



Circular letter 0086/2008

To: The Chief Executive Officer of each Vocational Education Committee

Changes in the enrolment policy for Senior Traveller Training and Youthreach Centres

You will have received a copy of the Value for Money (VFM) Review of Senior Traveller Training Centres (STTCs) and Youthreach which was published earlier this year. The Department has set about implementing the recommendations contained in the Review.

Amongst the recommendations contained in the Review was that Travellers under 18 years of age should be enrolled in mainstream inclusive settings with their peers (this was also a recommendation of the *Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy*) and that this should be effected over a 3-year period, to allow learners under 18 years of age who are currently enrolled to complete the programme. The Department has decided to implement this recommendation with effect from 1 September 2008 so accordingly, **no new learners under 18 years of age are to be enrolled in STTCs, with effect from 1 September 2008.**

The Review also recommended that trainee allowances should not be paid to learners under 16 years of age in Youthreach centres. In the context of the provisions of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, which raised the minimum school leaving age to 16 years (or the completion of three years of post-primary education, whichever is the later), the payment of allowances to learners under 16 could clearly act as an incentive to leave mainstream education. **Therefore, with effect from 1 September 2008, no trainee allowances are to be paid to learners under 16 years of age in Youthreach centres.**

You are requested to make arrangements to implement these two recommendations with effect from 1 September 2008.

Seamus Hempenstall
Principal Officer
Further Education Section
26 August 2008