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# Evaluation of the BEACONS pilot event

October 2019



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## Section 1: Introduction

This report is a retrospective evaluation of the first pilot event of the BEACONS initiative which has been carried out by the Centre for Effective Services (CES). BEACONS (Bringing Education Alive for our Communities on a National Scale) seeks to develop and grow a scalable model of conversations between principals, teachers, parents and students about things that matter to them. These events aim to facilitate open and honest conversations between a diverse range of participants and seek to give voice collectively to those at the coal face of education - students, parents, principals and teachers in primary and post primary schools. One of the core aims is to explore how this bottom-up approach can connect with national conversations about education to support a system in which teachers and learners can thrive.

BEACONS aims to address the challenges with embedding innovation and change at a local level in school communities. It also seeks to address the disconnect that can exist between policymakers, principals, teachers, parents and students, and to enhance healthy connections and relationships between these groups. It is based on the premise that a model for ongoing conversations between principals, teachers, parents and students at the local level can be developed for all school communities and scaled to a national level. This would facilitate local engagement with issues of importance to the school community, as well as enhancing connections with national policy development and implementation.

The outcomes that BEACONS ultimately seeks to achieve include more systematic innovation in schools; enhanced understanding and bottom-up insights for policy development and implementation; better relationships between teachers, parents and students that will enhance the quality of inclusive education; more effective utilisation of resources; and more organic and creative links between schools and their communities, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning for all. The first pilot BEACONS event was held in Ennistymon, Co. Clare in May 2019. More detail on the event will be provided in the following sections.

### Methodology

The methodology of this event evaluation is a retrospective mixed methods evaluation, involving a survey circulated to event attendees who consented to follow-up contact after the event and interviews with key stakeholders involved in organising and attending the event. A desk-based review of background documentation pertaining to the initiative was also carried out and a review of a recording of the event.

## Section 2: Overview of the BEACONS event

To date, one BEACONS event has been held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in Ennistymon. The event was arranged in Ennistymon and led by the Burren College of Art. Over 40 participants were in attendance, including principals, teachers, parents and students from the following five schools:

- Mol an Óige Steiner National School
- Scoil Mhainchín National School
- CBS Ennistymon
- Ennistymon Vocational School
- Scoil Mhuire.

These schools encompass a mix of primary and post-primary schools. Additionally, there were attendees from the North West Clare Family Resource Centre, as well as the Teaching Council and Burren College of Art. Several observers from schools in other areas interested in hosting future BEACONS events were also in attendance.

The aim of the event was to begin a conversation process between parents, students, principals and teachers in Ennistymon to allow them to discuss what was important to them about the future of education in a safe, inclusive way. It was also hoped that this first event would shed light on how the BEACONS process could best be facilitated to grow on a national scale.

The event took place over a day and a half, a Thursday evening from 7pm – 9pm in the Falls Hotel and Friday from 9am – 3pm in the Teach Ceoil, both neutral venues as opposed to in one of the schools. The Thursday evening session focused on participants getting to know one another and sharing their experiences of the education system from their different perspectives (principals, teachers, parents, primary and secondary students). Friday morning (9am – 12.30pm) focused on sharing stories of education at its best, identifying common qualities in the stories and the potential for such stories to happen more often. This was followed by two ‘open space rounds’ that gave the participants the opportunity to talk about the issues that they felt were most important by nominating topics that were discussed at different tables that participants could move between. The session after lunch (1.15pm-3pm) focused on reflecting on what had come up so far and determining next steps.

The event was characterised by a mix of small group discussions and whole group discussions that harvested the information generated in the smaller discussions. The small groups were broken up in a number of different ways. On the first day, participants were invited into their ‘constituencies’ - teachers, parents, principals, secondary and primary school students - to discuss what they wanted the other groups to know about their experiences of being in education. The second day

involved breaking into small groups with people that the participants didn't know to share stories; group discussions in the open space round determined by what topic participants wished to discuss; a review of what had been coming up in pairs; and finally school-based groupings with parents, teachers, principals and students from the same school reflecting on what they were learning and next steps. After each of these small group discussions, there was a whole group 'plenary harvest' session in which the facilitator drew attention to common themes and differences between the groups - drawing attention particularly to instances where the student voice was saying something different.

The event was facilitated by Chris Chapman, an independent facilitator working with the Burren College of Art. The facilitator focused on making sure that everyone felt welcome and cultivating a safe environment where people felt comfortable sharing their views.

There was an emphasis throughout the two days on reflecting on what was emerging from the discussions and ensuring that people had a sense of the overarching narrative emerging from the event. The facilitator was flexible in terms of timing, with the exception of the finishing times, so that people did not feel rushed in discussions and were given time and space.

Some of the themes that came up during discussions are presented in figure 1 below:

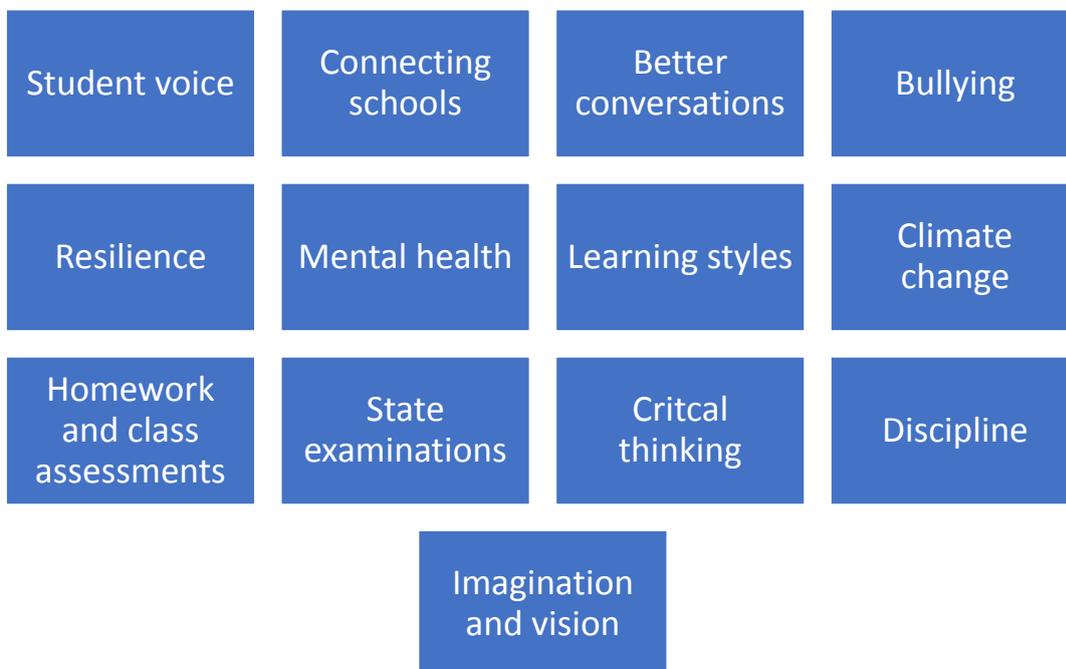


Figure 1. Selection of themes emerging at the first BEACONs event

At the end of the second day, participants reflected on what they wanted to come from the process. These were grouped under specific recommendations for the local schools and more general reflections on the process. More general reflections on the process centred on thematic areas that future events should focus on, such as environmental education; and a number of specific recommendations for local schools focused on what attendees wished to see introduced in schools, such as water fountains.

General reflections on the process by participants:

- The importance of keeping calm and creating a 'safe space'
- The potential impact of the BEACONS events happening across the country and allowing for a national picture of the education system to be captured
- The events potentially offering a valuable opportunity to allow all stakeholder's voices to be heard and cultivate a less adversarial means of communicating with each other
- The events may help stakeholders to realise that all partners are doing their best and that positive change is possible
- BEACONS can help foster more accountability in the system through a replicable model
- The potential to foster better mutual respect between the diverse parties in the system
- The events serving as a helpful platform to become aware of how students feel
- The potential for events to promote curiosity and creativity as being central to learning
- Raising the awareness of the importance of environmental education and also place-based learning
- Utilising the initiative to create a language and currency for what we value in education other than points.

Specific recommendations for local schools included:

- Apply learning from the process in the schools
- Provide more opportunities for cross-curricular learning
- Create a Student Council
- Install a water fountain
- Install a goldfish pond
- Have a 'dialogue café' each month to hear the student voice
- Have a 'no-phone protocol for away days
- Offer pre-exam de-stressing interventions / practices
- Invite a guest speaker from SOAR.

## Section 3: Findings - Participant Survey

As part of this evaluation a survey was circulated to those who attended the Ennistymon event and had consented to their contact details being shared with staff in CES carrying out this evaluation. In total, there were ten respondents to the survey, from a total of 40 participants at the event on the day. The survey can be found in the appendix to this report.

Answers to the survey, by question, are presented below. No percentages are presented from the survey data due to the small sample size.

### *I am a...*

Three of the respondents were secondary school students, two were principals and one was a parent. The four remaining respondents selected 'other.' Their roles were:

- Education Centre director
- Parent and teacher
- Parent of a preschool student working to open a 'Sudbury inspired' school
- Chaplain

No primary school students responded to the survey.

### *In your opinion, what was the purpose of the BEACONS event you attended?*

Respondents had a range of views on what the purpose of the BEACONS event was. The purposes identified were:

- To allow stakeholders in education - students, teachers, parents, principals and others - a forum to express their opinions and share ideas on their vision for education both at a local and national level.
- To provide a 'safe space' for discussion and listening and a forum in which to plan practical changes at local level.
- To discuss matters to do with the education system nationally and schools locally, and what should be changed.
- To facilitate more conversation and understanding between stakeholders in the education system.
- To highlight some problems in the school environment locally and see what possible solutions would be.
- To explore potential options regarding creative learning.

- To allow sharing of ideas, brainstorming of concerns, and to encourage respectful communication and feedback between stakeholders and partners in the education system.

*How would you rate the event on a scale of 1 (Excellent) to 5 (Poor)?*

Six of respondents rated the event as excellent. Two rated it as very good and 2 rated it as good (a weighted average of 1.6 on a scale of 1 to 5).

*In your opinion, what were the highlights / most positive things about the BEACONS event?*

Various highlights were identified by the respondents, which commented on a variety of aspects of the event including the facilitation of the event, the strong participation of students and the open and inclusive nature of the discussion:

*'The opportunity to listen to different voices and perspectives on education and schooling in Ennistymon'*

*'The engagement of the students was highlighted as particularly powerful. It was highlighted as impressive that the final feedback was delivered by the students in most of the groups'*

*'The facilitation style used was particularly appropriate'*

*'The facilitation was excellent'*

*'The first night was an amazing conversation - authentic and enlightening.'*

*'The goodwill among all the stakeholders towards each other'*

*'The fact that other people, including teachers and adults, are seeing the issues that occur in school environments and are willing to get together to discuss them and possibly find solutions is amazing and really inspiring'*

*'Great open discussions, respect for students voices and positive supportive energy'*

*'Everyone listened to everyone, regardless of age and opinion'*

*'All stakeholders got to hear how other stakeholders experience education.'*

*Was there anything about the event you did not like/could be improved for the future?*

Two respondents did not feel that there was anything that they did not like or could be improved. Another also commented that there was nothing that they did not like and that the local setting suited the event well and based it firmly in the community. Other respondents highlighted things that they felt went less well and could be improved, ranging from how the event was run to more attendees:

*'The event was rather vague, and it was difficult to say how useful it was. It was difficult to explaining [sic] it to colleagues and other interested parties'*

*'The food'*

*'The day event didn't match the evening before - not enough structure and not a great venue.'*

*'The chairing of the forum was almost too generous at times. One parent, for example, had a very distinct agenda, and was allowed re-vocalise a number of times, at everyone else's expense.'*

*'A larger cohort of participants would be better.'*

*'There could have been more movement breaks and dynamic activities to improve focus and support the involvement of younger students.'*

*Can you share any learning that you have taken away from the event?*

Participants highlighted different learning that they had taken away from the event, with common among the respondents being a desire to hold more events of this nature in schools:

- A principal will actively seek feedback from parents and children in efforts to improve the educational experience of those who attend their school, for example on revising homework policy, and deciding which sports and activities to run and what sports equipment to buy.
- The power of student voice was hugely impressive. However, one respondent shared their concern that the voices of younger/primary school children may not be heard at the event.
- A student took away the fact that other students feel the same and that they are not alone.
- Ideas for broadening conversations and hearing more voices.
- It was a positive environment and open forum for discussion

- It was highlighted that if teachers and principals take this seriously and take actions, there could be very rich learnings and transformative feedback from students at BEACONS events.
- A student stated that they learned a lot and hopes that the ideas shared in BEACONS will be put into practice in September.

#### *How could future BEACONS events be improved?*

Three participants did not identify any ways in which future events could be improved, with one commenting that from their perspective it was well done and another who felt that it would be premature to advise on an improvement having only attended one event. Various improvements were identified by the other respondents, which ranged from exploring other alternative settings for the events and being clearer with attendees about follow-up on the event:

*‘Having clear objectives. It was very difficult to recruit parents for the event without know [sic] what was involved.’*

*‘Exploring other models - events for schools in certain sectors perhaps, for example post-primary schools in the same geographical area or of the same patronage/management/ethos and primary school only events. It might be useful to look at alternative setting such as Youthreach, Further Education colleges, settings for young offenders and adult education/return to education settings.’*

*‘The two-hour event in the Falls Hotel could not be faulted and was, perhaps, enough.’*

*‘Being open to larger groups’.*

*‘Clearly stating when follow-up events will happen and holding people accountable to their proposed actions.’*

*‘Asking questions about the relevance of what is taught in schools and asking stakeholders to draw what their ideal school might look like.’*

#### *Would you attend another BEACONS event in your area?*

All the participants (n=10) indicated that they would attend another BEACONS event in their area.

#### *Do you have any further comments about the BEACONS event?*

Some of the respondents elected to leave additional comments about the event. Most of these comments thanked the organisers and noted that it was an excellent

day and very positive experience. One respondent noted that they were very glad to be part of a very respectable and exciting learning revolution. A couple of the respondents reflected on the future, with one noting that it was a wonderful start and that it was important to keep up the momentum. Another stated that it was an innovative, creative event that will no doubt evolve into something more concrete, defined and productive as it rolls out more.

## Section 4: Findings - Stakeholder Interviews

As part of this evaluation, a total of five interviews were held with a mixture of members of the BEACONS Working Group, those who were involved in organising and running the event across the two days and education practitioners who attended the event. The semi-structured interview schedule for the interviews conducted can be found in the appendix to this report.

The themes which emerged covered both strategic considerations for the BEACONS initiative going forward, such as opportunities, challenges and objectives and purpose, in addition to more practical concerns around how the events are run and coordinated. An overview of the emergent themes from the analysis of the qualitative interview data is presented in Figure 5 and Figure 6 below, with more detail on these themes provided under the relevant headings in this section:

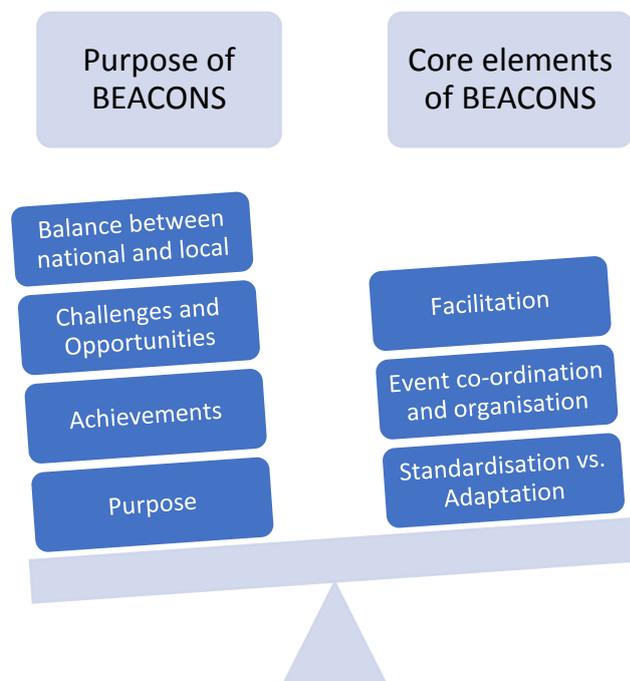
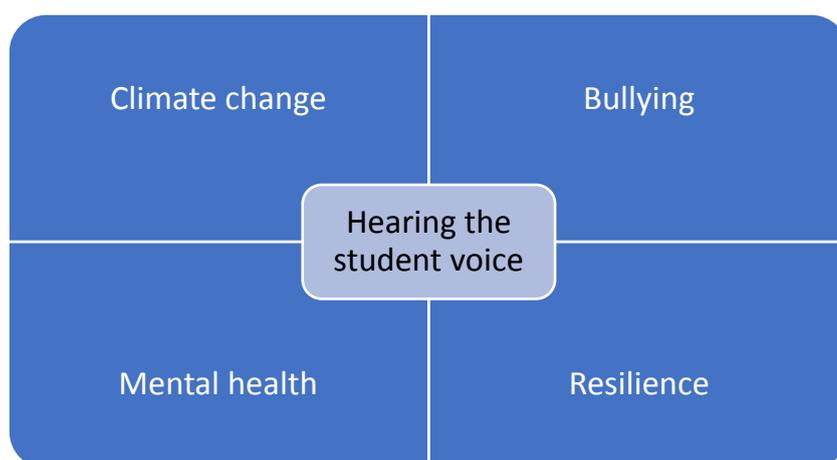


Figure 2. Interview themes



*Figure 3. Key topics discussed at the inaugural BEACONS events, according to interview respondents*

## Purpose

In terms of the purpose of the events, at the core of all responses was a recognition that it was important to have a conversational space where students, parents, teachers and other educational stakeholders could come together to discuss issues in education. However, there was no broadly shared statement of purpose, with external attendees who were not involved in the co-ordination stating they were unsure as to what the exact purpose of the event was. Other attendees shared multiple interpretations of the purpose of the BEACONS event, analysis of the responses indicated most respondents felt BEACONS events could fulfil various purposes.

From across respondents, some felt the purpose of the event should be locally focused, whereas others were of the opinion the events could target both local and national issues in the education sector, with an emphasis on addressing both policy and practice. Several respondents felt that the events can provide a platform for addressing problems with systemic change in education and solving the disconnect between local and national fora.

Three respondents shared that they felt the purpose was to create a scalable suite of models for conversational engagement between teachers, parents and students to have more and better conversations; one respondent highlighted the purpose would evolve over time through experimenting and creating prototype events. It was stated by one respondent that enhancing student and teacher agency should be a core purpose of the initiative, in line with the OECD 2030 Learning Framework.

## Event co-ordination and organisation

All respondents who were not involved in coordinating the event commended the role of the event organisers, stating how important it was that the event was very well organised, with significant efforts made to ensure the event was representative of the different local voices of students, parents, teachers and school leaders.

The importance of existing relationships was also highlighted as critical to the success of the event, in ensuring all local education stakeholders were invited and made aware of the event.

## Achievements

Common across all interviews conducted was an acknowledgement that the pilot or prototype BEACONS event was a significant achievement, especially considering it was run on very modest resources. The diversity of participants across the two days was also highlighted as a success, in terms of mix of schools (primary and secondary together for the first time in the area, schools with very different ethos); the mix of principals, teachers, parents and students; and ethnic diversity (e.g. Syrian, Traveller and Polish attendees). The diversity of representatives on the BEACONS Steering Group was also highlighted as an important achievement of the initiative so far, with the state regulator of teachers, the primary parents' council, a principal's network, a not-for-profit enterprise and parents and young people all represented.

Respondents also highlighted that an achievement of the event was in empowering the voice of young people. One respondent stated it was especially impactful hearing one young man talk about his experience of bullying at school at the event in Ennistymon and the impact this bullying had on his willingness to stay in school. Respondents were also impressed at the capacity of young children to contribute in group discussions on the day.

In addition, the honesty and quality of the discussions were commended, with almost all respondents commenting on how the event was characterised by participants hearing each other respectfully.

Another achievement highlighted by a smaller number of respondents was the 'quick wins' or changes schools have already made based on issues raised by participants, particularly students on the day, for example one local school has installed a water fountain.

## Challenges

In terms of the challenges facing BEACONS one of the issues highlighted by

respondents was the issue of scaling up – there were some concerns that the event may be difficult to scale across a number of local areas across the country. In terms of scaling up some stated concerns around the need to have a standardised template to assist local event organisers but also the need to be flexible and adaptable to local need, and that this may be a challenge in the next steps for BEACONS.

Several respondents felt that the purpose of BEACONS was ‘woolly’ and needed to be refined in order to communicate what it is and promote it. The issue of funding was also highlighted as a challenge, with the need to secure greater funding to ensure the sustainability of the initiative going forward.

Another challenge highlighted was that the need to show impact from the initiatives, with some respondents feeling that participants may get fixated and see it as a ‘*talking shop*’ if no tangible results are seen to come from the event.

### Opportunities

In terms of what opportunities there are for BEACONS going forward, it was highlighted that there is a need for ongoing harvesting of data from the events which will be held, as these events can provide important systemic information and determine local and national patterns of need / issues arising.

It was also stated by several respondents that there is a need to ensure there is a rich diversity of stakeholders involved in the initiative as it grows and evolves, and that this is in part dependent on having an effective communications strategy for BEACONS to ‘*get the message out*’.

### Facilitation

The facilitation of the first BEACONS event was a common theme among all respondents, with many respondents commenting on the quality of the facilitation on the day and the importance of the conversation being led by a skilled facilitator, for future events. Facilitation was highlighted as being critical in ensuring the event runs to time and in ensuring that attendees feel heard and respected. However, one respondent stated that the facilitation was ‘over generous’ at times in Ennistymon, and that, for some participants, there is a need for criticism to feel constructive and the discussions to be more solutions-focused.

### Core elements

Respondents indicated that there were four core elements to hosting a successful BEACONS event:

- Needs to be a trained facilitator, well-skilled at managing tensions that may arise in an initial gathering
- Appropriate venue
- Access to appropriate IT
- Needs to be a standard programme or programme template.

The need for a skilled facilitator was especially marked in interview responses to this question, with the diversity of participants at the events, and the nature of some of the topics discussed necessitating the need for the facilitator guiding the discussions across the two days to the experienced at working with groups.

### National/local balance

A common theme across interviews was a concern about the need to strike a balance between the emphasis on local and national issues. One respondent felt the national agenda should drive the initiative, with the BEACONS initiative possibly serving as a vehicle for a Citizen's Assembly on education. Another felt that the initiative focusing on national issues would be attractive to stakeholders who are frustrated with the slow pace of change in education, particularly regarding state examinations. However, a number of other respondents were of the opinion that BEACONS should be primarily concerned with local issues and grassroots organising of key stakeholders to attend events.

One respondent highlighted that it is important that BEACONS events do not appear nationally prescribed, as this may impact stakeholder buy-in to the initiative at local level. There was also a view that if BEACONS can run and develop organically, there will eventually be congruence between the national education agenda and what comes up at locally.

### Standardisation vs Adaptation

As with the previous theme, respondents largely agreed that it was important to strike the right balance between standardization versus room for adaptation of the events. On the one hand, it was raised that there needs to be a broad template for the events to provide guidance for local event organisers and assist with communicating about the initiative strategically and practically. However, it was also stated by some respondents that, given that BEACONS is still in an early developmental stage, it is imperative that there is some experimentation permitted at local level, particularly in terms of venue and the methods used at the events to promote engagement of attendees.

It was suggested that the national steering group could liaise with a local core steering group for individual events to determine what adaptation is required to meet

local need.

### Themes from event

Respondents were asked what they felt were important themes emerging from the event. From the interviews conducted the four themes which respondents felt were the most pervasive were (also presented in Figure 6 above):

- Young people not feeling heard in schools and their communities more broadly
- Climate change and the importance of schools leading communities in more environmental conscious practices
- Bullying in the school environment and its impact on education
- Resilience and how to promote and cultivate it in young people to deal with stressors
- Stress and anxiety – particularly in relation to the State examinations.

## Section 5: Conclusions

This retrospective evaluation has highlighted several important issues and considerations for the BEACONS initiative going forward. These will be outlined in this section, alongside some areas to pay attention to in areas such as strategy and purpose, scale and monitoring and evaluation.

Before beginning a discussion of the key conclusions emerging from this research, it is imperative to keep in mind the caveats of this evaluation. Firstly, this study was a retrospective evaluation, meaning that all data collected involved participants recalling their experiences of the event, as opposed to live capture during or immediately after the event, which may have produced more accurate reflections. This also impacted the sample size of the study, as it was more difficult to recruit participants for the post-event survey due to the time lag. The small sample for the survey also means that the findings included in this report may not be generalisable to all participants across the two days of the inaugural BEACONS event, in particular primary school students as these were the smallest group among the stakeholders represented. Therefore, these findings and conclusions should be interpreted with some degree of caution.

### Achievements

A strong theme across the data collected as part of this evaluation was an assertion that that first BEACONS event was a significant achievement, realised on a modest budget. The event organisers were commended for coordinating the event in a short space of time, with a diverse group of stakeholders, including both primary and post-primary students, principals, teachers and parents from a variety of education and ethnic backgrounds. This contributed to, what was described by respondents as, an open, welcoming, participative and inclusive event. Many were especially impressed at the strength of the student voice at the event, and the respect for others' contributions that was evident.

The quality of the facilitation was highlighted by many respondents, stating this was an important core element of the event and having an experienced facilitator should be a pre-requisite for future events.

All survey respondents indicated that they would attend another BEACONS event in the future, reinforcing how successful the first event was.

### Purpose and desired outcomes of BEACONS

Analysis of both the survey and interview data indicates that there is insufficient clarity regarding the purpose of BEACONS, beyond the purpose of holding an event in local areas for community stakeholders. The purpose of BEACONS varied in descriptions from being a locally oriented event, to a more national, policy-oriented

initiative, to a mixture of both. This ambiguity may be detrimental to BEACONS going forward and should be remedied by the collaborative development of a clearer strategic direction for BEACONS, which also clearly outlines a small set of specified desired outcomes to work towards. As BEACONS is still in an early, experimental stage of development, there can be flexibility in terms of how it will work to achieve these outcomes (i.e. how the events are structured etc.), but the desired outcome of these structures must be clarified, so the events are not viewed as a *'talking shop'*, as one interviewee put it.

However, it is acknowledged that this strategic work is underway as the national Steering Group have undertaken to develop a Theory of Change and Logic Model for BEACONS, and this will support the development of a clearer strategic direction and statement of purpose.

### Looking forward

Looking forward with BEACONS and keeping in mind some of the concerns raised in the previous section, there are some issues and concerns to pay attention to, to ensure the future success and sustainability of the initiative. As stated above, it is imperative that there is a clear and shared statement of purpose, which will help with securing buy-in for upcoming events and will also bring a stronger strategic direction for the project.

It is also important to ensure the quality of facilitation at the events, as it has been highlighted as a critical feature for the first event. It is also important to ensure the facilitation of future events strikes the balance between continuing to be open and inclusive and ensuring the conversations remain constructive. With this in mind, a broad event template may be helpful for local facilitators, in addition to the training they will receive, outlining the core elements of each BEACONS event.

Time should be invested in carrying out a stakeholder mapping to determine and clarify who is or should be targeted to get involved in the BEACONS initiative. For example:

- are there community representatives involved (separate from schools) and if not, how can they be brought on board?
- Are there existing structures or programmes that BEACONS can link in with to maximise impact?
- Are education professionals one stakeholder group or is there a benefit to disaggregating to principals, primary teachers, post-primary teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) and other education practitioners?
- Should early years education practitioners be involved?

A stakeholder mapping exercise will help address these questions and clarify what

stakeholder gaps are present i.e. which group is not yet involved in the initiative and what approach should be taken to promote engagement?

Paying attention to adequate follow-up with attendees at the upcoming events will be important to reinforce the 'feedback loop' function BEACONS purports to offer to the system, not just to 'the centre' or policy sphere but also back to the grassroots community members involved. This may be in the form of short reports on what happened at the events or mechanisms for follow-up on agreed actions, ensuring the 'quick wins' and longer-term goals of BEACONS are realised. It also promotes accountability for what is agreed at events among stakeholders.

As BEACONS is in a very early stage of its development, it is crucial that ongoing attention is paid to the evaluation of the initial events, and ensure the learning is captured and shared. Indeed, the approach to evaluation may need to be reviewed as the initiative matures. The evaluation approach has already been revised by the evaluators following the first Ennistymon event to involve more real-time capture of data during the events, to reduce participant attrition.

In addition, a formal communications strategy for BEACONS will be critically important to plan for the dissemination of outputs from the events themselves, the evaluations, and direct the stakeholder engagement work emanating from a stakeholder mapping exercise. This will ensure that the impact of the BEACONS initiative is being shared in a strategic and systematic way.

### Conclusion

The inaugural BEACONS event was a significant achievement, with positive feedback from attendees and tangible learning described by respondents. The event has succeeded in bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders in the local community and education sector more broadly, to participate in the first event. This has all been achieved in a short space of time and on a modest budget, which is to be commended. To support the scalability of the events to other localities, and ensure the sustainability of the initiative, it is imperative that the strategy for BEACONS for the next few years, and the statement of purpose, is refined and more explicitly defined. This is not only important for those already committed to the project but also new communities that may come on board, as lack of a shared, defined purpose will impede buy-in, especially for BEACONS events which generally involved significant commitment of people's time over two days.

Nonetheless, the Ennistymon event succeeded in creating an open and inclusive environment where participants, including students, indicated they felt comfortable in sharing their views on education and collaboratively advocating for changes they would like to see in the education system. If the quality of the future events can be sustained, and the commitment to recording and sharing the learning from events

continued, this initiative can provide a reliable platform for instilling a community focus in education, and potentially informing and enhancing both policy and practice in the future.

## Appendices

- Semi-structured interview schedule
- Survey circulated to event attendees

## Semi-structured interview schedule

1. Brief description of your role and connection to BEACONS
2. Purpose of BEACONS
3. Description of BEACONS event(s)/activities
4. Successes and challenges of BEACONS so far
5. Any interesting examples/case studies
6. Future opportunities or risks (including opportunities and risks of scaling up)
7. Any changes that you feel should be made to BEACONS?
8. Next BEACONS events
9. What has been the learning from the BEACONS event held so far?
10. Anything else that you would like to mention/talk about?

## Survey

1. I am a...
  - a. Primary school student
  - b. Secondary school student
  - c. Parent
  - d. Teacher
  - e. Principal
  - f. Other (please specify)
2. In your opinion, what was the purpose of the BEACONS event you attended?
3. How would you rate the event on a scale of 1 (Excellent) to 5 (Poor)?
4. In your opinion, what were the highlights/most positive things about the BEACONS event?
5. Was there anything about the event you did not like/could be improved for future events?
6. Can you share any learning that you have taken away from this event?
7. How could future BEACONS events be improved?
8. Would you attend another BEACONS event in your area?
9. Do you have any further comments about the BEACONS event?