

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE
GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND
REPORT 2004**

SYNOD EXAMINATION

The prize winners for 2002-2003 examination were as follows:

Year 1

1 st	Avril Maxwell	St Aidan's Comprehensive (Kilmore)
2 nd	Alice Kehoe	Alexandra College
3 rd	Danielle Neale	Wilson's Hospital School

Year 2

1 st	Catherine Blair	Royal and Prior Comprehensive
2 nd	Lia Prendergast	Alexandra College
	Sarah Cunningham	The King's Hospital
3 rd	Lucy Abraham	The King's Hospital

Year 3

1 st	Emma Curtis	Bandon Grammar School
2 nd	Lucy Cunningham	Sligo Grammar School
3 rd	Emma Adams	Monaghan Collegiate School
	Lynne Grey	St Aidan's Comprehensive

Junior Division Prizes

Daniel Finnegan	East Glendalough School
Evanna Mills	The High School
Aoife Nevin	Ashton School
Jenny Keegan	Newpark School
Síona Cameron	Newpark School
Ashling Harrison	Cavan Royal
Siobhan O'Neill	St Andrew's College
Dawn Farrell	St Andrew's College
Emma Condell	St Bricin's School (Kilmore)
Tanya Keyes	St Bricin's School

Year 4

1 st	Rachel Bourke	Sligo Grammar School
2 nd	Jason Barrington	East Glendalough School
3 rd	Lorraine Brennan	East Glendalough School

Year 5/6

1 st	Wendy Bustard	Royal and Prior School
2 nd	Nancy Reilly	Wilson's Hospital School
3 rd	Alison Holmes	Wilson's Hospital School
	Laura McMorrow	Sligo Grammar School

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Senior Division Prizes

Daniel Keyes	St Bricin's School
Hazel McMeekin	St Aidan's Comprehensive

Hackett Special Prize

Sarah Nairn	Royal and Prior School
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The Board would express its sincere appreciation to the APCK for the funding of the Synod Examination prizes and to Mrs Linda Clarke who undertakes so carefully the onerous task of moderating the scripts submitted by each school. Mrs Clarke also advises on the structure of the examinations. The examinations are set by the individual schools and the three best scripts in each section are forwarded by the individual school for consideration. It is hoped that all schools will move to using the syllabi for the subject set for the various examinations at Junior and Leaving Certificate levels. However the Synod Syllabus continues to be available for those who wish to use it. Some restructuring in the awarding of prizes has been made and it is hoped that this, together with an increase in the level of prizes, will encourage more schools to participate in the examination. The Board also awards book tokens to all participating schools.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Personalia
2. TRC responses to important areas of development in the field of education
 - a. Ethos and Education
 - b. Post Primary Curriculum review
 - c. University 'top-up' fees
 - d. Costello Report
3. Additional responses by Board of Education
 - a. Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill
 - b. Centre of Excellence for Autism – Middletown
 - c. Creating a vision for all our children
4. RE Core Syllabus Review – an outline of the proposals for change in the RE syllabus for use in every grant-aided school in NI.

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5. Safeguarding Trust – Developments in implementing the Code of Practice of working with children and young people
6. Children’s ministry
 - a. Building Blocks Conference
 - b. Children’s Ministry review
7. Ace Ventures

Personalia

During the period of the report a number of changes occurred in membership. The Board welcomed Revd SB Forde replacing Revd MRK Ferry who resigned as Connor clerical representative following his appointment to Castlerock parochial group in Derry diocese. Mrs Mae Glenn, lay representative for Clogher Diocese also resigned from the Board because of ill-health and has been replaced by Mr SB Morrow. The Board is most grateful to the two outgoing members for their contributions to its discussion and work, and in particular offers prayers and good wishes to Mrs Glenn for improved health.

In February 2004 the Board accepted with regret the resignation of Mrs Muriel Crockett who is unable to attend meetings at present for personal reasons. Members expressed their understanding and offered sincere gratitude to Muriel for her invaluable assistance to the Board as one of the Honorary Secretaries.

Mr Jack Dickson OBE

It was with great sadness that members learned of the death of Mr Jack Dickson, a distinguished educationalist and faithful former member of the NI Board. Mr Dickson was a former Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board and originator of the Craigavon two-tier system of education, still known today as the ‘Dickson Plan’. The Archbishop officiated at his funeral service in St Mark’s, Armagh and paid tribute to the outstanding contribution Jack made to both the Church of Ireland and to the development of education.

TRC developments

The Transferor Representative Council (TRC) which represents the interests of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist Churches has taken initiatives and made submissions endorsed by this Board, in the light of significant developments, in the field of education.

Ethos and Education

For over a year the TRC has been conducting some research and developing a paper on the subject of ethos in Controlled schools.

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The Controlled school sector historically is under the sphere of influence of the churches through transferor governor representation at school level and transferor representatives at Education and Library Board (ELB) level. Controlled schools being the effective successors of original church schools have historic church relatedness which might be expected to be reflected in the ethos of these schools.

The TRC has had a growing concern that the ethos of Controlled schools is variably defined – some schools express a clear Christian ethos others less so. By contrast, the TRC perceived the ethos of schools in the Maintained, Integrated and Voluntary Grammar sectors to be much more fully resolved.

There is however a fundamental difficulty in trying to express the ‘church relatedness’ of Controlled schools; namely, the churches are not the only stake-holders within this sector. Governance is shared and there are therefore potentially many different understandings of school ethos. Fear of disturbing equilibrium among governors may explain the diffuse nature of existing ethos statements.

The TRC believed that it was important to take a lead role in initiating a discussion about ethos and therefore set about the task of developing a transferor’s contribution to a discussion of an ethos and values statement for Controlled schools. This statement would emphasise the historic church relatedness and life values from the Judeo-Christian faith tradition, but which would hopefully also rest easily with those of other faiths or no faith background.

What is an ethos and values statement?

Ethos has been likened to an atmosphere which infuses every aspect of school life and which is determined by the fundamental values held by the school. A charter of values should state in clear simple terms those things which the school considers to be of greatest worth and importance to its function as a community of persons engaged in the process of education.

The TRC has developed a suggested ethos and values statement for Controlled schools. It has consulted widely on its paper and received many helpful comments from transferor representatives, the churches’ Boards of Education, and ELB chief Executives. The present status of the document is as a contribution to a discussion within a Board of Governors when a school prospectus is being devised or reviewed. The most recent version of this document is attached to this report as appendix A.

Post-Primary Curriculum review

During 2003, the Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment (CCEA) published its proposals for the curriculum for young people aged 11-14. Having listened to the views of teachers, employers, parents and young people, CCEA has proposed ‘a more coherent, enjoyable, motivating and relevant curriculum’.

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Under the new proposals, schools will be expected to: provide a minimum entitlement for all pupils, meet requirements relating to preparation for life and work, place emphasis on a range of important skills and capabilities, make clear connections between different areas of the curriculum, use real life issues as starting points for learning, assess pupils skills and capabilities as well as knowledge and understanding.

The TRC developed a response to these proposals incorporating comments from the various Churches' Boards of Education. It gave a welcome to the general direction of the proposals towards more coherence, relevance and enjoyment for pupils. The reductions in content and new emphasis on flexibility were also welcomed. The Council supported the new area of Learning for Life and Work and believed that it should help prepare children to become well rounded, responsible, fully integrated citizens of the future.

Concern was however expressed regarding the lack of acknowledgement of the role of religion in all aspects of life and the lack of stress upon the underpinning values of the Christian faith. The Council is convinced that religion has a valuable contribution to make within all learning areas, and has a positive role to play in the holistic development of individuals, in developing responsible citizenship and exploring the values which promote tolerance and understanding within the wider community.

University 'top-up' fees

In January 2004, the government published its legislation to introduce variable tuition fees in higher education. These propose to enable universities in England to charge up to £3,000 per year for full-time under-graduates. In the face of opposition even from its own MPs, the government announced a number of concessions including a new financial assistance package for the most disadvantaged students. In January 2004, the legislation was passed by a very small majority for a second reading in Parliament.

The TRC responded to the initial white paper indicating its disapproval of 'top-up fees' on the basis that it would lead to an increase in the debt culture within our society. It also believed that students from the poorest backgrounds would be deterred from higher education. The Council agreed universities require better funding but indicated its preference for funding from general taxation. It believes that as the biggest beneficiary of a more highly educated workforce is the national economy as a whole, the nation ought to be prepared to invest in Higher Education.

Costello Report

At the time of writing, the Minister of Education has just published the report from the Working Group, chaired by Mr Steve Costello, advising on the future post-primary arrangements in NI. The Minister has accepted the report's recommendations in full.

A key concept of the new arrangements is an Entitlement Framework to guarantee access for all pupils to a wide range of academic and vocational course options. Academic selection will end (the last tests will be 2008) and new transfer arrangements will be based on informed parental and pupil choice. An academic route will remain available

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but pupils and parents will select this pathway rather than being selected for it. A pupil profile will be developed to give parents the information to make the informed decisions. New admission criteria will be required to determine admissions where schools are over-subscribed. Separate research on admissions criteria, school transport and funding is to be taken forward by the Department of Education. Implementation will involve schools and FE colleges working together to develop access arrangements for their local area.

The initial reaction of the TRC is to welcome these proposals as a positive way forward; in particular the very strong focus on the child and the prospect of schools and colleges from various sectors developing closer working partnerships. Many of the recommendations which have emerged closely correspond with elements of the council's own response to the Burns consultation in 2002.

Other consultations responded to by the Board of Education NI

Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill – the Board was strongly supportive of the main thrust of this Bill towards strengthening the rights of parents and a greater emphasis on inclusion in the provision of education in schools and colleges. The Board empathised with the desire of parents of a child with special educational needs for the fullest possible integration of their child in the school community.

Many schools having begun this process of accommodation of those with moderate or mild learning difficulties and disabilities find that inclusiveness adds much to school life and enriches the educational experiences of all pupils. However we noted the view of practitioners that this inclusive process presents enormous challenges to schools when applied in the case of children with severe learning difficulties.

The Board welcomed the proposals for disability access however noting that most schools will need major structural alterations to install lifts, widen doors, or provide ramping etc to meet the new requirements. Extensive financial resources will have to be made available to meet the demands of the new Bill.

Centre of Excellence for Autism – Middletown

The Board warmly approved of this cross-border initiative to develop a centre of excellence in Autistic Spectrum Disorder. It was conscious of the increasing number of children diagnosed in this category of developmental disorder and of the widespread cry for help from parents, teachers and support professionals. It was supportive of the objective in developing an island-wide response which harmonised education and other professional agencies to provide a lead for early diagnosis, assessment and training.

Creating a vision for all our children – Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM)

The Board welcomed this discussion document from the OFMDFM which proposed an overarching strategy for children and young people in NI. Such a strategy should enable better co-ordination of service provision for children by the various sectors of

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government and above all send a message that children are valued citizens of the present as well as of future society.

RE Core Syllabus Review – Proposals for change in the RE syllabus for use in every grant-aided school in NI.

The Churches' RE Review Working Party published its proposals in Sept 2003 and almost 400 responses were received. Initial statistical analysis indicates a large measure of support for the proposals (over 90% in favour amongst primary schools and some 80% to 90% amongst post-primary schools). Various groups requested and received face to face meetings to discuss their concerns, in particular equality issues needing to be addressed at each Key Stage in respect of the categories specified under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

At the time of writing this report, the responses are being examined and a report composed with further modifications to the syllabus made in the light of the consultation. The aim is to have the syllabus approved in time to allow the four Church leaders to forward it to the Minister before Easter 2004.

Summary of proposed changes in the Core Syllabus

The main changes at primary level include the subdivision of Key Stage 1 (KS1) into two, to correspond with the Foundation Stage and the new KS1 in the revised NI Curriculum. The content and structure of KS2 remains largely unchanged, however there are now more references to Old Testament characters.

At post-primary level a number of significant changes have been made. There has been a reduction in content in order to promote progression between Key Stages, to allow for the inclusion of a fourth Learning Objective at KS4 – World Faiths, and an increase in content on Christian Morality.

At KS3, it is now proposed that pupils should study the Christian Church from a Roman Catholic and Protestant perspective. Currently all Maintained schools do this as do some Controlled schools. At KS4, pupils are to study two World Faiths in addition to Christianity in order to develop awareness and understanding of the beliefs and practices of peoples of other religions in NI.

Safeguarding Trust

The Board continues its role of training, resourcing, advising and evaluating the implementation of the Church of Ireland's code of practice in caring for children and young people.

During the year, the Board was invited to participate in a pilot project funded by the Dept of Health and Social Services, in order to test a process of accreditation. This development came from the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Bill 2003.

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It is envisaged that in the future, voluntary groups will have to demonstrate that they meet minimum standards in Child Protection, in order to be granted the status of accreditation.

During the pilot, Safeguarding Trust underwent detailed scrutiny and has demonstrated itself as a robust child protection policy and set of guidelines. Certain areas have been highlighted as needing further development, however our basic practice and the system of evaluation in particular, is well ahead of many others in this area.

The implications of accreditation will have a bearing on our development of Safeguarding Trust and will usefully inform the drafting process for the publication of the third edition of the guidelines.

Children's Ministry

The Secretary continues to work along with Presbyterian, Methodist and Scripture Union (SU) colleagues in providing an annual training and resources conference. The most recent conference held in November 2003, entitled *'Building Blocks'*, attracted over 350 Sunday School teachers and a parallel event held in Dublin had over 250 delegates. The main speaker was Mr Ron Buckland of SU Australia, and the conference also offered a wide range of seminar topics covering various issues, skills and developments in Children's Ministry.

In March 2003 the Board held a short conference to review its work in Children's Ministry. It was assisted by Mrs Diana Murrie, the National Children's Officer for the Church of England. Following on from this day, a sub-group has been asked to conduct some research across parishes in NI to establish the precise needs in Children's Ministry and how the Board might help address these needs.

Ace Ventures

The Board commends Ace Ventures for its success and proven track record in operating as a semi-independent agency providing help and training to those who are seeking employment. The Board, however, is of the view that, since the company is functioning perfectly well without the Board's direct involvement, the role of the Board of Education as sponsor of Ace Ventures is at best symbolic.

The Board has recently undertaken a review of its functions and responsibilities and has come to the view that involvement in Ace Ventures is no longer a core function. The Board has notified the company directors of the decision to withdraw from its sponsorship role and assured the company of its very cordial good wishes for continuing success.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

Primary Schools

New boards of management took office on December 1, 2003. Outgoing members have given much appreciated service at a time of considerable change in the sphere of education. The Board had issued guidelines to all involved in the election but the actual circular from the Department of Education & Science (DE&S) was not formally issued or conveyed to patrons until after the date by which the process was to be complete.

The new boards will hold office for four years and it is hoped that the extended period will give members the opportunity both to come to grips with the demand of management and to feel well involved. It is a matter of regret that funding has not yet been put in place by the Department of Education & Science to provide training on a partnership basis as heretofore.

There is particular concern regarding the need to support honorary treasurers as the payments for supervision and for part-time staff such as caretakers and secretaries require the operation of a wages system. In a small school this puts an additional demand on voluntary time and requires increased expertise and exactitude. In some cases boards have sought to avoid such issues by treating some individuals as contractors. If appropriate legal agreements and insurances are not in place this may ultimately create a serious liability for members of such boards.

The improvement in capital funding for primary schools is very welcome. Both the Devolved Scheme of Capital Grants and Summer Work Scheme provide opportunities for schools to upgrade and in the case of the former provides a new build element. A number of schools feature in the building programme for 2004 while others will have noted that they are moving towards the commencement of their projects.

Appointment of Teaching Staff

The process for the appointment of staff is subject to a National Agreement between the Partners and the Department of Education & Science. The shortage of eligible candidates has led some boards of management to consider ignoring such procedures particularly in regard to the approved time frame for each aspect of the procedure. If this was to happen it could cast doubt on the validity of certain appointments and leave the process in that particular situation open to challenge. At least one patron has now asked his assessors, as a matter of course, to certify that the procedures have been followed.

Discussions are ongoing with the Partners and the Department of Education & Science regarding the use of web advertising for posts and the circulation of criteria for posts to candidates. It is hoped that new procedures will be agreed during 2004.

Complaints Procedure

A great deal of work at central level was done on revising this procedure which provides a framework in which parents may progress complaints. There has been a delay however in implementing a revised procedure as the Department of Education & Science has decided such a procedure should be a common procedure for both primary and second-levels.

There is also a valuable grievance procedure in place that allows teaching staff to raise inter-staff or employee issues in an agreed framework. Boards may also adopt this procedure for other staff. At present there is no standard agreed disciplinary process for teaching or other staff other than the general guidelines arising from employment legislation.

Second Level School Building

A number of schools feature in the building programme, announced by the Minister, Mr Noel Dempsey TD, in December 2003, but not for projects to commence in this current year. The condition of some of the comprehensive schools, built on a modular system in the early seventies, is now a matter of anxiety. Initial planning for redevelopment has been approved in some cases but the need to sanction building is urgent as there are increasing health and safety issues for pupils and staff.

East Glendalough School serving Wicklow and North Wexford has not, as yet, been given permission to extend the premises. This means that from this current year an increasing number of Church of Ireland and other Protestant children will not be able to be enrolled and so must travel considerable distances outside the catchment area to attend schools with a congenial ethos. As Wicklow is an area of considerable demographic growth, clearly reflected in growing parish numbers, this unfortunate situation will get increasingly worse while building does not take place.

The Board congratulated Archbishop Neill on his role in achieving a reassurance from the Minister for Education & Science regarding the continuance of the Secondary Education Committee grant scheme and the eligibility of fee charging schools for building grants.

Proposed New Primary School

The Diocese of Meath, in response to population growth, particularly in the area along the N3 national route way, has supported the parish of Dunboyne in making an application for the approval of a new primary school. This has been undertaken following consultation with the Diocese of Dublin and existing local schools. Undertaking such a project is extremely costly and if it goes ahead will need the support of a wider Church.

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

Moving On which completed the modules for junior classes in national schools was introduced at Synod in 2003. In-service was subsequently provided for teachers of junior classes who were not familiar with the *Follow Me* Programme. *Moving On* comprised of a pupil's text book and a teacher's book including photocopyable worksheets and resources.

Log On is a module for third class (P5) and the content has been tested in pilot schools, reviewed by advisors from the three Churches involved in the project, considered by an advisory group of teachers and after the inclusion of appropriate changes has gone to print. The Board is most appreciative of the work of the editor, Mrs Jacqui Wilkinson, who has made the programme a significant part of the Church's ministry to children. The work of the Religious Education Curriculum Committee, chaired by the Bishop of Meath and Kildare, and the advisory group of teachers, Mrs England and Mrs McNamara of Rathfarnham National School, Mrs Tracey of Kilkenny Model School, Dr Brooke of Taney National School and Mr Shaw of Rathmichael National School have had an important input into the programme.

Diocesan Boards and the Priorities Fund have given valuable grants to aid the development of the project and this has had the benefit in keeping costs of the books in line with the costs of other school texts and resources despite what is a limited print run for a small market.

The Church Education Society has again aided the project both by direct grant and by the purchase and distribution, as a gift, of one teacher's book to each school. This Society also provides support for the purchase of educational resources in small schools (less than thirty-six pupils) and by allocating bursaries to primary teachers undertaking relevant post-graduate courses in educational management and religious education.

The Board again wishes to pay tribute to the gracious permission given by Most Rev Dr Martin Drennan on behalf of the Episcopal Commission on Catechetics for the use of art work and content from the *Alive O* programme and for the assistance given by the staff of Veritas, the publishing house that prints *Alive O* and the *Follow Me* pupils texts.

Safeguarding Trust

The Board of Education has been delegated the responsibility for the oversight of Safeguarding Trust by the Standing Committee. Both that Committee and this Board have made representations to the Government regarding the need to provide pre-employment vetting to those who wish to work in schools and to those who work with children as employees or volunteers in parish situations. The Minister for Children, Mr Brian Lenihan TD, has informed the Board that he awaits a report from a specialist inter-departmental group regarding the extension of vetting to the wider community. Clearly vetting is only one aspect of the care which needs to be taken in appointing individuals to the responsible role of caring for children.

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Training programmes and resources are available for use by diocesan trainers and the Secretary has also provided training upon request in a number of areas. A newsletter was issued for Select Vestries and panel members that included information about supervision ratios and other issues. Parishes will be asked by dioceses to make the triennial return regarding the implementation of the Code during the current year.

Transport Scheme D (Primary Schools)

The number of qualifying families now stands at exactly 300. Grants totalling €146,421.10 for the school year 2002/2003 were received from the Department of Education and paid out to sanctioned families. There was a delay of two months in payment of grants due to staffing shortages in the Department of Education and Science. More regrettable however is that a number of schools returned forms up to four months late and this may have resulted in unnecessary hardship for families. The efficient co-operation of many principals in completing and returning forms is a valued part of the administration of the scheme.

The Board is most appreciative of those diocesan boards of education who have contributed to the ancillary fund which allows us to give on-going support to two families by way of additional transport grants.

Educational Issues and Resources

The Board has welcomed the extension of the education welfare service but regrets that the financing of the National Educational Welfare Board is insufficient for a nationwide service. Likewise the introduction of Special Educational Needs Organisers will be of assistance but this Board, in common with many educational bodies fears that the Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill will not result in adequate resources being made available to support the rights of all children to have an appropriate education. The Employee Assistance Service, which in its pilot form had given great support to teachers endeavouring, has also been affected with an inability to take on new cases. This was a most helpful service and it is to be hoped that a national service will be put in place in the near future.

Educational Developments

The NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) in preparing proposals on the future pattern of the Senior Cycle involved all those in education, teachers, parents, students, employers and third level bodies in a far reaching consultation process. Representatives of the Board attended several seminars and a response document, (Appendix B) prepared by two practising teachers at the Board's request, was submitted for consideration.

The DE&S furnishes certain draft circulars and a response is made where appropriate. The Board contributed comments to a review of the appeals procedure operating under section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 and to a draft document on *Interim Guidelines and Procedures for the Review of Complaints about Schools and Teachers*. Certain concerns

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were raised in regard to the development of a training course for primary teachers through distance learning. The Board sought assurances regarding the validation of this course and expressed grave disquiet that it would not increase the number of entrants to primary teaching but rather transfer costs from the DE&S to the students themselves. The Board has taken a keen interest in the issues raised by the *Education for Persons with Disabilities Bill (2003)* and has voiced anxiety regarding both the resource issue and the additional workload for principals and boards.

The issue of the formal expansion of boards of management, through the inclusion of teachers and parents, has been hindered by the issue of the recognition of patronage.

Support Services

The Board continues to assist schools by the provision of a newsletter *Education Newsbrief* which issues five times a year. Briefings in regard to local review of appeals, enrolment of pupils with special educational needs, general enrolment issues and the requirement on Boards to register with a PRSA provider have been circulated. Patrons and diocesan boards have also received information in regard to the School Building Programme, Summer Works Scheme and possible additional funding for school transport. The Board also strives to provide support and advice in response to queries from board members, teachers and parents in regard to educational issues.

APPENDIX A

TRC DISCUSSION PAPER (Oct 2003)

ETHOS OF CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

Historic Transferor Relationship

Controlled schools are ‘church-related schools’ because in the 1930s, 40s and 50s, the three main Protestant Churches transferred their school buildings, pupils and staff into state control on the understanding that the Christian ethos of these schools was maintained. This agreed principle was enshrined in an act of parliament. As a result of this, Transferors were given rights of representation on school management committees (equivalent now to Boards of Governors) and Education Authorities (now Education and Library Boards). Transferors were also given rights of representation in the management of new Controlled schools built subsequently by the state.

In the present day, Transferors seek to work in partnership with parents, teachers and Board representatives in the governance of schools, and with other educational professionals and community representatives as members of Education and Library Boards. Transferors from the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist churches work together at a policy level within a grouping formally recognised by the Department of Education and known as the Transferor Representatives’ Council (TRC)

Opportunities for Discussion of Ethos

There may be opportunity for a school Board of Governors to discuss the issues of a Mission statement and core values, perhaps when framing or reviewing the school prospectus. The TRC encourages such reflection and offers the following as a Transferor’s contribution to a discussion of the distinctive aims of a Controlled school.

Suggested Vision Statement

Controlled schools should offer an understanding of the world and the place of humanity in it within the context of the Christian tradition. This should be reflected in worship and by the values espoused by the schools. It should also be reflected in the relationships which the schools seek to promote at all levels. The schools should foster tolerance of and respect for the beliefs of others and should also respect the rights of those with no religious belief.

Core Values

As Transferors, we urge that schools reflect the foundational Christian value of the revelation of God and humankind’s response, through our concern for and attitude to others and to the world in which we live.

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We would encourage the inclusion of core values within the life of the school, based upon the Biblical revelation and shared Christian understanding, which reflect:

- The rights and responsibilities of the individual
- Relationships within the school
- Preparation for adult life

Overarching Christian Emphases

Schools should promote

- Christ-like principles of forgiveness and reconciliation
- Justice and integrity in personal and community life
- A sense of responsibility in making use of God-given talents
- Christian responses to living in a multi-cultural society
- The challenge of working for peace and justice in God's world

Individual Level

Schools should promote:

- The concept of the intrinsic value of the individual as created in the image of God
- The right of each individual to fulfil his/her potential in mind, spirit and body
- A sense of self-worth and self-esteem
- A life-long love of learning
- The acceptance that privileges bring responsibilities
- The role of conscience in discerning right or wrong attitudes or actions

Inter-Relationship Level

Schools should promote:

- Relationships within the school based upon love of God and love of one's neighbour
- Friendship / loyalty
- Appreciation of individual differences

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- Tolerance and a capacity to share
- Inter-dependence and team work
- Fairness / equality of opportunity
- Honesty / integrity

Preparation for Adult Life

Schools should promote:

- Responsible citizenship
- Exploration of the values which build community
- The importance of strong family relationships and faithfulness in marriage
- Development of social skills
- Awareness of environmental issues
- A sense of justice
- An appreciation of the Christian heritage of this land
- An appreciation of culture and the arts
- An appreciation of the richness of other cultural traditions

APPENDIX B

DEVELOPING SENIOR CYCLE EDUCATION: DIRECTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT. NCCA 2003

Note: *Developing Senior Cycle Education Directions for Development* has been issued as part of a process by the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) in considering education for those students in the final three years of post-primary education. It anticipates a reshaping of the structures by 2010 with schools having a discrete senior social area, a timetable with class contact, group work and research and students developing personal responsibility for managing time outside the formal timetable. Subjects will be expressed in units within a modular structure and short courses and Transition Units will be taken by all students. The outcomes to be achieved and the skills to be acquired will be key to learning. Assessment will take a number of forms and will not be dependent on a single end of cycle examination. Aspects of these developments already exist in some forms of Leaving Certificate. School have received details of the proposals

At the conclusion of the consultation process the NCCA will bring formal proposals to the Minister for Education and Science.

The following response has been prepared by Cyril Drury and Ida Reed on behalf of the Board of Education

1. Ambitious Plans must be carefully Managed

Directions for Development is proposing very significant change in the post-primary system. Pupils, parents and schools will welcome many elements of these changes. However there will also be a concern that the implementation of the proposed changes will need to be managed very carefully. The approach to educational development within the document represents a radical new departure for the Irish system and as such, traditional change management methods may not be adequate if the proposed re-structuring and cultural change is to be successful.

2. Changes must be Piloted

It should be recognised that most previous changes within the post-primary sector have been introduced on a phased basis. As a recent example, the Leaving Certificate Applied was initially piloted before being introduced on a system wide basis. Similarly the Transition Year Programme, now fully embedded within the post-primary system, was developed and refined over a period of nearly a decade before being widely implemented.

3. School Exemplars are Needed

The 2010 implementation time-frame suggests that the time should be available to plan carefully for the change process. This time must be used to fully pilot and test

the proposed changes within a selected number of schools so that concrete exemplars are available to illustrate the effectiveness of these changes and to provide lead schools as models for effective implementation elsewhere.

4. Curriculum Development Process must reflect Best Practice

Directions for Development is proposing dramatic change. While the existing mode of curriculum development is strongly consultative in its approach, its inherent limitations must also be recognised. An approach which takes greater account of best practice in teaching and learning must be employed. There is a need to look outside the existing stakeholders for additional expertise and alternative perspectives. An attempt should be made to integrate best practice on curriculum from around the world into Irish models of development.

5. Differences between Schools must be Accommodated

While all Irish post-primary schools are similar to the extent that they operate within same education system, it must also be recognised that there are a number of important differences between schools. The proposed changes in school organisation and culture outlined in *Directions for Development* must take appropriate account of existing school strengths and ensure that these are accommodated.

6. Framework for Delivery of Skills must be Clear

There is little argument that future curriculum changes must seek to enhance the development of skills such as "learning to learn, information processing, personal effectiveness, communication, critical thinking and working with others" (p8). However a number of curriculum reforms in the past have set out similar goals in relation to the development of generic skills but regrettably these goals have not translated into concrete learning outcomes. It must be made clear how the teaching of these skills can be embedded within a traditional subject framework.

7. Assessment Models must take Account of Constraints

There is significant support from many of the key educational stakeholders, including pupils, parents and teachers, for changes in the assessment process, particularly in relation to the once-off terminal examination associated with the established Leaving Certificate. However while widespread support on the need for such changes may exist, there appears to be a practical difficulty in translating these desires into concrete change. For example, even where there are broader models of assessment already in existence, there are concerns about the organisation and financial constraints associated with their operation.

8. Academic Excellence must be Maintained

The achievement of high academic standards is recognised by pupils, parents and employers as one of the key strengths of the Irish school system. The maintenance of

these high standards cannot be taken for granted, a fact that is evident from any comparative review of international education. There will be a concern amongst some commentators that, for example, a movement away from students taking *subjects* towards taking *units*, could be associated with a more fragmented approach which might in turn lead to a lack of depth of treatment. There is a need to provide concrete exemplars of how such an approach is compatible with an academically challenging learning environment.

9. The Transformation of Learning must be Supported

The description of the educational environment presented in *Directions for Development* suggests that a highly innovative and flexible approach to teaching and learning will be needed in 2010. A major transformation in how schools will be organised is implicit. If schools are to effectively implement these changes then significant long-term support will be needed. Much of this support will need to be provided on a regional basis to schools or clusters of schools so that effective local planning can be undertaken.

10. New Models of Professional Development are Needed

Teachers will need both support and on-going professional development on a long-term basis. Much existing in-service provision for teachers follows a conventional lecture-based format. It must be recognised that this reinforces traditional models of classroom teaching. A key challenge for in-service, and indeed pre-service, providers will be to radically transform their mode of delivery to reflect the types of changes envisioned.

11. Adequate Resources must be Guaranteed

All of these changes are clearly aimed to provide a school environment that is more responsive to the learning needs of individual pupils. It must be recognised that this transformation will not come cheaply. Those responsible for planning for the resourcing of these changes, on both a national and local basis, must ensure that they take full and adequate account of needs. Government must guarantee that adequate resources will be made available throughout the life-time of the change process.

APPENDIX C (For information only)

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY FOR IRELAND - 2004 Report

The Sunday School Society continues to expand its involvement in children's' ministry providing services directly to children and training and resources for those working with children both in the traditional Sunday Schools and the increasing numbers of mid-week Bible Clubs and holiday clubs. The annual table quiz designed for children from 3rd to 6th class primary school took place in February with an increased number of parishes taking part involved. The Society is indebted to St. Andrew's College for the use of their premises. A training day, in conjunction with Howth Parish, was held in their premises in May. It was led by Karen Bowden and Karen Webb, *Kaz & Co*, from One Way UK Creative Ministries.

The Society revived the idea of a Fun Sunday in May. This was held in St. Andrew's College and approximately 200 children from 16 parishes, along with leaders, had a great afternoon together.

Our new training scheme for Sunday School teachers continues to be of benefit. This year training days for leaders were held in Donoughmore, Castlemacadam, Cloughjordan and Booterstown and were much appreciated. The Committee is very grateful to the Chairperson and Secretary for their effective training role at these events.

Rev Anne Taylor and Mrs Heather Wilkinson represented the Society on the organising ecumenical committee of the national childrens' ministry conference for youth and childrens' workers in November. *Building Blocks* was held in All Hallows College, Glasnevin and was extremely valuable for the large attendance. The keynote speaker was the Rev Ron Buckland from Australia and also he gave a most helpful address at our televised service the following day. Children and leaders from eight Sunday Schools were involved in a very meaningful service under the guidance of Anne Taylor.

The next Children's Ministry Conference in 2004 will be on Saturday 27th November in the Republic and Saturday 4th December in Northern Ireland and the keynote speaker will be Nick Harding, from the Church of England.

Rev AE Taylor continues to be our representative with CGMC, Children's Ministry Consultative Group, and this provides a crucial link to developments in child ministry outside Ireland.

The Society was represented by the Chairperson, Heather Wilkinson, at a farewell function in Lisburn for Mavis Gibbons who retired from CPAS. We look forward to continuing our links with that body through their new organiser Rev Paul Hoey.

The Resource Centre has increased its range of materials available for children and leaders. This year the society gave a gift of a book token to all first year ordinands and first year trainee primary teachers in CICE. The Resource Centre is situated in Holy Trinity Church in Rathmines and is open 9am - 4pm Tuesday to Friday (which includes lunch time) and also opens on the Monday of RB week to facilitate those travelling to Church House from outside Dublin.

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APPENDIX D

The following are the members of the Board and its committees as on 31 March 2004.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ex-officio members

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

Very Rev H Cassidy, Dean of Armagh Very Rev RD Harman
Mr SR Harper Lady Sheil

Elected members

Armagh	Rev Canon FD Swann Mr RF Palmer
Clogher	Rev Canon RT Gillian Mr SB Morrow, O.B.E.
Derry	Ven MS Harte Mr D West
Down	Rev Canon SMJ Dickson Mr I Davidson
Connor	Rev SB Forde Dr AR Acheson
Kilmore	Rev Canon J Merrick Mrs J Johnston
Tuam	Rev DTS Clements Mrs A Wills
Dublin	Ven EJ Swann Ms HF Empey
Meath	Rev Canon JDM Clarke Mrs JM Bruton
Cashel and Ossory	Rev Canon PA Harvey Mr I Dungan
Cork	Ven REB White Mr BD Cairns
Limerick and Killaloe	Rev SM Neill Mr TS Hardy

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Co-opted members

Rev Canon RJEFB Black	Ms S Mew
Mr JE Bunting	Ms R Maxwell-Eager
Mr I Bolton	Ms H McBain
Ven DR Chillingworth	Rev BJG O'Rourke
Mr A Godsil	Ms C Revington
Ms S Hall	Mrs P Wallace
Ms S Honner	Rev G Wharton
Ms E Jackson	Mr T Wheatley

Secretary

Rev Canon JE McCullagh, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2004)**

The Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev RHA Eames (Chairman)	
The Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev JRW Neill	
Lady Sheil	Mr RF Palmer
Rev Canon SMS Dickson	Miss SG Mew
Very Rev RD Harman	Rev Canon J Merrick
Mr JE Bunting	Ms E Jackson

BOARD OF EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Ex-officio members

Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev RHA Eames	Bishop of Clogher, Rt Rev MGStA Jackson
Bishop of Down and Dromore, Rt Rev HC Miller	Bishop of Kilmore, Rt Rev KH Clarke
Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev AET Harper	Very Rev H Cassidy
Bishop of Derry, Rt Rev KR Good	Lady Sheil

Elected members

Down	Rev Canon S M J Dickson Mr I Davidson
Connor	Rev SB Forde Dr AR Acheson
Armagh	Rev Canon FD Swann Mr RF Palmer
Derry	Rev Canon JCD Mayes Mr V Carson

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Clogher Rev Canon RT Gillian
 Mr SB Morrow, O.B.E.

Co-opted members

Mr J E Bunting	Mrs R Forde
Ven DR Chillingworth	Mrs H McClenaghan
Mr RM McKinney	Mrs MP Wallace
Mrs A McNee	

Observers invited to attend: Rev Canon WA Lewis (Transferor Rep BEELB), Ven CT Pringle (Transferor Rep WELB) Rev Canon JR Wilson (Hon Sec Down & Dromore & Connor Bd ED), Mr W Young (Sec Armagh DBRE)

Honorary Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Mr JE Bunting

Honorary Treasurer, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

Mr RM McKinney

Secretary, Board of Education (Northern Ireland)

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

The Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev JRW Neill (Chairman)

Bishop of Kilmore, Rt Rev KH Clarke	Ms S Honner
Bishop of Cork, Rt Rev WP Colton	Ms E Jackson
Very Rev RD Harman	Ms S Mew
Ms S Hall	Rev B O'Rourke
Mr S Harper	Ven EJ Swann (Vice-Chairman)
Mr T Hardy	Mrs A Wills

Co-opted members

Mrs Heather Wilkinson (Sunday School Society of Ireland) attends by invitation.

Secretary, Board of Education (Republic of Ireland)

Rev Canon JE McCullagh, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6

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