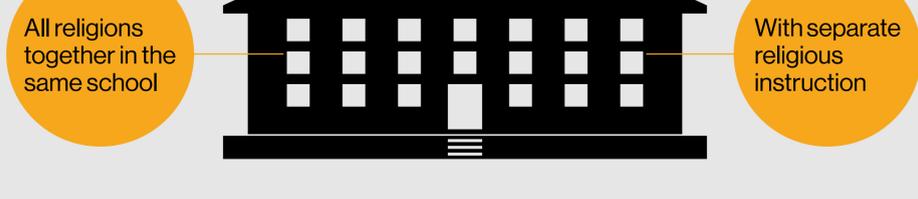


transforming education

The Governance of Schools

The first state-funded system of education in Ireland was introduced in the 1830s. While intended to be non-denominational, faith divisions appeared almost immediately.

National Schools in Ireland



The two pillars of the National School System

Today the administration of the education system in Northern Ireland is complicated and involves a range of organisations, many of which are funded from the public purse - some are legacies of the continuing connection between churches and schools.



The system is complicated, and so is how schools are managed. Every school must have a Board of Governors that works alongside the head teacher to ensure that the school operates effectively. These boards are made up of governors who represent the interests of those who founded the school, those who fund the school, pupils' parents and staff representatives.

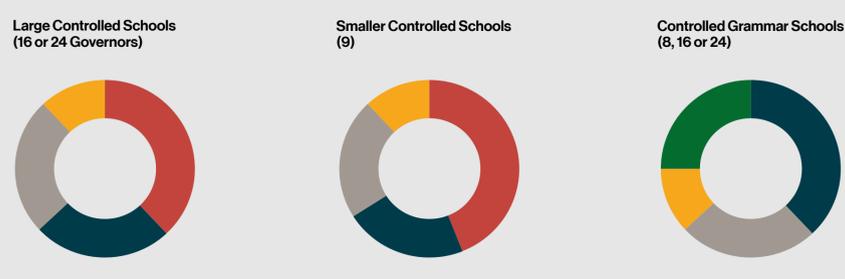
Places are reserved on the Boards of state-controlled schools for representatives of three Protestant denominations (Transferors) while the Catholic church has a guaranteed proportion of governors in maintained schools (Trustees).



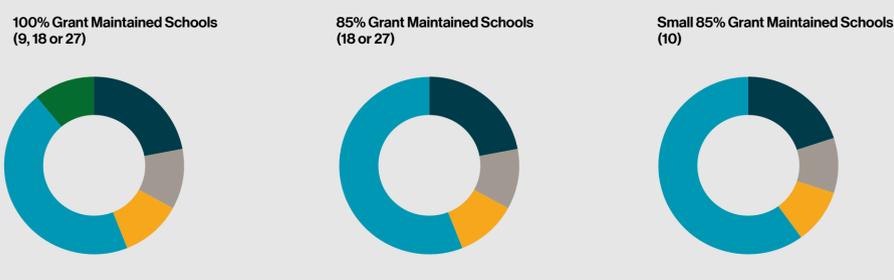
The number of places assigned to each category of governor is laid down in law. School boards vary in size (between 8 and 36 members) and composition, depending on the size and type of the school.



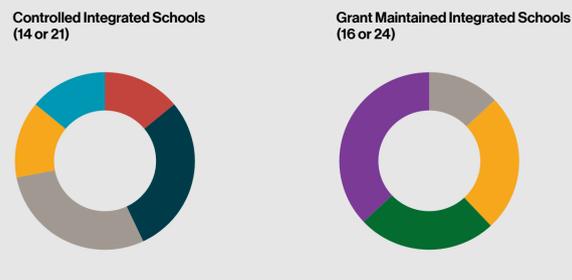
Controlled



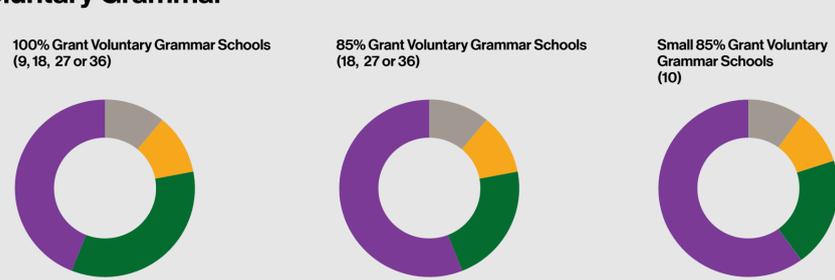
Maintained



Integrated



Voluntary Grammar



Governors are responsible for maintaining an ethos that reflects principles of the school's founders and have a duty to ensure that the school makes provision for religious education.

Religious Education

The separation of religions is embedded in the administration of education and the governance of schools

The "New Decade, New Approach" document includes a commitment to an independent review of education. If the education system is to be reformed, then governance of schools also needs reorganised to reduce complexity and to remove vested interests. Other models of governance are available and are delivering effectively in other systems.

