To: Principals & Boards of Management of Primary and Post Primary School participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools)

APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID UNDER THE DORMANT ACCOUNTS (EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE) FUND - SMALL SCALE ICT GRANT SCHEME

**Completed forms must be returned no later than
22 May 2007 to the appropriate Regional Office**

The Department is operating a service to assist schools with any queries they might have on the Scheme or in completing application forms. The service will operate daily from 10 am to 12:45 pm and 2:00 pm to 4.30 pm. If you have a query please call (Lo Call 1890 40 20 40) and ask for the Regional Office serving your area or email the Regional Office serving your area.

DORMANT ACCOUNTS (EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE) FUND
SMALL SCALE ICT GRANT SCHEME FOR SCHOOLS

1.   Introduction

The Minister for Education and Science is pleased to announce details of the abovementioned once–off scheme and to invite schools participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools), to apply for a grant to fund ICT equipment that will be used to support children's learning and development in accordance with the terms of this Circular Letter.

The scheme provides for small scale grants for the purchase of the following types of ICT equipment:

- Digital Camera
- Digital Video Camera
- Laptop
- Tablet PC
- Other Computer
- Data Projector
- Interactive Whiteboard (including software)
- Wireless mouse and keyboard
- Educational Software
- Other*

*Schools may apply, <u>on an exceptional basis</u>, for funding to purchase items not specifically listed above. However, in order to be eligible the school must clearly demonstrate the need for such items with reference to its ICT School Plan.

Under the scheme funding will be devolved to individual school authorities to purchase equipment with guidance from and minimal interaction with the Department.

2.   Eligibility

The Scheme is restricted to primary and post primary schools that are participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS.

3.   How to apply for grant aid under the scheme

Applications forms can be downloaded from the Department's website www.education.gov.ie.

Completed forms and supporting documentation where appropriate, must be fully signed off by the relevant representatives of the school authority and returned to the appropriate Regional Office. (See Appendix A for details.) Envelopes should be marked 'Dormant Accounts ICT Grant Scheme'.

If application forms are being returned by email the original application must be signed by the relevant representatives of the school authority and retained on file in the school.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 22 May 2007. Late applications will not be considered.

4.   Timetable for the Scheme

Publication of scheme details and application forms	16 April 2007
Closing date for receipt of applications	22 May 2007
Publication of list of successful applicants	August / September 2007
Claim for drawdown of grant by successful applicants	30 November 2007

5.   Funding Available

A total of €3.4 million has been made available from the Dormant Accounts Fund to fund the scheme.

Schools are not required to provide match funding for projects per se. However, where there is a shortfall in funding a project, this shortfall must be paid for by the school.

6.   Level of Grant Aid Assistance

The maximum level of grant aid available to a school is based on the number of pupils enrolled @ 30 September 2006 in accordance with the official records held by the Department.

Number of Pupils	Grant per school €	Number of Pupils	Grant per school €
< 99	2,500	550-599	8,500
100-149	3,000	600-649	9,000
150-199	3,500	650-700	9,500
200-249	4,000	700-749	10,000
250-299	5,500	750-799	10,500
300-349	6,000	800-849	11,000
350-399	6,500	850-899	11,500
400-449	7,000	900-949	12,000
450-499	7,500	950-999	12,500
450-499	7,500	950-999	12,500
500-549	8,000	1,000 plus	13,000

The actual grant paid to successful applicants will be whichever is the lesser of (i) the amount of grant aid approved by the Department in its letter of approval or (ii) the verified actual cost of the equipment purchased.

7.   Acknowledgement of funding

Schools will be required to acknowledge that approved projects are being funded by the Dormant Accounts Fund. Further guidance on this matter will be included in the letter of approval.

8.   Advice Sheets

Advice sheets providing information on various types of ICT equipment, their possible educational uses and, where relevant, technical and purchasing considerations, are available from the NCTE's website at www.ncte.ie/ICTAdviceSupport/AdviceSheets.

9.   Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix B contains a set of Questions and Answers to the most common queries in relation to this scheme.

10.   Freedom of Information Act

Applicants are reminded that the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2003 apply. As such it should be noted that the Department may be obliged to release information submitted to the Department under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2003.

Department of Education and Science
April 2007

Areas Served and Contact Details for Regional Offices

Lo-Call: 1890 40 20 40 – This service will allow you contact any one of the 10 Regional Offices.

Area Served	Regional Office – Address & Contact Details
Dublin City, Fingal County Council	Dublin City/Fingal Regional Office Department of Education & Science 1st Floor Findlater House Cathal Brugha Street Dublin 1 Tel: 01 8896765 Email: DubCityFinRO@education.gov.ie
South Dublin, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	Dublin South County Regional Office Department of Education & Science County Hall Belgard Square North Tallaght Dublin 24 Tel: 01 4635500 Email: dscro@education.gov.ie
Kildare, Wicklow	Kildare /Wicklow Regional Office Department of Education & Science The Maudlins Naas Co. Kildare Tel: 045 848500 Email: naasreoff@education.gov.ie
Clare, Limerick, Tipperary NR.	Mid Western Regional Office Department of Education & Science Rosbrien Road Punch's Cross Limerick Tel: 061 430000 Email: RO_midwestern@education.gov.ie
Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath	Midland Regional Office Department of Education & Science Friar's Mill Road Mullingar Co Westmeath Tel: 044 9337000 Email: midlandro@education.gov.ie
Cavan, Louth, Meath, Monaghan	North Eastern Regional Office Department of Education & Science 1st Floor Beechmount Centre Navan Co. Meath

	Tel: 0469067410 Email: nero@education.gov.ie
Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo	North Western Regional Office Department of Education & Science Kempten Promenade Bridge Street Sligo Tel: 071 9135700 Email: nwro@education.gov.ie
Carlow, Kilkenny, Tipperary SR, Waterford, Wexford	South Eastern Regional Office Department of Education & Science Johnstown Business Park Waterford Tel: 051 310000 Email: sero@education.gov.ie
Cork, Kerry	Southern Regional Office Department of Education & Science Heritage Business Park Mahon Cork Tel: 021 4536300 Email: ro_southern@education.gov.ie
Galway, Mayo, Roscommon	Western Regional Office Department of Education & Science Victoria Place Eyre Square Galway Tel: 091 864500 Email: wro@education.gov.ie

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the closing date for return of completed application forms?

The closing date for completed application forms is 22 May 2007.

How must forms be returned and to where?

Completed application forms and supporting documentation where appropriate should be returned by post or email to the appropriate Regional Office (See Appendix A for details). Envelopes should be marked 'Dormant Accounts ICT Grant Scheme'. If application forms are being returned by email the original application must be signed by the relevant representatives of the school authority and retained on file in the school.

Who is eligible to apply?

The Scheme is restricted to primary and post primary schools who are participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS.

How will projects be assessed?

Projects will be assessed having regard to the eligibility of the school, the amount of grant aid applied for and the type of ICT equipment applied for.

What is the amount of the grant?

The maximum levels of grant aid available to a school is based on the number or pupils enrolled @ 30 September 2006 in accordance with the official records held by the Department. The amounts are set out in section 6 above.

Is the school guaranteed this amount?

No, the actual grant paid to successful applicants will be whichever is the lesser of; (i) the amount of grant aid approved by the Department in its letter of approval or (ii) the verified actual cost of the project.

Will the school authority be required to make a local contribution towards the project?

The scheme is not structured on the basis that the grant aid must be supplemented by local fundraising. It does, however, allow a school to supplement the funding from local resources if it so decides.

Can the Department withdraw an offer of grant-aid?

Yes, the grant sanction will automatically lapse if a valid claim form in respect of the specified ICT equipment is not submitted by 30 November 2007. Further, the Department retains the option of altering/withdrawing the offer of grant aid if it is considered by the Department that a change in the local circumstances is sufficient to warrant this.

At what point will the grant be paid?

Schools must submit a valid claim form in respect of the specified ICT equipment to the appropriate Regional Office before 30 November 2007. The grant will be paid before 31 December 2007.

What combination of ICT equipment would be most effective?

Advice sheets providing information on various types of ICT equipment, their possible educational uses and, where relevant, technical and purchasing considerations, are available from the NCTE's website at www.ncte.ie/ICTAdviceSupport/AdviceSheets.

Have any aggregated purchasing arrangements been put in place?

Details about aggregated purchasing arrangements in place and how schools can avail of these arrangements will be sent to successful applicants with the letter of approval.

Will training be made available for schools?

Yes, the NCTE has agreed to provide appropriate training to support the scheme. Further information in relation to training will be provided to successful applicants in due course.

Is my school in a RAPID / CLÁR or Local Drugs Taskforce Area?

Details on RAPID and the areas covered by the scheme can be accessed on
http://www.pobail.ie/en/RAPIDandCLR/RAPIDFAQs/#r2

Details on CLÁR and the areas covered by the scheme can be accessed on
http://www.pobail.ie/en/RAPIDandCLR/CLR/CountybreakdownbyElectoralDivision/

Details on the Local Drugs Taskforce areas can be accessed on
http://www.pobail.ie/en/NationalDrugsStrategy/TheLocalDrugsTaskForcesLDTFs/"

What records must be kept?

All expenditure in connection with the scheme must be vouched and all documentation must be retained by the school authority for a minimum period of seven years in the event of an audit inspection by the Department and/or Comptroller and Auditor General.

Please note that the Department will be undertaking random audits and inspections of schools participating in this scheme.

Why are random audits done?

In accordance with standard practice, payment of grants is conditional on the Department being satisfied that the school has followed proper procedures and retained appropriate records.