



**To: THE BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT AND PRINCIPAL TEACHERS
OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Rescinding of Rule 68 of the Rules for National Schools

1. Introduction

At the conclusion of the work of The *Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector* the Advisory Group of the forum recommended that:

- (i) the Minister for Education and Skills should review and update the Rules for National Schools and;
- (ii) as a first step, and in line with the general view expressed at the Forum, Rule 68 should be deleted as soon as possible.

2. Rescinding of Rule 68

The Minister has decided to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Group in relation to the Rules and as provided in the Rules has rescinded Rule 68 which concerned religious instruction in primary schools.

3. Religious Instruction

In relation to providing religious instruction that accords with the patronage of a school of a particular denomination or faith tradition the Minister considers that the matter can be informed by Section 15 (2) (b) of the [Education Act of 1998](#) and the functions of the board of such a school in relation to upholding the characteristic spirit of the school.

The Minister has directed her Department to proceed to identify other Rules for rescinding particularly where primary legislation deals with the subject matter of the rule in question.

4. Dissemination of Circular

A copy of this circular should be provided to members of the board of management and the teaching staff of each school. This circular may be accessed on the Department of Education and Skills website at www.education.ie. An Irish version of this circular is also available on the Department's website.

5. Queries in relation to this circular

Queries in relation to this circular should be e-mailed to the Department at:

schoogovernance@education.gov.ie

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