<b>British/English</b>	4
<b>Irish</b>	4
<b>White European/European/Continental European</b>	2
<b>Protestant</b>	3
<b>Northern Irish/White Northern Irish</b>	2
<b>Christian</b>	2
<b>White Catholic</b>	1
<b>White Protestant</b>	1
<b>Mixed origin/other</b>	3
<b>Don't know/none</b>	1

Thirteen percent of respondents self-identified as members of a minority ethnic group. Almost six in ten (58%) of those who said they had a 'mixed' or other ethnic background said this, but it is note-worthy that also one in five of those identifying as 'Catholic' or 'Protestant' also said this. In fact, among all respondents who identified as members of a minority ethnic group, almost half (47%) identified as 'White' or 'Caucasian', 15 percent as 'Catholic' and only 12 percent said they had mixed or other (e.g. Chinese, Pakistani etc.) origin.

### Religious affiliation

Seventy-two percent of respondents said they had a religious affiliation. Table 6 shows the proportion of respondents affiliating with specific religions. Other religions included for example other branches of Protestant religions (e.g. Elim), Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Orthodox Christianity and Sikhism.

**Table 6: Religious affiliation**

	%
<b>Catholic</b>	54
<b>Presbyterian</b>	20
<b>Church of Ireland</b>	13
<b>Methodist</b>	3
<b>Baptist</b>	2
<b>Free Presbyterian</b>	1
<b>Brethren</b>	<1
<b>Other</b>	5

### National identity

Table 7 shows that Irish, Northern Irish and British national identities continue to be the main national identities YLT respondents affiliate with. Nearly three quarters of Catholics (74%) identify as 'Irish', whilst over half (54%) of Protestants identify as 'British'. The proportion of Protestants identifying as 'Northern Irish' (38%) is twice that of Catholics saying they feel 'Northern Irish' (19%). However, respondents with no religious affiliation are most likely to say they feel 'Northern Irish' (40%).

**Table 7: National identity**

	%
<b>Irish</b>	36
<b>Northern Irish</b>	30
<b>British</b>	27
<b>Ulster</b>	2
<b>Other</b>	4
<b>Don't know</b>	2

### Sexuality

YLT has been recording sexual preferences for many years. Table 8 shows that 88 percent of males and 81 percent of females were opposite-sex attracted, that is only ever sexually attracted to someone of the opposite sex whilst 11 percent of males and 12 percent of females were at least once sexually attracted to someone of the same sex.

**Table 8: Sexual attracted to...\***

	%	
	Males	Females
<b>only to females and never to males</b>	88	1
<b>more often to females and at least once to a male</b>	4	1
<b>about equally often to females and males</b>	2	3
<b>more often to males and at least once to a female</b>	2	8
<b>only to males and never to females</b>	3	81
<b>I have never felt sexually attracted to anyone</b>	2	6

\*Figures for those saying they are neither female nor male are too small to report

### Education

Ninety-five percent of YLT respondents were still in full-time education with the majority (81%) being in school. Table 9 shows the type of school respondents said they attended or, if they had left school, had recently attended. Table 10 shows that perceived religious mix of the schools respondents attended with just 14 percent saying that the proportion of Catholics and Protestants was about half and half.

**Table 9: Type of school most recently attended**

	%
<b>Grammar</b>	52
<b>Non-Grammar, incorporating...</b>	47
...Secondary (35)	
...Planned Integrated (7)	
...Irish Language (<1)	
...Other (4)*	
<b>Special Schools</b>	1

\* 'Other' schools include: Colleges of Further and Higher Education – e.g. Belfast Metropolitan College, Dixon system – comprehensive schools, schools outside Northern Ireland, alternative education providers etc.

**Table 10: Description of school most recently attended**

	%
<b>All or nearly all Protestant</b>	18
<b>All or nearly all Catholic</b>	35
<b>Mostly Protestant</b>	20
<b>Mostly Catholic</b>	6
<b>About half Protestant and half Catholic</b>	14
<b>Don't know</b>	7

### Family-financial background

YLT records the socio-economic background of respondents via a self-reporting mechanism which has produced a reliable measure over the years. In 2014, just over half of respondents said their families were average well-off. Fourteen percent said they came from not well-off families, whilst 29 percent thought their families were well-off.

### **Representativeness and weighting**

The sample frame for the YLT survey is representative of 16-year olds in Northern Ireland, as described above in the Methodology section. However, as in most other surveys, due to non-response bias, the achieved sample is not representative of the

target population. This may or may not have any implications for the results reported here. Table 3 shows for example that 59 percent of respondents were females, so due to females being much more likely to respond to the survey than males. This is typical pattern for most for social research studies.

Also, as can be seen in Table 9, 52 percent of YLT respondents said they had previously attended grammar schools, whilst the most recent DE enrolment statistics show that the proportion of pupils in grammar schools in Northern Ireland was 42 percent in 2014/15 (Source: [www.deni.gov.uk/enrolment\\_time\\_series\\_1415.xlsx](http://www.deni.gov.uk/enrolment_time_series_1415.xlsx); Accessed March 2015). Indirectly, the higher proportion of respondents from grammar schools may also affect the YLT socio-economic background variable (self-perceived family-financial wellbeing), as a much higher proportion of secondary school pupils is entitled to free school meals (37%) than in grammar school attendees (12%) (Source: [www.deni.gov.uk/per\\_cent\\_fsme\\_time\\_series\\_updated\\_1415.xlsx](http://www.deni.gov.uk/per_cent_fsme_time_series_updated_1415.xlsx); Accessed March 2015). Free school meal entitlement can be seen as a proxy for the socio-economic status of young people and their families. All this is only relevant in so far, as frequency tables of results may over-represent slightly the views and experiences of females and those of grammar school attendees and, thus, indirectly the financially better-off respondents.

#### *Should the data be weighted?*

Partially, the non-response bias can be addressed by introducing weight factors. This can be done for variables for which we know the actual proportion people in the target population. Gender and school type attended are such examples. This is much harder where reliable statistics are not available, or where certain issues are very complex, for example disability. We know that people with certain sensory disabilities or with complex needs are more likely to opt out of the survey, however, people with physical disabilities may be over-represented – we cannot be sure. Generally several weight factors would need to be applied to address various variables, and even then non-response bias is a complex issue, which cannot be easily fixed. The academic view is that caution needs to be applied when weighting datasets (see point 5.4. in this document produced by the National Centre for Research Methods: <http://www.restore.ac.uk/PEAS/nonresponse.php>), as the weighting procedure whilst increasing representativeness in some areas can, at the same time, decrease sample accuracy in others. The YLT approach is not to weight data. However, gender, family financial background and school background are routinely used to cross-examine findings, and if differences are found, these are reported, as can be seen below.

# Main findings

## CRED

In this section we report the experiences of YLT responses in relation to CRED. When possible, the results from the 2012 YLT survey are shown for comparison in the Tables and Figures.

### *Experience of CRED*

The CRED module was repeated exactly, thus - as in 2012 - the questionnaire provided an introduction to the topic for the respondents, using the following text:

***‘Education and youth work are supposed to encourage understanding of particular groups in society and promote the equal treatment of different groups. This can be done through exchange programmes, discussions, workshops, lessons or videos.’***

When asked if they had ever done any of this, 73 percent compared to 70 percent of respondents in 2012 indicated that they had done so. This shows a very slight increase of young people receiving CRED. The increase is largely due to a higher coverage of CRED topics in school. The coverage in youth projects remained the same as in 2012, however the proportion of young people receiving CRED in both school and youth settings actually decreased a little, as Table 11 shows.

**Table 11: Participation in CRED activities**

	%	
	2014	2012
<b>School only</b>	46	40
<b>Youth project only</b>	10	10
<b>Both school and youth project</b>	16	20
<b>Neither</b>	27	30

Tables 12 and 13 focus on those receiving CRED in school by school type and by the religious composition of the school they currently or last attended.

Table 12 shows that respondents attending planned integrated schools were more likely to receive CRED than those in grammar or secondary schools, which was also the case in 2012. (Other school types were omitted from this table due to small

numbers attending these). The difference between these two surveys is statistically insignificant.

**Table 12: CRED received in school by type of school**

	%	
	2014	2012
<b>Planned Integrated</b>	70	68
<b>Grammar</b>	59	61
<b>Secondary</b>	59	57

Table 13 indicates that those in all or nearly all Protestant schools were least likely to receive CRED. The findings show a reversal compared to 2012 with regard to schools with ‘mostly Catholic’ and ‘mostly Protestant’ intakes, with pupils in ‘mostly Protestant’ schools being more likely to receive CRED now than those in ‘mostly Catholic’ schools. This finding should not be overestimated as some respondents in particular in schools with an intake of pupils from mixed religious backgrounds may simply not know whether their schools have a majority Catholic or Protestant background.

**Table 13: CRED activities by religious composition of school last or currently attended**

	%	
	2014	2012
<b>All or nearly all Protestant</b>	54	56
<b>All or nearly all Catholic</b>	63	61
<b>Mostly Protestant</b>	61	55
<b>Mostly Catholic</b>	57	66
<b>About half Protestant and half Catholic</b>	64	65
<b>Don’t know</b>	39	52

### *CRED topics*

Those who had experienced CRED activities were asked if these activities had covered a range of ten groups, reflecting the Section 75 categories. This was explored separately for school and for youth settings (Table 14).

Table 14 clearly shows two trends. Firstly, as in 2012, schools have covered issues relating to all groups more than youth projects or youth clubs. Secondly, with few exceptions, those who said they had received CRED reported a higher coverage of topics compared to 2012, and this was the case for both school-based and youth project-based CRED. The increase in the level of coverage was not necessarily consistent between schools and youth projects. For example, there was a seven percentage point increase in coverage of relationships (ie whether people are married, cohabiting, single or divorced) in schools, but a two percentage point drop in coverage in youth projects, even though this is statistically insignificant. On the other hand, it appears that different political opinions were more discussed in both schools and youth projects in 2014 compared to 2012. Religious beliefs remains the topic most likely to be discussed both in schools and youth settings.

**Table 14: Coverage of CRED groups, by setting**

	%			
	Your School		Your youth project or youth club	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
<b>People with different political opinions</b>	65	59	53	48
<b>People with different religious beliefs</b>	88	84	79	70
<b>People from different ethnic groups</b>	79	74	65	58
<b>People of different ages (older and younger people/children)</b>	59	53	55	55
<b>People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced</b>	37	30	28	30
<b>People with different sexual orientations</b>	48	45	41	31
<b>Men and women</b>	58	55	54	46
<b>People with a disability and those without a disability</b>	66	63	54	46
<b>People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without</b>	35	31	34	26
<b>People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities</b>	34	34	31	29

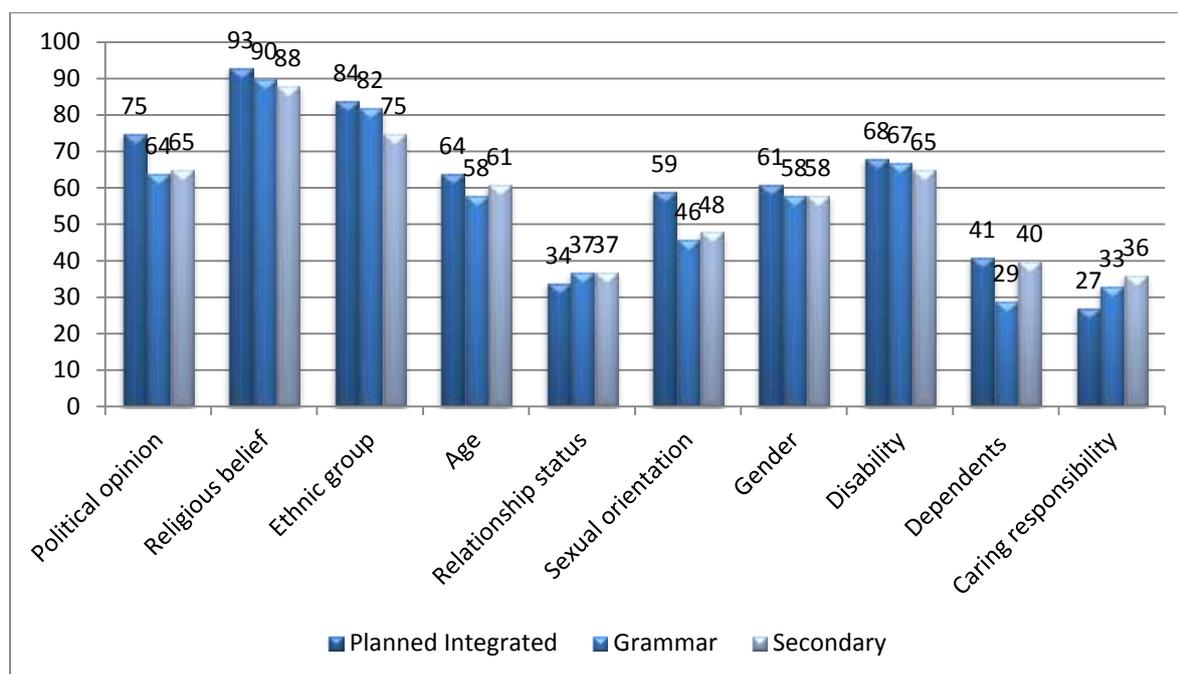
Table 15 shows that there was an increase in CRED topics covered both in school and youth work settings. This means that 2014 YLT respondents who received CRED education were more likely than their counterparts in 2012 to have covered a greater variety of topics. This is particularly noticeable in the increase in proportions of respondents saying that all respective ten CRED topics were covered. Almost one in five respondents who received CRED in school (19%) and 13 percent of respondents who received CRED in youth settings said they covered all CRED topics.

**Table 15: Number of CRED topics covered, by setting**

	%			
	In school		In a youth setting	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
1	7	7	11	6
2	8	9	14	10
3	12	11	8	15
4	10	16	11	17
5	12	11	13	9
6	12	11	6	7
7	7	8	8	7
8	7	7	6	7
9	7	6	12	5
10	19	12	13	7

In line with the Tables above, Figure 1 shows that most subjects were most likely to be discussed in planned integrated schools. The difference in coverage compared to grammar and secondary schools was greatest with regard to the topics of political opinion and sexual orientation. Religious beliefs, ethnic belonging and political opinions were also more likely to be covered by CRED programmes in schools with an exclusively or predominantly Protestant intake, whereas issues such as caring and dependencies were more likely to be discussed in schools with an all or predominantly Catholic intake.

**Figure 1: Coverage of CRED topics, by type of school (%)**



### *Changing attitudes among participants*

In this section we report respondents’ perceptions with regard to changing attitudes as a result of the CRED education received – both at group level and at a individual level. Again, we make comparisons with the 2012 data when and where this is appropriate. As in the previous report (Devine, 2013), figures are only presented for those respondents who identified that particular group for which they received CRED education<sup>1</sup>.

### Group level

Respondents were asked if they thought that members of their class or youth project or youth club felt more positive towards any of the groups as a result of what was taught or discussed in CRED.

Table 16 illustrates that at least seven in ten - in some topics almost nine in ten - respondents who had received CRED education felt that this had had positive effects on the feelings among those receiving the respective education. Similar to the previous survey this applied again to both school and youth settings. The Table also shows that the changes compared to the YLT survey two years ago were generally

<sup>1</sup> For example, if someone said s/he did not receive CRED on the topic of ‘*people with different political opinions*’, this respondent’s answer is automatically excluded and set as ‘skip’ or ‘missing’ when asked whether s/he felt that his or her views are now more positive towards people with different political opinions as a result of CRED, although, arguably, CRED on another topic, for example on ‘*people with different religious views*’ could have a more general positive effect, including an effect on the views on political opinions.

only marginal, with some notable exceptions. For example, there was a six percentage point increase in school settings and a seven percentage point increase in youth settings among those who said that CRED with a focus on different religious beliefs resulted in more positive attitudes among participants. Compared to two years ago, there was also a five percentage point increase amongst those who said participants had more positive feelings towards people with different sexual orientations after CRED on this topic in school settings. On the other hand, there was a six percentage point drop in perceived positive feelings among those who had received CRED in youth settings covering the topic of people with and without dependents.

**Table 16: More positive attitudes of participants about CRED groups, by setting and year.**

	%			
	Your School		Your youth project or youth club	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
<b>People with different political opinions</b>	72	74	81	81
<b>People with different religious beliefs</b>	84	78	85	78
<b>People from different ethnic groups</b>	81	78	80	78
<b>People of different ages (older and younger people/children)</b>	71	69	73	77
<b>People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced</b>	73	71	75	74
<b>People with different sexual orientations</b>	76	71	82	81
<b>Men and women</b>	74	72	74	75
<b>People with a disability and those without a disability</b>	80	80	82	82
<b>People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without</b>	75	75	77	83
<b>People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities</b>	74	67	78	77

Table 17 shows how many groups respondents thought their classmates or other attendants in youth projects felt more positive about following CRED. This is again

presented in a way that it makes comparisons with the 2012 YLT survey easy. The Table shows a seven percent decrease in the proportion of respondents who felt that CRED in youth settings had no impact on more positive views towards any of the groups covered in CRED. The results for CRED in school settings were almost identical to 2012, however, there was a five percent increase in respondents saying that CRED in school had a positive impact on their classmates' views about *all* ten groups covered in CRED. Overall, Table 17 suggests the closing of the effectiveness gap between CRED in school settings and CRED in youth settings compared to two years ago, although school remains the venue which appears to retain the greater positive effects so far.

**Table 17: Number of groups respondents thought their classmates or other attendants at youth projects felt more positive about after CRED, by setting and year**

%				
	CRED in school		CRED in youth settings	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
<b>0</b>	14	14	17	24
<b>1</b>	9	10	13	9
<b>2</b>	10	13	11	12
<b>3</b>	13	15	13	13
<b>4</b>	12	12	10	11
<b>5</b>	9	9	8	6
<b>6</b>	6	6	5	6
<b>7</b>	6	7	2	5
<b>8</b>	4	3	4	6
<b>9</b>	6	5	8	4
<b>10</b>	12	7	9	5

#### Individual level

Table 18 shows the proportion of respondents who felt they personally had more positive views towards any of the groups as a result of what was taught or discussed during CRED activities. The same principle applied as in Table 16, namely, anyone who had either indicated that s/he had not received CRED at all, or had not received CRED on the specific topic in the respective school or youth setting, was excluded in

the analysis of whether or not they held more positive views now. This means, again, that only the very direct effect of CRED education is covered in Table 18 and any possible indirect and cross-cutting positive effects are excluded.

For each of the ten groups, at least seven in ten respondents felt that their attitudes were more positive as a result of the CRED activities in school, and at least two thirds of respondents felt this after CRED in youth settings. Most changes compared to the YLT data from the 2012 survey were again only marginal, with CRED in school settings generally seeing more positive changes. There was an eight percent increase in more positive feelings as a result of CRED in school settings on gender and a six percent increase with regard to positive attitudes towards people of different ages. Around one in ten respondents said that their views had not changed on any of these issues as a result of CRED.

**Table 18: More positive attitudes of respondent about CRED groups, by setting and survey year**

	%			
	Your School		Your youth project or youth club	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
<b>People with different political opinions</b>	78	77	76	75
<b>People with different religious beliefs</b>	88	83	81	83
<b>People from different ethnic groups</b>	86	82	77	82
<b>People of different ages (older and younger people/children)</b>	77	71	73	74
<b>People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced</b>	80	75	80	74
<b>People with different sexual orientations</b>	79	77	82	80
<b>Men and women</b>	79	71	76	78
<b>People with a disability and those without a disability</b>	84	80	84	81
<b>People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without</b>	80	79	78	79
<b>People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities</b>	75	73	67	72

Keeping in mind the overwhelmingly positive response to CRED, if anything, there was slight decrease in positive attitudes as a result of CRED activities in youth settings compared to two years ago. However, statistically this decrease is insignificant. Notable is perhaps the five percentage point lower proportion of respondents, compared to two years ago, who received CRED in youth settings and who said they felt more positive as a result of talking about people from different ethnic groups and people with and without caring responsibility. This can be interpreted in different ways. One possible hypothesis is that CRED in youth settings has become slightly less effective with regard to attitude change. However, it is also possible that an increasing proportion of young people in youth settings already hold more positive views towards people from various other ethnic backgrounds so that CRED does not as such lead to even *more* positive views.

To support the latter hypothesis, we can refer to other YLT data. Attitudes towards minority ethnic groups have been recorded by YLT since 2004. Whilst the proportion of respondents expressing negative attitudes decreased slowly from seven percent in 2004 to three percent in 2014, the proportion of YLT respondents who expressed positive views towards minority ethnic groups increased from 39 percent in 2004 to 48 percent in 2014. This could be an effect of CRED and similar education activities, but it could also be a result of the changed demographic landscape and a higher degree of mixing, as is also evident from the YLT survey. In 2008 13 percent of respondents said they mixed and socialised very often with people from a different ethnic background. In 2014 this figure was 20 percent.

**Figure 2: More positive attitudes of participants about CRED groups, by type of school (%)**

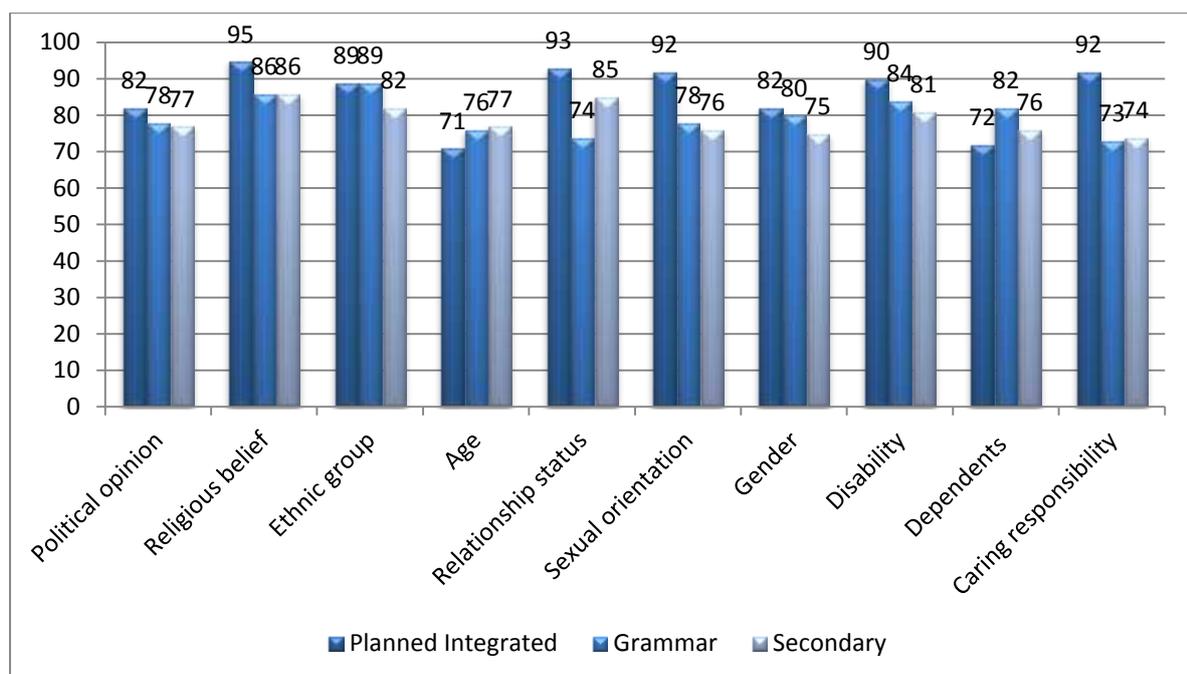


Figure 2 shows the extent to which respondents attending different school types said their own views had become more positive as a result of CRED education in their schools. In general, the perceived level of changing attitudes was similar in all school types although those attending planned integrated schools were slightly more likely to report positive attitude changes in relation to most topics. The differences between schools were largest on the topics of sexual orientation, caring responsibility and relationship status.

Table 19 shows the number of CRED groups that respondents felt *personally* more positive about. Again, the changes compared to two years ago are very modest. The most notable change is the decrease in the proportion of respondents who received in CRED in youth settings and said they did not feel more positive towards any of the groups discussed (24% in 2012 compared to just 18% in 2014). At the other end of the scale, 12 percent in 2014 compared to just seven percent in 2012 of those who took part in CRED in school said they felt more positive towards all ten groups covered by CRED.

**Table 19: Number of groups respondents felt personally more positive about after CRED by setting and year**

%				
	CRED in school		CRED in youth settings	
	2014	2012	2014	2012
<b>0</b>	12	14	18	24
<b>1</b>	9	9	15	9
<b>2</b>	10	11	12	11
<b>3</b>	11	14	11	14
<b>4</b>	10	14	10	10
<b>5</b>	9	9	7	7
<b>6</b>	8	7	2	7
<b>7</b>	5	6	4	5
<b>8</b>	6	5	5	6
<b>9</b>	7	5	9	4
<b>10</b>	12	8	7	4

## Discussion

This suite of questions discussed in this section provides an insight into the experiences of 16-year olds to Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) activities, and their perception of its effectiveness. It is interesting to compare the results of the 2014 YLT survey with those the baseline data collected by the 2102 YLT survey.

There was a very small increase of 16-year olds taking part in CRED activities compared to 2012 (73% and 70% respectively). This increase was entirely due to a higher proportion of young people receiving CRED in schools (46% compared to 40% in 2012). This means that 62 percent of 16-year olds have received CRED in school settings

The most likely topics covered both in school and youth settings remain ethnicity and religious beliefs, with disability and political opinions being the next most likely topics covered. Thus, our data suggest that even 20 years after the first Northern Ireland ceasefire, 16-year olds in Northern Ireland are still more than twice as likely - both in school and youth settings - to discuss religious and political division than to debate caring responsibility or family dependencies, which emphasises the currency that Northern Ireland conflict-related topics retain.

However, there is very little difference in the perceived effectiveness of CRED on any of the covered topics – Northern Ireland Conflict-related or not - with at least seven in ten respondents saying that discussions led generally to more positive views both among their classmates in school and friends in youth settings, as well as for them personally. This confirms the findings from two years ago that the perceived effectiveness of the CRED programme among 16-year olds is high for both youth and school settings.

The data suggest that planned integrated schools appear to have a slightly higher coverage of CRED topics and also boast a modestly higher effectiveness rate in CRED compared to secondary and grammar schools. Perhaps one of the explanations could be that planned integrated schools are *per se* organised in a way that they have a more diverse pupil population both academically and with regard to the ethnic and religious background of their pupil population, whilst due to the nature of pupil selection grammar schools - and as a consequence many secondary schools tend to have more homogeneous pupil cohorts. Addressing community relations, diversity and equality may be a more 'natural' and prudent activity in more diverse schools.

As pointed out in our previous report (Devine, 2013) and reiterated above, the CRED survey questions are asked in a way that they capture *change* in attitudes. The question module does not capture opinions and attitudes more generally. As Devine (2013) stated in the concluding comments to her report: '*Respondents may perceive that they had very positive feelings to start with, and this did not change.*

*Alternatively, they have may have very negative feelings, and this did not change.'*  
We currently do not record responses like that. Above we made an attempt to relate the CRED findings to other findings, to potentially address this. We showed that an apparently lower effectiveness of youth setting-based CRED addressing ethnic belonging may well be related to an improving attitude and greater degree of contact overall with people from minority ethnic groups.

We also do not capture or report on 'collateral effects' of CRED, for example more positive attitudes towards people with different political opinions as a result of CRED on religious views. This would be quite a reasonable effect to expect in the Northern Ireland context. Nor do we currently provide an opportunity for respondents to say that their views have become more *negative* as a result of CRED, even though this the current evidence would suggest that this would be an unlikely scenario. The proportion of respondents saying that CRED had no impact on their views was about ten percent as reported above, but 'no effect' is not the same as a 'negative effect'. At the moment, there is very little evidence for a negative effect of CRED, quite the opposite – the evidence for the positive effect that CRED has in both youth and school settings is overwhelming. However, a more complex review of CRED in a few years' time could include a more in-depth and qualitative assessment of CRED or alternatively an extended CRED survey module which would allow respondents to share more detailed experiences – both negative and positive.

## References

**Devine, P. (2013)** *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED): Findings from the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey*. Belfast: ARK.  
[Available online at: <http://www.ark.ac.uk/publications/occasional/CREDYLT12.pdf>]

## **Appendices**

- YLT CRED survey questions

## CRED SURVEY QUESTIONS

22. Education and youth work are supposed to encourage understanding of particular groups in society and promote the equal treatment of different groups. This can be done through exchange programmes, discussions, workshops, lessons or videos. Have you ever done any of this...?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply)

✓

... in your school

1

... in a youth project or youth club

1

... Neither

1

(Please go to question 26)

23. And do you think that your school or your youth project or youth club has done this for the following groups? (Please tick **ALL** that apply in **EACH** column) ✓

	Your School	Your youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
I have never attended a youth project		<input type="checkbox"/> 1

24. Looking at the same list again, do you think that members of your class or your youth project or youth club felt more positive towards any of these groups as a result of what was taught or discussed? (Please tick **ALL** that apply in **EACH** column) ✓

	Yes, in my School	Yes, in my youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People did not feel more positive towards any these groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

25. And how about you personally? Did you feel more positive towards any of these groups as a result of what was taught or discussed in school or in your youth project or youth club?

(Please tick **ALL** that apply in **EACH** column) ✓

	In my School	In my youth project or youth club
People with different political opinions	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different religious beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People of different ages (older and younger people/children)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People who are single, cohabiting, married or divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with different sexual orientations	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Men and women	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with a disability and those without a disability	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with dependents (e.g. children) and those without	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
People with caring responsibilities and those without caring responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
I did not feel more positive towards any these groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1