

Profile of Survey Respondents

Almost four thousand people (n=3,906), in both primary and secondary schools, responded to our survey questionnaire. These included members of boards of management, school principals, deputy / vice-principals, classroom and subject teachers and teachers of religion (RE teachers). As the following table shows, almost eighty-two percent of respondents are in the primary education sector, and over eighteen percent are involved with secondary education.

Table 1: Number and percentage of respondents by role and school level

Roles	Primary	Secondary	Total	% of respondents
Member of the Board of Management	1,162	95	1,257	32.2%
Principal or Deputy Principal	1,111	117	1,228	31.4%
Teacher - Classroom or Subject	794	302	1,096	28.1%
RE Teacher		129	129	3.3%
Other Staff	122	74	196	5.0%
Total	3,189	717	3,906	
% of respondents	81.6%	18.4%		

Gender of Respondents

Almost two-thirds of respondents were females, and almost a third were male. Just over one percent of respondents described their gender in other terms, or they opted not to declare it. As the following table shows, there was little overall difference (<2 percentage points) in the gender profile of respondents across both levels (primary / secondary).

Table 2: Gender of respondents by school level

Gender	Number of Respondents			% of Respondents		
	Primary	Secondary	Total Respondents	Primary	Secondary	Total Respondents
Female	2,105	467	2,572	66.0%	65.1%	65.8%
Male	1,043	237	1,280	32.7%	33.1%	32.8%
Other / Not Stated	41	13	54	1.3%	1.8%	1.4%
Total Respondents	3,189	717	3,906			

Females constituted over eighty percent of the teaching and other school staff who participated in the survey. They also constituted the majority of principals and deputy or vice-principals, who responded to the questionnaire. Males outnumbered females among the board of management members among survey respondents. The following table presents the breakdown of respondents by gender and role.

Table 3: Gender of respondents by role in their school, across both primary and secondary levels combined

Roles	Number of Respondents			% of Respondents		
	Female	Male	Other / N/S	Female	Male	Other / N/S
Member of the Board of Management	595	645	17	47.3%	51.3%	1.4%
Principal or Deputy Principal	808	402	18	65.8%	32.7%	1.5%
Teacher - Classroom or Subject	902	179	15	82.3%	16.3%	1.4%
RE Teacher	93	36	-	72.1%	27.9%	0.0%
Other Staff	174	18	4	88.8%	9.2%	2.0%
Total	2,572	1,280	54	65.8%	32.8%	1.4%

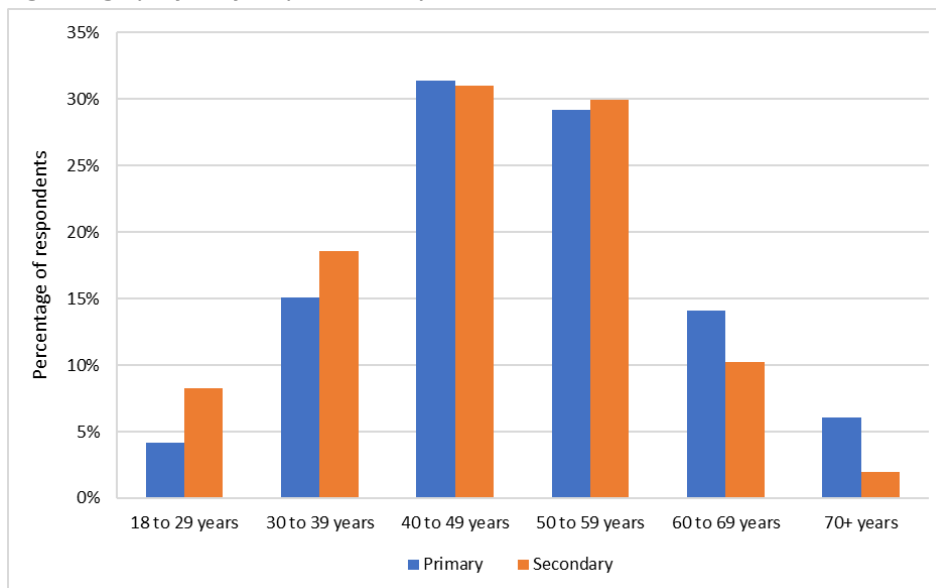
When the gender profile of respondents is analysed by both role and school level, we observe that:

- The majority of BoM members are male (51% at primary level and 52% at secondary level);
- The majority of principals and deputy principals are females (67% at primary level and 57% at secondary level);
- Teachers are predominantly female (88% at primary level and 68% at secondary level); and
- Other school staff (e.g. secretaries, caretakers, cleaners, SNAs) are overwhelmingly female (95% at primary level and 78% at secondary level).

Age Profile of Respondents

Over sixty percent (61%) of survey respondents were aged between forty and fifty-nine years. As the following graph illustrates, the age profile of respondents is similar at both primary and secondary levels.

Fig. 1: Age profile of respondents by school level



There are, however, some notable age-range differences among the various cohorts of respondents – based on the roles / functions they perform, as the following table shows.

Table 4: Age profile of respondents by role¹

Role	Age Cohort					
	18 to 29	30 to 39	40 to 49	50 to 59	60 to 69	70+
BoM	0.2%	4.8%	23.5%	25.8%	29.6%	16.2%
Principal or Deputy Principal	0.3%	13.0%	36.7%	41.4%	8.4%	0.1%
Teacher - Classroom or Subject	15.3%	31.2%	33.1%	18.0%	2.3%	0.1%
RE Teacher	10.9%	19.4%	40.3%	27.1%	1.6%	0.8%
Other Staff	1.5%	12.4%	32.5%	41.8%	11.3%	0.5%

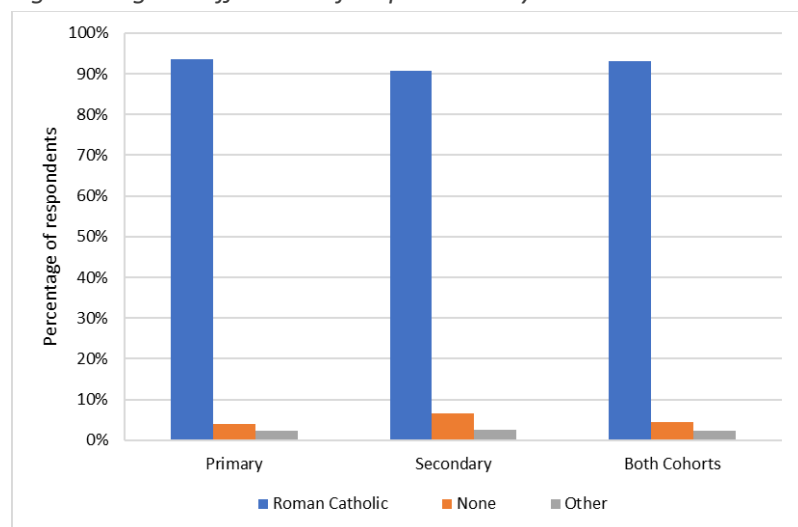
As the table shows:

- Almost half (46%) of board of management members are aged over 60;
- The modal age cohort for principals and deputy principals is 50 to 59;
- Four fifths (80%) of teachers are aged under fifty;
- The modal age cohort for RE teachers is 40 to 49; and
- Over half (54%) of non-teaching staff are aged over 50.

Religious Affiliations of Respondents

The vast majority (93%) of respondents declare themselves to be Roman Catholic. As the following graph shows, the religious-affiliation profile of respondents is similar at both primary and secondary school levels.

Fig. 2: Religious affiliation of respondents by school level



The following table presents a breakdown of these figures (on religious affiliation), by role / function, at both primary and secondary levels.

¹ Calculations excluded the seventeen respondents who did not state their age cohort.

Table 5: Religious affiliation by role and school level

Roles	Primary			Secondary		
	Roman Catholic	No Religion	Other Religion	Roman Catholic	No Religion	Other Religion
Member of the Board of Management	94.5%	4.3%	1.2%	94.7%	2.1%	3.2%
Principal or Deputy Principal	97.8%	1.5%	0.6%	94.9%	2.6%	2.6%
Teacher - Classroom or Subject	90.9%	7.4%	1.8%	83.4%	13.6%	3.0%
RE Teacher	N/A	N/A	N/A	97.7%	0.0%	2.3%
Other Staff	92.4%	4.2%	3.4%	97.2%	1.4%	1.4%
Total	94.7%	4.1%	1.2%	90.7%	6.6%	2.7%

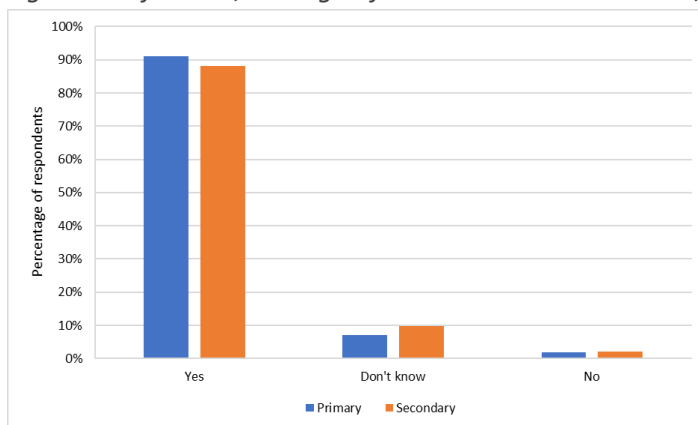
As the table shows,

- Across primary and secondary schools combined, the following proportions, in each role, describe themselves as Roman Catholics:
 - 97.0% of principals and deputy/vice principals;
 - 94.5% of board of management members;
 - 92.8% of non-teaching staff; and
 - 88.8% of teaching staff.
- All RE teachers have a religious affiliation; and
- Other teaching staff members are the most likely cohort not to have a religious affiliation, with one almost one in seven secondary-school teachers being in this category.

The vast majority (86%) of survey respondents report that they believe in God. A further eight percent state that they ‘don’t know’, while the remainder (six percent) said that they do not believe in God. Belief in God is higher among primary-school respondents (87%) than among secondary-school respondents (83%).

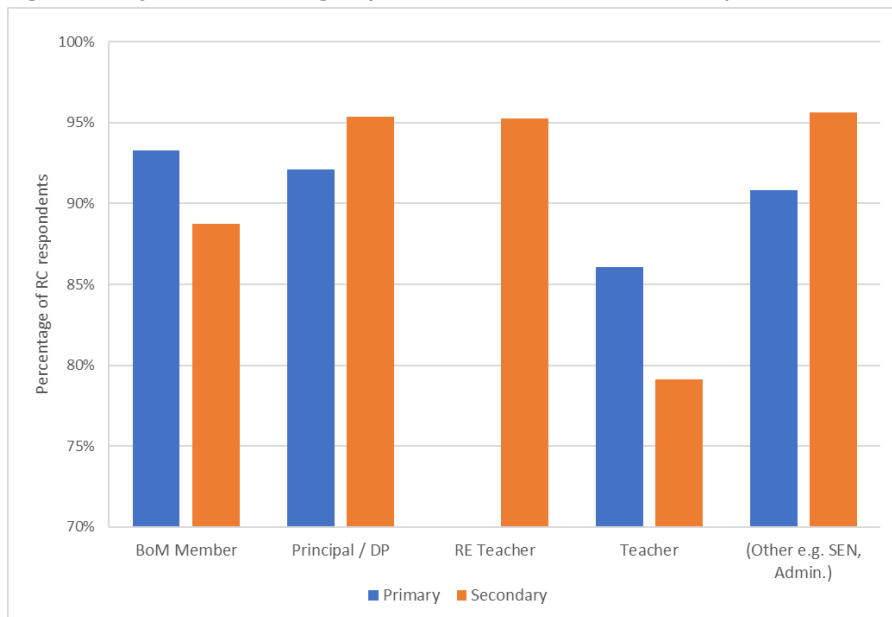
The following graph shows the proportion of self-declared Roman Catholics, by school level, who believe in God. It shows that approximately ninety percent of Roman Catholics, in both levels, report that they believe in God. Values are similar for both primary and secondary levels.

Fig. 3: Belief in God, among self-declared Roman Catholics, by school level



The following graph provides a further breakdown of the data in respect of belief in God. It shows the percentage of self-declared Roman Catholics who believe in God, by role and school level.

Fig. 4: Belief in God, among self-declared Roman Catholics, by role and school level



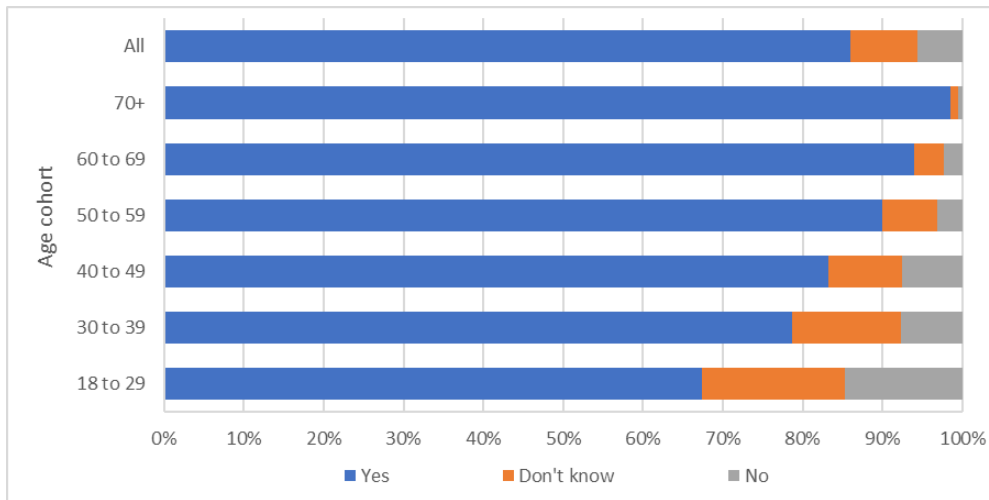
As the figures reveal,

- Belief in God is highest among secondary-school non-teaching staff (96%), principals (95%) and RE teachers (95%); and
- Belief in God is lowest among secondary-school teachers (79%), primary-school teachers (86%) and secondary-school board of management members (89%).

Among our survey cohort, gender does not have a significant bearing on belief in God; eighty-four percent of males and eighty-seven percent of females report that they believe in God. The corresponding figures are slightly higher among Roman Catholics (than among the entire cohort) for both genders; eighty-nine percent of males and ninety-one percent of females believe in God.

Of all the variables included in this survey, age has the most significant bearing on belief in God and religious affiliation. The following graph shows the percentage of respondents (across the entire survey sample), by age cohort, and their belief in God.

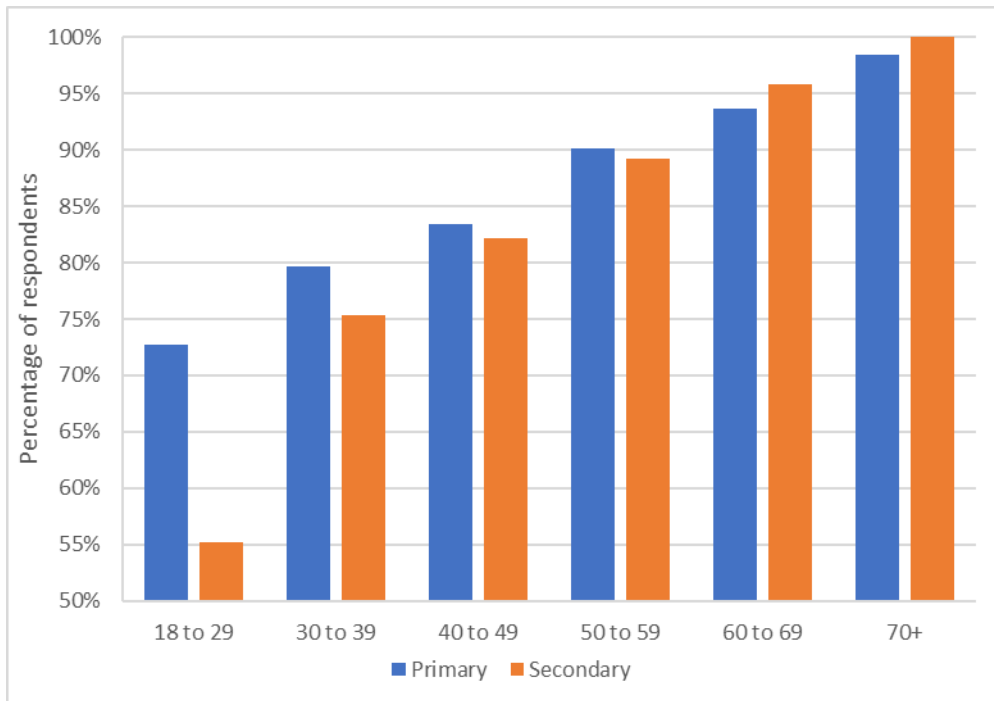
Fig. 5: Belief in God by age cohort (both school levels combined)



As the graph shows, there is a linear relationship between age and belief in God. Values range from sixty-seven percent among those aged 18 to 29 to ninety-eight percent among those aged 70+.

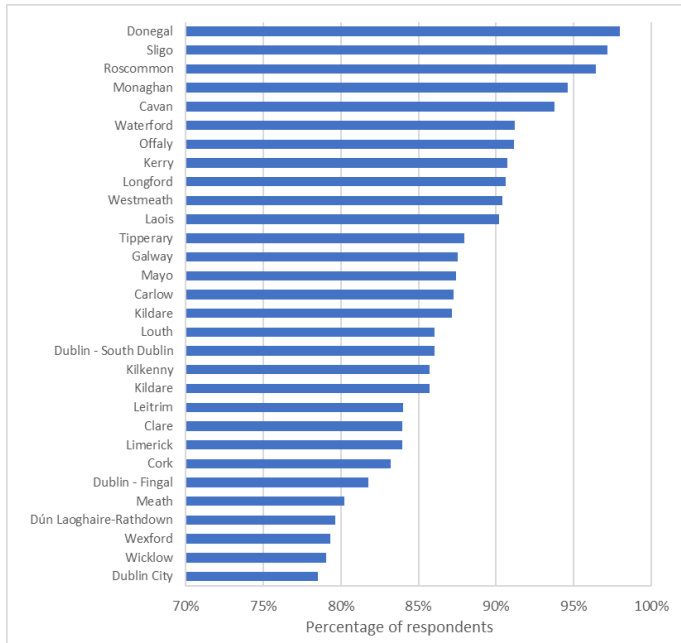
As the following graph illustrates, there is a linear relationship between age and belief in God transcends school level, but this pattern is more pronounced at secondary level.

Fig. 6: Belief in God by age cohort and school level



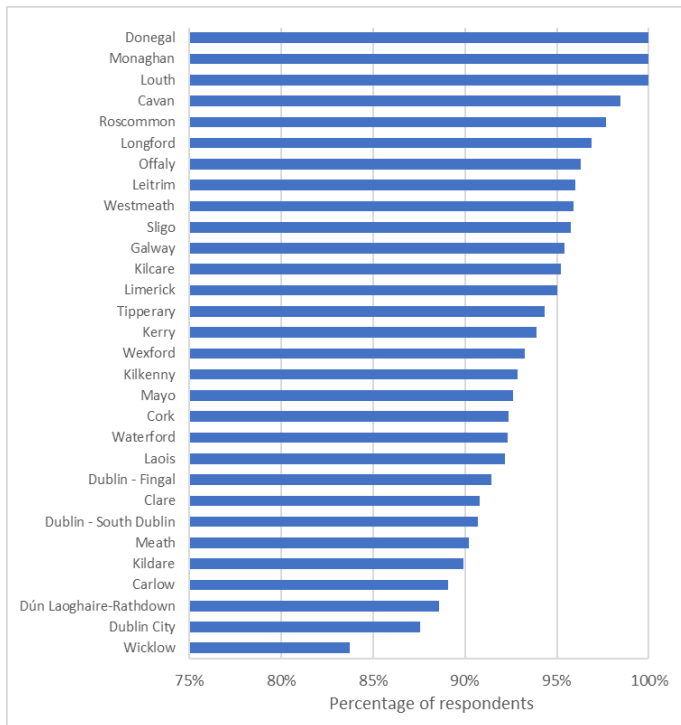
Geography also has a bearing on both belief in God and religious affiliation, as the following graphs illustrate.

Fig. 7: Percentage of respondents who believe in God by county in which their school is located



As the graph shows, respondents who are based in rural counties are more likely to express a belief in God, while those who are based in the Greater Dublin Area, Cork and Limerick are less likely to believe in God. Values range from seventy-eight percent in Dublin City to ninety-eight percent in Donegal.

Fig. 8: Percentage of respondents who self-declare as RC by county in which their school is located

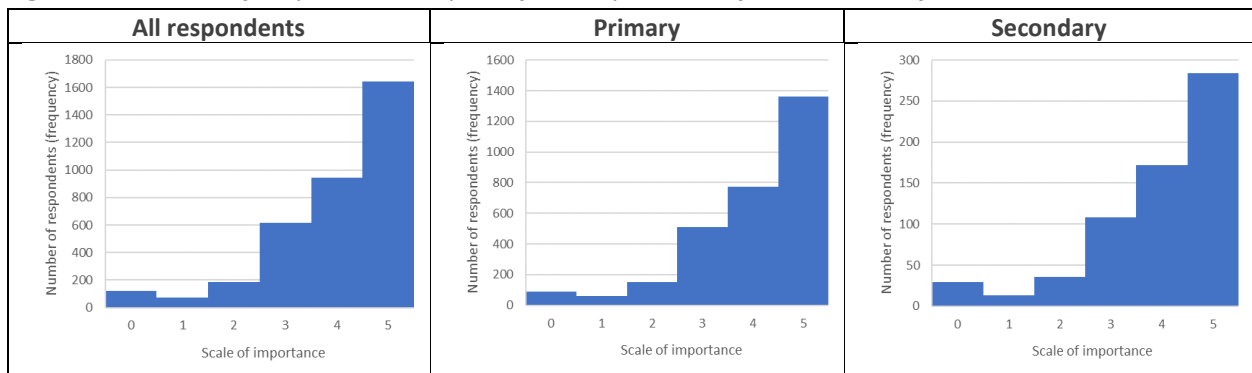


Those who stated that they believe in God were asked a follow-up question as follows: *How important is God in your life? Please indicate, using the scale (0 = not at all important to 5 = very important).* The following are the main measures of central tendency and dispersion on this six-point scale:

- Mean: 3.98
- Mode: 5
- Standard Deviation: 1.24

The following graphs (histograms) show the distribution of responses (among all respondents) at both school levels.

Fig. 9: Distribution of responses in respect of the importance of God in one's life



The following table provides further detail in respect of the data illustrated above; it reveals there is no significant difference between the overall mean (average) values for primary and secondary schools i.e. 4.0 and 3.92 respectively. There are, however, notable differences among the various cohorts, based on the roles they perform or exercise in the lives of their schools.

Table 6: Mean values, in descending order, in respect of the importance of God in respondents' lives, by role / function and school level

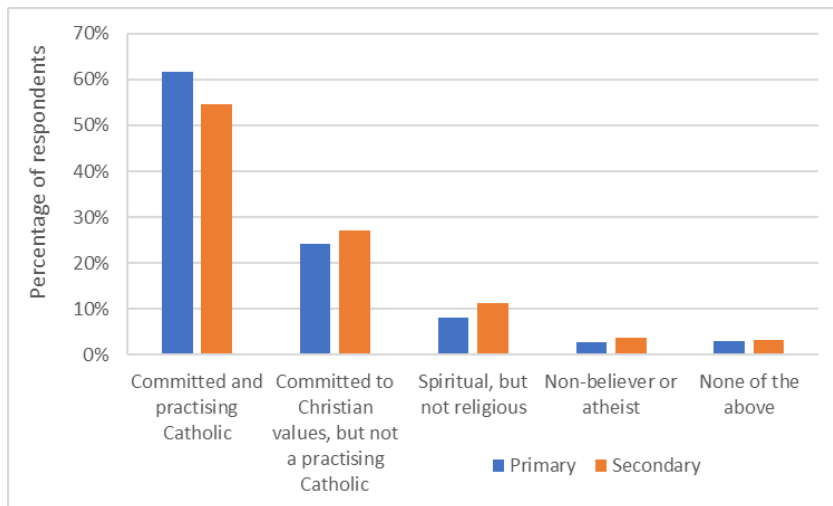
Role	Primary	Secondary
Member of the Board of Management		4.40
Other Staff Member		4.29
Deputy Principal		4.23
Principal		4.22
RE Teacher		4.20
Member of the Board of Management	4.14	
Principal / Teaching Principal / Deputy	4.06	
<i>All roles / cohorts</i>	<i>4.00</i>	<i>3.92</i>
Other Staff Member	3.97	
Teacher	3.71	
Subject Teacher		3.39

The table shows that, with the exception of subject teachers, all cohorts (based on role / function) at secondary-school level report that God is more important in their lives than is the case among the equivalent and other cohorts at primary-school level.

Religious Practices among Respondents

As noted earlier, the vast majority (93%) of respondents self-declare as a Roman Catholic. Yet, as the following graph shows, only sixty percent of respondents describe themselves as a ‘committed and practising Catholic’. A further quarter describe themselves as ‘committed to Christian values, but not a practising Catholic’, while almost one in ten respondents say they are ‘spiritual, but not religious’.

Fig. 10: Respondents’ descriptions of their religious outlook / practice

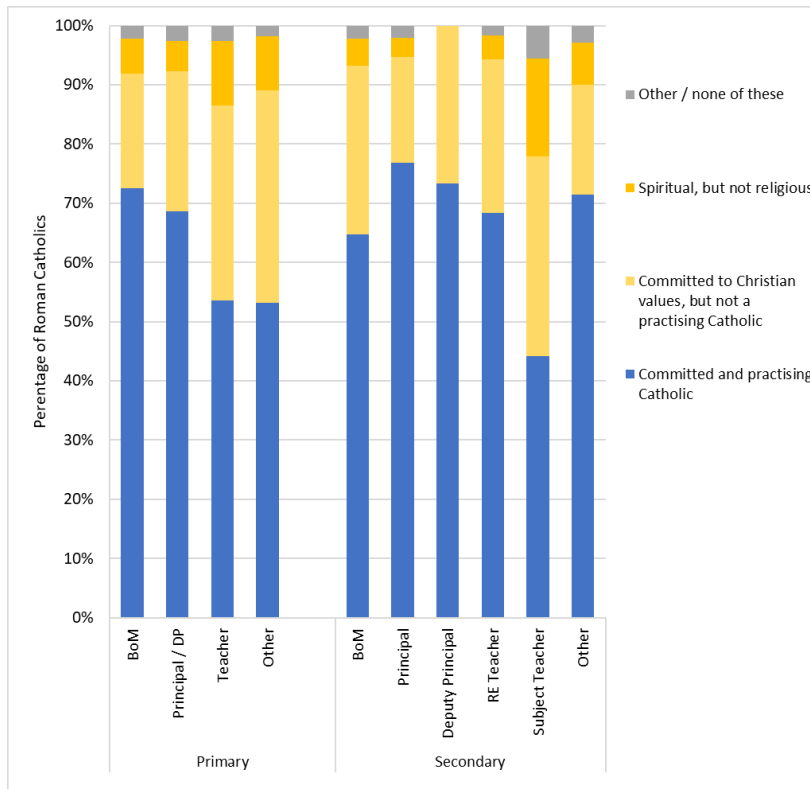


The data reveal that:

- The proportion of respondents who describe themselves as committed and practicing Catholics is higher at primary level (62%) than at secondary-school level (55%); and
- Among those at secondary-school level, thirty-eight percent are either ‘committed to Christian values, but not a practising Catholic’ and / or ‘spiritual but not religious’.

Among those who self-declare as Roman Catholics, almost two thirds (65%) describe themselves as a ‘committed and practising Catholic’, while a further quarter (25%) state they are ‘committed to Christian values, but not a practising Catholic’. Across all roles / functions in their schools, sixty-six percent of those at primary level and sixty percent of those at secondary level describe themselves as committed and practicing Catholics. The following graph shows Roman Catholics’ descriptions of their religious outlook and practice by school level.

Fig. 11: Roman Catholics' descriptions of their religious outlook / practice, by school level

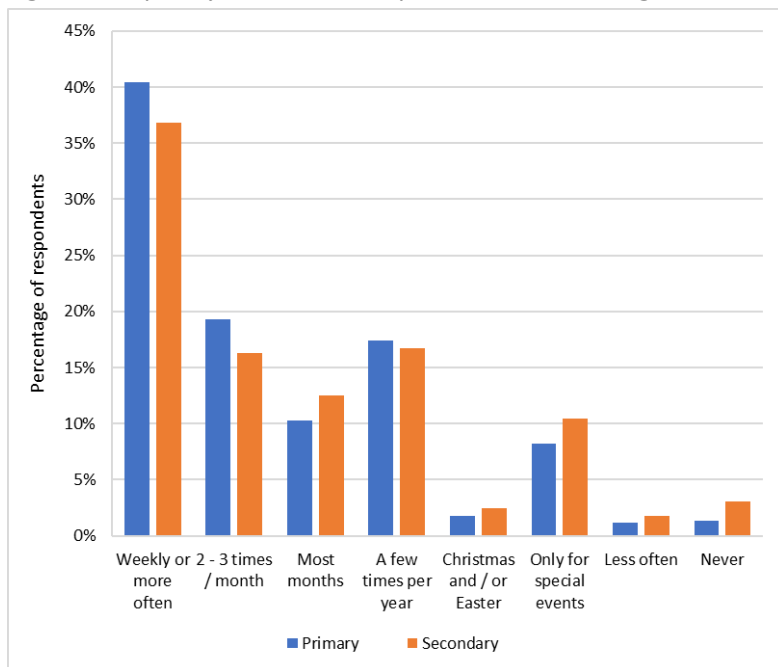


As this graph shows,

- Over sixty percent of Roman Catholic board of management members, principals and non-teaching staff describe themselves as committed and practising Catholics;
- The cohorts with the highest percentages of practising Roman Catholics are secondary-school principals (77%) and primary-school board of management members (73%);
- Just over two thirds (68%) of secondary school RE teachers are practising Catholics; and
- The cohorts with the lowest percentages of practising Roman Catholics are secondary-school subject teachers (44%), primary-school teachers (54%) and primary-school non-teaching staff (53%).

The survey findings reveal an association between respondents' descriptions of their religious outlook / practice and the frequency with which they attend religious services; figures are similar in respect of those who describe themselves as 'practising' and those who attend a religious service at least monthly. The following graph presents the findings in respect of frequency of attendance at religious services by school level.

Fig. 12: Frequency with which respondents attend religious services, by school level²



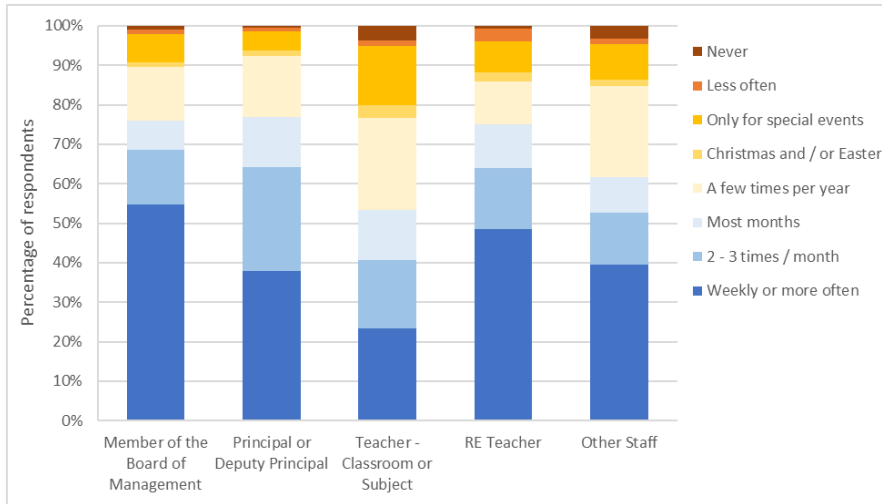
As the graph illustrates,

- The pattern (in respect of attendance at religious services) is broadly similar across primary and secondary schools, and ‘weekly or more often’ is the modal value across both school levels i.e. 40.5% at primary level and 37% at secondary level;
- Sixty percent of primary-school respondents and fifty-three percent of those at secondary school attend a religious service at least once a month;
- Eleven percent (10% at primary and 12.5% at secondary school) attend a religious service most months;
- Just over one in seven respondents (13.5%) attends a religious service less frequently than ‘a few times per year’ or they never do so.

As is the case with other variables covered in this survey, there is a level of association between the roles / functions respondents exercise and their religiosity, although age acts as an intervening variable. The following graph presents data in respect of the frequency with which respondents attend religious services, broken down by the roles / functions they exercise in their schools.

² Respondents were asked: If you are part of a religious tradition, how often do you attend organised religious services, either online (during COVID) or in-person?

Fig. 13: Frequency with which respondents attend religious services, by role

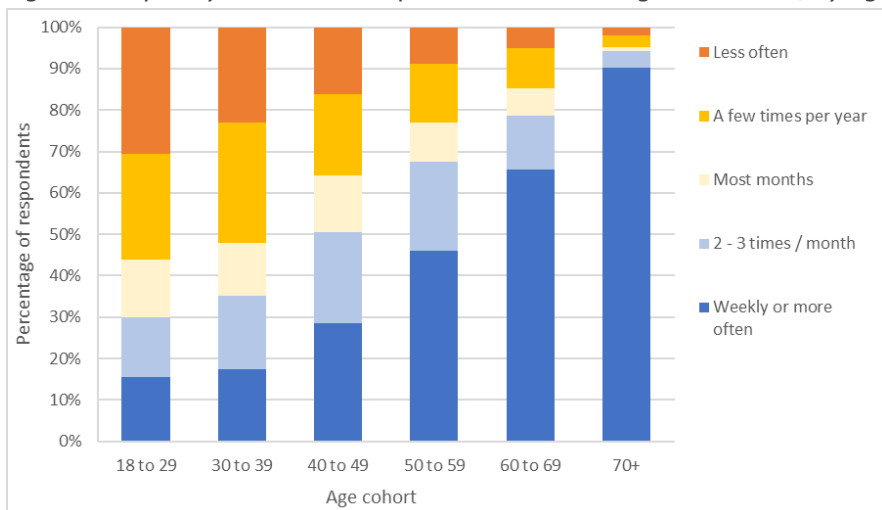


As this graph illustrates,

- Over half (55%) of BoM members attend a religious service at least every week;
- Almost half (48%) of RE teachers attend a religious service at least every week;
- Slightly fewer than forty percent (38%) of school principals and non-teaching staff (39.5%) attend a religious service every week;
- Fewer than a quarter (23.5%) of teachers attend a religious service every week; and
- One in seven teachers attends a religious service for special events only or less frequently.

As is the case with other variables in respect of religiosity, the dataset reveals an association between age and frequency of attendance at religious services.

Fig. 14: Frequency with which respondents attend religious services, by age cohort



As the graph shows, there is a direct linear relationship between age and frequency of attendance at religious services; the older the respondent the more frequently he / she attends a religious service.