

Board of Education – Report 2023

General Synod Board of Education

Reports of ROI and NI Boards of Education

Republic of Ireland

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Appendix 1

Membership for Triennium 2022 – 2025

1. Personalia

Following the expiration of the triennium of the term of office of the Board in March 2022, a number of changes occurred within the membership of the Board. The Board wishes to thank those previous members, some of whom served on the Board for many years. In thanking and wishing former members well, the Board welcomed three new members to serve for the 2022-2025 term. The membership of the Board is set out in the Appendix to this report.

The Board congratulates the Rt Rev Michael Burrows on his election and translation to the See of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe. Bishop Burrows will continue as a member of the Board as one of the two nominees to the Board from the House of Bishops. The Board also congratulates the Rt Rev Dr Ian Ellis on his election to the See of Clogher. Dr Ellis served as Secretary of the NI Board of Education for many years and will join the RI Board as the second nominee to the Board from the House of Bishops. Both episcopal nominees to the Board are patrons of primary schools in various parts of rural Ireland. The Board also congratulates the Rt Rev Adrian Wilkinson on his election and consecration as bishop for the United diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory as he automatically becomes the patron of all Church of Ireland primary schools in that United diocese upon entering into his Office. Bishop Wilkinson will also serve on the Board of Governors of Kilkenny College, Kilkenny. The Board wishes the bishop well in his new ministry in the South East.

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The Board sent good wishes to Ms Norma Foley, TD, on the renewal of her appointment as Minister for Education, following the alternation of Government in December 2022. Members of General Synod will recall that the RI Board entered into a Service Level Agreement with the Catholic Primary School Management Association (CPSMA) which involves the CPSMA providing a range of supports and advisory services to primary schools under Church of Ireland patronage. In this regard, the Board is glad to advise that Ms Susan Carpenter, formerly on secondment from her post as principal of St Columba's Church of Ireland National School, Tullow, Co. Carlow to CPSMA, has accepted a full time post with CPSMA. Ms Carpenter supports both Church of Ireland schools and Catholic schools as part of this new role and will also assist the secretary in servicing the needs of the RI Board. The Church of Ireland portion of this role will be funded from funds received from the Department of Education towards direct supports to school Boards of Management.

2. Academic Achievements in 2022

The Board was delighted to learn of the decision of Dublin City University (DCU) in November 2022 to award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) (honoris causa) to Dr Kenneth Milne, former secretary of the Board and former principal of CICE, in recognition of his expertise and contribution to the fields of history, education and the Church of Ireland over many decades. The Board was represented at the awarding of the honorary doctorate by the Chairman, Archbishop Jackson, the Secretary and by the Rev Professor Anne Lodge who read the citation. The Board congratulates Dr Milne on receiving this prestigious award and also congratulates him on being installed as a (lay) canon of St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh.

The Board congratulates Mrs Jacqui Wilkinson, lecturer in the CIC, DCU and who delivers the professional development course on 'Follow Me' to student teachers and teachers employed in Church of Ireland primary Schools, on being awarded a Ph.D. from the University of Leicester for a thesis entitled: 'The ethos of the Church of Ireland Primary School: The Student Voice'.

The Board congratulates the secretary who was awarded the degree of Master of Education (Management) from Trinity College, Dublin recently. Research conducted for the dissertation for the degree focused on exploring the relationship between the chairperson of the Board of Management and the school principal and should be of assistance to the Board in developing policy in that regard.

The Board also congratulated Dr Peter Hamill, secretary of the NI Board, who was also recently awarded an MA in Education (Leadership) from Wrexham Glyndwr University.

3. Role of the Church in Education - Why is the Church involved in the provision of Education?

The Church of Ireland has been involved in the provision of education, at primary, secondary and tertiary level, for hundreds of years. There is no doubt that the amount of time, work, energy and commitment involved in providing and delivering education by Church of Ireland communities, and the Church of Ireland in general, is immense. It is also often the case however, that all of this work is carried on 'hidden in plain sight' and not given the recognition and value it deserves. Boards of Management in all our primary schools will conclude their current term of office in November 2023. All of those members give freely of their individual expertise and commit huge amounts of personal time to their

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school. In this year’s report to General Synod, the Board wishes to highlight how education has a fundamental role to play in the life and mission of the Church of Ireland, now and in the future.

One of the five marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion is ‘to teach’. It is not only that Anglican and faith-based schools have something deeper and distinctive to offer to the formation of the person and character of the child; but that the involvement of the church in education springs from the very core of the church as a community. Where there is a strong connection between the school and the parish, the latter can benefit greatly. This is seen time and again across the country. While there are many parishes that thrive without schools, it remains the case that having a primary school in a parish can be hugely enriching for parish life - in a variety of ways. Attending a school which operates in a faith-based context may also equip the child to understand that faith is fully experienced in community and nurtured with fellow Christians; rather than as an individual, egocentric, or, indeed, androcentric activity. The Board wishes to highlight to General Synod that the involvement of the church in education is inherent to the personality and character of the church as a community. It is also the case that many Church of Ireland primary schools are owned or vested in the Representative Church Body or the relevant Diocesan Board of Education.

3.a. Useful Statistics on COI Schools (as at 30th September 2021):

Primary Level

At Primary level (ages 4 – 12) = 174 schools under the patronage of the local Church of Ireland bishop. There are a further 28 under the patronage of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland – mostly concentrated in the North West of the island.

A general statistical analysis shows that pupil enrolments in COI primary schools were consistent for the last ten years but have increased slightly in recent years.

Total enrolments for pupils in all Church of Ireland primary schools:

(girls = 7823; boys = 7984) = **15,807**

Post-Primary (secondary level)

At post-primary level (ages 12-17/18) there are 27 school which affiliate to or are under the patronage of the Church of Ireland or another Protestant denomination (1 Presbyterian; 1 Methodist; 1 Quaker (Friends)).

Of the 27 post-primary schools, 10 do not charge fees. 17 charge fees but parents may avail of a fees supplement through a state subvention scheme (the SEC – see separate report below).

Total enrolment of students in Church of Ireland or other Protestant affiliated Schools (at 30th September 2021) (girls = 7467; boys = 7137) = **14,613**

It is significant to highlight therefore that the involvement of the Church of Ireland in the field of primary and second level education alone will impact on the lives of **over 30,000 young people** at any one point in time.

4. Second level

4.a. Secondary Education Committee (SEC)

The SEC continues to provide financial support to second level students who belong to any one of over sixty Protestant denominations, and currently recognised for grant purposes. In 2021/22 over €6.3 million in grant support was paid to approximately 1,600 recipients. The SEC grant is fully funded by the Department of Education. The membership of the

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SEC is ecumenical in nature and is based on the representatives of those Church of Ireland and Protestant denominations who hold the patronage of a second level school. The members are elected by the Church of Ireland, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) respectively. The members of the Committee of the SEC are also directors of the SEC Clg [CRO 349370] and the SEC is a registered charity [CHY 6487].

For the Annual Report of the SEC please see: www.secgrant.ie/sec-governance/

4.b. Funding Issues

Members of General Synod will recall from the 2021 report of the Board, that, following various representations, an agreement was reached with the Department of Education and the Minister for Education regarding access to certain additional funding relating to the covid 19 pandemic for second level schools that charge fees, on a “case by case” basis. This agreement resulted in schools receiving significant levels of funding to support the costs incurred as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. The current ‘cost of living’ increases have also impacted on the financial capabilities of schools. Schools which charge fees are in a particularly difficult position as they are likely to have a fixed income while having no recourse to the usual sources of State funding (and have not been treated as in an analogous situation to schools in the ‘free scheme’ since 2009). The Board understands that the Department are continuing to take a ‘case by case’ approach to the availability of additional ‘cost of living’ funding to such schools and this matter is now being pursued by the JMB/ISA. The Board wishes to highlight the significant financial difficulties facing all schools currently, particularly with regard to increased energy costs.

4.c. Principal Appointments

The Board notes a number of changes at principal level among second level Church of Ireland schools. We wish Ms Niamh McShane well in her new role as principal of Bandon Grammar School, Cork and wish Mr Ian Coombes a long and happy retirement after his many years’ service to Bandon Grammar. The Board extends best wishes to Ms McShanes’ successor at Wilson’s Hospital School, Multifarnham, Co. Westmeath, Mr Frank Milling. Congratulations to the new Head of Kilkenny College, Kilkenny, Ms Emma Raughter, who succeeds Mr Simon Thompson who in turn was appointed as Headmaster of the British School, Geneva, Switzerland.

4.d. Council of Governors

In March 2022, the Minister for Education, Ms Norma Foley, TD. attended the AGM of the Council of Governors of Protestant second level schools. The Archbishop of Dublin and the secretary (ex-officio member of the Executive of the Council) represented the RI Board.

The Minister took the opportunity to acknowledge and thank the representatives of schools for the role Church of Ireland and Protestant schools play in modern Irish society. The Minister said that she was conscious that the schools represented by the Council of Governors had a long, honourable tradition of service to the Protestant community. “Some of your member schools have educated young people for literally hundreds of years [...] As a sector you have always and consistently been open to new ideas and to change. It is truly heartening to know that this vibrant tradition of excellence in education lives on in modern, dynamic schools all across the country. Schools that serve the

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Protestant tradition but which also reach out to others and indeed celebrate diversity.” Mr Leslie Ruttle, chairman of the Council, thanked the Minister for attending and addressing the AGM.

4.e. Review of Child Protection Procedures – Boarding

The Minister for Education announced at the AGM of the Council of Governors of Protestant Schools that it was her intention to initiate a review of the child protection procedures in relation to the Boarding element of schools and specifically in relation to the role of the Inspectorate in ensuring appropriate oversight is in place. The Minister announced the establishment of a working group to action this issue and invited representatives of the Council to participate in the working group. This initiative was greatly welcomed by the boarding schools sector as an opportunity to further enhance the safety and wellbeing of children in their care.

4.f. Comprehensive Schools

The Board notes that 2022 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Mount Temple Comprehensive School, Dublin. The Comprehensive schools were a new initiative in education, providing a broad curriculum blending ‘academic’ and vocational subjects in a single school model. Most of the Comprehensive schools were the result of amalgamations and mergers of existing secondary schools. The Church of Ireland embraced the concept of the Comprehensive scheme, and five comprehensive schools were founded between 1971 and 1987. The Royal and Prior Comprehensive School, Raphoe, Donegal, came into existence in 1971 following the amalgamation of the Prior Endowed School, Lifford and the Royal School, Raphoe. Ashton Comprehensive School, Cork, Newpark Comprehensive, Dublin and Mount Temple Comprehensive, Dublin were established in 1972. Ashton was Comprehensive was founded following the merger of Cork Grammar School and Rochelle School, Cork. Newpark Comprehensive, Dublin was established following the amalgamation of Avoca and Kingstown Schools, Dublin. Mount Temple was established following the amalgamations of Bertrand and Rutland Schools and the Hibernian Marine School and Mountjoy School (with the Hibernian Marine School and Mountjoy School having amalgamated in 1968). East Glendalough Comprehensive School, Wicklow, was established as a wholly new school in 1987 and was the last Church of Ireland school to be established under the Comprehensive Schools Scheme. The new Comprehensive schools were funded and built by the State which, at the time, was not common practice in establishing schools. The Board wishes to congratulate all involved in the Comprehensive schools on the valuable role they have played in their local communities and in the Church of Ireland over the last fifty years and wishes them every success for the future.

5. Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis

The Board has received briefings from the Department of Education since February 2022 in relation to the incursion into Ukraine by Russian forces and the subsequent humanitarian crisis which has resulted. The arrival of refugees from the war into Ireland has resulted in over 13,000 Ukrainian children being enrolled in Irish schools (primary and second level) since the war began. The Department of Education established ‘Regional Education and Language Teams’ (REALT) in response to the humanitarian crisis and these REALT teams have been leading the response and co-ordination at a local level with schools. While

figures for the number of Ukrainian refugees in Church of Ireland schools is unavailable, the Board is anecdotally aware that Church of Ireland schools have responded positively to the humanitarian situation and many of our schools, at both primary and second level, have been enriched in their diversity through the arrival of children from Ukraine. However, it has also been reported that children and their parents are deeply traumatised by their experience and that the process of resettlement in Ireland, the transient nature of the situation and the possibility that people can be moved again after settling into accommodation and a school traumatises children. The Board has raised these concerns with the Department of Education directly and the State has reiterated that it is very aware of the difficulties involved and has reassured the Board that they are consciously trying to make the experiences for all involved as positive as possible, given the limited available resources (particularly with regard to accommodation). We continue to pray for peace and reconciliation in Ukraine and among all humanity.

6. New Legislation regarding Special Education Needs (SEN) and Inclusion

New Legislation, the Education (Provision with Respect to Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022, was brought through the Oireachtas in June/July and commenced in September 2022. The new Act gives power to the State to direct that a school shall open SEN class (in mainstream school) if necessary and also provides a statutory basis for all mainstream schools to admit children with SEN's. The Board advised schools that admissions policies needed to be amended to reflect the change in legislation and guidance was subsequently issued to all schools in this regard.

7. RE Follow Me Development

A small working group consisting of Dr Jacqui Wilkinson, Ms Carolyn Good, Rev Prof Anne Lodge and Dr Ken Fennelly had been established prior to Covid tasked with considering the *Follow Me* Patrons' Programme taught in Church of Ireland National Schools. It re-convened in 2022 and made a number of recommendations. It proposed that the *Follow Me* books be digitised, that a new and updated resources be identified or created and that a new interactive website for the programme be developed. It also recommended that materials to support School Assemblies be developed and shared. A pilot project will be during Summer 2023 by Dr Wilkinson and Ms Good to investigate the work involved in digitisation of the programme, the creation of a new website and the location or development of the necessary resources both to support the RE programme and School Assemblies.

8. CIC DCU

The core work of the Church of Ireland Centre, DCU is concerned with the Bachelor of Education programme. The Centre delivers key components on the BEd to the Centre's students including the teaching of the RE Certificate in Teaching the *Follow Me* programme, delivering Religions, Ethics, Morals & Values modules, the Small Schools specialism and additional supports in Irish. Students on the CIC B.Ed pathway undertake the majority of their placements in schools under Church of Ireland and other reformed Christian patronage. The Centre also supports programmes for post-primary religion teachers and chaplains.

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Sixteen teachers completed the RE Cert course (Follow Me) in 2022. The course was a combination of afternoon/evening online sessions and attendance at three webinars. The course is again planned to run in 2023. Three webinars for schools were also held in 2022 on the themes of digital resources for supporting the teaching of RE, questions in RE and school assemblies. Webinars are also planned for 2023.

The Centre was delighted to welcome the original chapel furniture, commissioned in 1934 for the Chapel in the Church of Ireland Training College in Kildare Place, to the Chapel in the All Hallows' Campus. The furniture was dedicated in November 2022 and is now in use for Anglican services with CIC students and others in the DCU community.

The Centre reviews all applicants for the Centre's B.Ed pathway to check eligibility for entry in line with the requirements of the derogation to the Employment Equality Act. The Centre produces information for post-primary schools and deals with many enquiries about the pathway. In September 2022, a new cohort of 30 students commenced 1st year of the B.Ed programme with the Centre. These students come from all around the Republic of Ireland. The Church of Ireland Centre, DCU, liaises with primary schools under Church of Ireland and other reformed Christian patronage through school placement for its students, as well as the provision of supports, participation in research and sharing of a biannual Newsletter.

In April 2022, Dr Ida Milne launched a book edited by the CIC Director, the Rev Prof Anne Lodge, entitled *Living Faith Living History*. The book is a compilation of material produced by children in ten primary schools under the patronage of Archbishop Michael Jackson documenting the stories of their parish, past and present. This publication also formed the basis of a contribution by Prof Lodge and Archbishop Jackson to the Annual Conference of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland with a paper entitled: '*Re-establishing community active links: an initial evaluation of the Living Faith Living History project from teacher education and patron perspectives* Marino Institute, Dublin.

The Centre continued its partnership with IPPN in 2022 running an online webinar on leadership in small schools with guest inputs from Dr Ciara O'Donnell and Prof. Patricia Mannix-McNamara to launch the *Leading From the Middle* podcasts, made by principals of small primary schools around Ireland. The majority of the contributors lead Church of Ireland schools. The webinar was very well attended and is now available to watch on YouTube where you can also view each of the small school principals' podcasts: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3G5sLnCE6A&list=PLbtKxPWD1y1loGVbIjDn92N_j4AY1rcz.

The Centre has developed a partnership with the Dublin City Interfaith Forum through the *Interfaith Interpretations Podcast Project* to produce interfaith resources for student-teachers, primary and post-primary schools, education policy-makers and others. The first set of podcasts have addressed shared ethical questions concerning poverty, slavery and human trafficking, racism and inter-religious conflict. These were launched in the Chester Beatty Library on 28th September 2022. The podcasts are free to download: <https://www.dcif.ie/copy-of-thought-leadership>.

9. Small Schools Action Research Project

In 2021, the Minister for Education launched an Action Research Project aimed at seeking to identify ways in which school administration and curriculum delivery might be done in more efficient ways if schools clustered together. Five clusters were created during 2022 and one of these clusters were among four Church of Ireland schools in Donegal (Diocese of Raphoe). The project is into its second year and has already shown that systems and practices can result in greater efficiencies when done on a collective basis among a cluster of schools. It is hoped that the outcomes from the project will inform wider policy making and have broader implications. The Board wishes to thank the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) for supporting the involvement of the cluster of Church of Ireland schools involved in the project.

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AIMS

The current aims of the Board of Education NI are, to:

- Develop, in conjunction with other churches, a clear and shared vision of education shaped by core values of the Christian faith;
- Advise the Synod of developments in educational policy in NI and represent the Church as an educational partner to the Department of Education and other educational bodies;
- Liaise with other churches within the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) in promoting the interests and safeguarding the rights of transferors;
- Facilitate the nomination of transferor governors to controlled primary and post-primary schools.
- Make submissions to relevant government departmental consultations.
- Engage with the Education Authority, the Controlled Schools Support Council and other sectoral bodies.
- Engage with Institutions of Higher Education regarding the future preparation of teachers for the Controlled sector;
- Seek, in conjunction with other churches, continued curriculum support of the RE core syllabus in schools;
- Contribute to training and support for children's ministry in parishes, in particular as a member of the Church of Ireland Children's Ministry Network.

Report

1. Current Issues

The Board of Education (NI) support the TRC in their pursuit of a revision to the Religious Education curriculum in Northern Ireland. The Board of Education (NI) endorse the position that Collective Worship is a Christian act and is vital in the retention of a Christian ethos in all Controlled and Church of Ireland schools.

The Board of Education (NI) is concerned with the direction of travel of an imposed Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum for all schools in Northern Ireland. The Board of Education (NI) is supportive of the current

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arrangements of a minimum curriculum with options for schools to ensure that RSE is taught within the ethos of the school.

The Board of Education (NI) wishes to commend the resilience of all pupils and their parents / guardian for coming through and emerging from the post-covid pandemic these difficult times. The Board of Education (NI) thanks all principals, teachers, staff, and governors for their work in keeping learning going both in schools and at home over this time.

The Board of Education (NI) has produced a guide to all clergy regarding their relationship with their local schools.

2. Education Authority (EA)

The Revd. Amanda Adams and Miss Frances Boyd continue to serve as representatives on the Board of the Education Authority (EA), the Revd. Adams since its formation in 2015 and Miss Boyd since April 2020. The direct involvement of the Church of Ireland in the work of the Education Authority is a practical expression of the church's concern for the moral, social, intellectual, physical, and mental development of the next generation.

Established under the Education Act (NI) in 2014, the EA is a non- departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Education, and as such is responsible to DE for ensuring that efficient and effective primary and secondary education services are available to meet the needs of children and young people. It is the employing authority for all staff in Controlled Schools and for non-teaching staff in Catholic Maintained schools and has subsequently become the funding authority for voluntary grammar and grant maintained integrated schools. Since its inception, EA has also been tasked with encouraging, facilitating and promoting Irish Medium education, shared education and the community use of premises.

In the past year, EA has continued its journey of improvement. Driving forward the transformation of Northern Ireland's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services has been a central focus of this improvement work and while progress has been made, there is still much more to be done. To date, significant funding from DE has allowed the SEND Strategic Development Programme to begin to bring together in a strategic and holistic way, the many complex strands of this work so that all children and young people can access the high-quality support, services and learning experiences that they deserve. The launch during the year of the region's first Special Education Strategic Area Plan was very significant in that the plan specifically focuses on creating a special education system for the future that can offer all pupils, whether in Special Schools or in Specialist Units in Mainstream Schools, the opportunity to achieve their full potential by having the best educational experiences and pathways to meet their individual needs.

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During 2022 the EA engaged with two major reviews, namely the Landscape Review of the EA and the wider Independent Review of Education. The recommendations made in the Landscape Review together with the ongoing Transformation Programme present a clear opportunity for the EA, together with DE and the wider system to collectively refocus and enhance how they support and deliver the best outcomes for our children and young people and better meet the needs of schools, parents, and other stakeholders. However, significant continued investment will be needed.

As part of the Transformation Programme, in addition to improvements to SEND services, a Corporate Governance Strategy and EA People plan, informed by EA staff and stakeholder consultations, have been developed and implemented. Significant work has also commenced on the 10-year Education Information Solutions (EDiS) Programme which, through the use of digital technologies, will completely transform the educational landscape in Northern Ireland.

Unfortunately, the biggest challenge currently facing the EA and the wider education system is the financial position. While the EA and schools have, year on year managed to ensure a financial breakeven position, this has been achieved mainly through major cost savings and in year allocations of funds to address SEND demand pressures. Given the unprecedented financial pressures facing all public services it is extremely unlikely that current levels of service and support will be sustainable. Lack of funding also jeopardises essential Transformation Programme work without which, improvement in educational services and support will be impossible.

During the coming year the EA will facilitate the reconstitution of Boards of Governors in all schools. The importance of having all Transferor posts filled in Controlled schools cannot be overestimated as this will ensure that the church can continue to work for the benefit of children and young people in local communities to help them to discover and fulfil their God given potential.

3. Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC)

TRC has held meetings with a range of key stakeholders in the education sector including the Minister for Education, Permanent Secretary for Department of Education, the Education Authority, Stranmillis College, Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC), Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, Catholic Trustees Support Service, and Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education. The TRC has also engaged with local political parties to ensure they keep education at the forefront of their policies.

The TRC continues its role at all levels of Area Planning including: the Department of Education Area Planning Strategic Group (APSG); the Area Planning Working Group (APWG); and the Area Planning Local Groups (APLG). Dr Hamill is the TRC representative on APSG and APWG and Mr Ray Gilbert is the TRC representative on the Southwest and North APLGs which includes the Church of Ireland schools.

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The TRC has been working with representatives from the Catholic Church to agree the conditions required for creating Jointly Managed Church Schools. The working group have agreed on an ethos document, a guide to creating such a school and minimum conditions for consideration of such a school. The Board fully supports this work and hopes to see a Jointly Managed School come to fruition in the near future.

The TRC will be supporting all church nominators of Transferor Governors through the process of reconstitution in the coming year. The Board of Education (NI) would encourage all clergy and nominators to ensure that all Transferor Governors positions are filled with the best persons to serve our children and the schools they attend.

The TRC has been minded to intervene in the Judicial Review 87 concerning the teaching of Religious Education and Collective Worship in Controlled Schools. The TRC are working to support and protect the Christian ethos of Controlled Schools.

The Board of Education (NI) through TRC affirms the role of Religious Education as a curriculum subject in education and affirms its support for the value of Collective Worship in a school setting and that it should be solely Christian in nature. The Board of Education (NI), as member of TRC, encourages all clergy and lay people serving in youth ministry and in ministry with children and families, to make the best use of every opportunity to lead and facilitate Collective Worship in schools.

The TRC is chaired by Dr Andrew Brown (Presbyterian representative) and the four Church of Ireland representatives are Bishop Andrew Forster, Rev Amanda Adams (Vice-Chair), Rev Catherine Simpson and Dr Peter Hamill.

4. Controlled School Support Council

The Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC) is the advocacy body for Northern Ireland's controlled schools. Established in September 2016, it has gone from strength to strength and more than 95% of controlled Schools are members.

Dr Hamill is the Church of Ireland TRC representative on the CSSC Board. CSSC has gone from strength to strength raising the profile of the Controlled Sector. The Board of Education (NI) is delighted the impact CSSC makes on schools and wider education issues. The CSSC is also involved in Area Planning which is a major and comprehensive review of educational provision across Northern Ireland. CSSC supports schools facing changes and comments directly on the individual development proposals published by the Education Authority.

5. Children’s Ministry

The Board of Education (NI) welcomes the work of the Board for Ministry with Children and Families through their Development Officer Ms Rachael Murphy. Dr Hamill acts as Secretary to this Board.

6. Membership

The Board has welcomed Mr Ian Bell as a new member. Mr Bell is a recently retired Principal of a Controlled Post-Primary School and organist in his local parish. We are delighted to have him as part of the Board.

Dr Ivor Hickey retired from the Board of Education (NI) after many years of service and his wisdom and academic knowledge will be greatly missed.

The Board wishes to thank Dr Peter Hamill for his ongoing service and commitment to the Board.

The Board was greatly saddened to learn of the death of Mrs Sue Hogg in March 2023. Mrs Hogg was a member of the Board as an elected member from the Diocese of Clogher and made a valued contribution to the work of the Board. The Board wishes to express its deepest sympathy to Sue’s family on their sad loss.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Members:

Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev FJ McDowell

Bishop of Derry, Rt Rev A Forster

Rev M Kingston (Clerical Hon Sec)

Mr K Gibson (Lay Hon Sec)

Elected members:

ARMAGH Rev M Kingston

 Mr T Flannagan

CLOGHER Vacant

 Mrs S Hogg

CONNOR Rev A Campbell (Board of Education only)

 Mr Ray Gilbert

DERRY Vacant

 Mrs A Reid

DOWN Rev C Simpson

 Vacant

Co-opted members:

Rev A Adams

Mrs R Forde

Mr M Johnston

Rev M Ferry

Miss F Boyd

Mrs E Trew

Dr Noel Purdy

Mr I Bell (March 23)

Dr I Hickey (retired Sep 22)

Mr Robin McLoughlin

Mrs Diane Cheshire

CIYD representative:

Mr S Henry

Honorary Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Vacant

Honorary Treasurer, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Mr M Johnston

Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Dr PJ Hamill, Church of Ireland House, 61-67 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2QH

Listings of Members of Boards of Education:

***THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERSHIP (from 31st
March 2022 to March 2025)***

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS (Ex Officio)

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD (Ex Officio)

Ms H. Corrigan	Mr K Gibson
Rev Canon GV Wharton	Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston

Elected members are 2 from each diocese (one clerical and one layperson)

Armagh	Rev Malcolm Kingston
	Mr T Flannagan
Clogher	Vacant
	Ms. S Hogg
Derry and Raphoe	Rev Canon H Gilmore
	Mr D. West
Down	Rev C Simpson
	Dr E. Leonard
Connor	Rev Dr A Campbell
	Mr R. Gilbert
Kilmore	Very Rev N Crossey
	Vacant
Tuam	Rev Canon J. McWhirter
	Ms F. Hill-Thornberg
Dublin	Rev Dr W Olhausen
	Ms S Rusk
Meath	Rev Canon JDM Clarke
	Mrs F Higgins
Cashel Ferns and Ossory	Rev Canon PA Harvey
	Mrs M Jacob
Cork	Ven AM Wilkinson
	Mr W. Baker
Limerick and Killaloe	Rev J Godfrey
	Mrs M Brickenden

Co-opted members: 21 places available (including representatives of teachers)

1. Rev Canon BJK O'Rourke (CIPSMA)
2. V. Rev N Sloane (Sunday School Society)
3. Rev Prof A Lodge (Third Level)

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4. Mr M Hall (ISA)
5. Ms. J. Storey (ISA)
6. Mr A Forrest (ISA)
7. Mr K Sparling (ASTI)
8. Mrs S Hall (ASTI)
9. Mrs J Perdue (PSCICE)
10. Ms R Fraser (PSCICE)
11. Ms S Richards (PSCICE)
12. Mr S. Grahsam (CIYD)
13. Mr S. Henry (CIYD)
14. Rev A Adams
15. Mrs R Forde
16. Mr M Johnston
17. Rev M Ferry
18. Miss F Boyd
19. Dr I Hickey
20. Mr R McLoughlin
21. Mrs Diane Cheshire

Observers:

Ms K Jardine
(Presbyterian Church)
Ms D Wood
(Methodist Church)

**GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(2023-24)**

Archbishop of Armagh
Archbishop of Dublin
The Rev Canon M Kingston
Hon Secretary RI
Rev C Simpson
Mr T Flannagan
Ms S Richards
Mr A Forrest
Mrs M Brickenden

BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND) (2022-25)

Ex officio members:

The Archbishop of Dublin (Chair)
Honorary Secretaries – Rev Canon GV Wharton, Ms H. Corrigan

Elected by House of Bishops:

Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry (Deputy Chair)
Bishop of Clogher.

Diocesan Representatives: Rev Canon J. McWhirter, Mrs M. Brickenden.

Post primary representatives: Mr A Forrest, Mr K. Sparling

Board of Education – Report 2023

Third level representatives: Rev Professor A Lodge

Primary representatives: Ms Sarah Richards, Rev Canon H. Gilmore

CIYD representative: Mr S. Grasham

Sunday School Society: Very Rev N Sloane

Co-options GS BOE: none

Observers:

Ms K. Jardine

(Presbyterian Church)

Ms D Wood

(Methodist Church)

Secretary, Board of Education (Republic of Ireland)

Dr. K. Fennelly, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6

In Attendance: Dr Peter Hamill, Church of Ireland House, Donegal St, Belfast, NI.