



Circular 0061/2008

To: Boards of Management & Principals of Primary and Post Primary Schools participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS Band 1 (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) in Limerick City

**APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID
UNDER THE
DORMANT ACCOUNTS (EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE) FUND
TO ENABLE DEIS BAND 1 SCHOOLS IN LIMERICK CITY TO OPEN AFTER SCHOOL
HOURS TO MAXIMISE COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

Completed forms must be returned by post or email no later than

18th June, 2008 to:

**Mid-Western Regional Office,
Department of Education & Science,
Rosbrien Road,
Punch's Cross,
Limerick.**

Email address: mwro@education.gov.ie

**DORMANT ACCOUNTS (EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE) FUND
TO ENABLE DEIS BAND 1 SCHOOLS IN LIMERICK CITY TO OPEN AFTER SCHOOL
HOURS TO MAXIMISE COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

1. Introduction

The Minister for Education and Science is pleased to announce details of the above mentioned scheme and to invite schools participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS Band 1 (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools), in Limerick City, to apply for funding in accordance with the terms of this Circular Letter.

The scheme provides for an initial once-off grant for capital costs, and an annual grant for operating costs for two years, to enable schools to open after school hours, including weekends and holiday periods, to provide after school programmes and to maximise community use of the school premises and its facilities.

Under the scheme funding will be devolved to individual school authorities to undertake the project with guidance from and minimal interaction with the Department's Mid-Western Regional Office.

2. Eligibility

The scheme is restricted to primary and post primary schools in Limerick City that are participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS Band 1.

3. How to apply for grant aid under the scheme

Application forms will be sent by post and email to all eligible schools in Limerick City.

Completed forms and an After School Hours Plan must be fully approved and signed off by the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the CEO of City of Limerick VEC, as appropriate, and returned to the Mid-Western Regional Office, Department of Education & Science, Rosbrien Road, Punch's Cross, Limerick. (See Appendix A for guidance on the development of the After School Hours Plan.)

Envelopes should be clearly marked 'Dormant Accounts, After School Hours Grant Scheme'.

The closing date for receipt of applications is 18th June, 2008. Late applications will not be considered.

4. Timetable for the Scheme

Publication of scheme details and application forms	May 2008
Closing date for receipt of applications	18 June 2008
Projects approved	October 2008
Claim for drawdown of capital grant by successful applicants	October – December 2008
Claim for drawdown of operating costs Year 1	On commencement of After School Programme
Claim for drawdown of operating costs Year 2	On commencement of After School Programme

5. Funding Available

A total of €1.7 million has been made available from the Dormant Accounts Fund for this scheme.

Schools are not required to provide matching funding for projects. However, where there is funding currently available for any after school activities, please note that this measure is seeking to add value, and cannot be used to replace the funding of those existing programmes.

6. Level of Grant Aid Assistance

The actual grant paid to successful applicants will be 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.

An initial once-off grant of €25,000 is available for capital costs. In addition, an annual grant of €26,000 payable for a two year period is available to cover operating costs. See Appendix A - Frequently Asked Questions - for examples of eligible expenditure under this scheme.

7. Acknowledgement of funding

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

8. Advice

An information session for all schools eligible to participate in the scheme is being provided by staff in the Mid-Western Regional Office. The contact details for the office are:

Mid-Western Regional Office
Department of Education & Science,
Rosbrien Road
Punch's Cross
Limerick

Tel: 061 430000
Email: mwro@education.gov.ie

9. Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix A contains a series 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.

The terms and conditions of this scheme are subject to change at the discretion of the Minister.

Mid-Western Regional Office,
Department of Education and Science
20th May 2008

Appendix A

Frequently Asked Questions

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

The closing date for receipt of completed application forms is **18th June 2008**.

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 Mid-Western Regional Office, Department of Education & Science, Rosbrien Road, Punch's Cross, Limerick.

Envelopes should be marked 'Dormant Accounts After School Hours Grant Scheme'.

Who is eligible to apply?

The scheme is restricted to primary and post primary schools in Limerick City that are participating in the School Support Programme under DEIS Band 1.

How will projects be assessed?

The Mid-Western Regional Office will assess applications having regard to eligibility, the content of the After School Hours Plan and the capacity of the school to deliver such a programme. Schools are asked to take into account inclusive practice and disability awareness when designing programmes.

What is the amount of the grant?

1. An initial once-off grant of up to €25,000 to cover capital costs incurred in making the premises suitable for use out of school hours. Eligible capital costs under this scheme include, inter alia:

- Improving physical access to the school
- Additional lighting
- CCTV
- Furniture/Equipment

2. An annual grant of up to €26,000 to cover additional operating costs payable over a period of two years. Eligible costs include, inter alia:

- General maintenance and caretaking
- Heating and lighting
- Insurance
- Publicising programmes in newsletters etc
- Funding of after school activities

When will payment be made?

The capital grant will be paid in two instalments. 70% will be paid on commencement of the works and 30% on completion.

The grant to cover operating and programme costs for each of the two years will be paid as follows:

- 30% on commencement of the After Schools Programme Year 1/Year 2
- 30% 6 months later
- 40% at year end.

Payment will be made within one month of receipt of a valid claim form.

Is the school guaranteed this amount?

No. The actual grant paid to successful applicants will be 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?

No. 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 form of acceptance in accordance with the terms and conditions of the letter of offer, which will issue to successful applicants in October 2008, is not submitted by the due date. 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.

What is meant by After School Hours?

After school hours may include evenings, weekends and holiday periods.

What is meant by an After School Hours Plan?

The application for funding under this scheme requires an After Schools Hours Plan. Schools are asked to indicate a range of activities that will be made available as a consequence of this funding. The time and duration of these activities should also be documented. It is anticipated that the plan will be designed in consultation with parents, statutory, voluntary and community groups, and with the approval of the school principal, board of management and trustees.

As Home School Community Liaison Officers and School Completion Programme Coordinators have a specialist remit for a range of after school activities it is expected that they will have a key function in developing and supporting the plan.

The After School Hours Plan must take account of the following:

- It must include information on key stakeholders and target groups such as parents and others, and how it is expected that a particular activity will benefit them.
- Priority may be given to supporting the school community in that geographical area. Classes for parents, homework clubs, sporting and youth groups are examples of activities/organisations that may wish to avail of the premises.
- As one of the objectives of the scheme is to share the school facilities with the community, the plan should include usage by community groups.
- An accurate costing of the activities must be included. It should be possible for many of these activities to become self-financing in later years.
- A review process should be built into the plan. Schools will be required to submit this review as part of the application for the operating grant payable in Year 2.
- Grants under this scheme should be accounted for separately from funding currently provided for existing after school programmes.
- Schools are asked to take into account inclusive practice and disability awareness when designing programmes.
- Schools are asked to be mindful of the Child Protection Guidelines in allowing extended usage of school facilities.
- The onus is on the school to put in place a signed agreement with third parties for use of the school premises, including cost, duration, caretaking arrangements, insurance cover and policy on child protection. Please refer to Department of Education & Science Circular Letter Primary 16/05 or Post Primary M18/05, "The Sharing of School Facilities with the Community" as appropriate (copy attached).
- **There can be no guarantee of additional funding from Dormant Account Funds or the Department of Education & Science after the two year period.**

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. Such documentation may be required 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 carried out?

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.