



Circular 0039/2007

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SCIENCE
School Building Unit

**To: The Management Authorities of Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools
and the Chief Executive Officers of Vocational Education Committees**

Grant Scheme for PE Equipment in Post Primary Schools

1. PE EQUIPMENT RENEWAL

A PE Equipment Renewal Grant is being provided of €4,000 per post primary school to provide capital funding to meet PE equipment renewal requirements. The first priority for this once-off additional capital funding is to address any health and safety issues in relation to goalposts in schools. The background is that there have been a number of injuries and fatalities in Ireland and the UK in recent years due to substandard or unsecured goalposts.

To address these issues, an interagency Goalpost Safety Committee was convened by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) to develop a National Standard for goalposts and to initiate a safety awareness programme. The Department is represented on this committee. A Standard (I.S. EN 748: 2004) is already in place for fixed soccer goalposts. Draft Standards pr I.S. 356 pr I.S. 357 have been published on the NSAI website (www.nsai.ie) for portable goalposts and for other sports. It is anticipated that the new Standards will be ratified in the first half of 2007. Copies of these Standards can then be obtained from the NSAI.

The onus will be on school authorities to satisfy themselves, and keep adequate records, that any existing goalposts are safe and comply with these new safety standards. [Appendix A](#) to this circular contains an 11 point goalpost safety plan which should be of assistance to school authorities in assessing any required action, e.g. replacement of goalposts. School authorities may use any remaining balance of this additional funding to meet their other PE requirements for the replacement or purchase of new equipment. Schools should ensure that the equipment purchased is suitable for their pupils' use and suppliers should certify, where appropriate, that it meets the relevant Irish, European or British standard. Some guidance on school PE equipment is available on the Department's website at www.education.ie

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APPENDIX A - Goalpost Safety Plan

Guidance for the general procurement, installation, maintenance, storage and other related matters.

Before use, ensure that the goalpost is secured at all times by means of the appropriate supplied anchoring system. This applies to all posts whether they are fixed, portable or free-standing. All goalposts should be either anchored, weighted, pinned, chained, pegged or otherwise made secure so as to prevent overturning.

Before assembly of equipment check that it is not damaged and that it is fit for use. Check for damages to nets, joints and that locking devices are in good working condition.

Check that the equipment for securing the product is intact and in good working order.

When goalposts that are tall or heavy are being erected/assembled, it is recommended that heavy lifting equipment is used and that correct tools for the job are used at all times. Assembly and erection of goals should be carried out by sufficient number of persons.

Consideration should be given to the proximity of overhead electrical cables during the erection and transportation of goalposts.

When dismantling goalposts follow the assembly instructions and recommendations. Ensure all ground sockets have been suitably blanked off when goalposts have been taken out to eliminate trip hazards.

Portable goalposts should be dismantled or removed to a secure area when not in use following the recommended storage instructions by the manufacturer/owner.

Moving: If a piece of equipment must be moved, and no transportation wheels are provided, the equipment should be lifted by a sufficient number of competent persons to prevent injury and to prevent damage to the product.

Procurement: All new goalposts should be purchased from manufactures/suppliers that comply with the following standards I.S.EN 748, I.S.EN 749, I.S.EN 750 and BS 8462. All products should carry a manufactures label and safety warning label. The manufacturers label should include instructions for installation, storage, dismantling, inspection and maintenance.

Maintenance: Regular maintenance of goalposts is essential to ensure that it is fit for use. In the absence of a standard, it is recommended that the user follow the guidelines set out by the manufacturer.

Alterations or additions/appendages (such as target sets) to parts of a goalpost that could affect the essential safety of the equipment should not be carried out.

Please note that the goalpost safety plan as outlined in this appendix is based on a document that originated from Elizabeth O Ferrall, Technical Secretariat, Goalpost Safety Committee, NSAI, Glasnevin, Dublin 9 on 13 July 2006 and is solely for guidance only. The Goalpost Safety Committee is not responsible for any omissions that may have occurred during its generation. Users are responsible for all aspects of goal safety from procurement to installation to storage. Please follow the manufactures instruction at all times. All users should generate their own safety plan in relation to these matters. Queries should not be sent to the NSAI Goalpost Safety Committee.