

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD  
OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND**

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, Diocesan Boards of Education, and other educational and school authorities with a view to 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 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 educational partner to the Department of Education and Science (DE&S) and other educational bodies;

support, through the *Follow Me* programme, religious education in primary schools under Protestant management;

co-ordinate and encourage the participation of post-primary Protestant schools in the Synod Examination in Religious Education;

provide training and advices to bishops and boards of management;

provide training and advisory service to bishops, dioceses and parishes in the implementation of *Safeguarding Trust*;

facilitate Garda vetting of workers and volunteers in Church of Ireland primary schools and parishes.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Personalia

Submissions to the Department of Education and Skills

*Follow Me* Religious Education Programme

R.E. Qualification for CICE Graduates

Transport Scheme D

Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative

RE Reference Group

## Board of Education – Report 2011

School Closure (Primary)  
RE at Second Level  
Issue of Patronage in Ashton Comprehensive School, Cork  
Involvement in new Community Comprehensive School, Gorey, Co. Wexford.  
*Safeguarding Trust*  
Garda Vetting  
Conferences  
Grants

### **Personalia**

Dr Ken Fennelly took up the post of Secretary to the General Synod and Republic of Ireland Boards of Education in April 2010 in succession to Rev Canon John McCullagh. Dr Fennelly has previously held posts in The National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM) and DIT and has completed doctoral research on the topic of the provision and future of Protestant education in the Republic of Ireland.

The Board is extremely grateful to Ms Jennifer Byrne, Education Administration, who acted as Secretary during the intervening period of Canon McCullagh's departure and Dr Fennelly's arrival.

Ms Mary Coughlan, TD was appointed Minister for Education and Skills in May 2010, in succession to Mr Batt O'Keeffe, TD. The Board wished the Minister well on her appointment. The Minister was also appointed Tánaiste. Following the Minister's appointment, the Department's name was changed to The Department of Education and Skills.

Mr Ruairí Quinn, TD was appointed Minister for Education and Skills in March 2011. The Board wished the Minister well on his appointment.

Mr Pat King was appointed General Secretary of the ASTI in succession to Mr John White. The Board wished Mr King well on his appointment.

Ms Sheila Nunan was appointed General Secretary of the INTO in succession to Mr John Carr. The Board wished Ms Nunan well on her appointment.

### **Submissions to the Department of Education and Skills**

The Board made a number of submissions to the Department of Education and Skills (DE&S).

Two submissions were made on *the Report of the Commission on New School Accommodation*. This report envisages a shared campus arrangement where two or three individual schools might share one site and a connecting building. While this is prudent in that it would avoid duplication, reservations were expressed about how it would work in practice and what ethos safeguards would be put in place. Following the submissions and further meetings with the DES, a redraft was circulated which allayed some of those concerns. This report is a significant policy development in the field of primary school provision and may well be of interest to Church of Ireland and Protestant primary schools in the future.

***Follow Me* The Primary Religious Education Programme**

The Committee set up to look at the development of the *Follow Me* RE Programme has now completed its work. Revised infant Teachers' Books were published and distributed free of charge to schools in September. The Board is very grateful to Ms Jacqui Wilkinson and the Committee for their work in this area over the past number of years. A working group will be established to examine ways in which religious education at primary level can be developed into the future.

**Religious Education Qualification**

The Certificate in Religious Education is now in place in the Church of Ireland College of Education. The current second years students will complete module four by June 2011. An intensive summer course will be offered to third year students in 2010/11 following the completion of summer examinations. The current first year students have just commenced module one. The graduation class of 2010/11 and onwards will hold the Certificate. The Certificate is offered to students on a voluntary basis.

**Transport Scheme D (primary)**

The number of qualifying families stands at 337 and grants totalling €178,249 for the school year 2010/2011 were received from the Department of Education and Skills (DE&S) at the end of December 2010. Payment to families was therefore delayed until January 2011.

Cutbacks in funding and also the moratorium on staff appointments within the DE&S continue to impact on the scheme in terms of responses to queries and applications. It is very important that applications are made as soon as possible after enrolment. A small auxiliary transport fund, managed by the Board, still exists to provide one-off grants for Church of Ireland families who are experiencing exceptional short-term transport difficulties.

**Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative**

The outlook for modern languages in Primary schools is looking somewhat uncertain with a reduction in the co-coordinating team from eight to five persons. There are now 527 schools in the initiative and training is still continuing and within budget despite the reduction of resources.

Recent media coverage has indicated that Irish primary schools have the lowest level of foreign language tuition in Europe. Ireland has no official National Language in Education Policy. In fact, Ireland is the only European country where a modern foreign language is neither a compulsory subject nor a core curriculum option.

The team is determined to continue this initiative and involve new schools. Clustering of schools as a result of a restructuring of school support and regional allocation is proving very successful and the website is to be developed further with a focus on Best Classroom Practice and European Language Portfolio implementation.

**Religious Education Reference Group**

The Board is grateful to Rev Canon Horace McKinley who represented the Church of Ireland on the Religious Education Reference Group until the appointment of a new Secretary.

#### **School Closure – Arva**

It was with regret that Arva NS, Co. Cavan was forced to close. Despite heroic efforts made over a number of years, falling numbers to the point below that which is deemed to be a sustainable school had been reached. The Bishop of Kilmore (Patron) wishes to record his thanks to all who were associated with the school.

#### **Religious Education at Second Level**

The APCK raised concerns which were brought to the attention of the Board, that secondary school textbooks for both the Junior and Leaving Certificate curricula were inadequate on the topic of the Church of Ireland and Protestant Churches and portrayed the Churches in only a superficial and, in some textbooks, an erroneous way. In an attempt to address the problem in the short term, APCK information leaflets were distributed to every second-level school in the State. The response was very positive. In the longer term, a working group of RE teachers and the Secretary has been established with a view to liaising with the textbook publishers and re-writing the relevant section of the textbooks.

#### **Patronage of Ashton Comprehensive School**

The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross has agreed to enter into joint Patronage with City of Cork VEC in relation to Ashton Comprehensive School. This has been achieved through negotiations with the Department of Education and Skills and made possible by the positive and co-operative relationship that exists between the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross and City of Cork VEC. The Board is grateful to the Bishop of Cork for his dedication and commitment to this issue over a number of years. Ashton school is now in a position to expand its Board of Management since the issue of the Patronage of the school has been clarified and resolved.

#### **Community School Involvement in Gorey, Co. Wexford**

After a process of wide consultation by the Department of Education and Skills with existing patrons, parents and the local community, a new Community School is to be established in Gorey, Co. Wexford. At a public meeting in Gorey, Co. Wexford, representatives of Wexford VEC and Educate Together made presentations for the management of the new school. At the meeting, the Church of Ireland Board of Education was represented by the Secretary and the Diocese of Ferns was represented by the Diocesan Secretary, the Archdeacon of Ferns and the Rector of Gorey. The result of that process saw Co. Wexford VEC receive the management of the new school. The Bishop of the United Diocese of Cashel, Ossory and Ferns will have representation on the Board of Management of the new Community school. There is a long history in the Diocese of Ferns of the VEC serving the Church of Ireland and Protestant population so this is most especially appropriate.

#### **Safeguarding Trust**

Training in *Safeguarding Trust* for panels and workers was carried out during the year by the diocesan trainers and by Ms Renée English, the Child Protection Officer (CPO RI). Updated training material was provided to facilitate the recommended extended training for panel members in view of their responsibilities.

## Board of Education – Report 2011

A clergy training day, new and refresher, was held in September. There was significant demand for this training and 17 members of the clergy attended.

Training capacity was strengthened by the recruitment of a number of new diocesan trainers. The United Diocese of Limerick recruited a team of parish evaluators and training was held for them.

Parish evaluations continued on a triennial basis, with some parishes included for the first time. The CPO receives copies of parish evaluations from a number of dioceses. This provides valuable feedback regarding implementation and issues arising.

A meeting for diocesan support teams was held in October 2010. The group was addressed by Rev Pearl Luxon, until recently National Safeguarding Advisor to the Church of England and Methodist Church and now provides a variety of services on a freelance basis. Ms Luxon spoke about past, current and future issues and challenges in safeguarding for Churches.

A new leaflet which provides information for parents on *Safeguarding Trust* was produced in 2010. It was been widely distributed and well received as a useful addition to the suite of resources.

The CPO maintains links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. During 2010 she was involved in setting up a child protection network for those working in the community and voluntary sector.

### **Garda Vetting**

Owing to a reorganisation of duties within the Board of Education, the CPO Ms Renée English, has taken on the role of authorised signatory, in addition to Ms Jennifer Byrne. She attended training with the Garda Vetting Unit in September and commenced this work in October. Vetting is in relation to both parishes and non-teaching personnel in schools.

There has been much confusion regarding the vetting of school personnel across all sectors. Several meetings were held in 2010 with the Department of Education & Skills, the Teaching Council, unions and management bodies. This resulted in the publication of circular 0063/2010 which clarifies the matter in relation to paid and unpaid staff.

The vetting of teachers has been extended to include teachers moving employment and it is proposed that the vetting of all teachers will commence in 2011. This will be subject to resources being made available both to the Garda Central Vetting Unit and the Teaching Council.

The retrospective vetting of clergy is also under consideration by the Board. A protocol document, similar to the procedures being adopted by the Teaching Council, has been drafted and a working group set up to move the issue forward.

## Board of Education – Report 2011

### **Conferences**

The Secretary attended the ASTI Annual Conference held in Galway in May 2010. Ms Byrne attended the INTO Annual Conference also held in Galway in May 2010. Much of the business of both conferences was taken up with delegates expressing disquiet at the fiscal measures taken by government and the Croke Park Agreement.

The Secretary also attended the IVEA annual Conference in Portlaoise and the National Trustees Forum for Community (NFT) and Comprehensive Schools annual conference held in Mullingar. The Secretary represents the Protestant Comprehensive Schools on the NTF.

### **Grants**

The Board provides grant aid to the Church of Ireland College of Education towards the provision of the course leading to the Certificate in Religious Education.

The Board provides grant aid to the Past Students' Association of the Church of Ireland College of Education to assist in the running of its annual conference, to *Building Blocks* to offset the deficit in running the annual conference and also toward the publication of *Search* a Church of Ireland Journal.

Board of Education – Report 2011

**Synod Examination in Religious Education**

The prize winners for 2009/2010 were as follows:

**YEAR 1**

Morgan Jellett Fund Prize	Emily Hanlon	Alexandra College
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Christine O'Neill	Newpark Comprehensive
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Natalie Beckett	King's Hospital

**YEAR 2**

James Fitzgerald Gregg Prize	Meabh O'Regan	Cavan Royal
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Vanessa Winn	Alexandra College
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Rachel Blennerhassett	Alexandra College

**YEAR 3**

Morgan Jellett Memorial Prize	Anna Hartnett	Alexandra College
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Jack Mills	Wilson's Hospital
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Bella Purcell	Alexandra College

**Junior Division Prizes:**

Rachael Slattery	Alexandra College
Louise McCollum	Alexandra College
Ellin Patterson	Royal and Prior
Arianna Stewart	Royal and Prior
Nadia Hourihan	King's Hospital
Victoria Forster	King's Hospital
Melissa Heaslip	Cavan Royal
Alice Hamman	Newpark Comprehensive
Jacqui Memagh	King's Hospital
Aine Beirne	Wilson's Hospital

**TRANSITION YEAR**

Ferns Fund Prize	John Fallows	Royal and Prior
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Shannen McGuinness	Wilson's Hospital
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Lorraine Levis	Wilson's Hospital

**YEARS 5 AND 6**

Ferns Exhibition Prize	Carolyn Holt	King's Hospital
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Emma Nwokonko	King's Hospital
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Nikola Porter	Royal and Prior

**Senior Division Prizes:**

Jennifer Gorrison	Wilson's Hospital
Hannah McCauley	Royal and Prior
Ben Oliver	Royal and Prior
Killian Hales	Wilson's Hospital
Beth Kirwan	Newpark Comprehensive

## Board of Education – Report 2011

The Board would like to thank Rev David McDonnell who kindly agreed to act as Examiner again this year.

A working group has been established by the APCK to look at ways in which the Synod Examination might be restructured or re-presented to try and make it more appealing to a teenage audience.

### **B. Board of Education (Northern Ireland)**

#### **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 General Synod of developments in educational policy in Northern Ireland and to 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) to promote the interests and safeguard the rights of transferors in the future;
- make submissions to relevant government consultations in particular regarding legislative changes to establish the new Education and Skills Authority (ESA);
- 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;
- provide a training and advisory service to bishops, dioceses and parishes in the implementation of *Safeguarding Trust* and prepare for requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups legislation;
- contribute to training and support for children's ministry in parishes in particular as a partner in the *Building Blocks* conferences.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

##### **1. Reform of education administration in Northern Ireland**

Transferor Churches continue to serve on Education and Library Boards at a time of difficult decision making and have lobbied for a way forward in the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority which protects their existing rights.

##### **2. Education budget**

The Department of Education draft budget proposes severe savings measures over the next four years. Transferors are concerned that these measures will have a direct impact on core educational services.

##### **3. Shared education in Northern Ireland**

The First Minister's speech opened debate on shared education in schools in Northern Ireland – the Board expresses willingness to explore new arrangements for collaboration and sharing.



- 4 Arrangements for transfer to post-primary**

Independent testing regimes continue to be used for admission to grammar schools.
  - 5. Proposed merger of Queens University Belfast School of Education and Stranmillis College**

Churches offer a cautious response to the merger proposals and seek measures to mitigate any adverse impact upon students from the Protestant community.
  - 6. Other consultations responded to:**

Two reports investigating under-achievement and a new policy on community relations in education.
  - 7. Religious education**

Teacher support restricted by uncertainty and financial cut-backs.
  - 8. Safeguarding Trust**

A report by the Child Protection Officer NI.
  - 9. Building Blocks**

A report of another successful annual conference for children’s ministry leaders.
  - 10. Annual Theological Lectures at Queen’s University**

The 2011 lectures by the Rev Dr Michael Ward were widely appreciated.
- 1. Reform of education administration in Northern Ireland**

Due to the failure of the Northern Ireland Assembly to pass the necessary legislation to establish the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs) have continued to administer services to schools in Northern Ireland albeit with reduced membership. Church nominees continue to serve with great dedication and have borne a heavy load of responsibility along with their trustees and other professional colleagues. It is of great concern that, at the time of writing, not all political representatives have been appointed to ELBs leaving a democratic deficit in decision making at a time of unprecedented financial restraint. The greatest challenge in the coming months will be the setting of budgets with inevitable cut-backs to Board services.

The Department of Education plans to use the interim ELB structure as a means to eventually establish the ESA through the convergence of services across the five Boards; some have questioned whether this process is practicable. All political parties now agree that the original plan for the ESA would have removed rights from the transferor Churches and delivered a huge inequality to the Protestant community and controlled schools. The Transferor Representatives’ Council (TRC) has lobbied political parties over the past months to find a way forward which retains the rights of transferor Churches to nominate members of any ownership and decision-making body for Controlled schools. To date, no political agreement on a way forward has been reached by parties.
  - 2. Education budget 2011–2015**

In January 2011, the Department of Education published its draft budget for consultation. The budget proposes annual savings measures for the next four years

beginning with £139m in 2011 rising to £303m in 2015. The proposals include a release of £41m of capital monies to ‘resource’ in 2011–2012 to minimise the impact of the level of funding directly available to schools. The Minister has proposed a number of protected spending areas including: allocations for Special Educational Needs, Extended Schools, Post-primary School Counselling Services and Early Years.

It is of concern that many schools planning for capital investment to address inadequate facilities will not see improvements in the foreseeable future. It is equally concerning that many of the savings measures will, in coming years, have direct impact at school level through significant reductions in the Aggregated Schools Budget, school transport and curriculum support for teachers. It is paradoxical that the Department continues to expect schools to address priority areas such as raising standards, closing the performance gap and increasing access and at the same time endure such painful cuts to funding. The TRC has submitted a response on behalf of the three transferor Churches’ Boards of Education in which it has drawn attention to the adverse affect of the proposed savings on core educational services and the far-reaching social consequences for local communities.

### **3. Shared education in Northern Ireland**

In October 2010, an important debate on the nature of schools in Northern Ireland was initiated following a speech by the First Minister, Rt Hon Peter Robinson, MP, MLA, in which he spoke of the need to create a single educational system. His unexpected intervention revealed his belief that educating our children separately “is fundamentally damaging to our society”. In what was interpreted as an attack on denominational schools he expressed the view that although Churches can provide and fund schools for those who choose them he objected to the state providing and funding such schools. His speech concluded that a body be tasked with bringing forward recommendations for a staged process of integration to be taken forward.

The Church of Ireland, along with other Churches, was asked for comment on this speech. It was noted that the Church is open to finding ways of sharing education between the major sectors across the traditional community divide; however, the structure of our divided school system is a product of our history and not easily changed. The Archbishop of Armagh in his address to the Armagh Synod earlier that month pointed to the need for Churches to show leadership and imagination to encourage schools to develop closer relationships through collaboration and sharing between sectors. The debate has reawakened the idea of exploring potential for shared management of schools, in particular to provide a sustainable school in a local community – a proposal which this Board strongly supports.

### **4. Arrangements for transfer to post-primary schools**

The Board has been kept informed of developments in 11+ transfer arrangements and discussed the matter at its meetings. The issue remains as last year; the Minister has issued guidelines for admissions to post-primary schools which do not include the use of academic criteria. Grammar schools have for a second year devised and set independent entrance tests, the results of which are used by schools to select pupils for admission. The process last year was completed without the legal

challenges anticipated by the Department of Education. It is of great concern that having two testing regimes, with a total of five tests, is adding greatly to the pressure on children especially those hoping to keep options open for admission to both the Catholic grammar and non-denominational grammar schools.

**5. Equality Impact Assessment - a proposal of the governing body of Stranmillis University College to seek a merger with Queen's University Belfast (QUB)**

The TRC submitted a response to this consultation, on behalf of the Boards of Education of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland. The view of the Churches is that the proposed merger has the potential to be a positive development bringing enhanced provision for education programmes, research expertise and longer term financial stability. It is however vital that both legislative protection for ethos and appropriate institutional measures are introduced, in order to mitigate the otherwise potentially negative impact of the merger on prospective students from the Protestant community as well on parents and pupils within the Controlled sector who hold a Christian belief.

The TRC has had helpful discussions with the Vice Chancellor of QUB regarding the churches concerns. Various provisions and assurances have been suggested which if coming to fruition have the potential to mitigate any adverse impact of the merger. The TRC has participated in discussions with the minister and officials from the Department of Employment and Learning regarding possible mitigating measures. A full consultation by the Department on the proposed merger is expected later this year.

**6. Other consultations responded to:**

NI Assembly Education Committee: *Inquiry into successful post-primary schools serving disadvantaged areas;*  
*Educational Under-achievement and the Protestant Working Class* – private member's consultation by Ms Dawn Purvis, MLA;  
Department of Education draft policy paper: *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED)*.

**7. Religious education**

Over many years the TRC has found its termly meetings with RE Advisers from the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) very valuable. From concerns expressed at such meetings, the Churches have identified that the uncertainty in the establishment of the ESA poses a question about the extent of future curriculum support for RE teachers. The proposed budget cutbacks to professional services to teachers will have a considerable impact on the capacity of advisers to support RE teachers in schools.

**8. Safeguarding Trust**

The Child Protection Officer NI, (CPO NI), continues to provide advice and guidance on a range of issues to parishes, dioceses, mission agencies and related organisations throughout Northern Ireland. Whenever situations relating to child protection arise which lead to PSNI and Social Services involvement, the CPO NI

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liaises closely with the statutory agencies in relation to these issues and advises and supports the parishes/dioceses through the process.

The CPO NI was a member of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Advisory Group which produced *Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility*, launched by the Department of Health and Social Services on 7 October 2010. This guidance outlines standards for good practice in the running of services to vulnerable adults. It is specifically aimed to help those who work in the voluntary and community sectors – including churches. A copy has been made available to each parish in Northern Ireland. It has helpful guidance relevant to the services/groups such as: pastoral visiting teams for the elderly, luncheon clubs for the elderly, a counselling service for those suffering mental illness, support group for those suffering addictions and activities for adults with learning difficulties.

The Vetting and Barring Scheme which was to have been implemented in stages in 2010, has been put on hold by the coalition government while a review is undertaken. However, vetting for all those who work with children, and now also vulnerable adults, continues through AccessNI.

The annual training event for newly ordained clergy and first incumbents was facilitated by the CPO NI in October 2010. There have been a number of training sessions for parish panel members in each diocese and the CPO NI has also facilitated training sessions for a number of parishes. Working closely together Ms Renée English, CPO RI and Ms Yarr, CPO NI have delivered training to students in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, clergy in the Republic of Ireland and to clergy in a cross border setting in Monaghan. The trainers who were recruited in 2009 have delivered training on a more local level to various parishes within their individual dioceses. The Board thanks them for their commitment, expertise and generous giving of their time.

The CPO NI attended a number of training courses including the Church of England and Methodist Church National Safeguarding Conference 2011 and the National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers conference on *Young People Who Engage in Sexually Harmful Behaviour*. During 2010 the CPO NI undertook professional training in child protection for children with disabilities as part of her ongoing *Keeping Safe* trainer role.

A Memorandum of Co-operation between Faith and Worship Organisations in Northern Ireland and the Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland, (PPANI) which deals with the management of sex offenders in their attendance at places of worship has recently been developed. The CPO NI is the designated contact person for the Church of Ireland in Northern Ireland.

The process of parish evaluation continues and is overseen by the CPO NI. Teams of evaluators in each diocese carry out the evaluation visits on a triennial basis and follow-up reports are provided by the CPO NI to the incumbents. The Board appreciates and values the commitment of the evaluators, who give of their time and expertise so generously, and offers sincere thanks to all of them for their continued support.

**9. *Building Blocks* - Children's Ministry Conferences**

In November 2010, the ninth annual *Building Blocks* conference took place in Belfast and Dublin. The Northern Ireland organising committee comprises representatives of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church and Scripture Union. The Belfast and Dublin events each drew over 200 delegates from a wide range of Churches. The keynote speaker was Rev Dr Ivy Beckwith from the USA who is an acclaimed author of books on children's ministry whose area of interest is children's faith formation using story, ritual and relationship. These conferences, which also feature a variety of practical seminars, have become established as important sources of inspiration and training for children's ministry leaders. Details of the conferences including seminar notes are available at [www.buildingblocks.ie](http://www.buildingblocks.ie)

**10. Annual Theological Lectures at Queen's University Belfast (QUB)**

The 2011 lectures were held on the 21 and 22 February and were delivered by Rev Dr Michael Ward, a noted authority on CS Lewis. His lectures highlighted how the theological and cosmological imagination of Lewis shaped his construction of the world of Narnia and its many well known characters. These widely appreciated lectures are arranged by the Church of Ireland Chaplaincy at Queen's University Belfast and funded by this Board.

**Personalia**

The Board offers its good wishes to Canon Lady Sheil on her retirement, and expresses its appreciation of her faithful attendance, expertise and contribution to discussions over many years.

**APPENDIX A**

**THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The following are the members of the Board and its committees as on 31 March 2011.

**THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS**

**THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD**

Ven Robin Bantry White  
Mr Samuel Harper

Rev John McDowell  
Mrs Ethne Harkness

*Elected members*

Armagh	Rev Canon John McKegey Mr Leslie Johnston
Clogher	Rev Bryan Kerr Mr Samuel Morrow
Derry	Rev Canon Henry Gilmore Mr Desmond West
Down	Rev Canon Robert Howard Mr James Bunting
Connor	Ven Stephen Forde Dr Kenneth Dunn
Kilmore	Very Rev Raymond Ferguson Mrs Brigid Barrett
Tuam	Rev Canon Doris Clements Professor Paul Johnston
Dublin	Rev Gillian Wharton Ms Ruth Handy
Meath	Rev Canon John Clarke Mr Adrian Oughton
Cashel and Ossory	Rev Canon Patrick Harvey Mrs Avril Forrest
Cork	Rev Adrian Wilkinson Mr William Perrott
Limerick and Killaloe	Ven Robert Warren

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Mr Thomas Hardy

*Co-opted members*

Mr Thomas Flannagan	Dr Anne Lodge
Mrs Rosemary Forde	Mr Michael Hall
Mrs Helen McClenaghan	Mr Alan Cox
Mr Roy McKinney	Mr Ian Coombes
Dr Wilfred Mulryne	Ms Susie Hall
Mrs Patricia Wallace	Ms Rosemary Maxwell-Eager
Ms Claire Bruton	Ms Sadie Honner
Rev Canon Robert Black	Ms Eileen Jackson
Rev Brian O'Rourke	Mrs Patricia Conran
Rev Anne Taylor	Ms Susan Farrell

*Secretary*

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

The Rev Ian Ellis attends in his capacity as Secretary to the Board of Education (NI)

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
(FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012)**

Two members of the House of Bishops  
Rev John McDowell  
Ven Robin Bantry White  
Rev Canon John McKegey  
Mr James Bunting  
Mr Thomas Flannagan  
Ms Eileen Jackson  
Rev Brian O'Rourke  
Ms Sadie Honner

**BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)**

***Ex-officio members***

The Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Rev Alan Harper  
The Bishop of Clogher, the Rt Rev Dr Michael Jackson  
The Bishop of Down and Dromore, the Rt Rev Harold Miller  
The Bishop of Kilmore, the Rt Rev Kenneth Clarke  
The Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy  
The Bishop of Derry, the Rt Rev Ken Good  
Rev John McDowell

***Elected members***

Armagh	Rev Canon John McKegey Mr Leslie Johnston
Clogher	Rev Bryan Kerr Mr Samuel Morrow
Derry	Rev Malcolm Ferry Mr Malcolm McSparron
Down	Rev Canon Robert Howard Mr James Bunting
Connor	Ven Stephen Forde Dr Kenneth Dunn

***Co-opted members***

Mrs Patricia Wallace  
Dr Wilfred Mulryne  
Mrs Helen McClenaghan  
Mr Thomas Flannagan  
Mr Roy McKinney  
Mrs Rosemary Forde  
Canon Wilfred Young  
Professor Kenneth Bell

***Observers***

Rev Peter McDowell  
Mrs Florence Brunt

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

Mr James Bunting

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

Mr Roy McKinney

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

Rev Ian Ellis, Church of Ireland House, 61-67 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2QH



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**APPENDIX B**

**SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**REPORT 2011**

**Membership**

***Church of Ireland***

Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Rt Rev Paul Colton, (Chairman)  
The Rev Canon Robert Black (Resigned December 2010)  
Mrs Joan Bruton  
Mr Edward Lindsey (Appointed January 2010)  
Mrs Patricia O'Malley  
Rev Brian O'Rourke  
Ms Elizabeth Oldham  
Mr Adrian Oughton  
Mr Geoffrey Perrin

***The Presbyterian Church***

Mr Brian Duffy (Resigned May 2010)  
Rev Mary Hunter (Deputy Chairman)  
Mrs Eleanor Petrie (Appointed December 2010)

***The Methodist Church***

Rev Nigel Mackey  
Dr John Harris

***The Religious Society of Friends***

Mr Alan Harrison  
Mr David Grubb

**Secretary to the Committee and to the Company**

Rev Canon John McCullagh (Resigned April 2010)  
Dr Kenneth Fennelly (Appointed April 2010)

**Administrator (Grants Scheme)**

Mr David Wynne

**Secondary Education Committee**

The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a body comprising representatives from the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and the Religious Society of Friends.

The Committee derives its authority from a resolution passed by the sponsoring Churches in 1965.

The functions of the SEC are twofold: to distribute the block grant provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DE&S) to ensure necessitous Protestant children

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may attend Protestant secondary schools and to represent the interests of the member Churches in the post-primary education system.

The Committee operates as a limited company thus allowing both the corporate body and the liability of individual members to be appropriately insured.

### **Personalia**

Two long serving members of the Secondary Education Committee retired in 2010, Mr Brian Duffy in May and Canon Robert Black in December. Both had contributed much to the work of the Committee from their educational and management skills. New appointments were Mrs Eleanor Petrie on behalf of the Presbyterian Church and Mr Edward Lindsey and Mr Geoffrey Perrin on behalf of the Church of Ireland.

In addition to Canon Black and Mr Duffy, the Committee's long serving Secretary, Canon John McCullough, also retired in 2010. His long service and immense knowledge had contributed a lot to the cause of education in the Protestant sector. We wish his successor, Dr Kenneth Fennelly, every success in his post.

### **Block Grant Scheme**

Enrolments for 2009/10 in the twenty-one fee charging schools totaled 9,794 (9,863 in the previous year). This figure does not include the five comprehensive schools. In the school year 2009/10 the audited accounts showed the total amount received from the DE&S was €6,381,185 (€6,555,763), the grant in aid of fees totaled €6,580,259 (€5,528,025) and capitation adjustment grant totaled €244,126 (€1,863,082). The net cost of administering the SEC scheme was €15,752 (€14,817). There is a small grant to assist the running of the office. The rise in costs reflects the loss of interest from deposits which were distributed in 2009 on the instructions of the previous Minister for Education and Science Mr Batt O'Keefe, TD.

The following numbers of grants were awarded in respect of the 2010/11 school year: 1,588 day grants (1,622), 894 boarding grants (924), 2,482 in total (2,546).

The Committee agreed to increase grants for the school year 2010/11 on a scale from boarding €1,140 - €7,767 (€1,140 - €6,699) day €480 - €820 (€480 - €505). An increase in certain allowances was also agreed in relation to the reckoning of assessments. This resulted in improved access to grants for a number of families.

The Administrator, Mr David Wynne and Ms Bridie McAuley, Administrative Assistant, attended a number of open days at the request of schools and took the opportunity to discuss issues with individual parents. Mr Wynne also made contact with each school to discuss the functioning of the grant scheme.

### **Educational Developments**

Late 2009 saw a publicity campaign by the Protestant schools to raise, in the public domain the difficulties that Protestant schools have suffered since the withdrawing of ancillary grants. However, this report last year highlighted that a dialogue had tentatively been put in place with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) on the general issue of the future funding of Protestant secondary schools. That dialogue picked up apace after a meeting with the newly appointed Minister for Education and Skills, An Tánaiste Mary Coughlan, TD, took place in 2010. The delegation, led by the Bishop of Cork,

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Cloyne and Ross (Chairman of the SEC), sought to renew the dialogue that had tentatively begun in 2009, with a view to advancing the dialogue in a spirit of co-operation and partnership. The Minister was receptive to this approach and a series of meetings between the DE&S and a delegation, which included the Secretary Dr Fennelly, were held throughout late 2010. A timeframe and agenda for these discussions was agreed and the discussions are continuing. The first set of discussions related mainly to the funding of the SEC and have been positive. However, the Department has premised all its discussions to date on the advice from the Attorney General to the Department that Protestant fee-charging schools must be treated in the same manner as schools of other religious denominations in like circumstances. This imposes a considerable limitation on the scope for discussions with the Department. Nonetheless discussions have continued. A working group under the Chairmanship of Dr John Harris and drawn from various bodies involved in the Protestant secondary education provision was formed. It acts as an advisory and consultation body on discussions with the DES. It is hoped that the appointment of a new Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Rory Quinn TD, from the formation of a new government in March 2011 will offer a new opportunity for a new direction in these negotiations.

### **Administration**

The Secondary Education Committee maintains a review and appeal procedure, in the form of an appeals sub-committee, for applicants who are dissatisfied with a decision by the grants office. This sub-committee sat in July 2010 and considered a number of appeals. Each case was reconsidered on an agreed criterion and is determined by the level of need and the amount of funds available after the current years grant payments have been made. A number of applicants had their grants increased.

The Secondary Education Committee appreciates the work of the Administrator, Mr David Wynne and the Administrative Assistant, Ms Bridie McCauley and during grants processing, Ms Penny Dewar and Ms Alison Andrew. The office is under the management of the Secretary Dr Fennelly who is also Secretary to the Committee on Management. The Committee is also grateful for the advice and assistance it receives throughout the year from its auditors Deloitte and in particular to Mr Tom Cassin, Partner, Deloitte.

**Appendix C**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY REPORT**

The Sunday School Society had a less hectic year in 2010 after our year of 200<sup>th</sup> celebrations in 2009. The main concern was the financial state and survival of the Resource Centre. Would we make it to the end of the year or were we facing closure? The result of the audit shows that we have just about broken even. This is due to the generous donations of parishes and also well-wishers and to the ongoing support of many clergy, Sunday Club leaders and parishioners. We, the Committee, along with the staff of the Resource Centre, Ms Gillian Kohlmann and Ms Betty Cox, are most appreciative of the support. As the margins of survival are still very tight please continue to remember us for all parish resources, books and gifts.

During the year we welcomed Rev Adrienne Galligan and Ms Lynn Storey to the committee and we were pleased to welcome back Rev Anne Taylor to the Committee.

Our annual autumn training evening was held in Rathmines in October and was a very successful evening. The speaker was Ms Barbara McDade who is Director of Programmes for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Rev Anne Taylor gave a synopsis of the courses available for children's groups and Ms Lynn Storey presented some seasonal craft ideas. The event was much appreciated by a large group of leaders from the four corners of the Diocese and beyond.

The annual Children's Ministry Conference *Building Blocks* was held in All Hallows College, Drumcondra in November and the keynote speaker was Rev Dr Ivy Beckwith. Ivy is well known in America as a speaker and an author of children's ministry books. She was received very warmly and feed-back forms recorded many words of praise and appreciation from a very large number of participants. The Building Blocks Committee would like to thank the Board of Education RI for the financial support for this valuable training event. Over half the participants are from Church of Ireland parishes from throughout the country and it has become an important event in the calendar for many involved in children's ministry. The 2011 *Building Blocks* Conference will be held on Saturday 12 November in Belfast and Saturday 19 November in Dublin.

We wish to thank most sincerely Rev Neil McEndoo for the frequent use of Holy Trinity Church premises for committee meetings and training events. It is much appreciated. We also thank the staff of the Resource Centre for their commitment, dedication and loyalty to the Society.