



Transferor Representatives' Council Constitution

(agreed April 2021)

Transferor Churches

The Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC) represents education interests of the Church of Ireland, the Methodist Church in Ireland and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The Church of Ireland, the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in Ireland together have historically had a significant role to play in education in Ireland, not least in transferring our schools to State control in the early decades of the twentieth century. As transferors we have a right enshrined in law, to nominate over 1,800 governors to controlled schools and four representatives as members of the Education Authority. In addition there remains a small number of maintained schools for which the Church of Ireland and Methodist Church respectively have responsibility.

Core Values

The Council would 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 the world in which we live.

The Council would encourage the inclusion of core values within the life of schools and their community, based upon the Bible and shared Christian understanding.

Purpose

The aim of the Council is to monitor educational development in such a way that the rights and interests in education of the three transferor churches, and the communities they seek to serve, are maintained and enhanced.

The Council will formulate and express those views with which all three transferor churches are in agreement - and will attempt to foster a spirit of common purpose in such endeavours.

The Council will facilitate the transferor churches in nominating representatives to relevant external bodies such as the Education Authority and the Controlled Schools Support Council.



Representation from churches

The Council consists of eleven members, three being appointed by the Methodist Church in Ireland and four being appointed from each of the Church of Ireland and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The Council may consult with and /or invite to such meetings to present information those individuals, groups or bodies as are deemed to forward its aim and help formulate decision-making.

Where significant changes in policy proposed by, for example, the Department of Education require consultation within the respective churches, such matters will be referred to the individual denominational Boards of Education/ Education Committee. There may be a further request that these matters are debated at the respective annual church Conference / Assembly / Synod in an attempt to foster a spirit of common purpose in such endeavours.

Officer roles

The Council will elect from its membership the following office bearers for a period of three years at a time:

Chair; Vice-chair; Honorary Treasurer.

Honorary Secretary – this role will be undertaken by the Church of Ireland Secretary to the Board of Education (NI).

There will be an expectation that the role of Chair will rotate on a three year cycle between the three churches using the following pattern: Methodist then Presbyterian then Church of Ireland then Methodist and so on.

The role of Vice-chair will follow the same pattern but representatives from the next denomination in the cycle will be asked who they wish to stand.

Should no one from within the particular denomination wish to undertake the role then the representatives from the next denomination in the rotation will be asked if they wish to stand.

The bearers of such offices will reflect the Council's composition and across the roles will ideally include representatives from each of the transferor churches.

Each denomination will be asked identify one of their members as their Church Education Secretary.



Role descriptions:

The **Chair** shall:

- chair Council meetings
- represent the TRC, together with the three Church Education Secretaries, at meetings with the Education Minister, the Permanent Secretary, and where required with officers of Department of Education, Education Authority, Controlled Schools Support Council and any other relevant education stakeholders.
- be kept informed of all business by the Hon Secretary
- agree the agenda with the secretary prior to meetings and agree the minutes following meetings.
- speak for and on behalf of the TRC
- agree any press releases in conjunction with the Hon Secretary

The **Vice-chair** shall:

- chair meetings of the Council when the Chair is not available
- be kept informed of any matters of concern between meetings
- deputize for the Chair as a representative of TRC to other bodies as required
- fulfill all the other roles of the Chair should the Chair be unavailable.

The **Honorary Secretary** shall:

- communicate all relevant information to the Council members
- be the main point of contact both within TRC and with external bodies and organisations
- consult with the Chair regarding the agenda, the minutes, the venue and any other relevant aspect of council meetings
- keep the minutes of each meeting and distribute these to members as soon as possible after meetings
- meet regularly with the other Church Secretaries to continue the business of the Council between meetings.
- support the Honorary Treasurer in their role and act as signatory on the bank account
- represent the TRC at meetings / conferences as required
- prepare any press releases as required, liaise with the Chair for approval of such releases and work with the Press Officers from the three denominations to ensure relevant distributions of such release.



The ***Honorary Treasurer*** shall:

- manage the TRC bank account and act as a signatory
- ensure income requests are sent to each denomination on an annual basis
- present the Independently Examined accounts to TRC on an annual basis.

The ***Church Education Secretaries*** (one per denomination) shall:

- meet regularly to ensure the business of the Council is continued and developed between meetings.
- represent the TRC at all relevant meetings with education bodies, politicians and any other relevant stakeholders.
- draw together any position papers, information sheets, policies, documents as required for TRC meetings.
- engage with any legal issues that may arise and consult both internally within their denomination or externally with relevant legal personnel.
- act as a conduit between the TRC and each denominations Board of Education / Education Committee to ensure TRC business is shared with each denomination and relevant business from the denominations is shared with the TRC.

Meetings

The Council will meet a minimum of three times per calendar year. All three churches will have representatives present and decisions will be made by consensus. Agendas will be drawn up by the Honorary Secretary in consultation with the Chairperson. Minutes will be taken and distributed by the Honorary Secretary.

Quorum for a meeting will be six persons with at least one person from each denomination.

Special meeting

An extraordinary meeting of the Council may be called by a minimum of three members requesting this through the Chair. This meeting can with a two thirds majority of those present make adjustments to this document and deal with any pressing issues that may have arisen.



Representatives of TRC on External Bodies

Those representing the TRC on any external education body / organisation are:

- expected to reflect the values and aims of TRC in their roles
- required to provide reports to the Council at each meeting (these can be in person, in writing or through another TRC representative on the body)
- expected to keep the Honorary Secretary of TRC apprised of all relevant matter which arise between meetings of the TRC.

Finance

The expenses of the council are sought from the three transferor churches. The amount required to fund the Council will be determined on an annual basis and the Church of Ireland and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland will each provide 40% of the total and the Methodist Church in Ireland shall provide 20% of the total. Monies will be kept in a TRC bank account managed by the Honorary Treasurer and accounts / budget presented to the Council on an annual basis having been Externally Examined by a Qualified Accountant.

Should the Council decide to dissolve, then any monies held will be returned to the Transferor churches as per the percentages above after payment of all outstanding monies owed.