

The Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity Process



What is a School Patron?

Every school has a school patron or patrons. The school patron is the person/body that manages a school.

The patron appoints the board of management to manage the operation of the school. The patron also determines the ethos and characteristic spirit of the school. Religious education or instruction may be provided at the school in line with its ethos.



- At present, 89% of primary schools have a Catholic ethos.
- Approximately 5% have a multi-denominational ethos.
- The remaining approximately 6% of primary schools have a religious ethos other than Catholic, mainly Church of Ireland.

What is Schools Reconfiguration?

- The Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity process aims to provide more multi-denominational schools, in line with the choices of families and school communities. This reflects the commitments in the Programme for Government.
- The Reconfiguration process involves existing schools changing their patron. This is called a transfer of patronage.
- Transfers of patronage may also involve a change of ethos (for example, a change from a denominational (religious) ethos to a multi-denominational ethos).
- When a school transfers from the patronage of one patron to another, the school remains open, in the same property, with its staff and pupils.
- The school patron is responsible for decisions on any transfer of patronage.
- The Minister for Education has announced the commencement of arrangements in a number of pilot areas aimed at increasing the number of multi-denominational primary schools.



Have more questions?

- Parents and school communities may have questions, for example about what is involved in changing patronage or about the curriculum and religious education in a school with a multi-denominational ethos.
- The Department of Education has prepared an information pack for school communities, with a 'your questions answered' section for parents, which is available at gov.ie/schoolsreconfiguration.



Parents and school communities can find out more at www.gov.ie/schoolsreconfiguration.



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