

**General Synod Board of Education**

**Reports of RI and NI Boards of Education**

The aims of the General Synod Board of Education are to:

- Define the policy of the Church in education, both religious and secular and, in promotion of this policy, to take such steps as may be deemed necessary to co-ordinate activities in all fields of education affecting the interests of the Church of Ireland;
- Maintain close contact with Government, the Department of Education and Skills, Diocesan Boards of Education, and other educational and school authorities with a view to ascertaining the most efficient and economical use of resources including funds, transport facilities and teachers;
- Study any legislation or proposed legislation likely to affect the educational interests of the Church of Ireland and take such action with respect thereto as it may deem necessary;
- Deliberate and confer on all educational matters affecting the interests of the Church;
- Make such enquiries as it shall deem to be requisite and communicate with government authorities and all such bodies and persons as it shall consider necessary.

**A. Board of Education (Republic of Ireland)**

**AIMS**

- Shall have the power to represent the Board of Education of the General Synod in all educational matters applying solely to the Republic of Ireland;
- Will advise the General Synod of developments in educational policy in the Republic of Ireland and will represent the Church as an education partner with the Department of Education and Skills and other educational bodies;
- Support, through the *Follow Me* programme, religious education in primary schools under Protestant management;
- Provide support, training and advice to primary level patrons and boards of management;
- Undertake the processing of garda vetting applications for non-teaching employees and volunteers in Church of Ireland primary schools and employees and volunteers in parishes and other Church of Ireland organisations.

**General Synod Board of Education (RI)**

**Report to General Synod 2021**

1. Executive Summary:
2. Personalia
3. Impact of Pandemic on Schools
4. Secondary Education Committee (SEC)
5. Second Level Education

## Board of Education – Report 2022

6. Representation on Boards and External Bodies
7. North South Ministerial Council
8. Review of Role and Aims of the (RI) Board
9. Church of Ireland Centre, DCU, Update 2021
10. Board of Management Training (Primary)

### **1. Executive Summary**

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on schools has been immense.

The Board thanks those who represent the Board on various external educational bodies. The Board would like to express its gratitude to CIPSMA for its funding of three online board of management training modules which are available to schools to access at: [www.ireland.anglican.org/children-youth/education/information-policies-roi/boards-of-management-secure-page](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/children-youth/education/information-policies-roi/boards-of-management-secure-page)

The Board is grateful to CIC, DCU for an update on its work in 2020 and this report is included in the more detailed version of this Report.

### **2. Personalia**

In 2021 the Board noted changes in both its own membership and in the wider field of education management.

The Board wishes to congratulate the Rt Rev Michael Burrows on his translation from the diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory to the newly amalgamated diocese of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe, and wishes the bishop every success in this new period in his ministry.

The Board welcomed Mr Kieran Sparling as a member of Board in 2021, a nominee of the ASTI to the General Synod Board. Mr Sparling is the Head of Boarding at Glenstal Abbey secondary school and is involved in the diocese of Limerick.

In September 2021, the Board learned, with regret, of the decision of Ms Eimear Ryan to resign from her role as Education Advisor and solicitor to the RCB. Ms Ryan had served for 14 years with the RCB, 10 of which were as education advisor, where she was a highly valued colleague and her advice and guidance was valued by both schools and patrons. The Board wished her well in her new role with a multi-national telecommunications company. In a new joint venture with the Catholic Primary School Management Association (CPSMA), the Board welcomed Ms Susan Carpenter as education advisor to Church of Ireland primary schools. Ms Carpenter will combine her existing role at the CPSMA with advisory services to Church of Ireland primary school. Ms Carpenter is the principal of St Columba's Church of Ireland National School, Tullow, Co. Carlow from where she is on secondment. In this connection, the Board wishes to record its thanks to the Chief Officer and the RCB for facilitating the arrangement; to Mr Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary of the CPMSA for his assistance and to the Board of the CPSMA for their collegiality in entering into this joint venture.

In 2021, Ms Breda Corr, general secretary at the National Association for Boards of Management for Special Education (NABMSE) resigned from her post to take up a new role with the National Council for Special Education. The Board thanked Ms Corr for all her assistance to the Board during her time with NABMSE, especially for speaking at various events and conferences held by the Board (or CIPSMA) and wished her well in her new role. In November 2021, the Board of NABMSE appointed Ms Eileen O'Rourke as

general secretary. The secretary, on behalf of the Board, congratulated Ms O'Rourke on her appointment.

### **3. Impact of the Pandemic on Schools**

Members of General Synod will be fully aware of the extraordinary general impact of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid 19). It is important to record that the impact of Covid 19 on education at all levels, continues to be challenging and difficult. The Board wishes again to take the opportunity of this Report, to express its admiration and thanks to Boards of Management, school leaders, teachers and all school staff for keeping schools functioning during this extraordinary time of pandemic. The experience of the last two school years 2020/21 and 2021/22 is unlikely to be forgotten by anyone involved a school community. Yet, it should also not be forgotten that in the midst of ambiguity and uncertainty, schools continued to deliver teaching and learning. This sent a vitally important signal of reassurance to pupils, staff and society that education continued on despite it being a time of anxiety, ambiguity and uncertainty.

The stated priority of government in January 2021 was to 'keep schools open'. In this regard, the Department of Education (DE) issued an updated 'Roadmap' on the phased reopening of schools. Subsequently, a range of documents and public health guidance to schools on dealing with an outbreak of covid19 and measures to mitigate against the transmission of covid19 in schools were published on the DE website. Funding was provided for PPE equipment and, latterly, for 'Co2 monitors' and 'HEPA' filters to all primary schools. Through an agreement with the Department of Education, and following representations by our chairman Archbishop Jackson and others (as noted in the 2021 Report to General Synod), funding was made available to second level fee-charging schools on a case-by-case basis and this agreement was carried on into the school year 2021/22.

In response to the pandemic, school management bodies, teacher unions and other stakeholders met on a weekly basis with officials of the Department of Education. Minister Foley joined these meetings on a number of occasions. From March 2020 to March 2022, 64 such meetings have taken place, reflecting the seriousness of the situation facing schools. The Secretary participated in those meetings on behalf of Church of Ireland primary schools and endeavoured to advocate on behalf of those schools; he also contributed to the drafting of advice and guidance issued to schools by the Department. Information communications from the Board to schools have increased since the onset of the pandemic, with an average of five 'Information Updates' per year being sent directly to schools. Colleagues at the CPSMA, with whom the Board now has a service level agreement for education services, have produced an online documentary repository of all such advice and guidance to schools from the Department and school management. This is available to view at: [www.cpsma.ie/covid-19-documents-repository](http://www.cpsma.ie/covid-19-documents-repository)

### **4. Secondary Education Committee (SEC)**

The SEC is an independent company which is fully funded by the Department of Education through an agreement relating to the payment of capitation funding dating back to 1968 and continues to provide financial support to second level students who are of a Protestant denomination. Over sixty Protestant denominations are currently recognised for grant eligibility purposes. In 2020/21 over €6.2 million in grant support was paid to approximately 1,400 recipients. The members of Committee are nominated by the Church

## Board of Education – Report 2022

of Ireland, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) and elected to serve as directors of the SEC (clg) at the AGM of the SEC. Ms Hazel Corrigan, Honorary Secretary of the General Synod, is the Chairperson of the SEC and the Secretary of this Board is the Company Secretary of the SEC. A number of members of the General Synod serve as directors of the SEC.

The SEC Annual Report is available to view at: [www.secgrant.ie](http://www.secgrant.ie)

### **5. Second Level Matters**

Although the Board is not a recognised education partner for negotiation purposes with the State at second level, the Board has a number of connections with the various other sector specific second level bodies. Through this collaboration and engagement, the Board seeks to influence the development of second level education policy at a national level.

The Secretary is a member, ex officio, of the Executive of the Council of Governors of Protestant Secondary Schools and supports and advises the Executive. The Council is chaired by Mr Leslie Ruttle, former chairman of The High School, Dublin and a member of the RCB. The Council of Governors is a forum for representatives of the Boards of Governors of Protestant and/or Church of Ireland secondary schools to network, discuss relevant matters and hear from educational experts. In 2021, the Council had a briefing from Mr Neale Richmond, TD, spokesperson on European Affairs on the impact of ‘Brexit’ on North-South educational provision and on the political view on education generally.

The Council was also briefed by Mr John Curtis, General Secretary of the Joint Managerial Body for Second Level schools, which is the recognised management body for secondary schools, and has negotiation rights for those schools with the Department of Education. Ms Jill Storey, principal of Villiers, Limerick and Mr Johnathan Graham, Headmaster of Dundalk Grammar School, represent Protestant second level schools on the Council of the JMB.

Two members of the Board are members of the Irish School Headmasters Association (ISA); Mr Michael Hall, is Headmaster of Sligo Grammar School and Mr Andrew Forrest, is the principal of The High School, Rathgar, Dublin and the current president of the ISA. In addition, Mrs Hazel Corrigan, member of the Board and Honorary Secretary of the General Synod is the chairperson of the Secondary Education Committee Grants Body (mentioned above).

The Secretary represents the patrons of the Protestant Comprehensive Schools on the Association of Joint Patrons of Community and Comprehensive Schools (AJPCCS). Through this body, a connection is maintained with the Association of Community and Comprehensive schools, which allows a variety of issues affecting this sector to be addressed.

In addition, the Secretary is a director the ‘Le Cheile’ Catholic Schools Trust and a Governor of the Incorporated Society for Protestant Schools. The Board has members drawn directly from the Protestant second level education sector. A number of other members of the Board serve on Boards of Governors or Boards of Management of post-primary schools under the patronage of the Church of Ireland or another Protestant church, including the chairman of the Board, Archbishop Jackson who is a patron at post-primary level.

## **6. Representation on Boards**

The Board is grateful to those who continue to represent it with external bodies. In 2021, the Board nominated Ms Claire Halligan, assistant lecturer at the school of Language, Literacy and Early Childhood, DCU, to the Board for Early Childhood and Primary, NCCA. The Board is grateful to Ms Halligan for agreeing to take on this role and continues to express its thanks to Board members Mrs Joyce Perdue, the Rev Professor Anne Lodge and the chairman for their continuing engagement with the NCCA on behalf of the Board.

During the course of 2021/22 the members of the Board and secretariat were involved in various representations with a range of national bodies, agencies and other educational bodies, including:

- The Teaching Council with regard to Teacher Supply and Cosán
- The Minister for Education and Department of Education
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
- Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)
- Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools (JMB)
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Ecclesiastical Insurances (EIO)
- Steering Committee on Board of Management training,
- SEAI with regard to energy awareness and reporting requirements on energy
- The Centre for School Leadership (CSL)
- Primary Management Stakeholder Group
- North South Ministerial Council
- The Presbyterian Board of Education
- Community Outreach Office, St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin

## **7. North South Ministerial Council: Shared Island Dialogue**

On behalf of the Board, Mr Michael Hall participated in an online event convened by the North South Ministerial Council as part of the Shared Island Dialogue initiative. Entitled, “Learning from each other – the future of education on a shared island” this was a ‘high level policy’ event the purpose of which was to share, in broad terms, developments in the area of education relevant to relationships between the two jurisdictions on the island (and with the wider United Kingdom where applicable). While it was noted that the content of such events is high level and broad in nature, the Board welcomed the fact that an invitation to participate in the event was issued to the Board (and the Church of Ireland).

## **8. Review of Role and Aims of Board**

As advised in the 2021 Report, the Board has formed the view that it is necessary to review the aims and role of the Board (last revised in 1993) with a view to revising them to reflect the reality of the work and purpose of the Board in the present day. The Board wishes to signal to General Synod that it intends to bring forward proposals in this regard when finalised.

### 9. Church of Ireland Centre, DCU Update 2021

The core work of the Church of Ireland Centre, DCU focuses on the Bachelor of Education programme. The Centre delivers the key components to the Centre's students. These components are:

- (a) the *Religious Education Certificate in Teaching the Follow Me Programme* co-ordinated for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year B.Eds by Mrs. Jacqui Wilkinson;
- (b) teaching the *Religions, Ethics, Morals and Values* modules to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years. These modules, taught by Mrs. Wilkinson and Rev. Prof. Anne Lodge, complement the RE Certificate;
- (c) co-ordination of the five modules to 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years to prepare the students to work in small schools and to teach multi-level classes;
- (d) procuring specialist supports in Irish for 1<sup>st</sup> years;
- (e) Ms. Geraldine O'Connor organises and oversees the majority of the Church of Ireland Centre students' placements in schools under Church of Ireland and other reformed Christian patronage.

Mrs. Wilkinson and Rev. Prof. Lodge also support programmes for post-primary religion teachers and chaplains.

The 120 Centre B.Ed students across 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year are also part of the larger B.Ed cohort in DCU. This primary teacher education programme has several pathways through it. The Centre Director Rev. Prof. Lodge takes responsibility annually for reviewing all applicants wishing to follow the Centre's pathway through the Bachelor of Education programme who are eligible for entry and meet the requirements of the derogation to the Employment Equality Act. To this end, the Centre produces information for post-primary schools and deals with many enquiries about the pathway.

In September 2021, a new cohort of 31 students commenced 1<sup>st</sup> year of the B.Ed programme with the Centre. These students come from all around the Republic of Ireland. Despite ongoing concerns about Covid, DCU made the decision to return all undergraduate teaching to campus from September 2021 though much postgraduate work remains virtual, as was the case before the pandemic. Because of the impact of Covid, the Department of Education & Skills agreed with the Teaching Council, the Higher Education Institutions and other stakeholders that student teachers would contribute to plugging the substitution crisis. While our students are delighted to help and to gain experience, this has created additional stress for them as they are still required to meet all their assessment requirements.

The Church of Ireland Centre, DCU, also liaises with primary schools under Church of Ireland and other reformed Christian patronage. The Centre sends a detailed Newsletter out to its school network three times a year. We initiated a project with primary schools in Dublin & Glendalough called *Living Faith Living History*. Children in 10 primary schools produced projects about their local parishes. These were exhibited locally, then in Christ Church Cathedral. The material was collated into a publication launched in Spring 2022. We invite members of Synod to visit the Church of Ireland Centre's website to read our online Newsletters and catch up with our latest news and the range of our activities: <https://www.dcu.ie/church-of-ireland-centre/index.shtml>

In spite of all the upheaval, Covid has had some positive consequences. It has provided a way to enable guest lectures, specialist events or short courses to be much more accessible

by being provided online. In November 2021, the Centre in conjunction with the IPPN, ran an online event on leadership in small schools with guest inputs from two researchers based in Queens University Belfast who reported on their research in small schools in Northern Ireland. Four principals of Irish small schools responded to them. The webinar was very well attended and was accessible to a far larger group of people than could have attended had it been an in-person event. As it was recorded, others were also able to share it afterwards.

Greater use of online platforms has also facilitated the RE Cert for teachers employed in Church of Ireland schools. 18 teachers from across the country are attending the RE Cert this Spring. There are three online sessions with the participants and one face-to-face session. Last year (2021) we had 23 teachers who did the online course so it is still obviously meeting a need which is great. There are also three CPD webinars which Mrs. Wilkinson is offering to schools. The first webinar is on digital supports for Follow Me and has 50 teachers registered.

#### **10. Board of Management Training (Primary)**

The Board facilitates and co-ordinates training for Boards of Management at primary level, in co-operation with patrons and dioceses.

Three modules of training are available to view online at: [www.ireland.anglican.org/children-youth/education](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/children-youth/education). Board of Management members should contact their school principal who has been provided with the relevant login details to the secure education area of the Ireland.anglican.org website.

The Board is grateful to the Department of Education for a grant of €10,000, received in November 2021, towards the provision of Board of Management training. The Board is considering using this grant funding to develop specific training and support material for the chairpersons of Boards of Management and perhaps also specific training for patron's assessors on interview panels for teacher recruitment. These materials will be developed in 2022/23.

The Board wishes to record its thanks to the CIPSMA for their ongoing support for Board of Management training and also to the Dublin and Glendalough Board of Education for their contribution towards the costs of producing online training material in 2020 and 2021.

#### **Garda Vetting**

Garda Vetting is undertaken by the RCB, under the auspices of the Board of Education and the Safeguarding Board, in respect of primary schools for non-teaching staff and volunteers. Garda Vetting is also undertaken by the RCB for Church of Ireland parishes and clergy. In 2021, 1572 Garda Vetting applications were processed in respect of primary schools under the patronage of the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church and Methodist Church. The Board is grateful to the Department of Education for the grant funding it receives towards the cost of providing Garda Vetting in respect of primary schools.

### **Board of Education NI - General Synod Report 2022**

#### **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;

## Board of Education – Report 2022

- 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. Covid-19

Covid continues to impact on our schools but hopefully by the time of this Synod things will be much better. The Board of Education (NI) wishes to commend the resilience of all pupils and their parents / guardian through 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 year.

#### 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 Education Authority is a regional body with responsibility for the provision and delivery of education, pupil support and youth services. It is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Education (DE) with an annual budget of circa £2.3 billion.

The EA is responsible for and accountable to DE for ensuring that efficient and effective nursery, primary and post primary education services are available to meet the needs of some 340,000 children and young people, including those with special needs and for ensuring the provision of efficient and effective youth services. Of the 1134 schools in Northern Ireland, EA is the employing authority for all staff in 520 controlled schools.

The Education Authority is the largest employing authority in Northern Ireland with over 44,000 staff. Of these, over 8000 are teachers, 23,000 are school based



## Board of Education – Report 2022

- including classroom assistants, cleaning, catering, patrol officers and administrative staff and 13,000 are non-school based.

Each year the EA administers 71,000 pre-school, primary and post primary admissions, ensures that approximately 100,000 young people have access to free school meals and uniform grants, and provides 86,000 pupils with free transport each day. 140,000 school meals are delivered daily.

The vision of the EA is to inspire, support and challenge all our children and young people to be the best that they can be, its mission is to provide a high quality education for every child. The Covid Pandemic has in the last two years presented huge challenges to all in the education sector, but just as school leaders and teachers have responded with huge creativity and agility, so the EA have done everything in their power to ensure that children have had their needs met through enabling them to access flexible, well-resourced and high quality learning. Huge efforts have been made to support the emotional health and wellbeing of all children and young people, particularly the vulnerable and those most in need. Their physical needs have been prioritised as well, with every effort being made to facilitate their attendance at suitable, sustainable and safe educational settings. There is no doubt, however that the Covid-19 pandemic will have detrimental long term educational implications for children and young people.

The EA Board continues to oversee a major review of Special Needs provision that has in the past two years resulted in significant improvements. The complexities surrounding Special Needs and recent changes to legislation mean that there is still much to be done in order that increasing demand can be met.

During the year the EA Board undertook a major review of its own structures and effectiveness as members sought to improve their oversight and governance. New committee structures which came into place in April 2021 have already enabled members greater opportunities to interrogate, scrutinize, and challenge the EA's policies and planning, and its capacity and capability to resource its work financially and through its people. The new structures also allow much greater scrutiny of performance and outcomes, a new pipeline system has been established to ensure that all concerns raised by the various committees are followed up. The Revd Adams brings huge expertise and tenacity to her role as Chair of the Performance and Engagement Committee.

Representation on the Education Authority Board continues to ensure that the three largest Protestant churches can maintain their direct influence in education in furtherance of their statutory rights and the missional role of the Church. In addition to providing a de facto voice for the over 1500 transferor governors who serve on the Governing Boards of their local schools, the church representatives provide a voice for Controlled Schools. The reconstitution of Boards of Governors which should have taken place this year has, due to Covid, been

postponed until 2023. The importance of having all Transferor posts filled cannot be overestimated.

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. As has already been stated, children are the focus of the Board's work and encouraging the potential of each individual child is its reason for being. The Board of Education NI's participation in the work of the Education Authority remains an important conduit for the church to reflect Christ and, with God's help, to be humble instruments of His blessing.

**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), and 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 South West APLG which includes the Church of Ireland schools.

The TRC has been working with representatives from the Catholic Church to agree the conditions required for creating Jointly Manged 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. This documents are being put forward for approval at the Presbyterian General Assembly and the Methodist Conference. The motion before synod asks for approval of the relevant documents.

The TRC is chaired by Miss Rosemary Rainey OBE (Methodist representative) and the four Church of Ireland representatives are Bishop Andrew Forster, Rev Amanda Adams, Rev Catherine Simpson and Dr 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 is 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.

## Board of Education – Report 2022

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.

In March 2021, Mr Mark Baker became the new CEO of CSSC coming from a senior role in the Education Authority. The Board of Education NI wish him well in his new role and Dr Hamill is already working closely with CSSC on a number of matters.

### 5. Children’s Ministry

The Board of Education (NI) welcomes the formation of the Board for Ministry with Children and Families. Dr Hamill acts as Secretary to this new Board.

#### Membership

The Board has welcomed Mr Ray Gilbert (Connor Diocese), Mrs Eileen Trew (Co-opted) and Dr Noel Purdy (Co-opted). All the new members bring a wealth of experience in education and we are delighted to have them as part of the Board. Professor Rosalind Pritchard retired from the Board of Education (NI) after many years of service and her 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.

#### **Listings of Members of Boards of Education:**

##### ***THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERSHIP (from 31<sup>st</sup> 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

Board of Education – Report 2022

Kilmore	Mr R. Gilbert Very Rev N Crossey
Tuam	Vacant Rev Canon J. McWhirter
Dublin	Ms F. Hill-Thornberg Rev Dr W Olhausen
Meath	Ms S Rusk Rev Canon JDM Clarke
Cashel Ferns and Ossory	Mrs F Higgins Rev Canon PA Harvey
Cork	Mrs M Jacob Ven AM Wilkinson
Limerick and Killaloe	Mr W. Baker Rev J Godfrey Mrs M Brickenden

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

1. Rev Canon BJG O'Rourke (CIPSMA)
2. V. Rev N Sloane (Sunday School Society)
3. Rev Prof A Lodge (Third Level)
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 A Oughton
13. Mr S. Grahsam (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

Board of Education – Report 2022

(Methodist Church)

**BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND) (2019-2022)**

Members:

Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev FJ McDowell.

Bishop of Derry, Rt Rev A Forster

*(Following a review of membership, the House of Bishops, in September 2020, nominated two members to be part of the Board as per above. The Bishops below were members until August 2020)*

Bishop of Down and Dromore, Rt Rev David McClay (As of 25th January 2020)

Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev G. Davison (as clerical honorary secretary of the General Synod)

Bishop of Clogher, Rt Rev Dr IW Ellis (from 25<sup>th</sup> April 2021)

Bishop of Kilmore, Rt Rev Dr SF Glenfield

Mr Ken Gibson (Lay Hon. Sec).

Elected members:

*ARMAGH Rev Canon Malcolm Kingston*

*Mr T Flannagan*

*CLOGHER Vacant*

*Mrs S Hogg*

*CONNOR Rev Dr A Campbell*

*Mr K Gilbert*

*DOWN Rev C Simpson*

*Vacant*

Co-opted members:

Rev A Adams

Mrs R Forde

Mr M Johnston

Rev M Ferry

Miss F Boyd

Ms E Trew

Dr N Purdy

Prof R Pritchard (resigned November 2021)

Dr I Hickey

Mr Robin McLoughlin (appointed June 2020)

Mrs Diane Cheshire (appointed November 2020)

**CIYD representative:**

Mr S Henry

***Honorary Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)***

Vacant

***Honorary Treasurer, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)***

Mr M Johnston

Board of Education – Report 2022

***Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)***

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

**GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Archbishop of Armagh  
Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough  
Rev Canon M Kingston (elected clerical hon sec NI 2020)  
Hon Secretary RI  
Rev Professor A Lodge  
Rev C Simpson  
Mr T Flannagan  
Mr M Hall  
Rev BJG O'Rourke  
Mr A Oughton

**BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND) (2019-2022)**

***Ex officio members:***

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

***Elected by House of Bishops:***

Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, Rt Rev PW Rooke (until January 2020)  
Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, Rt Rev MAJ Burrows.

***Diocesan Representatives:*** Rev Canon H. Gilmore, vacancy.

***Post primary representatives:*** Mr M Hall, Mr K. Sparling (from 2020)

***Third level representatives:*** Professor P Johnston, Rev Professor A Lodge

***Primary representatives:*** Rev Canon BJG O'Rourke (vice chairman), Mrs J Perdue

***CIYD representative:*** Mr S. Grasham

***Sunday School Society:*** Very Rev N Sloane

***Co-options GS BOE:***

Mr A Forrest (ISA President)  
Mr A Oughton

**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

**Appendix 1 - Letter sent to all Controlled Schools**

9th February 2022

Dear Principal,

The Church of Ireland Board of Education (Northern Ireland) is writing to express its continued thanks to all involved in school life at this time and to outline its approach to the Integrated Education Bill.

**Covid-19**

The Church of Ireland is conscious that schools are currently experiencing a high incidence of Covid 19, recently reported by the Public Health Agency, as being more than five thousand cases among staff and pupils. Thankfully, it is also being reported that in most cases the virus is not leading to individuals experiencing serious symptoms that require hospitalisation. It is acknowledged that required periods of isolation for those testing positive for Covid-19 brings disruption for both staff and pupils and significant organisational pressure on school leaders.

It is clear from reports from school leaders that the absences of affected staff and pupils has had and continues to create challenging circumstances as schools work to ensure that children and young people continue to have access to education, with particular challenges for staff and pupils in those year groups working towards examinations.

The Church of Ireland Board of Education (NI) wishes to commend Principals, Teachers, Staff and Governors on their outstanding dedication and day to day endeavour and resilience in coping with these extraordinary times and to extend our heartfelt thanks to all for their professional work in schools. The Board is encouraged to hear that many restrictions may soon be eased and is hopeful that this will be of benefit to reducing the pressures on the operation of schools. It is also pleasing to note that some direction is emerging in respect to 2022 examinations and that already some examinations have taken place in person.

**Integrated Education Bill**

Schools will also be aware that the Northern Ireland Assembly are currently considering a Private Member's Integrated Education Bill which contains elements that, if approved, will have far-reaching effects on the schooling system in Northern Ireland in the years ahead.

The Church of Ireland Board of Education believes that all pupils should learn together.

The Board recognises that the Controlled Schools Sector, which in law and ethos is non-denominational, provides an environment for children and young people of all faiths and none, to learn together and would wish to express support for the opportunities provided in these schools.

The Board encourages churches to engage with their local schools and work with them in whatever way helps the pupils, the school and the local community.

Thank you for your time and, again, for all that you do on behalf of our young people.

Yours sincerely,

The Most Rev John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh  
Chairperson

Dr Peter Hamill  
Secretary