

## **Board of Education Report**

**Seconder: Mr Mike Johnston**

**Embargo Until Delivery • Check Against Delivery**

The Board of Education for Northern Ireland wishes to thank all the principals, staff and governors for their hard work and dedication in continuing to provide an excellent education to children and young people despite difficult circumstances.

The Board is concerned with the lack of funding and investment in schools specifically in terms of investing in teachers and their lifelong learning, bringing all our school buildings up to a modern safe standard, and providing sufficient teaching and support staff for our children.

Churches engaging with their local schools has never been such a vital witness and support to staff and children. The Board has been excited to support more projects allowing churches to engage with the schools in their parishes in new and innovative ways. The Board will soon be opening this fund again to encourage more projects to come to fruition. The Board wishes to thank all the clergy and volunteer parishioners who have given of their time and energy to improve the education experience for our children.

The Education Authority is just completing the process of reconstitution of governors. Historically rather than own many schools (we only have two Church of Ireland schools in the North), we have been given places on the boards of most of our controlled schools (nearly 50 per cent of all schools in Northern Ireland). The Board wishes to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all those who volunteer as school governors in these schools. Being a governor is a vital role and is very rewarding, however when times are difficult it can be hard, and we pray for those of you having to deal with delicate issues and we support you in bringing the love and compassion of Christ into the school. It is vital we fill all our spaces on school Boards and I encourage those who have yet to find someone for gaps in your area to pray and work to find the right person. If we fail to fill our spaces we may lose the opportunity to fill them in the future.

The Board of Education also has influence at a strategic level, and we would like to thank Canon Amanda Adams for her dedication, wisdom, and service to the Board of the Education Authority over the last number of years. We welcome Mr Ray Gilbert (St Nicholas Parish, Carrickfergus) as her replacement as the Church of Ireland representative and have no doubt he will bring years of experience as a teacher and EA employee to this role.

## **Board of Education Report**

**Seconder: Mr Mike Johnston**

**Embargo Until Delivery • Check Against Delivery**

Through the Transferor Representatives' Council, the Board has an impact on area planning, special educational needs, the work of the Controlled Schools' Support Council, the development and implementation of the Religious Education curriculum and a voice for the Churches with the Minister for Education and other key stakeholders. Dr Hamill was part of a delegation that recently met with the Minister for Education and the Minister is supportive of the work of the Churches.

The Board are concerned with the status of Religious Education in schools, and we acknowledge the need for a curriculum review. The Board would like to thank all clergy, youth, and children's workers who go into school on a regular basis and give input to assemblies and other religious activities.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr Hamill, now ten years in this post.

Yours Grace, it is my pleasure to second the report of the Board of Education to General Synod.