



Atheist Ireland
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Dear Editor,

I refer to your online article published on 10 January 2020 with the heading "Minister confirms that many ETB schools are denominational" which referenced a reply from the Minister for Education and Skills to Deputy Ruth Coppinger, T.D. The response which issued to Deputy Coppinger on 6 December 2019 arose from the Deputy's Parliamentary Question Nos. 50034/19 and 50035/19 of 3/12/2019 on the number of schools each patron body is a patron of at primary school level and the number of schools each patron body is a patron of at secondary school level.

I wish to inform you that unfortunately due to a clerical error Education and Training Board (ETB) Designated Community Colleges were incorrectly described in the response as having "denominational" patronage and Community Schools were incorrectly described as "Catholic". I wish to correct the record and to also confirm that the vast majority of ETB Designated Community Colleges are classified as having an "inter-denominational" ethos and that the vast majority of Community Schools are classified as having an "inter-denominational" ethos.

Please find enclosed tables with the correct descriptions. I would appreciate if you would note this correction please.

The Department apologises for the inadvertent error and any confusion caused.

Yours sincerely,

Fidelma Lyons, Assistant Principal Officer
Forward Planning Section



Total number of Primary Schools by patron (2019)

Total number of Primary Schools by Patron (2019)	Number of schools	Percentage of schools
Catholic	2740	87.54%
Church of Ireland*	169	5.40%
Educate Together**	91	2.91%
An Foras Pátrúnachta***	68	2.17%
Education and Training Boards	21	0.67%
Presbyterian Church	17	0.54%
Minister for Education and Skills	9	0.29%
Islamic foundation of Ireland	2	0.06%
Methodist Church	1	0.03%
Dublin Talmud Torah (Jewish)	1	0.03%
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)	1	0.03%
Joint Patronage of Catholic Bishop and Church of Ireland	1	0.03%
Other Patronage	9	0.29%
	3130	

*Four of the Church of Ireland schools have shared patronage with the Presbyterian Church; one Church of Ireland school shares patronage with the Methodist church and the Presbyterian Church; three of the Church of Ireland schools have individual patron bodies

** including schools in the Educate Together network with their own patron body – a limited company in each case

***some schools under An Foras Pátrúnachta have a denominational ethos, some an inter-denominational ethos and some a multi-denominational ethos. All are Irish-medium.

Total number of Post Primary Schools by patron (2019)

Second Level school type	Patronage	Number of schools	Percentage of schools
Voluntary secondary schools	Catholic*	326	45.21%
	Church of Ireland**	21	2.91%
	Methodist	1	0.14%
	Dublin Talmud Torah (Jewish)	1	0.14%
	Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)	1	0.14%
	Educate Together***	13	1.80%
	An Foras Pátrúnachta	5	0.69%



	Other	14	1.94%
ETB Community Colleges (non-designated)	Education and Training Boards****	182	25.24%
ETB Community Colleges (designated)	Education and Training Boards****	61	8.46%
Community schools*****	Education and Training Boards and Catholic congregations and/or a Bishop	80	11.10%
	Education and Training Boards and Educate Together	2	0.28%
Comprehensive schools	Minister for Education and Skills	13	1.80%
	Joint patronage of an ETB and a Church of Ireland Bishop.	1	0.14%
TOTAL		721	

* includes schools under the patronage of a Catholic Bishop/Archbishop, religious groups and educational trust companies formed in recent years by Catholic congregational orders

**includes schools under the patronage of Church of Ireland Bishops/Archbishops, boards of governors and joint Church of Ireland patronage

***these are multi-denominational schools

****Education and Training Boards are patrons of non-designated Community Colleges. These schools have a multi-denominational ethos. Education and Training Boards are also patrons of designated Community Colleges; 55 of these are classified as having an inter-denominational ethos, 3 a multi-denominational ethos and 3 a catholic ethos.

*****Community Schools have joint patronage arrangements, consisting in the main of Education and Training Boards and Catholic congregations and/or a Bishop. The majority of Community Schools (78) are classified as having an inter-denominational ethos and 4 are classified as multi-denominational.

