

Atheist Ireland

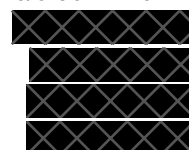
Promoting atheism, reason and ethical secularism

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c/o John Hamill



1st February 2018

Attn: Ms Ciara O'Donnell
National Director
Professional Development Service for Teachers
14 Joyce Way,
Park West Business Park,
Nangor Road
Dublin 12

Re: Request for Records Under Freedom of Information Act, 2014

Dear Ms O'Donnell,

I refer to your response to my Freedom of Information request, which you dated 30th January 2018. One of the requests that I originally made, was for:

"A list of all in-service days for religion teachers since January 2016, which were attended both by representatives of the Catholic Church and representatives of the PDST ..."

In your response to this very specific request you have stated as follows:

"There have been no jointly arranged in-service days and representatives of the Catholic Church have not attended our in-service days in that capacity."

Your response to the very specific request that I made under the Freedom of Information Act, does not seem to be accurate or complete. On the Diocese of Kerry web site¹, you can find details of an in-service day that was jointly attended by representatives of the Catholic Church and representatives of the PDST, during

¹ <http://www.dioceseofkerry.ie/2016/03/post-primary-religious-education-in-service/>



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February 2016. The website of the Archdiocese of Dublin², also advertises events that seem to fit my Freedom of Information request. In fact, Catholic Diocesan Advisors right across the country regularly advertise Church-hosted events, that include both representatives of the Catholic Church and representatives of the PDST. For example, I'm aware of several events attended by the PDST, which were used to promote Veritas materials and other teaching products that are sold by the Catholic Church (as per the attached).

My Freedom of Information request specifically sought an exhaustive list of all such events, which have been attended by both PDST representatives and Catholic Church representatives, since January 2016. Moreover, it is difficult for me to understand how representatives of the PDST arrived at such well-publicised events, without any prior communication with representatives of the Catholic Church, or any documented agreement as to the agenda or the goals of such events. Certainly, if the PDST is in the habit supporting such Catholic Church events, without retaining any associated records or documentation whatsoever, then that would be a situation that I would be eager to have confirmed by you.

Since your response to my request seems incomplete and inaccurate, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act I would now like to formally request that my original application should be reviewed in full by senior members of your organisation. If I do not receive a satisfactory response within three weeks of the date of this communication, then my next recourse will be to the Information Commissioner.

Yours Sincerely,

John Hamill.

² <http://education.dublindiocese.ie/2015/11/19/2015-2016-opportunities-for-in-servicecpd/>

