



Dr. Michael Wardlow, Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and school pupils Matthew McGinley (5) and Gemma Carlisle (14)

Equality in Northern Ireland education has not improved since 2007, report claims

**The inequality in the Northern Irish education system has
been not improved since 2007, it has been claimed.**

The Equality Commission's Draft Statement on Key Inequalities in Education is their assessment of inequalities faced by those in education in Northern Ireland.

It states that not much has changed in terms of educational challenges since 2007.

It highlights persistent underachievement by working-class Protestant children, and wider male underachievement in education.

They also say that "prejudice-based bullying is a persistent problem".

They say the inequalities "have worsened over time" and have called for them to be addressed as a matter of urgency by government.

Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission Dr Michael Wardlow said the education system needs to be robust and built on a stable and secure base.

He said: "This research and statement highlights areas where there are educational challenges and how these impact on vulnerable children.

"It highlights the painful truth that not much has changed in this area since 2007 when the

Commission issued its first statement on Key Inequalities in Education."

Amongst other things, the statement highlights that many children in Northern Ireland continue to experience persistent inequalities because of barriers which are linked to disability, gender, religion and other equality grounds.

These inequalities are magnified for children coming from social and economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

"There is a responsibility on those who shape and manage our education systems - those in Government Departments and the Assembly; on Education and School Boards; on the Churches; political leaders and those across the community - to focus on and overcome these enduring barriers which continue to disadvantage the most vulnerable sections of our community," said Dr Wardlow.

"The Equality Commission is eager to work with these groups to help ensure that our education system, which serves all our people, is robust and built on a stable and secure base."

The impact of the new assessment of the experiences of people in education across all the equality grounds in Northern Ireland will be

discussed with experts from the education sector and people involved in and affected by it at a meeting in Malone College Belfast today.

The Commission will use the feedback from this event to assist in the finalization of its statement on 'Key Inequalities in Education' which it hopes will help shape future initiatives on these issues.

The key findings of the report include:

- Boys have persistently lower levels of attainment than females throughout primary and post-primary education;
- Protestants have persistently lower levels of attainment than Catholics at GCSE and A-Level, and that gap has widened in recent years;
- There are fewer male school leavers entering higher education than females and this has an impact on the make-up of the graduate workforce;
- Minority ethnic school leavers are more than twice as likely to enter unemployment as their white peers;
- Many schools are not effectively tackling racist bullying.

Moderator starts his first Presbytery Tour

Each year the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland makes a week-long tour of three of the Church's 19 Presbyteries.

Accompanied by his wife Anne, Dr. McNie will also preach at a Gospel Rally in Connor Presbyterian Church this week, take a United Service for congregations in Ballymena town at West Church Presbyterian and preach in Clough Presbyterian Church. The tour will conclude in Third Portglenone Presbyterian Church next Sunday where he will lead evening worship.

During the week he and Anne will attend coffee mornings at Second Broughshane and First Ahoghill Presbyterian churches. He will also host two breakfasts – one for ministers in the Presbytery and the other for Ballymena town centre traders.

In addition to a busy speaking schedule he will visit Dunclug Primary School and Dunclug College, Ballymena Livestock Market and pay a courtesy call on the Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.



Speaking at the start of his tour, Dr McNie said, “While Presbytery tours are always busy occasions for Moderators and our wives, we really are looking forward to joining with friends in Ballymena and the surrounding area and hope that through our visit to congregations and the Presbytery itself, we can encourage and be encouraged ourselves.

“While I will be meeting many people from different congregations and speaking in a number of churches, we are also looking forward to hosting a meeting of Ballymena town traders,

visiting the Farmers Mart and two local schools. Anne will also be talking about our [recent trip to Malawi](#) as well.”

Ballymena Presbytery – one of the Church’s 19 presbyteries across Ireland – consists of 31 congregations. Rev. Joseph Andrews, Clerk of Ballymena Presbytery and Minister of Ballee Presbyterian Church said, “The last time our Presbytery welcomed a Moderator on a Presbytery tour was in 2009, so we are looking forward to Dr. McNie’s visit.

“The Moderator’s visit always encourages us at a local level and reminds us that we are part of a larger church family and bigger Presbyterian community. His visit will be a very practical way of demonstrating that. It is also a good opportunity for Moderator’s to see what local Churches are doing in the community and for the local community to meet the Moderator.”

Climate Justice Lecture in Zion Parish Dublin

Leading Environmental Theologian, Dr. Martin Hodson, will give a lecture on ‘Climate Justice’ in



Zion Parish Church on Wednesday October 28
at 8.00 pm.

Climate change will most adversely impact the world's poorest. Dr Hodson (pictured) will consider climate justice and what this means for the church, offering a clear biblical foundation for caring for creation through ethical living, practical action and advocacy.

Dr Martin Hodson is Visiting Researcher in Environmental Biology at Oxford Brookes University, and Associate Member of the Institute of Human Sciences at the University of Oxford. He is Operations Manager for the John

Ray Initiative (JRI), a charity looking at the interactions between science, faith and the environment.

Dr Hodson has published widely in the area of theology and climate change, his books include *Cherishing the Earth* (2008), *Climate Change, Faith and Rural Communities* (2011), *The Ethics of Climatic Scepticism* (2015) and *A Christian Guide to Environmental Issues* (2015).

Engage Connor Youth launches new social media

Engage Connor Youth is launching on Twitter and Pinterest.

To date, Engage Connor Youth has been connecting with young people and youth leaders through social media mainly through Facebook.

The [Engage Facebook](#) page has been active in informing young people and leaders about the events and activities being hosted by the Connor Youth Council. It has given an opportunity to share pictures of previous events and details of upcoming gatherings. The Youth Council has been engaging with those in the diocese through this and these new additions set up by Diocesan Youth Officer Christina Baillie will build on this.

ideas or pictures which can be useful in their regular youth work programmes.

The Youth Council hopes it will be a great resource to provide craft ideas, session plans, game ideas and creative suggestions for prayer rooms.

Launching the new Engage social media sites, Christina said: “For me it is an opportunity to resource and begin to provide helpful tools for those engaged in youth work through the diocese.

“It may be helping to find an unusual game or a suggestion on how to develop young leaders, but overall should provide a small part of our ongoing support to individual parishes. It helps to add to the continuing development of community amongst our youth in Connor.”

Christina continued: “As we gather for regular events we hope that social media can be one way of keeping in touch in between times. So please like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and pin ideas from Pinterest!”

Links to Engage Social Media sites are on the [Engage Connor Youth](#) page.

Korean Anglicans celebrate 125 years of mission ministry

Korean Anglicans welcomed friends from across the communion Oct. 3 as they celebrated 125 years of ministry based in inculturation, mission and evangelism.

The festive Eucharist at the [Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Nicholas](#) in downtown Seoul drew an overflow crowd. Many people sat on blue stools in the courtyards outside Romanesque church watching the proceedings on three enormous video screens. Many wore blue paper visors that were handed out with the order of service booklets to shield themselves from a warm October sun.

A street fair of sorts lined on side of the lower courtyard and the cathedral's Café Grace coffee shop under a large tree in that courtyard was open for business. The café is a mission of the cathedral that helps women refugees from North Korean get settled into society in the South. Communion was served to those sitting outside.



Seoul Archbishop and Anglican Church in Korea Primate Paul Keun Sang Kim prays the Eucharistic prayer during the province's 125th anniversary celebration Eucharist Oct. 3 at the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. Nicholas in downtown Seoul. He is surrounded by bishops from across the Anglican Communion, including Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, second from left, and others from The Episcopal Church.

Inside the cathedral, bishops from across Asia and other parts of the communion, including The Episcopal Church joined the service, as did Korean clergy. The celebration took place during Episcopal Asiamerica Ministries international consultation that began here Sept. 30.

Participants were among the hundreds of worshippers.

Those worshippers same sang traditional Anglican hymns in Korean as well as modern compositions. The music included folk instruments played by Koreans in traditional dress. The service was broadcast to those outside by CBS, a non-profit television station that features programming related to the Korean church and society. Cameramen on foot and with a crane caught different angles of every element of the two-and-a-half-hour service.

The [Anglican Church of Korea](#) traces its roots to Sept. 29, 1890 when Bishop Charles John Corfe, who had been ordained a bishop at Westminster Abbey, arrived with other colleagues at Incheon Port. Corfe began his work in the Seoul area, opening schools and medical facilities and other institutions such as orphanages. The church now has three dioceses, more than 200 priests, Sungkonghoe University, four religious communities and 60 social welfare centers. It has grown to more than 65,000 members in 120 parishes and missions.

From the beginning, Anglicans worked for the church to be integrated into Korean culture. Thus, while the Romanesque cathedral's apse is filled with a golden mosaic crowned by an image of Christ, there are church buildings elsewhere that were constructed in the traditional Korean architecture.

Before the anniversary service started, the bishops joined Seoul Archbishop Paul Keun Sang Kim, who is also the primate of the Anglican Church in Korea, to dedicate a bust of the Rev. Mark Hee-Jun Kim, the Anglican Church in Korea's first Korean priest. He was ordained on Dec. 21, 1915 by Bishop Mark N. Trollope, who later oversaw construction of the cathedral.

Christopher Chan-Young Kim, a young boy descended from the priest, read the Old Testament reading in Korean during the service. The reading, Isaiah 6:3-9, formed the theme of the service as Isaiah offered to preach God's word, saying "Here I am; send me."

This year marks 50 years since Korean bishops have led the Korean Anglican Church. Lee Cheon Hwan was ordained and consecrated in 1965, just 20 years after the country was

liberated from Japan after World War II. The church became an independent province of the Anglican Communion in 1993. Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby sent anniversary greetings to the province that were read during the service by Church of England Diocese of Peterborough Bishop Donald Allister. Peterborough and the Diocese of Seoul have had a relationship since 2011.

Reconciliation is a theme for the province's ministry and the anniversary Eucharist's collect included a prayer that Korean Anglicans would "devote ourselves to the unification and reconciliation of the Korean peninsula."

The service also featured a Korean-specific prayer for each of the Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission. The prayer for the fourth mark (to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation) noted the sorrow of the peninsula's division.

"Seventy years of our independence is also 70 years of our division," the prayer said, noting that wounds from World War II "turned into ideological conflict" and "families lost their hometowns.

“We pray that our nation will become one, dance in an embrace, and worship and praise you even in North Korea,” the prayer concluded.

The Anglican Church in Korea has also pursued reconciliation with the [Nippon Sei Ko Kai](#) (the Anglican Church in Japan). Japan’s annexation of Korea in 1910 was the start of a militaristic period in that country’s history that only ended with its defeat in World War II. Korean men and women were conscripted as laborers in Japan, suffered from and often died because of their working conditions. The Anglican Church in Japan did not protest as Japan began to occupy and colonize other Asian countries.

Last December the two churches celebrated 30 years of mission partnership.

Synod will not result in ‘spectacular change’ in doctrine, says cardinal

Observers expecting the family synod to result in a “spectacular change” of Church doctrine will be disappointed, a senior cardinal has said.

Speaking at a Vatican press conference on Monday, Cardinal André Vingt-Trois said: “If you have come to Rome with the idea that you are going to witness a spectacular change in Church doctrine, you are going to be disappointed.

“Nor do you need a synod to work that out. All you have to do is listen to the Pope’s homilies on the family, week after week at his Wednesday public audiences.”

The cardinal is the Archbishop of Paris and one of four delegate presidents at the synod.

His comments were echoed by Archbishop Bruno Forte, the synod’s special secretary, who added that the media wrongly presented bishops as divided into two parties.

“We are pastors, filled with faith, open to God,” he said.

At the press conference synod rapporteur Cardinal Péter Erdő defended his comments about Communion for the remarried in his opening address at the synod.

In his address Cardinal Erdo had said: “The integration of the divorced and remarried in the life of the ecclesial community can take many forms, [but it] is different from admission to the Eucharist.”

Cardinal Erdő told reporters that for the divorced and civilly remarried “it is not failure of first marriage, but living in a second union that prevents access to Eucharist”.

Cardinal Erdo emphasised that marriage was indissoluble. “God offers forgiveness to sinners, but asks for conversion,” he said.

Media digest

Equality Commission reports inequality in NI education - BBC News

The Equality Commission says inequality in education has worsened in Northern Ireland since 2007
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-34445359>

UDA - We haven't gone away - News Letter

A declaration has been made on behalf of the UDA, stating that the organisation still exists and suggesting that it has no intention of disappearing.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/uda-we-haven-t-gone-away-you-know-1-6994556>

Bishops approve of Hibernia College's religious training programme - Irish Times

Private teacher training college Hibernia has received approval from the Catholic bishops for its religious education programme, removing any doubt about whether its graduates can teach in Catholic schools.

... the [Catholic Primary School Management Association](#) (CPSMA) has issued a statement to boards of management, clarifying how to carry out elections this month.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/bishops-approve-hibernia-college-s-religious-training-programme-1.2378656>

[Mail/Guard/Western Gazette/BBC/ITV/Bournemouth Daily Echo/Brighton & Hove News/Western Morning News](#)

Further coverage the announcement that Archbishop of Canterbury has commissioned an independent review into the way the CofE responded to sex offence allegations made against the Peter Ball. The former Bishop of Gloucester and Lewes pleaded guilty last month to sex abuse charges involving men dating from the 1970s-90s. He will be sentenced tomorrow. Reports carry comments from survivors saying the review must be truly independent and the Church must not police itself.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3261307/Church-review-allegations-child-sex-abuse-branded-joke.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/05/sex-abuse-bishop-welby-orders-review-of-churchs-handling-of-peter-ball-case>

<http://www.westerngazette.co.uk/Archbishop-Canterbury-commissions-review-retired/story-27923339-detail/story.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34447422>

<http://www.itv.com/news/2015-10-05/deeply-corrupt-church-of-england-tried-to-silence-abuse-victims-for-decades-victim-claims/>

BBC

Report that the Bishop of Manchester, David Walker has criticised the benefits system which he says produces too many wrongly imposed sanctions and delays. Speaking at a fringe meeting of the Conservative Party Conference in the city, Bishop David claimed innocent people are trapped in the drive to catch fraudsters.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-34449325>

BBC/Tel/Times

Reports that Home Secretary Theresa May will tell the Conservative Party Conference that high levels of immigration make building a cohesive society impossible for the UK. Net migration is at record levels. She will say that those on both extremes of the debate conflate refugees who need help, with economic migrants who want to live in a more prosperous society.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-34450887>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/11913392/Theresa-May-Mass-immigration-making-cohesive-society-impossible.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/politics/article4577400.ece>

BBC

Report that end of life care in the UK has been ranked the best in the world. The study of 80 countries by the Economist Intelligence Unit said service provided by the NHS and Hospice movement was second to none.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-34415362>

Comment

Guard

Andrew Brown - Opposing gay bishops for the sake of church unity is stupid.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/05/church-opposing-england-gay-bishops-unity>

Guard

Adam Lee - Abortion opposition is a religious stance. Atheists must help fight for choice.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/05/abortion-opposition-religious-atheists-must-help-fight-for-choice>

Guard

Giles Fraser - If Jeremy Corbyn lacks one thing, it's the powerful poetry to back his vision.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2015/oct/01/if-jeremy-corbyn-lacks-one-thing-its-the-powerful-poetry-of-vision>