

**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 Skills (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

1. **Review**
2. **Education Amendment Act 2012**
3. **Primary Level**
4. **Redeployment of Teachers**
5. **Policy Development**
6. **Teaching Council**
7. **School Closure (primary-level)**
8. **School Opening (second-level)**
9. **Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE)**
10. **Child Protection and Safeguarding Trust**
11. **Children’s Ministry Network**
12. **Review and Development of *Follow Me***
13. **APCK Synod Exams**
14. **Work of the Board of Education Secretariat Synopses**

1. **Review**

The triennium of the General Synod Board of Education (2010-2013) concluded in March 2013. The Archbishop of Dublin, chair of the RI Board of Education thanks retiring members for their engagement and involvement in the work of the Board over the last three years and welcomes the members of the new Board, which has already commenced its triennium to 2016.

There are a number of positive developments to report, in spite of 2012 being another challenging year for schools at both primary and second-level. The strengthening of the Children’s Ministry Network continued in 2012. The purpose of this network is to strengthen the role and activity of ministry with children in dioceses across the Church. The Children’s Ministry Network (CMN) is a gathering of all Children’s Ministry Network co-ordinators, from each diocese across the Church and is chaired by Bishop Alan Abernethy. It meets a number of times a year to collaborate on the sharing of resources and ideas related to the promotion and support of Ministry with children in the Church. It is actively supported by the Board, and the Secretary is a member of CMN. At second level, the opening of a new secondary school under the patronage of the Church of Ireland is a very positive development in the life of the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough. There have also been a number of key education initiatives in 2012 such as the Literacy and Numeracy strategy, changes to Whole School Evaluation practices, new guidelines on the school book rental scheme and also the plan for the prevention of bullying in schools. On the regulatory front, the Teaching Council has introduced a new code of conduct for teachers and has changed the requirements and process for the induction of newly qualified teachers. In relation to teacher training, throughout the year, The Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE) was engaged in a process of deliberation and negotiation regarding its future. Child protection policy continues to be a priority for the Church of Ireland and the Child Protection Officer continues to be a support to parishes in this regard.

2. Education (Amendment) Act 2012

In 2012 the Board of Education (RI) considered the proposed Education (Amendment) Bill. The Board, together with the other education management bodies, made representations to various TDs and Senators on the various provisions of the draft Bill. The main provision of the Education (Amendment) Act 2012 is that it puts teacher redeployment on a statutory footing, where previously it was by agreement between patrons, management and the teacher unions.

3. Funding at Primary Level

The Board of Education (RI), together with the Church of Ireland Primary School Management Association (CIPSMA), have been active in political lobbying on this issue throughout 2012. The Board's on-going concerns about the consistent reduction in funding to primary schools were outlined by the Secretary, on behalf of the Board, to the all-party Oireachtas committee on Education and Social Protection in November 2012. The Board continues to maintain contact with public representative in advocating for schools on funding issues generally.

The raising of thresholds for teacher allocations is now also having a direct impact on schools. The Board is fully supportive of the CIPSMA in their work of supporting smaller schools through their creating of a support network and small schools steering committee.

4. Redeployment of Teachers

The Secretary, Dr Kenneth Fennelly and the Education Advisor, Ms Eimear Ryan would both like to thank schools for their co-operation during this challenging period. The Secretariat of the RI Board of Education administers the redeployment panel for teachers in Church of Ireland primary schools, on behalf of the ten primary school patrons. In early 2012, the Department of Education and Skills introduced a number of significant changes to the operations of teacher redeployment panels for that year. The Department indicated that these changes were required in order to comply with the national budgetary agreement with the EU/IMF/ECB.

5. Policy Development

The Board of Education (RI) has had a significant input into the formulation of many of these policies and, as a recognised “education partner” continues to enjoy a positive working relationship with the Department on the development of such policies. During 2012/2013 a number of policies and initiatives were instigated by the Department of Education and Skills (DE & S) such as the revised Whole School Evaluation Management Leadership and Learning (WSE MLL) procedures, incidental school inspections and the new Literacy and Numeracy strategy.

6. Teaching Council

In March 2012, the Minister for Education and Skills appointed the Secretary to the Teaching Council. This has enabled the Board to be briefed on a range of issues related to the regulation of teaching as a profession, such as the new Code of Conduct for all 73,000 teachers, which was published by the Teaching Council in June 2012. The Teaching Council also revised the requirements relating to the induction of newly qualified teachers. From September 2012, induction for newly

qualified teachers, previously a voluntary process was made compulsory. This affects all newly qualified teachers, including those graduating from CICE in 2013. From September 2012, the Teaching Council assumed responsibility for the determination of regulations relating to teaching probation of newly qualified teachers. Probation is a vital element in the teacher training process as it enables the newly qualified teacher to grow into the teaching profession “ex praxis.” The current period of probation is 100 days, to be completed in the first three years following appointment. This requirement was reduced from 180 days in 2011 and it is hoped that the Teaching Council will not reduce the probation period any further.

7. School Closure (primary level)

Members of General Synod will recall that the Rt Rev Michael Burrows, Bishop of Cashel and Ossory, announced to General Synod 2012 that, having discussed the matter with the Board of Management, he intended to withdraw his patronage from Killegney NS, Co Wexford. The school was due to become a one-teacher school in September 2012. Regrettably, Killegney NS closed in June 2012, its roll number was suppressed and the teaching staff redeployed.

8. School Opening (second level)

The Board of Education (RI) is delighted to advise the General Synod of the opening of a new voluntary secondary school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin. Following a sustained campaign by a group of parishioners and their respective rectors in both Greystones and Bray, the Minister for Education and Skills announced in September 2012 that the patronage of the proposed new secondary school at Blacklion, Greystones, Co Wicklow would be awarded to the Archbishop of Dublin. The new secondary school will be called Temple Carrig Secondary School and will be non-fee charging. Temple Carrig Secondary School will open in September 2014, with building work to commence in Autumn 2013. At full capacity it will accommodate over seven hundred students. While the new school will be under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, it will, in practice, be a co-educational and Christian multi-denominational school. Provision has been made in the plans of the new school for a “quiet room,” chaplain’s office and designated religious education teaching rooms. Archbishop Jackson appointed the first Board of Management of the school in February 2013, which will be chaired by Mr Garrett Fennell, a solicitor and parishioner of St Patrick’s, Greystones, Co. Wicklow.

(Further second level report in SEC Report).

9. Church of Ireland College of Education

The following statement has been received from the Church of Ireland College of Education by the Board of Education RI for reporting to General Synod:

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) and Higher Education Authority (HEA) requires that all Colleges of Education find new homes in a university-led configuration for the future. This is part of a country-wide Governmental review and revision of university education. This is therefore a stated Governmental requirement of CICE and, when implemented, it will restore in new surroundings a

relationship of learning and participation directly enjoyed with those in other disciplines in third-level on the part of students and staff of CICE.

In September 2012, the Department of Education and Skills published *The Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland*. There will be six designated University-led centres for re-structured Initial Teacher Education across the State, three of these in the Dublin region. The Minister accepted in full the recommendations of the Report. In late October 2012 he instructed the Higher Education Authority to move towards their implementation as a matter of urgency. Future public funding of all institutions, including CICE, requires co-operation with the new policy. CICE is obliged to locate within one of the three Dublin configurations. The Minister has stated that CICE cannot remain as a stand-alone institution. However, its continued existence and role is assured in a larger institutional setting.

The Minister for Education and Skills wrote to the College on 26th October 2012 stating: “I wish to assure you that every care will be taken to protect the Protestant ethos of the college in order to ensure a supply of teachers for Church of Ireland primary schools and other primary schools in the Reformed Church traditions.” An extensive series of discussions took place between CICE and the lead universities in the Dublin area (namely the Dublin City University, the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and the University of Dublin, Trinity College). Negotiations are on-going with Dublin City University (DCU) and the Board of CICE are satisfied that the future role of CICE can be secured in DCU.

The views of a range of stakeholders have been, and remain of key importance to CICE in securing the best possible outcome of its discussions. Stakeholders whose views have been sought include teachers, principals and Board of Management members in primary schools under Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Methodist and Society of Friends patronage throughout the country. Other stakeholders whose views have been gained are the school Patrons, the CIPSMA and the General Synod Board of Education. The following were of significant importance to all of the different groups:

- That the system of restricted entry to the CICE B.Ed be retained for entrants from reformed Christian backgrounds;
- That there continue to be specialist preparation for teaching in small schools with multi-level classes;
- That preparation to teach the Religious Education programme *Follow Me* be retained;
- That the majority of the CICE cohort’s Teaching Practice placements be in primary schools under Church of Ireland, Presbyterian, Methodist and Society of Friends patronage;
- That these graduates be identifiable as CICE graduates on completion of their programme.

All of these issues are of central significance in the on-going negotiations and have also been vigorously communicated to the Minister for Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority.

10. Child Protection and Safeguarding Trust

The Child Protection Officer (CPO RI), Ms Renée English, continues to provide advice and guidance on a range of issues to parishes and dioceses throughout the Republic. She liaises with both the HSE and An Garda Síochána in relation to the referral and management of child protection cases. Historical abuse cases, while small in number, require careful management and record keeping and some cases may remain ongoing over a number of years.

The CPO maintains links with voluntary organisations and is secretary of a Child Protection Network. This informal network provides a forum for child protection personnel in the voluntary and community sector to discuss and influence child protection policy development and to share resources. Links are also maintained with colleagues from Churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Church of England.

Training in Safeguarding Trust for panels and workers was carried out during the year by the diocesan trainers and by the CPO. Select vestry members were invited to attend a number of the training sessions. The CPO provided training for the Dioceses of Armagh, Raphoe, Kilmore, Limerick and Killaloe.

The annual diocesan support teams' meeting was held in Church of Ireland House in November. There was a good attendance and wide diocesan representation. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity to brief team members on legal and policy developments impacting on child protection practice, including legislation to place Children First on a statutory footing. In addition, Ecclesiastical staff members Mr Scott Hayes and Mr Cathal McKenna provided a very practical workshop on insurance issues for parishes.

The Board of Education greatly appreciates the contribution to Safeguarding Trust implementation which is provided by dedicated volunteers from the diocesan support teams.

The annual training/refresher day for clergy was held in October. The training provides an opportunity for members of clergy to update their knowledge and for new incumbents and those coming from outside the jurisdiction to familiarise themselves with the child protection requirements of the Church of Ireland.

The CPO provided Safeguarding Trust training for students of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute in conjunction with Ms Margaret Yarr, CPO NI.

A training programme for junior leaders has been developed in conjunction with the Children's Ministry Network and the Rev Anne Taylor. It was piloted in September and received positive feedback. It is planned to develop this training and identify suitable trainers in the dioceses.

The CPO maintained her registration as a Keeping Safe trainer, delivering the revised programme which includes disability awareness and requires the delivery of the 12 hour training programme, monitored by the HSE.

The Secretaries to the Boards of Education and the CPOs met the Board of The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) in September to discuss possible policy development requirements in relation to one-to-one working and the use of technology in youth work. Training attended by the CPO included a briefing by Mr

Gordon Jeyes CEO designate of the planned new Child and Family Support Agency, a National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA) conference entitled 'Managing the risk - policy and practice in a time of change' and a National Youth Council of Ireland seminar on Garda vetting for the youth work sector.

It is important that children are aware of the Church's commitment to keeping them safe.

Two new resources have been developed to meet this need. One is a colourful information card for children from ten years upwards and the other is a downloadable poster suitable for younger children.

The Garda Vetting Bureau Act (Children and Vulnerable Persons 2012) was enacted in December 2012. It places vetting on a statutory footing. Junior leaders now meet the criteria of those required to be vetted.

The processing of Garda vetting applications has continued to absorb a large amount of the CPO's time as an authorised signatory.

It was intended to commence a pilot online vetting application system in 2012 but this project was delayed for reasons outside the Board's control. However, this has recently been re-activated and online vetting will be available in 2013.

11. Children's Ministry Network (CMN)

The remit of the Board of Education (RI) is not confined to just formal school based education. In this regard, both Education Secretaries are involved in the establishment of the Children's Ministry Network within the Church. The CMN facilitates contact between those involved in children's ministry in each diocese and promotes and encourages contact and support among diocesan children's ministry co-ordinators. The CMN is still establishing itself within the life of the Church, but in the last year has developed significantly. It has met a number of times during the year, shared resources and developed a website as a resource to people involved in children's ministry. Ministry to Children should be regarded as a key component in the mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel and looks forward to the full support of the Church community for the CMN in the years ahead.

12. Review and Development of Follow Me

The *Follow Me* Religious Education Curriculum at Primary level is continuing to be popular with teachers, parents and children in all the Church of Ireland primary schools, and is also taught in the Methodist and Presbyterian primary schools. It is designed to introduce children to the person of Jesus Christ, encourage familiarity with Scripture and to experience the Christian faith as part of their daily lives. *Follow Me* has completed a full curricular cycle and so it is timely for it to be revised and developed. Following discussions, the Board is convening an expert group to initiate the process of review.

13. APCK Synod Exams

Synod Examinations are funded by the Association for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (APCK). The Board was advised by the APCK that a query was raised in relation to equality legislation and the holding of the Synod Examination. Preliminary advice has been received by the APCK and further legal advice has been sought. Consequently, there were no Synod Examinations in 2012.

14. Work of the Board of Education Staff

The Secretary and the Education Advisor continued to provide assistance and advice to schools on a range of issues relating to school management. Given the increasing regulatory responsibilities being placed on Boards of Management, demand for this service increases year on year. Both the Secretary and the Education Advisor were actively involved in representing the Board of Education and Boards of Management at various policy meetings in the Department of Education and Skills (DES) throughout the year. The Board continued to advocate on behalf of Boards of Management in 2012. A number of meetings were held with key political figures including the Minister for Education and Skills, ministerial advisors and senior DES staff. On Easter Monday the Secretary addressed the 2012 INTO Congress in Killarney and attended the ASTI Conference in Cork the following day. Following comments made at the CIPSMA conference in March 2012, the Secretary General of the DES, Mr Seán O’Fhoghlú had a follow-up meeting with the Secretary in Church of Ireland House, Rathmines. A report of the meeting was subsequently made to the CIPSMA Executive. In 2012, (in connection with the impact of budget reductions to primary schools), the Secretary held meetings with Diocesan Education Boards/groups in Cashel and Ossory, Cork, Dublin, Kilmore, Limerick and Tuam and also delivered training to Boards of Management at various meetings across the country.

Maintaining links and relationships with other education partners and bodies to promote the profile of the Church of Ireland in the education sphere, is an important part of the work of the Board.

In this regard, the Board and its staff liaised with the following bodies in 2012:

The Irish National Teachers Association (INTO); The Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI); The Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS); The National Trustees Forum of Community and Comprehensive Schools (NTFCCS); The Joint Managerial Body/Irish School-Heads Association (JMB/ISA); The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD); The Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN); The Catholic Primary School Management Association (CPSMA); The National Association of Boards of Management for Special Education (NABMSE); The Irish Vocational Educational Association (IVEA); The Catholic Schools Partnership (CSP); The National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB); The Health Service Executive (HSE); The Sustainable Energy Association of Ireland (SEAI); The Department of Education and Skills (Minister and Ministers Office, Buildings, Governance, Inspectorate); Department of the Taoiseach; Revenue; Teaching Council; Educate Together; An Forás Patrúnachta; National Parents Council and Compass; An Garda Síochána; Ecclesiastical Insurance; the Methodist Board of Education; COI Children’s Ministry Network; Past Students Association of CICE; RC Episcopal Commission on Education and (RC) Archdiocese of Dublin.

B. Board of Education NI

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 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) and the proposed Controlled Sector Body;
- 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. Prepare for requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups legislation;
- 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 and a partner in the Building Blocks conferences.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA):** A summary of the legislative progress of the Education Bill to establish the ESA and a report of the submission of the Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC).
2. **Controlled Sector Support Body:** The Board warmly welcomes the establishment of a Working Group with transferor representation to establish the new body.
3. **Shared Education:** The churches express their commitment to shared education in a submission to a ministerial advisory group.
4. **Religious Education (RE):** Concerns are raised about the future of curriculum support for RE teachers.
5. **Teacher training:** Reductions to post-graduate teacher training admissions are noted however concern is expressed at the numbers of unemployed newly qualified teachers.
6. **Consultations responded to:** Four important responses by the Transferor Representatives' Council.
7. **Safeguarding Trust:** Report of the work of the Child Protection Officer NI.
8. **Building Blocks - Children's Ministry Conferences:** Report of the two annual conferences for children's ministry workers.

9. Annual Theological Lectures at Queen’s University Belfast (QUB): 2013 lectures were well attended and widely appreciated.

10. Membership

Report

1. Establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA)

The legislation to enable the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) is currently passing through the NI Assembly. The legislation will bring together the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs), the Youth Council, Staff Commission and the statutory functions of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

The creation of this single authority for all schools in Northern Ireland represents the most significant change in administration of education in forty years. ESA will be the employing authority for all staff in grant-aided schools and its main functions will be: Improving education and raising standards in schools, planning the schools’ estate, providing support for school governors and providing key services to schools eg, school transport, school maintenance, school meals, and youth services.

ESA will be governed by a Board of 20 members of whom 8 will be persons nominated by the political parties determined by their representation in the Assembly. The Minister will appoint a Chairperson and 4 Catholic Trustee nominees, 4 Transferor nominees and 4 persons representative of the community in NI.

Transferors have welcomed the Bill and are heartened by the fact that their existing legal rights are both acknowledged and protected in the ESA Bill, enabling them to continue to play a constructive role in partnership with others in education in Northern Ireland. During the Committee stage of the Bill passing through the Assembly, the TRC made written and oral submissions expressing their views and taking the opportunity to suggest various amendments to the detail of the Bill. Transferors urged that the Bill is scrutinised with appropriate amendments made and the Bill pass into legislation without undue delay. The TRC response suggested amendments to clarify and strengthen the functions of sectoral bodies. The response also suggested a simplification of the process of appointing transferor governors to secondary schools along with a proposal that school governors may request that Religious Education is included during school inspections.

It is anticipated that ESA will become operational during the latter half of 2013 and until that time the ELBs etc will continue to deliver key services to schools. In the interim a shadow ESA will begin work to ensure everything is in place to enable a switch over of authority at an appropriate future date.

The transferor churches, that is, the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, which transferred their schools into state control in the early 20th century, have a right to nominate a total of 4 persons to the Minister for appointment to the ESA Board. The three churches have devised their own processes to bring forward nominations. The Board of Education NI on behalf of the Church of Ireland has decided to seek expressions of interest from church members. A panel from the Board will meet interested persons in order to make a

decision on nomination. The exact division of the four places among the three Churches will be agreed by the Transferor Representatives' Council.

2. Controlled Sector Support Body

Alongside the ESA there will also be support bodies. A new support body has been proposed for the Controlled Sector and a Working Group has been announced by the Minister to make all necessary preparations for this body to enable it to be operational as soon as ESA is in place. Transferors are represented on the Working Group which has been meeting regularly since September 2012. In January 2013 a series of information events were arranged by the Working Group in each Education and Library Board (ELB) area to enable principals, staff and governors of controlled schools to hear about proposals for the body and to provide feed-back. Thus far the general response to the proposals has been very positive. The Board has warmly welcomed this development which for the first time ensures that the controlled sector will have a representative voice and placed on an equal footing with other sectors.

3. Shared Education

In the autumn of 2012, the Minister of Education announced the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Group to examine the advancement of shared education in NI. The Group was asked to use a wide definition of shared education which was to include all education sectors, and to meet the needs of and provide for the education together of learners in all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status. It is to involve schools of different ownership and sectoral identity and ethos, and deliver educational benefits to learners, promote efficient and effective use of resources, and promote equality of opportunity, good relations, and respect for identity and community cohesion.

The Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) made a written and oral submission and its response can be found on the Church of Ireland website. The Churches stressed their strong commitment to the development of shared education and urged that incentives should be introduced to promote the development of creative ways to share facilities, classrooms, staff, support services and equipment. Despite the wide brief given to the Group, the TRC urged that a key objective should be to encourage shared education between the two largest sectors of schools – Controlled and Maintained, which are attended by a majority of children from Protestant or Catholic backgrounds. They also pointed to good practice examples of sharing within various independently funded schemes already operating in NI eg, the Queen's University Belfast Shared Education Programme, the Fermanagh Trust, and the North Eastern Education and Library Board Primary Integrated/enriching Education (PIEEE) project.

The Group reported to the Minister in February 2013.

4. Religious education (RE)

Until recently the TRC Executive used to meet termly with RE Advisers from the Education and Library Boards (ELBs). However the reduction in the number of advisers to two and the adjustment of their work schedule has impacted the regularity these meetings. There remains a concern about the extent of future

curriculum support for RE teachers within the new arrangements for the ESA. One of the transferors' proposals is that the Controlled Schools' Sectoral Support Body could have a role in supporting RE in Controlled schools. The RE Advisory Group working with the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) continues to develop resources to support the teaching of RE; recent work has concentrated on devising non-statutory guidance for the revised RE syllabus. The Churches acknowledge the continued support of CCEA at a time of budgetary restraint and sincerely appreciate the commitment of the group's members to this work.

5. Teacher training

There have been no significant developments regarding the future of Stranmillis College following the decision last year by the Minister of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL), not to proceed with a proposed merger with the QUB School of Education. The outcome of a study commissioned by DEL of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland is still awaited. However in May 2012 the Department of Education reduced the number of post-graduate places for trainee teachers by 20%. The Department has been trying to limit the number of teachers who are trained, at a time when there are widespread redundancies and many unemployed new teachers. The biggest cut is to the post-primary Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The changes mostly affect Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster. Neither the two teacher training colleges, St Mary's and Stranmillis, nor the Open University have lost any places. The prospects for graduate teachers remain bleak and it is a matter of great concern that in 2012 it was reported that less than one in ten newly qualified teachers in NI secured a full time teaching post.

6. Consultations responded to:

- a. Public consultation on the future of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) Scheme.
- b. Submission to the NI Assembly Committee for Education – Committee stage consideration of the Education Bill.
- c. An Independent Review of the Common funding Scheme.
- d. Ministerial Advisory Group on the advancement of Shared Education in Northern Ireland.

7. Safeguarding Trust

The Child Protection Officer NI (CPONI) continues to provide advice and guidance regarding the implementation of Safeguarding Trust to parishes, dioceses, mission agencies and related organisations throughout Northern Ireland. She liaises closely with the PSNI, Social Services and other agencies whenever issues relating to child protection arise within parishes and dioceses.

The annual Safeguarding Trust training event for newly ordained clergy and first incumbents was facilitated by the CPONI in November 2012. Training events for panel members in Armagh, Connor, Derry and Down and Dromore dioceses were held during March and April 2013.

The CPO attended a training evening for junior leaders in Rathfarnham parish. This event was organised by Ms Renée English, the Child Protection Officer RI (CPORI) who had arranged for Ms Jenny Price - Safeguarding Advisor for the Diocese of Wakefield to facilitate the training and share ideas and resources from her diocese. Together with CPORI, the CPONI delivered training to students in the Theological Institute in November 2012.

The CPONI attended a number of training courses dealing with child protection and safeguarding including the National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA) conference ‘Sexual Abuse – The Journey of Survivors’. The CPONI has been trained as a Keeping Vulnerable Adults Safe trainer which has provided helpful insight in developing guidance for working with vulnerable adults in church settings.

The Memorandum of Co-operation between Faith and Worship Organisations in NI and the Police Service for NI (PSNI), which deals with management of sex offenders in their attendance at places of worship, continues to be a most significant development. This ensures safer management through formal agreements in the small number of situations where offenders wish to return to parish worship. The memorandum also allows for sharing of information between the justice agencies and the Church where there are issues of public safety and child protection.

The Diocesan Evaluation Teams continue with their very valuable work in visiting (on a triennial basis) and supporting parishes. The Board of Education offers sincere thanks to the evaluators for their continuing diligence and expertise in carrying out these parish visits. Mrs Claire Geoghegan (AccessNI Co-ordinator in the office of the Board of Education in Belfast) continues to process in excess of one hundred applications for Enhanced Disclosure checks to AccessNI per month, providing an important service to parishes.

From September 2012, there were some changes to safeguarding arrangements in relation to pre-employment vetting of staff and volunteers working with children and young people in Northern Ireland. These changes arose from the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, which amends the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. This includes the introduction of a new, more limited definition of “regulated activity” – the term which defines voluntary or paid work with children. The new definition of regulated activity is the basis for eligibility for an enhanced disclosure certificate with a check against the children’s barred list. This is the level of checks the Board of Education NI as an umbrella body for Church of Ireland parishes and dioceses, has been undertaking on behalf of those working with children. Changes have also been introduced regarding regulated activity with vulnerable adults. Information regarding these changes has been circulated to clergy and is now included in training for panel members.

8. Building Blocks Children’s Ministry Conferences

In November 2012, the ninth annual Building Blocks conference took place in Belfast and Dublin. The organising committees comprise representatives of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Scripture Union and also some new churches from the Dublin area. The Belfast and Dublin events together drew over 400 delegates from a wide range of Churches, with the Church of Ireland having significant representation at both venues. The key-note speaker was

Mr Bob Hartman a well known author of children’s ministry books with expertise in storytelling. These conferences which 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: <http://www.buildingblocks.ie>

On the wider issue of this Board’s role within Children’s Ministry, the Secretary is a member of the Children’s Ministry Network group which is presently considering potential areas of work for such a group across all the dioceses of the Church of Ireland.

9. Annual Theological Lectures at Queen’s University Belfast (QUB)

The 2013 lectures were held later than usual this year on 22nd and 23rd April and were delivered by Dr Elaine Storkey a well-known academic and broadcaster. Dr Storkey is Director of Education for the Church of England Church Army and is president of Tearfund. She has lectured at King’s College, Birkbeck College and Oxford University. These annual lectures which continue to be well attended and appreciated by a wide range of people are arranged by the Church of Ireland Chaplaincy at QUB and funded by this Board.

10. Membership

In September 2012, the Board marked the retirement of Archbishop Alan Harper with a presentation in appreciation of his wise chairmanship of this committee and thanked him for his commitment to education throughout his primacy. The Board welcomes Archbishop Richard Clarke as its new chairman and also Mrs Hope Kerr as the newly elected Clogher lay representative. Members also offer good wishes to Mr Samuel Morrow (Clogher diocese) on his retirement from this Board and thank him for his contribution to its work.

Appendix A

THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

The following are the members of the Board and its committees as on 31 March 2013.

THE GENERAL SYNOD BOARD OF EDUCATION

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

Mr Samuel Harper

Mrs Ethne Harkness

Ven Robin Bantry White

Rev George Davison

Elected members

Armagh

Rev Canon John McKegey

Mr Thomas Flannagan

Clogher

Rev Canon Bryan Kerr

Mrs Hope Kerr

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 Wilfred Baker

Limerick and Killaloe

Rev Canon Robert Warren

Ms Margaret Brickenden

Co-opted member

Mrs Rosemary Forde	Mr Michael Hall (ISA)
Mrs Helen McClenaghan	Mr Alan Cox (ISA)
Mr Roy McKinney	Mr Ian Coombes (ISA)
Mrs Patricia Wallace	Ms Rosemary Maxwell-Eager (ASTI)
Ms Claire Bruton (CIYD)	Ms Susan Farrell-Malone (TUI)
Rev Brian O'Rourke	Ms Joyce Perdue
Rev Anne Taylor (Sunday School Society)	Ms Rachel Frazer
Dr Anne Lodge (Third Level)	Ms Sarah Richards

Secretary to the General Synod Board of Education:

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

Secretary to the Board of Education (NI) (in attendance)

Rev Ian Ellis, Church of Ireland House, 61-67 Donegal St, Belfast BT1 2QH.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014)**

The Archbishop of Armagh
The Archbishop of Dublin
Mrs Ethne Harkness
Ven Robin Bantry White
Rev Canon John McKegney
Mr James Bunting
Mr Thomas Flannagan
Rev Brian O'Rourke
Mr Michael Hall
Mr Adrian Oughton

BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Ex-officio members

The Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev Richard Clarke
Bishop of Clogher, Rt Rev John McDowell
Bishop of Down and Dromore, Rt Rev Harold Miller
Bishop of Kilmore, Rt Rev Ferran Glenfield (*elect*)
The Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev Alan Abernethy
The Bishop of Derry, Rt Rev Kenneth Good
Lay Honorary Secretary of General Synod, Mrs Ethne Harkness
Clerical Honorary Secretary of General Synod, Rev George Davison

Elected members

Armagh	Rev Canon John McKegey Mr Thomas Flannagan
Clogher	Rev Canon Bryan Kerr Mrs Hope Kerr
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
Mrs Helen McClenaghan
Mr Roy McKinney
Mrs Rosemary Forde
Canon Wilfred Young
Professor Kenneth Bell
Mr David Brown (CIYD)

Observers

Rev Canon Peter McDowell
Mr James Kerr

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

Ex officio members:

The Archbishop of Dublin

Honorary Secretaries - Ven Robin Bantry White, Mr Samuel Harper

Elected by House of Bishops:

Bishop of Tuam, Killlala and Achonry, Rt Rev Patrick Rooke

Bishop of Cork, Rt Rev Paul Colton

Diocesan Representatives: Mr Adrian Oughton, Rev Gillian Wharton

Post primary representatives: Mr Michael Hall, Ms Rosemary Maxwell-Eager

Third level representatives: Professor Paul Johnston, Dr Anne Lodge

Primary representatives: Rev Brian O'Rourke, Ms Rachel Frazer

CIYD: Ms Claire Bruton

Sunday School Society: Rev Anne Taylor

Co-options: none.

Observers:

Ms Daphne Wood (Methodist Church)

Rev Trevor Gribben (Presbyterian Church)

Secretary, Board of Education (Republic of Ireland)

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

Appendix B

SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT 2013

Membership

Church of Ireland

The Rt Rev Paul Colton, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross (Chairman)

Mrs Joan Bruton

Mr Edward Lindsey

Mrs Patricia O'Malley

Rev Brian O'Rourke

Ms Elizabeth Oldham

Mr Adrian Oughton

Mr Geoffrey Perrin

The Presbyterian Church

Rev Mary Hunter (Deputy Chairman)

Mrs Eleanor Petrie

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

Dr Kenneth Fennelly

Administrator (Grants Scheme)

Mr David Wynne

Secondary Education Committee

The Secondary Education Committee (SEC) is a corporate 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. The distribution of a Block Grant provided by the Department of Education and Skills (DE&S) to ensure necessitous Protestant children may attend Protestant secondary schools and the representation of 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, with members of the committee being simultaneously directors of the company.

Block Grant Scheme

Enrolments in the twenty fee charging schools totalled 7,732 Day Pupils (7,577 in previous year); 2,071 Boarders (2,143); 9,803 in total (9,720). This figure does not include the five comprehensive schools. In the school year the audited accounts showed the total amount received from the DE&S, was €6,500,000 (€6,481,720), the grant in aid of fees totalled €6,540,396 (€6,541,479). The net cost of administering the SEC scheme was €145,807 (€151,205). There is no grant to assist the running of the office.

The following numbers of grants were awarded in respect of the 2012/13 school year: 1,623 day grants (1,672), 819 boarding grants (872), in total 2,442 (2,544).

The Committee agreed to retain the grants for the school year 2012/13 on a scale for boarding from €70 to €767 (€140 - €767) day €174 - €820 (€80 - €820). 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

Budget 2012 also announced plans by the DE&S to conduct an analysis of all fee-charging schools to determine schools net income from fees. The DE&S has been in contact with schools recently and has also met with the Committee on Management in this regard. It is expected that the results of that analysis will be published in Spring 2013 and will display publically, the levels of funding and income which exist in particular secondary schools. It will enable all interested parties to ascertain for themselves, the financial situations of each of the Protestant fee-charging secondary schools.

Budget 2013 saw a further increase in the pupil teacher ratio to 23:1 for schools who were outside the free education scheme. This will increase the strain on Protestant fee-charging schools to provide a full range of subject and curricular choice to students while, at the same time, seeking to avoid employing significant numbers of privately paid teachers. The pupil teacher ratio (ptr) has now been increased under three successive budgets. It is clear that a policy is being pursued at governmental level to “squeeze” fee-charging schools. Yet it also seems clear that a significant portion of current fee-charging Church of Ireland secondary schools will remain outside the free scheme as the costs associated with running their schools are too high to contemplate any other option. However other schools are in a different position, to the extent that those with responsibility for the management and governance of the schools are reflecting carefully on the future funding provisions for their schools. Should the current Minister be minded to increase the ptr to the level suggested in the McCarthy Report (28:1), it is hard to see how the financial and curricular implications of such a reality would not push a number of schools to actively engage with the Department of Education and Skills in relation to

other funding mechanisms, while concurrently it would likely cause other schools to either significantly curtail their curricular choices to students or employ more privately paid teachers and increase fees (or perhaps a combination of all three). What is clear however is that changes in the funding mechanisms for a number of Protestant voluntary secondary schools will be seen in the short to medium term.

In this regard, Kilkenny College, a fee paying boarding school under the Patronage of the Incorporated Society for the Promotion of Protestant Education, announced in February 2013 that it intends to enter the Department of Education and Skills' Free Tuition Scheme. This entitles the School to the full Pupil/Teacher Ratio and the return of Department Support and Services Grants. The SEC boarding grant remains payable to support boarding families on the same basis as all other pupils attending SEC boarding schools. The School retains control of its admissions Policy and ethos in accordance with the Education Act 1998. Kilkenny College follows Wilsons Hospital School, Multyfarnham, Co Westmeath who entered the Free Scheme in 2011.

The SEC also wishes to advise the Churches of the opening of a new co-educational voluntary secondary school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson. The new school will be called Temple Carrig Secondary School. It is to be built on a site owned by the Department of Education and Skills at Blacklion, Greystones, Co Wicklow. The building of the new school will commence in September 2013 and open in September 2014 with capacity for 750 students when fully operational.

The SEC exists to increase access for children from Protestant traditions to attend second level schools of a Protestant tradition. In this regard, the SEC again notes with concern the continuing trend of low levels of Protestant children transferring to Protestant second level schools from primary level.

Administration

The 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. The Appeals Committee considers a number of appeals annually. Each case was reconsidered on agreed criteria and is determined by the level of need and the amount of funds available after the current year's grant payments have been made. A number of applicants had their grants increased.

The Committee appreciates the work of the Administrator, Mr David Wynne and the Administrative Assistant, Ms Bridie McAuley. A number of administrative support staff are engaged during the busy processing period. The office is under the management of the Secretary, Dr Kenneth Fennelly. The Committee is also grateful for the advice and assistance it receives throughout the year from its auditors Deloitte and in particular Mr Thomas Cassin, Partner, Deloitte.

