

# Annual Report 2000







**Department of Education and Science**  
**Annual Report 2000**





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## Foreword by the Minister

I am pleased to receive this Annual Report prepared by my Department under the terms of the Public Service Management Act, 1997. The year 2000 was one of significant achievement for my Department in delivering on the high level goals and objectives set out in the Strategy Statement 1998 – 2001.

Education has long been seen as one of the most critical factors in determining the success of our children and young people as they take their place in society and make their contribution to Ireland's economic growth, prosperity and social development. Lifelong learning with learning opportunities provided over a lifespan is central to maintaining economic wellbeing and social cohesion.

The Government recognises this role of education in sustaining economic growth and social progress and has demonstrated its commitment through significant increases in expenditure during the period covered by this report. This extra funding has allowed for substantial improvements in services across all levels of education as detailed in this report.

I look forward to continuing this progress and I am confident that the challenges and changes facing us will be successfully met through the commitment and dedication which have been the hallmark of the Department's service delivery over the years.



**Dr. Michael Woods, T.D.,**

Minister for Education and Science.

December 2001

## Statement from the Secretary General

I am pleased to provide this Department's Annual Report on implementation in 2000 of the strategic aims set out in the Strategy Statement 1998 – 2001.

The year 2000 was one of significant progress and achievement for the Department. This report details the main developments during the year across all levels of education. In line with our high-level goals, developments outlined in the report are grouped under the four key areas of equity and inclusion, quality outcomes, lifelong learning and legislation. We also include in this report a special focus on three important areas of the Department's activity; the Certificate Examinations, Planning and Provision of Accommodation and the Primary Curriculum Support Programme.

The progress in achieving challenging objectives in recent years is due in large part to the dedication and hard work of the staff of the Department. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all concerned for their commitment and professionalism. While the challenges ahead are not insignificant, I am confident that, in a spirit of partnership, we will continue to meet these challenges with enthusiasm and commitment.



**John Dennehy**  
Secretary General.  
December 2001



# Mission, Goals and Activities



## Mission

The mission of the Department of Education and Science is to ensure the provision of a comprehensive, cost-effective and accessible education system of the highest quality, as measured by international standards, which will:

- Enable individuals to develop to their full potential as persons and to participate fully as citizens in society and
- Contribute to Ireland's economic, social and cultural development.

## Goals

*In pursuit of this mission, the Department has the following high-level goals*

- To promote equity and inclusion
- To promote quality outcomes
- To promote lifelong learning
- To plan for education that is relevant to personal, social, cultural and economic needs
- To enhance the capacity of the Department of Education and Science for service delivery, policy formulation, research and evaluation.

## Activities

In support of its high-level goals, the Department is engaged in a wide range of activities including:

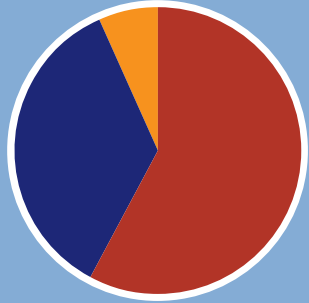
- Policy advice, development and review
- Resource allocation
- Quality assurance
- Planning and provision of accommodation
- Examinations administration
- Administration of large-scale executive and operational functions
- Advice and support to educational management and staff.

# Key Education Statistics



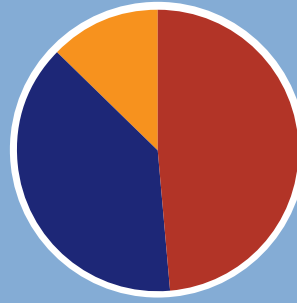


### Number of full-time students by level 1989/1990



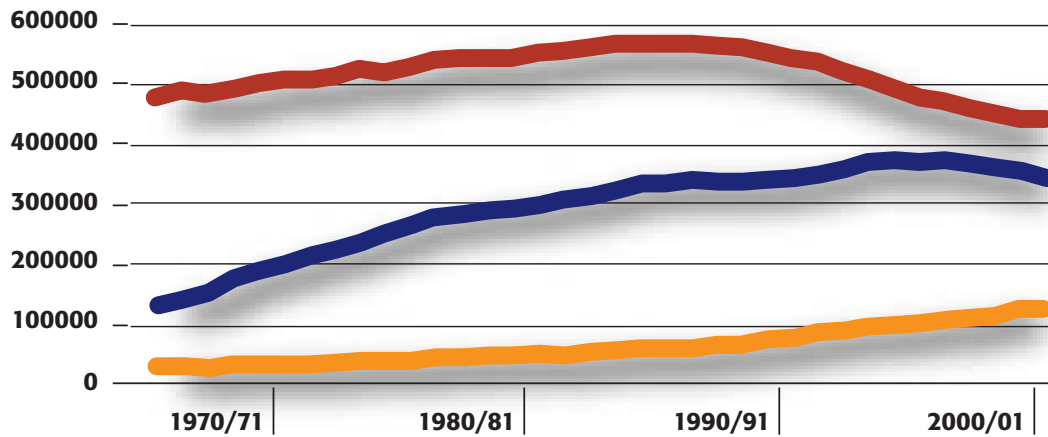
- First Level **57.8% (552,182)**
- Second Level **35.5% (339,132)**
- Third Level **6.7% (64,137)**

### Number of full-time students by level 1999/2000



- First Level **48.6% (444,310)**
- Second Level **38.7% (353,860)**
- Third Level **12.7% (115,696)**

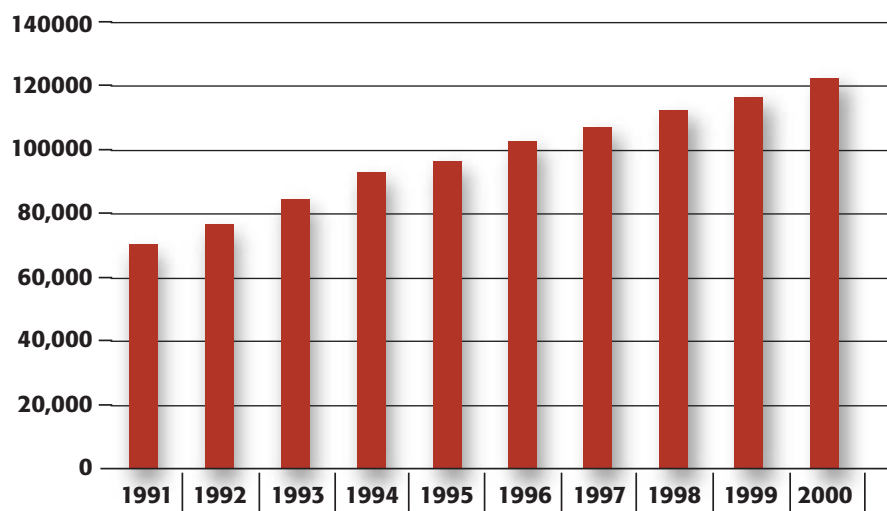
### Number of full-time pupils by sector 1965 - 2001



- First Level
- Second Level
- Third Level



## Number of full-time enrolments at third level 1991/2000

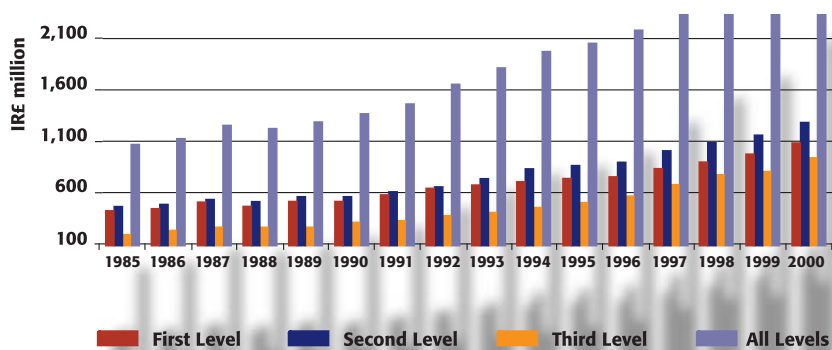


## Participation in further/higher education 1998/1999

	Male	Female	Total
<b>PLC Courses</b>	6,840	17,266	24,106
<b>VTOS</b>	1,829	3,345	5,174
<b>Youthreach</b> (excludes FAS)	1,102	1,145	2,247
<b>Senior Traveller Training</b>	*251	*410	661
<b>Adult Literacy</b>	5,280	9,311	14,591
<b>Further Ed</b>	37,916	102,217	140,133
<b>Third Level</b>	50,808	57,707	108,509

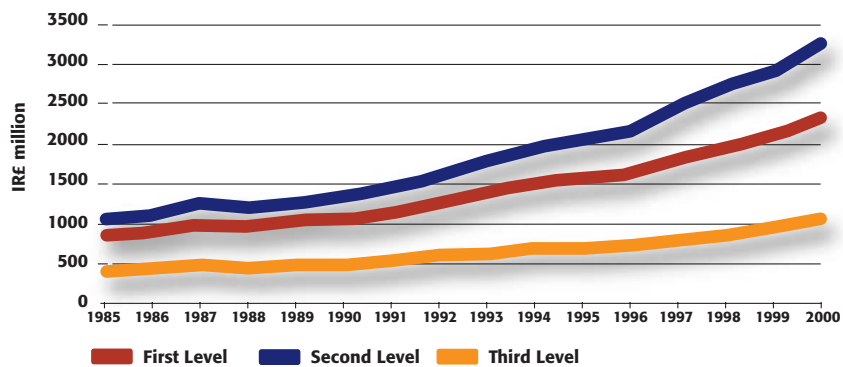


### Expenditure on Education 1985 to 2000



An Chéad Leibhéal

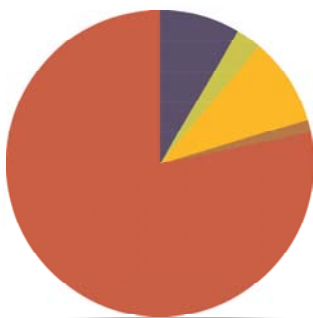
### Expenditure on Education by level 1985 to 2000





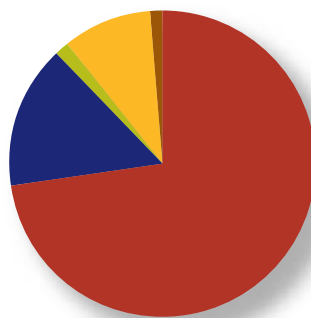
## How the money is spent:

### First Level



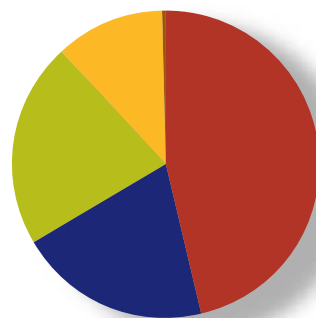
- Salaries & Superannuation **78.2%**
- Grants & Services **8.4%**
- School Transport **2.7%**
- Capital Expenditure **9.3%**
- Department pay and other overheads **1.3%**

### Second Level



- Salaries & Superannuation **72.2%**
- Grants & Services **15.1%**
- School Transport **1.5%**
- Capital Expenditure **9.4%**
- Department pay and other overheads **1.3%**

### Third Level



- Salaries **46.3%**
- Grants & Services **20.2%**
- Capital Expenditure **21.6%**
- Student Support **11.5%**
- Department pay and other overheads **0.4%**

# focus



## The Certificate Examinations 1990–2000 An Era of Change

The last decade has seen significant change in both the nature of the certificate examinations and how they are administered.

### New and broader approach

A new examination, the Junior Certificate replaced the Intermediate Certificate and the Day Vocational Group Certificate examinations. This new examination was taken for the first time in 1992 but students had started studying revised subject syllabuses in most subjects 3 years earlier. The Junior Certificate provided students with a significantly enhanced choice in relation to the level at which they could take examinations and introduced a foundation level in the case of Irish, English and Mathematics. It also extended the forms of assessment with greater use of aural, practical and project work alongside the traditional written assessment.

The traditional Leaving Certificate was broadened by the development of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme. This encouraged students to take particular subject combinations and also focused them on the world of work outside the classroom through the links modules.

Students were given further choice with the introduction of the innovative Leaving Certificate Applied Programme. It introduced a new approach to education, training and assessment within the senior cycle at second level. Students are required to apply their knowledge, skills and experiences to practical tasks at school, in the workplace and in the wider community. The programme for the Leaving Certificate Applied includes preparation for work, practical courses and general education. The modular nature of the programme is complimented by a new

approach to assessment with candidates accumulating credits over the full two-year life of the course. Candidates also earn credits for modules completed. A module is a period of study of approximately 40 hours.

### Delivering the change

The certificate examinations are organised by the Department's Examinations Branch and the Inspectorate in co-operation with school authorities.

The full cycle of examination administration (i.e. from taking entries to sit the examinations through to issuing results and the appeals process) was carried out using computer technology for the first time in 1990. Since then the use of technology has been critical in delivering a high quality service given the greater complexity in examination administration that flowed from the introduction of the Junior Certificate and the broadening of assessment at Leaving Certificate.

One indicator of the scale of the operation and its growth during the 1990s is the increase in the number of items for examination in any one year. The items for examination comprise written scripts, project work, practical work, oral and aural tests and the total number more than doubled from 1 million to over 2 million between 1990 and 2000.

### An agenda of openness

In 1998 Leaving Certificate candidates were given access to their marked examination scripts for the first time. This was arguably the most radical change to the examination system since its inception. It made Ireland a world leader in terms of examination system openness and transparency.



Granting candidates access to their marked scripts followed a number of measures taken during the 1990s that were designed to lift the veil of secrecy and open up the examination system to full scrutiny so that candidates, their parents and teachers could both have a better understanding of how the examination system worked and also have greater confidence in the system.

The detailed marking schemes used by examiners when marking scripts were published and made available, initially through schools in printed form only. More recently they are accessible to all, through the Department's website. Similarly the Inspectorate of the Department oversees the publication of reports by Chief Examiner's on the performance of candidates generally in specific examination subjects. In general a report is published on any one subject once every three years or where a new syllabus is examined for the first time. Some 120 such reports have been published in the last six years. They are available through the internet on the Department's website.

## Empowering candidates, schools and parents through enhanced customer services

Central to the change agenda in relation to examinations has been a theme of empowering the individual candidate. The range of new features include the following:

- In advance of the examination each candidate receives a statement for sign-off showing her/his range of subjects and the level at which s/he intends to take them. This replaced a practice of having schools notify changes on behalf of candidates.
- Examination results can be accessed privately by candidates either through a dial-up service or over the internet
- Candidates receive a supplementary report with their results in any case where the grade has been calculated in the absence of an essential component of the examination. This empowers the candidate to immediately identify any problem with his/her result.
- Access to the examination scripts and the marking schemes means that the candidate is now empowered to make a more informed decision on whether or not to appeal a result.
- Those who do appeal their examination results can request an Examination Commissioner to determine if

the appeal was conducted according to the specified process. Examination Commissioners are independent of the Department.

Other improvements in services for candidates and schools in the last number of years involved the following:

- Use of bar code technology to track the movement of examination material and scripts from schools and examination centres to the Department's Examination Branch in Athlone and between the Department and examiners.
- Creation in association with AN POST of a dedicated EXAMPOST service that operates each June.
- Introduction of individual candidate bank giro facility for paying examination entry fees and fees for appeals.
- Publication of past examination question papers and aural test sound recordings on CD and on the Internet.

## Making the examinations more inclusive

A key part of the work of the Examinations Branch and the Inspectorate is ensuring that the examinations are made as inclusive as possible so that candidates with special needs are enabled to take the examinations. The range of measures includes providing question papers in enlarged print or braille and in allowing candidates the assistance of readers and scribes. A candidate with special needs can seek a waiver from an element of the examination and still score full marks in the examination. For example, a candidate who is deaf can be exempted from the aural test in a language subject and have his/her overall grade determined on the oral and written parts of the examination.

Candidates who are unhappy with any of the accommodations being offered by the Department can appeal to an appeal committee whose members are independent of the Department.

## Ongoing change

The last decade brought about the considerable change described here. The significant role of the education system in seeking to ensure that all our people, in a life long learning context, are able to participate fully in a rapidly changing world will undoubtedly in turn require ongoing change in our examination system and how it is administered.





# Main Developments in 2000



**Equity and  
Inclusion**

**Quality  
Outcomes**

**Lifelong  
Learning**

**Legislation**





## Equity and Inclusion

### Tackling Disadvantage in Primary Schools

Tackling educational disadvantage has been a priority of education policy in recent years. A range of measures has been introduced to counter educational disadvantage and funding of £400 million has been set-aside in the National Development Plan (NDP) for this purpose. A new programme to tackle disadvantage in primary schools “**Giving Children an Even Break**” was developed in 2000. This programme specifically targets resources to disadvantaged students in primary schools. To do this, a comprehensive survey of levels of disadvantage in all primary schools was undertaken on behalf of the Department, by the Educational Research Centre in 2000. Schools invited to participate in the new programme were identified through this survey. A key condition of participation in the new programme is that the additional resources must be used for the provision of holistic supports for pupils from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. The additional supports to be provided reflect the level of concentration of pupils from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds in each participating school.

### Breaking the Cycle

The Breaking the Cycle pilot project was introduced in September 1996. It was based on studies of educational disadvantage conducted by the Combat Poverty Agency and the Education Research Centre (ERC) with a view to identifying the means necessary to focus and target new measures to break the cycle of educational disadvantage.

The scheme’s spend for 2000 was €681,000 and a total of 96 extra posts were allocated in 2000 in support of this scheme.

The project involves 32 urban schools covering 6,372 pupils, provides extra staff to allow a maximum class size of 15:1 in all junior classes and also provides special funding for materials, equipment, out of school projects, support from a co-ordinator and targeted in-career development for school staff.

121 rural schools are involved covering 6,500 pupils and again special funding is provided for materials/equipment, local initiatives, special capitation funding of €30 per pupil, support from 25 local co-ordinators and targeted in-career development for school staff.



## Early School Leavers

Programmes for early schools leavers initiated in 1998 and 1999 were further developed in 2000. These include:

### ■ The Stay in School Retention Initiative

Increasing retention rates to completion of senior cycle is a key priority. The programme was expanded from 58 schools to 117 schools in the year 2000. Co-ordinators have been appointed to support schools in developing, implementing and evaluating their plans for increased retention and to liaise between the schools and the Department.

### ■ The 8 – 15 Early School Leavers Initiative

In 2000 this programme included 17 projects involving 80 schools, (51 primary and 29 second-level), together with statutory and voluntary agencies involved with youth, community development and Area Based Partnerships. A total of £2.2 million was available to this initiative in 2000.

## Youthreach

Youthreach provides education, training and work experience to young people aged 15–18 with no formal education or training qualifications. The programme has expanded progressively and is offered in over 130 centres catering for 7,162 students of which 2,947 are in the Vocational Education Committee (VEC) sector.

At local level Youthreach has established referral networks linked with schools, probation and welfare, youth, health and juvenile liaison services complemented by similar links at national level. Other measures already in existence such as counselling, guidance and psychological services are continuing. Also continued in 2000 was a childcare measure for Youthreach, VTOS and Senior Traveller Programmes for which over £2m was allocated in 2000. Some 997 children (795 parent participants) are benefiting from the measure at present.

## Home School Community Liaison Scheme

This scheme is a key element in the Department's strategy to combat educational disadvantage. It is centred around the assignment of a co-ordinator (teacher) to a school, or group of schools, in disadvantaged areas to work with school staff, parents and relevant community agencies in advancing the educational interests of children. This service was extended to all first and second level schools which have disadvantaged

area status from the commencement of the 1999/2000 school year.

Expenditure in 2000 was over £7 million (inclusive of teacher salaries) catering for over 70,000 pupils at primary level and 48,000 pupils at second level.

## Early Start

The Early Start pre-school intervention programme for pupils aged 3 to 4 years who are most at risk in areas of social disadvantage, aims to expose young children to an educational programme which will enhance their overall development, prevent school failure and offset the effects of social disadvantage. Each Early Start Pilot Project pre-school class attracts special capitation funding of £75 per pupil, a qualified primary teacher and a child-care assistant, a start-up grant of £4,500 for materials / equipment and a grant of £1,500 to foster parental involvement. This programme will be reviewed in the context of the implementation of the White Paper on Early Childhood Education, "Ready to Learn."

## Early Childhood Education

The White Paper on Early Childhood Education, "Ready to Learn", sets out a comprehensive strategy for the development of early childhood education for all children aged from birth to six years. Following the publication of the White Paper, the Department carried out an extensive post-consultation process with all of those who made presentations to the National Forum for Early Childhood Education. The aim of these consultations was to seek the views of interested parties with regard to the implementation of the policies set out in the White Paper and to enable the necessary planning and preparatory work for implementation to be undertaken by the Department in line with the commitments in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness.

Towards the end of 2000, the Department sought proposals from third-level institutions for a pilot project to develop early childhood education provision in pursuance of the objectives in the White Paper. It is envisaged that the pilot project will include:

- Development of early education quality standards in relation to equipment and materials, staff qualifications, training, learning objectives, methodologies and curriculum.
- Development of a support framework to encourage

compliance with quality standards by early education providers.

- Coordination and enhancement of early education provision with a particular focus on disadvantaged and special needs groups.
- Commissioning of a programme of research and development through which best practice in curriculum, teaching methodology and parental involvement may be implemented and evaluated.

A total of £74 million is provided in the National Development Plan for the implementation of the White Paper proposals, over the period 2000 – 2006. This figure is inclusive of funding for existing programmes.

## Psychological Services for Schools

The National Educational Psychological Service Agency (NEPS) was established in September 1999 as an administrative agency of the Department, in order to provide a comprehensive educational psychological service to schools and other educational institutions for young people of school going age. NEPS began a major programme of expansion during the autumn term of the year 2000 with the appointment of 26 additional psychologists. This brought the number of psychologists in the agency to a total of 75. Other psychologists working in the educational system also come under the aegis of NEPS. These include psychologists working in the VECs of the City and County of Dublin, the Schools for Young Offenders and Area Partnerships. The development plan for the agency has set a target of 200 psychologists to be appointed in order to provide a comprehensive service to assist all children, particularly those with learning difficulties.

Progress was made during the year with the development of the administrative framework to support the work in schools. This includes accommodation, administrative and IT support. A programme commenced to identify and develop office accommodation countrywide for NEPS local and regional offices. The Minister officially opened the national headquarters of the agency in Frederick Court, North Frederick Street, Dublin 1 in May 2000.

The NEPS Agency is organised into 10 regions roughly equivalent to the 10 Health Board regions to facilitate easy collaboration with colleagues in the clinical sector. During the year 2000, NEPS provided a psychological service to all second-level schools and to approximately 725 primary schools. Recruitment to NEPS is ongoing and, as additional psychologists are appointed, the service will be progressively

expanded until it serves all schools.

## Traveller Education

The National Development Plan provides £9.8m for Traveller education. The policy on the education of Traveller children aims to increase the number benefiting from education and to integrate them into mainstream education. An Advisory Committee on Traveller Education continued its important work during the year.

In 2000 funding was provided for

- 52 pre-school facilities catering for over 500 Traveller children
- £624,000 for tuition, £195,000 for transport and £42,000 for equipment (pre-school children)
- Purchase of equipment and materials from the Schools IT Programme (£40,000)

Some 5,000 primary school age Traveller children attend national schools. In addition there are 4 special primary schools for Traveller children in operation. There are 443 resource teachers working with Traveller children in 375 primary schools (pupil teacher ratio 14:1).

In 2000, over 1,100 Traveller children between the ages of 12 and 15 were attending post-primary schools. The classes have a lower pupil teacher ratio and a flexible curriculum.

## Children at Risk

A number of projects aimed at providing support for children at risk continued to receive funding in 2000. These include:

- 5 Youth Encounter projects, catering for up to 125 young people who have become involved in minor delinquency or are at risk and have become alienated from the mainstream system.
- 5 Young Offenders Centres catering for 186 long-stay and 20 short-term/remand places.

A significant programme costing £21m, is being put in place, to refurbish existing facilities and provide new facilities at remand, high security and custodial placement centres.



## Substance Misuse Prevention Programmes

The 1999 Budget included provision of £1m for the phased implementation of the drugs misuse prevention programme (including provision of in-service training for teachers) to all primary schools by the end of 2000.

Initiatives include the continuation of substance misuse prevention education programmes "Walk Tall" (primary) and "On My Own Two Feet" (second level), participation in the European Health Promoting School Network and an active role on the National Drugs Strategy Team. By the end of February 2000 the "Walk Tall" programme had been introduced in half of all primary schools. At post primary level the "On My Own Two Feet" programme had been introduced into approximately 570 schools. This programme has now been subsumed into the social, personal and health education, (SPHE), programme. By the end of 2003 every school is expected to have SPHE as an integral part of its programme at junior cycle level. It is proposed that the "Walk Tall" programme will also become part of SPHE.

## Youth Services

The Youth Affairs budget of £16.9 million in the year 2000 was provided to facilitate the continued development of youth work and to support youth agencies to deliver programmes and services to young people. Youth strategies include a number of programmes aimed specifically at disadvantaged youth. In 2000 a provision of £1m was made for the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme which was introduced in 1999 to grant aid local youth clubs/groups, particularly in disadvantaged areas. Other initiatives include the provision of funding for a network of 30 Youth Information Centres

## Special Needs Students

In 2000 a total of £46m was provided in special support services for students with special needs.

The policy is to maximise the integration of children with special needs into the ordinary school system while at the same time ensuring an appropriate range of special support services for children for whom special dedicated provision is required.

A Planning Group was set up to make recommendations to the Minister for the most effective provision of a highly co-

ordinated service at all stages of the system. The group's report was submitted to the Minister in Mid-December 2000 and has informed Government policy in relation to the proposed setting up of a National Council for Special Education.

The Special Education system has undergone an unprecedented level of development over the past 2/3 years. Examples of achievements include:

- In October 1998 the Government decided that children with special needs in the primary system should henceforth have an automatic entitlement to a response to their needs. As a result of this development;
  - the number of special resource teachers supporting children with disabilities in integrated settings grew from 104 in October 1998 to some 700 by the end of year 2000, and
  - the number of special needs assistants supporting children in the primary system grew from less than 300 to more than 1,500 over the same period.

Further such posts are being allocated in response to assessed needs.

- The Remedial (Learning Support) Scheme provides support for children experiencing difficulties in the areas of literacy and numeracy. From September 1999 this service has been extended to all first and second level schools in the country. As a result of this development, the number of learning support teachers in the system increased from 1,652 in 1998/99 to 2040 in 1999/2000.
- Since September 1999 funding has been made available to facilitate the appointment of Escorts on all special school transport services carrying children with disabilities to and from school. Annual expenditure on this scheme amounts to some €2.5m.
- A total of €4.9m was expended on the provision of part-time teaching supports to children with special needs.
- Funding of €863,000 was expended on the provision of special equipment to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities.

## Educational Provision for Children with Autism

In October 1998 the Department of Education and Science made provision for the distinct educational needs of children

with autism by putting in place special dedicated classes. Each class caters for a maximum of 6 children with autism. Each class is supported by a teacher and two special needs assistants. Children attending such classes also attract a special increased rate of capitation funding and are entitled to avail of the special school transport service. In excess of 80 such classes have been established to-date and further classes are established in response to assessed needs. The Department is also funding 3 pilot programmes, which use the applied behavioural analysis approach to the education of children with autism.

In October 2000, the Minister established a special Task Force on Autism to carry out an independent review of current approaches to the education of children with autism and to make recommendations for the future development of services in this area. The Task Force, which was comprised of people with a wide range of experience and expertise in the field of autism, presented its report to the Minister in November 2001 and is now being considered.

## Educational Provision for Children with Dyslexia

In October 2000, the Minister established a special Task Force to carry out an independent review of current approaches to the educational needs of children with dyslexia and to make recommendations for the future development of services in this area. The report of the Task Force was presented to the Minister in November 2001 and is now being considered.

A €2m pilot project in 31 schools will provide each student with dyslexia with a laptop computer for home and school use. A grant of €2,700 will be paid for eligible 2nd year students while each school will be paid €3,000 to purchase back-up equipment for the project teachers who will be provided with training by the National Centre for Technology in Education.

## Educational Provision for Children with Cystic Fibrosis

In December 2000, funding of €250,000 was provided for a new, highly innovative, Cyber Campus pilot programme run by the Cystic Fibrosis Society of Ireland for young people with cystic fibrosis. The new programme will provide on-line education and training for students with cystic fibrosis using information and communications technology to fill the educational gap caused by recurring illness and prolonged hospitalisation.





## Access to Higher Education

The Department has responsibility for promoting access and participation opportunities for students including disadvantaged and mature students and students with disabilities, in higher education and on Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses. There is provision within the National Development Plan for a Third Level Access Fund totalling £95m over the period 2000 to 2006.

In September 2000, the Minister in line with a commitment in the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness (PPF) announced the creation of an Action Group on Access to Third Level Education, to advise him on the development of a co-ordinated framework to promote access by students from the three target groups. As an initial step to promote access to third level the Minister also announced the following initiatives:

- Payment of special rates of maintenance grant (top-up grants) to disadvantaged grant holders;
- Establishment of a Millennium Partnership Fund for Disadvantage to assist disadvantaged students to participate in higher education.

## Third Level Student Support

The Department manages a range of student support schemes which provide means-tested financial assistance to further education and third level students. There are four maintenance grant schemes and, under the free fees initiative, the Department meets the tuition fees of eligible students who are attending approved full-time undergraduate courses. Approximately 39% of third level students qualify for maintenance grants.

### Expenditure under the Four Maintenance Grant Schemes - 2000

Scheme	No of Grant holders	Expenditure in 2000
Higher Education Grants	24,200	£50m
VEC Scholarships	5,590	£10.2m
Third Level Trainees Maintenance Grants	14,160	£22.3m
Post Leaving Certificate Grants	6,300	£7.8m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50,250</b>	<b>£90.3m</b>



# Quality Outcomes

## Curricular Developments

An extensive programme of in-career training and development to support the revised primary curriculum continued throughout 2000. The focus in 2000 was on curriculum planning support in Irish, English, Visual Arts and a Science Project.

At second level an extensive consultation process on the development of the Junior Cycle curriculum was undertaken by the Department and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in 1999/2000. This process followed the publication of *The Junior Cycle Review Progress Report: Issues and Options for Development* by the NCCA and a discussion paper titled *The Junior Certificate Issues for Discussion* published by the Department. Eight consultative meetings were held at venues around the country. The outcome of this process of consultation will be of help in planning future policy on assessment at junior cycle level.

Also, at junior cycle a revised Mathematics syllabus was introduced in September 2000 for examination in 2003 and the new Junior Certificate Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) syllabus was introduced in 2000. The new Junior Certificate Civics, Social and Political Education (CSPE) syllabus was examined for the first time in 2000.

At second level new syllabi in Leaving Certificate Physics and Chemistry were introduced and grant aid was issued to schools to support the implementation of the new syllabi. The Task Force on the Physical Sciences was established in 2000 to identify actionable steps to address the problem of decline in the number of students taking Physics and Chemistry to Leaving Certificate level.

## School Development Planning Initiative (SDPI)

The School Development Planning Initiative (SDPI) is designed to promote school effectiveness, development and improvement throughout the education system. The SDPI, which is managed and supported by the Department, saw a significant expansion in 2000. At primary level a further 1,332 schools were included in the initiative bringing the total to 1,774. All primary schools serving areas of disadvantage and all small rural schools are now involved in the SDPI. At second level, a further 85 schools joined the SDPI bringing the total to 361. This includes 130 schools involved in a special project to develop innovative approaches to school development planning.

Since its inception, all schools involved in SDPI have received grant aid and many schools have availed of special support services.

## Funding of Schools

Capitation grants constitute the main form of funding for schools. Capitation funding is intended to contribute towards such items as heating, lighting, cleaning, insurance, general up-keep and teaching aids required in schools. During the period under review, further improvements were made to the capitation allocations payable to schools. In the 1999/2000 school year the standard rate of capitation grant payable at primary level was £64 per pupil. This represented an increase of £4 on the standard rate applying in the previous school year. The standard rate for 2000/2001 was increased by a further £11.50 to £75.50.

The standard rate payable in voluntary secondary schools was increased from £184 to £192 for the 1999/2000 school year. This was further increased at the beginning of the 2000/2001 school year to £202. Budgetary allocations to the other second level sectors were increased on a pro-rata basis.

## Staffing Levels

In the 2000/2001 school year an additional 395 teaching posts were allocated in primary schools. As a consequence of the allocation of the teaching posts the overall projected pupil teacher ratio (PTR) in primary schools declined to 19.6:1 in the 2000/2001 school year from 20.4 in the previous school year. The PTR in primary schools has fallen consistently in recent years.

An additional 1,000 posts were created in second level schools in the 2000/2001 school year. The creation of these posts allowed for the reduction from 19:1 to 18:1 in the pupil teacher ratio for appointment purposes and the targeting for additional support of such programmes as the Leaving Certificate Applied and the Junior Certificate Schools Programme.

## Secretarial and Caretaking Services

Significant improvements to the Secretaries and Caretakers Scheme took place during 2000 with the Scheme being extended to include all primary schools. With effect from January 2000 the scheme of additional per-capita grants for secretarial and caretaking services was extended to all schools

with 100 pupils or more at the rate of £40 per pupil. In addition, all primary schools with less than 100 pupils, not already in receipt of any support for secretarial or caretaking services became eligible for inclusion in the scheme with effect from September 2000. A minimum grant of £2,400 applied to all schools with 60 pupils or less.

## Science Initiatives

During 2000, in response to the expansion and growth of science and technology-based industries in Ireland and in recognition of the importance of the availability of a well-educated, scientifically literate work force, the Department introduced a number of initiatives specifically aimed at increasing general awareness and uptake rates of the physical sciences at senior cycle level in second level schools.

The Science Bus Initiative, launched by the Minister in March 2000, was one of the first major collaborations between industry and the third level sector in promoting science education at primary level. The Science Bus, which is a mobile interactive laboratory for primary schools, designed in collaboration with the Irish Centre for Talented Youth based in Dublin City University (DCU), visits schools and public venues and is aimed at pupils in fifth and sixth classes in primary schools.

In April 2000, a new grant scheme for the payment of grants amounting to almost £2.5 million was introduced for schools that offer the physical sciences at senior cycle level. The purpose of the grants is to enhance the equipment levels in schools to facilitate laboratory work and to encourage the use of Information and Communication Technology in the teaching of science. These grants form part of a £12m package that is being made available for the improvement of resources for the teaching of science over a phased three-year period.

## Schools IT 2000 Project

The Schools IT 2000 project was launched in November 1997 and, up to the end of the year 2000, more than £40m of public money (£25m capital) has been invested in implementing the project. Eircom has invested a further £15.9 million under the Information Age Schools Initiative in association with Schools IT 2000.

The overall aim of Schools IT 2000 is to ensure that pupils in every school have the opportunity to achieve computer and Internet literacy and to equip themselves for participation in the information society. The strategies being used to achieve

this ambitious objective are

- The provision of assistance to every school in building up its technology infrastructure.
- The development of teacher skills.
- The establishment of support services.

The National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) was established in early 1998 to implement Schools IT 2000. An Education ICT Policy Unit has been established in the Department of Education and Science. The Education ICT Policy Unit has a lead role in ensuring that appropriate provision is made for the development of eLearning for the benefit of all.

**The following data on the implementation of Schools IT 2000 is available from a survey carried out in June 2000 by the NCTE for the Department of Education and Science.**

### Computers in Schools

- There are approximately 56,000 Multimedia Computers in Irish first and second-level schools - an increase of 65% since 1998.
- This translates into an average of 8.7 computers per first-level school, and 42.7 computers per second-level school.
- Pupil: Computer ratios are now 17.7: 1 at first level and 13:1 at second level.
- 78% of second level schools have a Local Area Network (LAN).

### Use of ICT

- In first level schools there is a significant increase in the use of ICT in the curriculum.
- This is especially so in English, other modern languages, learning support and mathematics.
- The main determinant of pattern of access is teacher skill. 25% of first level schools report having a deliberate strategy for access.
- 78% of second level schools offer certification in ICT skills to students.

### Internet Access and Use

- All schools have been provided with an Internet connection since early 1999. Over 90% of schools have used email.
- 69% of second-level schools have an ISDN connection and 62% have multi-user Internet access.
- 8% of first level schools and 11% of second level schools have websites on which school details and student work is published.

### Teachers and Training for ICT

- 75% of teachers have reported that they have done a course. First level teachers were more likely to have done a course (84%) than second level (65%).
- 92% of first level teachers reported having some skill in ICT and 74% having some Internet skill.
- 77% of second level teachers reported having some skill in ICT and 64% having some Internet skill.





## Research and Development

The Department of Education and Science is committed to using existing evidence and research, both national and international, in policy development and decision-making. In addition to involvement in large-scale and cross-national research the Department promotes the development of indigenous research, particularly qualitative research, through the Department's Research and Development Committee.

While most of the work of the Committee is that of selecting and monitoring research activity, it is also concerned with the promotion of research, through supporting the organisation of seminars and the preparation of publications. In 2000, the Committee supported 23 research projects covering a wide range of topics from the use of Irish outside the classroom to a study of the transfer process from first to second level schooling. Over £100,000 was allocated for this work in 2000.

## Research in Third Level Institutions

As part of the National Development Plan, the State is investing £550m in the research capacity and capability of our

third level institutions. The Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions is a major element of this investment and is designed to promote the development of high-quality research capabilities in third level institutions. The Programme is managed by the Higher Education Authority and applications are assessed according to the highest international standards. The joint public/private Programme was first launched in 1998 and awards to 11 institutions, amounting to £162.5m, were announced under Cycle 1 of the Programme in 1999. Further awards to 8 lead institutions, amounting to £62m, under Cycle 2 of the Programme were announced in July 2000. The projects funded have partnership arrangements with a number of other universities and institutes of technology

## Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences

The membership of the first Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences, with Professor Eda Sagarra as Chairperson, was announced in January 2000. The Council had previously operated on an interim basis. The Council supports research in the Humanities and Social Sciences by





making awards to postgraduate students, post-doctoral scholars and academics. The Council became a member of the European Science Foundation in December 2000.

### Meeting Skills Needs

The Second Report of the Expert Group was published in March 2000. The Report analysed the general labour market in terms of both general labour availability and the availability of workers for lower skill occupations.

In response to the Report additional places in the chemical and biological sciences were provided in the 2000/2001 academic year. Provision was made for an increased intake of 1,632 apprentices for the 2000/2001 academic year. In addition, special summer courses were introduced in 2000 in a number of institutes of technology, which provided training for 727 apprentices. New courses were also introduced under the Accelerated Technician Programme in 2000 providing training for 800 students.

### Steps Programme

This programme, which is a joint initiative between the Department and the Institution of Engineers in Ireland, was

launched in November 2000. Its aim is to increase awareness of the value of the engineering profession as a career and to encourage young people to take the necessary subjects at second level to enable them to take engineering at third level.

### North/South Co-operation

The first North/South Ministerial Council sectoral meeting on education took place in February 2000. At that time the Council reviewed the high level of existing co-operation between the two Departments and examined proposals on how best to progress co-operation. The Council agreed the establishment of a number of Joint Working/Co-ordination Groups, which were charged with delivering concrete progress in each of the following areas:

- Special Educational Needs Provision
- Educational Underachievement
- Teacher Qualifications
- School, Youth and Teacher Exchanges
- EU/International Affairs

The Department in 2000 participated actively in a range of discussions at European Union (EU) level working through the



Education Committee and at Ministerial level through the Education Council as well as working with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Council of Europe and UNESCO committees.

2000 was an important year for Ireland in relation to the OECD. We participated actively in a range of working groups and Mr. John Dennehy, Secretary General of the Department, was appointed chairperson of the OECD's Education Committee in March.

2000 was also an important year for education co-operation at European Union level. At the Lisbon Summit in March 2000, the Heads of State and Governments of the 15 EU Member States highlighted the need for Europe's education and training systems to adapt to the demands of the knowledge society. Education Ministers were given a specific mandate to "undertake a general reflection on the concrete future objectives of education systems, focusing on common concerns and priorities". This resulted in the adoption in February 2001 of a report to the March 2001 European Council of Heads of State and Government outlining future objectives for education and training systems.

Also in 2000, an action plan on mobility in education and training at EU level was approved by Heads of State and Governments. In addition, a recommendation on mobility

was negotiated in the course of the year leading to its subsequent adoption in 2001.

The year 2000 also saw the launch of the new generation of the Leonardo da Vinci (vocational training) and Socrates (education) EU programmes. The new programmes build on the progress achieved to date and have introduced a number of new measures to further enhance European co-operation in education and training.

2000 also saw strengthened bilateral co-operation with other countries. Discussions with Malaysia, China and the Czech Republic laid the foundations for education agreements, which were subsequently signed in 2001.



## Lifelong Learning

### White Paper on Adult Education

The publication of a Green Paper on Adult Education in 1998 was followed by the launch of the White Paper on Adult Education: Learning for Life in August 2000. This followed an extensive consultation process undertaken throughout 1999.

The White Paper sets out a range of recommendations to promote and expand access to adult education in the context of a continuum of educational opportunities on a lifelong basis. The recommendations cover the principles which should underpin the service, implementation of a national adult literacy strategy, expansion of part time options in further education through a Back to Education Initiative, improved opportunities for adult participation in third level education, a strengthened role for community education, the enhancement of supporting services such as guidance, counselling and childcare, and the establishment of a National Adult Learning Council and Local Adult Learning Boards for improved co-ordination, integration and planning, nationally and locally. The recommendations will be implemented on a phased basis in the light of the resources provided in the National Development Plan and in the Estimates.

### Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

The Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) is a second chance education and training programme for adults aged 21 years and over who are at least 6 months unemployed. Some 5,000 places are offered per annum at a cost, in 2000, of approximately €31.47m. A range of vocational options from Foundation level to Post Leaving Certificate level is offered to students.

A childcare support service was introduced in 1998 for participants on VTOS, Youthreach and Traveller programmes. The measure provides funds to VECs for direct provision of crèches, purchase of places in existing crèches or payment of child minders, subject to a maximum of €50 per child for full sessions, tax compliance, and registration as required with the health boards. In 2000 some 1,308 children and 1,050 parents benefited from the initiative.

In recognition of the need to ensure systematic participation and benefit of those most affected by prolonged periods of unemployment, a study was commissioned by the Department of Education and Science to identify and report on the outreach, recruitment, delivery and support strategies



which are most effective in catering for those most in need. A draft report has been completed and is being examined with a view to finalisation. The draft report highlighted a range of factors, which have contributed in part to a decrease in participation in VTOS among those hardest to reach, including the rapid growth in emphasis on employment programmes as opposed to education and training in active labour market policies.

### Post Leaving Certificate Courses

The numbers of participants on Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses continued to grow, increasing from 18,712 students in 1996/1997 to 25,518 students in 2000/2001. Means tested maintenance grants for students, along the same lines as pertain in the third level schemes, were introduced in 1998. The programme provides an important alternative route into third level for holders of NCVA Level 2 awards, under a Higher Education Links Scheme. Details of the scheme are circulated annually to all school principals and guidance counsellors. Increasingly, adults are using PLC courses to re-enter education – some 33 % of all PLC students in 2000 were aged 21 or over.

### Adult Literacy

The OECD International Adult Literacy Survey: Results for Ireland was published in 1997, showing some 25% of Irish adults scoring at the bottom literacy level. It is important to stress that this was not a survey of illiteracy, but rather of the different levels of skills that are needed for participation in a modern economy. Those adults who were found to score at the lowest level (Level 1) could perform, at best, tasks that required the reader to locate a simple piece of information in a text, with no distracting information. The survey showed early school leavers, older adults and the unemployed as being most at risk of literacy difficulties, with participation in adult education and training being least likely for those with the poorest skills.

Since the survey, the adult literacy budget has increased from less than £0.85m prior to 1997 to almost £8.35m in 2000. £73.6m is being provided for a National Adult Literacy Strategy under the National Development Plan for the period 2000-2006.

A range of initiatives has been progressed as part of the expansion of the service in co-operation with the VECs, the National Adult Literacy Agency, and training and employment interests. These include measures to support awareness





promotion, outreach, development of referral networks and flexible provision. The networks link the literacy service with the work of other agencies in schools, FAS, welfare, health, employment and community services, so that awareness is promoted as to the availability of services and how those with a literacy difficulty can be referred for help. As a result, the numbers availing of the service have increased from 5000 in 1997 to 17,150 at the end of 2000. A quality framework has been developed and nationally certified in-service programmes for staff are being implemented. A Directory of Adult Literacy Services has been published to promote awareness of contact points for the service. As part of the developments, family literacy and workplace learning initiatives are being expanded, allied with programmes for specific groups such as Travellers and learners with special needs.

These initiatives are being supplemented by radio and TV developments so that a mass audience can avail of literacy learning in the privacy of their own homes. A TV series "Read Write Now" was commissioned and broadcast on RTE from September to December 2000 and attracted an average weekly audience of 155,000, peaking twice at 192,000. The initiative was accompanied by free learner packs available from the National Adult Literacy Agency, allied with a free-

phone help-line operated by the Agency.

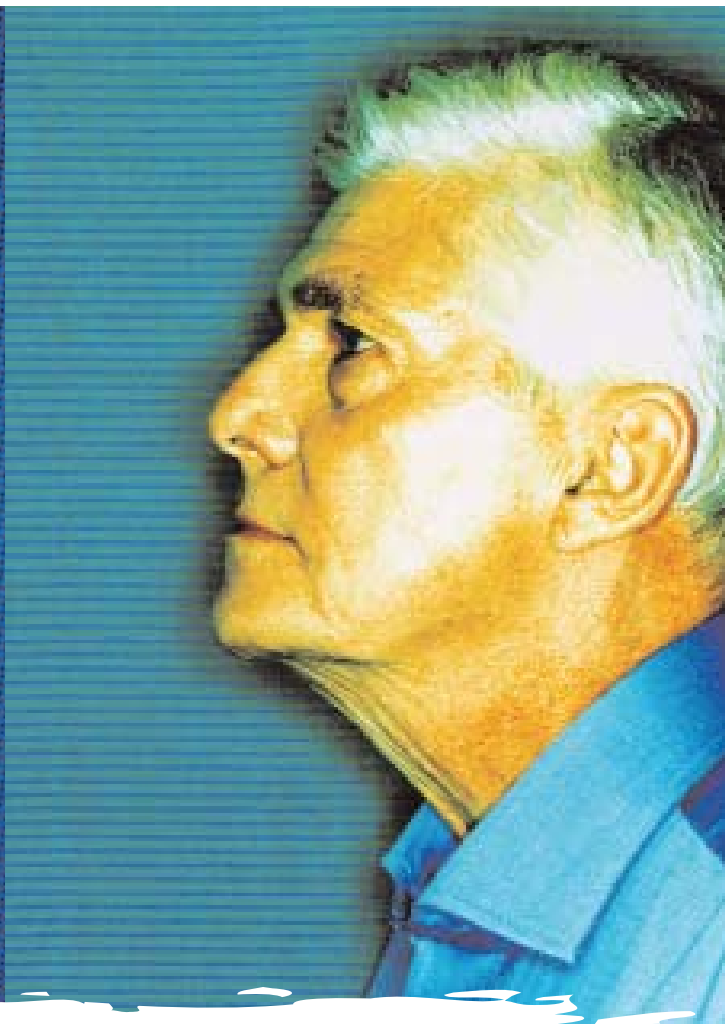
Videos of the TV series were subsequently distributed free to literacy schemes, adult learning centres, public libraries and video outlets.

An Inter-departmental Committee to promote an integrated strategy on literacy for the unemployed continued to meet in 2000. The Committee is hosted by the Department, and works with the National Adult Literacy Agency, FAS, the Local Employment Service, the VECs and the Departments of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Social Community and Family Affairs. A Return to Learning programme, operated jointly by the VEC's and the FAS-funded Community Employment Scheme, is underway, and is being expanded to all FAS regions. This enables intensive literacy tuition to be combined with a training allowance and work experience under the Community Employment scheme.

### **Literacy and Language Needs of Asylum Seekers**

The literacy and language needs of asylum seekers are posing new challenges. A co-ordinator was put in place in Dublin City and Dublin County VECs to undertake action research in this





area and to develop models of good practice in consultation with key agencies such as the Directorate of Services for Asylum Seekers and Refugees and the Refugee Language Support Unit. The Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) also set up a working group to develop policies in this area, and the twin approaches are co-ordinated. Existing literacy services are including these needs in the context of their overall area planning within the constraints of the overall budget.

### Adult Guidance

The Green and White Papers on Adult Education recognised the critical importance of developing support services, such as guidance, so that adults can gain optimum benefit from a return to education which is relevant to their needs. The Papers recommended the development of a service which would cover a spectrum of needs ranging from initial outreach, particularly in the fields of literacy and basic education, vocational information, guidance and orientation, advice in dealing with learning fears as well as counselling and access to expert services for those in need.

To progress matters, an Advisory Group was established led

by the National Centre for Guidance in Education and other relevant interests to oversee the development. Tenders were sought by public advertisement, and 10 proposals were selected to pilot a service from the 33 submissions received. The pilots began early in 2000, and will operate over a two-year period, at a cost of £0.5m in 2000 and £0.542m in 2001.

### National Reading Initiative

The National Reading Initiative was established in January 2000 as a year-long project with a budget of £2.5m. Its aims are to raise awareness in the general public of the importance of reading and to improve the quality of teaching and reading in the formal and non-formal sectors. The Initiative funded 200 projects in schools, libraries, adult education groups, prisons, traveller groups, hospice care and community groups. Many of these projects impact directly on children's and adult's access to books and are developing new ways of involving groups in reading.





## Commencement of the Education Act, 1998

The Education Act, 1998 was signed into law on the 23rd of December 1998. The Act provides, for the first time, a statutory framework for the Irish education system at first and second levels. As such, it represents a landmark in Irish education. The Act sets out broad objectives and principles underpinning the education system and provides for the rights of children and others to education. It also clarifies the roles and the responsibilities of teachers, principals, school patrons, boards of management and the Minister. It provides a framework for the development of a supportive and dynamic working environment for teachers and school managers and promotes the development of partnership in education at school level and at national level, providing for consultation with teachers, parents, school patrons and boards of management in a wide range of issues.

Section 1 of the Act allows for different parts of the Act to be commenced at different times. Section 1 provides for a maximum two-year commencement period; any provisions that had not been commenced by 23rd December 2000 were to automatically come into effect on that date. The Act was commenced in three parts. The first commencement order was made on the 5th February 1999 and the second on the 23rd December 1999. Taken together, these orders commenced 51 sections of the 59 sections in the Act, as well

as both schedules to the Act. The third and final commencement order was made on 22nd December 2000.

## Education Welfare Act, 2000

This Act repealed the 1926 legislation on school attendance and radically alters the approach, from one based on penalties to one focussed on identifying children and young people who have, or who in the future may have, school attendance difficulties and addressing their needs both in their schools and their communities. The Act also provides for the first time for the identification of children who are being educated outside the recognised school system and for a structure to ensure that the education, which is being provided to them, meets their constitutional rights to education. The Act establishes the National Educational Welfare Board, which through a network of educational welfare officers with responsibilities for specific schools will implement the provisions of the Act.

## Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse Act, 2000

The Act established the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse. The Commission has a remit to provide victims of abuse in childhood with a sympathetic forum in which they

can recount their experience. Where a victim of abuse wishes to do so he or she may also have his or her allegations inquired into by the Investigation Committee of the Commission. That Committee can establish accountability for abuse at the level of the individual abuser and the management and regulatory authorities of the institution where the abuse occurred. The Commission will publish a report on its findings.

### **Teaching Council Bill, 2000**

The Bill provides for the establishment of a self-regulating Teaching Council for first and second-level teachers. The Council will be an autonomous, statutory, self-regulating body, with the role of setting and promoting the highest professional standards for first and second-level teachers.

### **Vocational Education (Amendment) Bill, 2000**

This Bill was published in 2000. The Bill provides for new structures and accountability, management and financial procedures in order that each vocational education committee can meet, in as effective and efficient a manner as possible, the needs of vocational education in the area, which it serves.

### **The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999**

The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 was enacted in July 1999. Its main objects are to establish and develop standards of knowledge, skill or competence, promote the quality of further education and training and higher education and training, provide a system for co-ordinating and comparing education and training awards and promote and maintain procedures for access, transfer and progression.

In January 2000, the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland was established on an interim basis pending its establishment on a statutory basis as provided for in the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999. The task of the designate Authority is to commence work on the establishment of a national framework of qualifications and to advise on and support the transition to the new certification system as provided for in the Act.

### **Youth Work Bill, 2000**

Implementation of the Youth Work Bill, which went through its second stage in the Dáil in November 2000 will significantly enhance and develop participation by young people in non-formal education.

# FOCUS



## Planning and Provision of Accommodation - Work Programme in 2000

### Primary Buildings Section

- Construction was completed on 41 major primary school building projects (projects of £250,000 or more) in 2000.
- Architectural planning commenced on a further 143 major primary school building projects.
- The process of acquiring 50 new primary school sites was initiated.
- 656 minor projects (projects of less than £250,000) and grant sanctions were processed and completed in primary schools.
- The new design guidelines for primary schools, introduced in 1999, were extended to all new schools in architectural planning and on a phased basis to existing schools undergoing major extension and renovation.
- A programme of asbestos testing was completed in 1,500 schools and consequently, asbestos remediation works were subsequently carried out in over 200 of these.
- The annual devolved grant for improvement work to primary school buildings was revised and extended and the annual grant-aid increased to £3,000 per school and £10 per pupil.

### Post Primary Buildings Section

- Construction of 17 new Post Primary Schools was underway in 2000.
- Construction of 80 Extension Projects was underway.
- Construction of 15 Education Centres was nearing completion.
- Approximately 200 Minor Improvement Works (projects costing less than £500,000 each) were commenced and completed.
- Architectural Planning of a further 764 Building Projects was underway, ranging from new buildings to minor improvement works.
- A pilot Dust Extraction Programme for woodwork rooms was carried out.
- A complete review was carried out in relation to the Guidelines and Design Team Brief for Post Primary Schools.
- A complete review and upgrading of Furniture and Equipment Lists was concluded.
- A complete review of Area Norms and Room Layouts, including Fitted Furniture, was commenced in 2000, and is due for completion in early 2001.
- A programme of asbestos testing was completed and remediation works commenced as necessary.
- A programme of radon testing was carried out and remediation works commenced as necessary.





### Third Level Buildings Section

- Construction was completed on 9 projects costing in excess of IRE5m.
- Construction was completed on 85 projects costing less than IRE5m.
- Construction commenced on 4 projects costing in excess of IRE5m.
- Construction commenced on 15 projects costing less than IRE5m.

### Planning Section

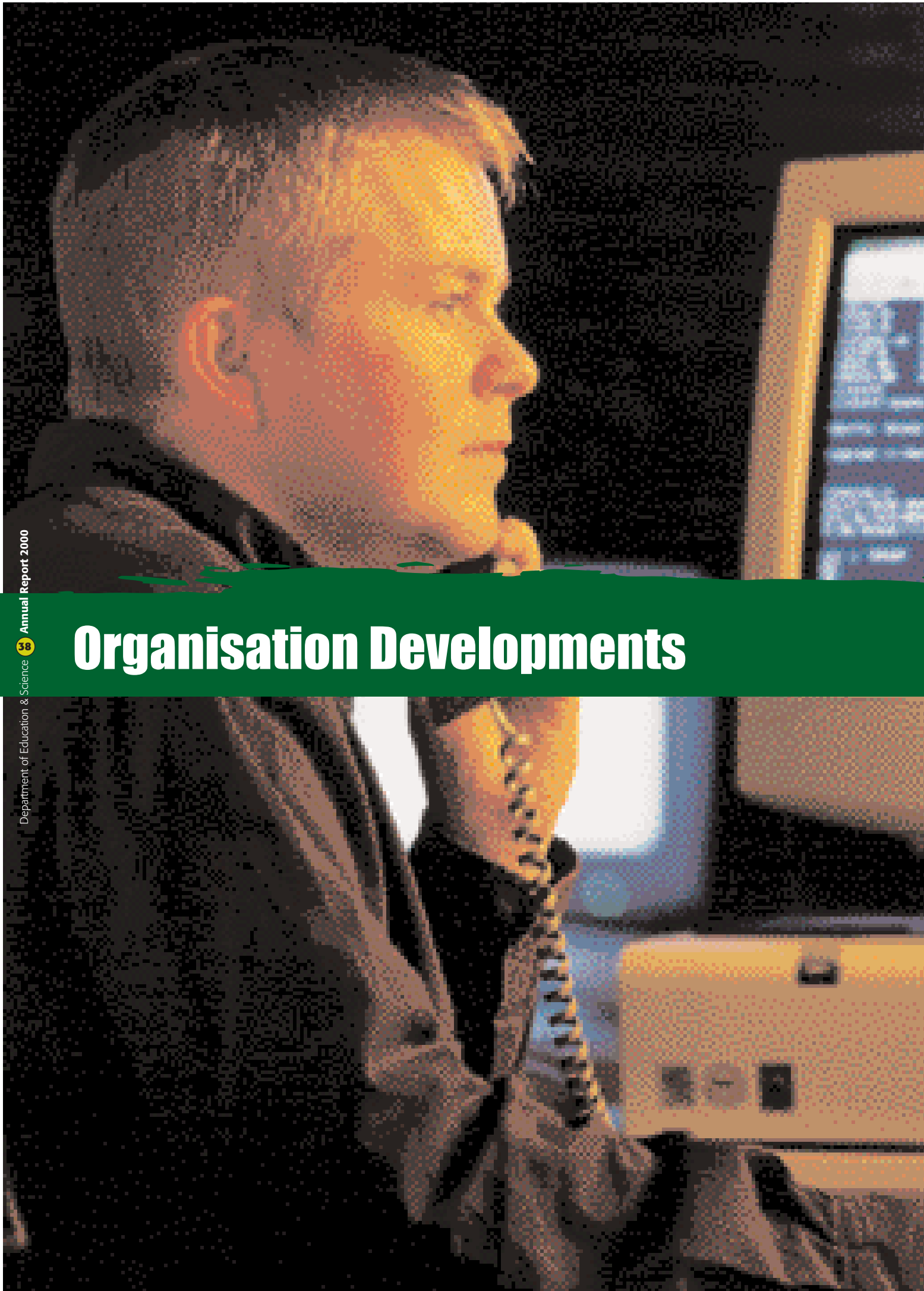
- New schools granted recognition  
**9** (4 Primary + 5 Post Primary)
- Amalgamations effected  
**15** (12 Primary + 3 Post Primary)
- Amalgamations initiated  
**26** (14 Primary + 12 Post Primary)
- Permanent recognition granted  
**5** (4 Primary + 1 Post Primary)

- Computerised system for projecting pupil numbers in post primary schools under development.

### Public Private Partnerships

The first education Public Private Partnership projects were successfully launched in July, following a EU-wide tender process. There was a substantial response from the private sector and, by September, three consortia had been short-listed and invited to submit bids for five new post-primary schools (Dunmanway, Shannon, Tubbercurry, Clones and Ballincollig), and for the Cork School of Music.

# Organisation Developments







## Programme of Change and Structural Reform

In June 2000, the Minister for Education and Science invited Mr Sean Cromien, former Secretary of the Department of Finance, to conduct a review of the Department's operations, systems and staffing. The decision to put in place such a review reflected the serious concern of the Minister and the Department's Top Management as to the Department's capacity to continue to discharge its functions efficiently and effectively in the absence of significant structural reform.

The findings of the review as set out in the Cromien Report of October 2000, reflect clearly the difficulties faced by the Department in delivering quality services in a highly challenging environment. At the core of the recommendations is the need to shift the Department of Education and Science from its overwhelming focus upon operational matters to a situation where serious attention can be given to the vital areas of policy development, forward planning and evaluation.

Arising from the review the Department has embarked upon a major programme of structural reform, which has 5 core elements to it.

- A focused movement of certain functions from the Department, specifically Examinations, delivery of Special Education and the transfer of the Department's current role in relation to the Institutes of Technology to the Higher Education Authority.
- The establishment of a regional office structure.
- Regulatory reform and appellate processes to under-pin key allocation functions.
- Implementation of a wide range of efficiency measures designed to bring the Department's procedures and processes into line with modern administrative practice.
- Arising from the above, a greater focus on core functions, with particular emphasis on policy and planning.

## Staffing of the Department

In 2000 over eleven hundred people, including the Schools' Inspectorate and Psychologists were employed in the Department in various locations throughout the country.

Department of Education and Science

Location	Total No. of Staff
Dublin	<b>445</b>
Tullamore	<b>180</b>
Athlone	<b>365</b>
Offices of the Inspectorate	<b>121</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,111</b>

## Partnership

Under the terms of Partnership 2000 the Department, in 1999, established new partnership structures involving management, unions and staff at all levels.

The objectives of partnership are to enhance the success of the organisation, to use the ideas, abilities and commitment of all staff in improving the organisation, to develop new arrangements for the discussion of issues affecting the organisation and to improve the quality of the work environment.

The Partnership Committee is chaired by the Secretary General and has three sub-committees: Training and Development, Internal Communications and Business Planning.

An extensive programme of work was advanced by these subcommittees in 2000.

Reports on the progress of each sub-committee were presented to the Partnership Committee at each of its meetings.

Additionally, in 2000, a representative Project Team was formed to prepare for and implement the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS). This group also reports on its progress to the Partnership Committee.

## Family Friendly Policies

In 2000, the Department continued to provide various flexible working arrangements for staff. Over 70% of staff work within the Flexitime Scheme which facilitates meeting the attendance requirement between 8.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. subject to core time attendance between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. Of the total staff some 29 were on career breaks and 111 members of staff, up to and including Principal Officer level, availed of job sharing arrangements. The working patterns varied and included week on / week off and mornings only. The term time working scheme, which was introduced in 2000, facilitates parents and others with care responsibilities to take a period of time off during the school holidays. 19 members of staff availed of this scheme in 2000. Parental Leave, which entitles natural or adoptive parents to up to 14 weeks unpaid leave, was extended in 2000 to those with children up to 5 years of age. 24 members of staff availed of this scheme in 2000.

## Staff Training and Development

It is the policy of the Department to provide training and development for management and staff at all levels in the context of implementing the performance management and development system. The aim of staff development is to ensure that the Department has available to it the skills and knowledge necessary to ensure best quality in service delivery and to enhance policy analysis, development and implementation.

In 2000 over 4,600 training days were delivered over 490 courses and seminars including IT training, technical training for professional and technical staff, management skills and personal development. In addition 42 staff had their third level academic fees paid by the Department. This represents the most significant ever investment by the Department in staff development and reflects the importance that the Department places on continuous development to improve service to customers.

In addition to the above a comprehensive formal training programme for grades up to and including middle managers was initiated in 1999 and continued throughout 2000. These customised modular programmes are delivered by external professional trainers. There is also an annual professional development programme for the Inspectorate and a structured induction programme for new Inspectors.



# focus



## The Primary Curriculum Support Programme

The launch of the revised Primary School Curriculum, which took place on September 9th, 1999, was the culmination of many years of development and planning by the Department of Education and Science and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). This process involved all the partners and interests in primary education. The bringing to fruition of the curriculum documentation opened the door to an exciting opportunity for change and renewal in primary schools. In anticipation of teachers and schools' needs, the In-Career Development Unit at the Department provided for the establishment of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) prior to the launch of the revised curriculum. The programme is headed by a National Co-ordinator who, together with a Deputy Co-ordinator and Assistant Co-ordinators, manage a national team of Trainers in the delivery of in-service support for teachers.

The purpose of the PCSP is to support teachers in implementing the curriculum in their schools. The programme is hosted by the Dublin West Education Centre under the management of a Steering Group and is supported by an administrative/ clerical team. The work of the PCSP is informed by planning undertaken by the Primary Curriculum Implementation Group, which was established by the Department of Education and Science in 1997. This group, representing all the partners in education at national level, provides the formal structure which enables the major stakeholders to contribute to the formulation of policy with regard to implementation issues, to assist in the development of a plan to support the introduction of the curriculum and to provide on-going dialogue as the process of implementation evolves.

### Introductory Seminars

By February 2000, a 2-Day Seminar on the Introduction to the Primary School Curriculum, which commenced in the first term of that school year, had been facilitated for more than 21,000 primary teachers. These seminars were facilitated by forty PCSP Trainers under the direction of the National Co-ordinating Team. The introductory seminars were aimed at developing an understanding of the principles underpinning the curriculum, familiarising teachers with the changes in emphases in the six curriculum areas (which comprise eleven subjects), experiencing new methodologies and initiating planning for the introduction of the revised curriculum in their schools and classrooms. The 2-day seminar was followed by a school-based planning day, which was designed, organised and facilitated by each school for itself.

### Language Seminars

From February to June 2000, the PCSP delivered approximately 920 2-day seminars on the Language Curriculum: English for English-medium schools and Gaeilge for Gaelscoileanna and Scoileanna sa Ghaeltacht. It was necessary to recruit additional trainers for this phase and seven new people joined the national PCSP team in February 2000. The 2-day Language Seminar was followed by a school-based planning day at a time of each staff's choosing.

### Pre-Seminar Consultation Trial

In the Easter term, 2000, eight PCSP trainers participated in a consultative process with a small number of schools in preparing for the 2-day English Curriculum Seminar. This involved liaison between the trainer and the school prior to the seminar and identifying areas of particular interest to staff. Some schools availed



of the offer of follow-up support after the seminar days. Schools found that the process was very helpful in enabling them to move forward towards planning for the implementation of the English Curriculum. The process also informed the provision of support for a further Language Planning Day in the school year 2000-2001.

## Support for School-based Language Planning Days

In the autumn term, 2000, schools were invited to apply for the services of a PCSP trainer to support them in their planning for the introduction of the language curriculum in which they had received in-service training in the previous school year. In December 2000, some 250 Irish-medium schools and 1,500 English-medium schools, applied for support. All of the Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht Schools that applied were served by a number of Gaeilge trainers and the English-medium schools were served by dual-role Visual Arts/English trainers.

## Visual Arts Seminars

Thirty one trainers were appointed to the Visual Arts team. In the autumn term, 2000, in-service began on the Visual Arts Curriculum. It was a "sandwich" model which provided for three separate days: Day 1 was facilitated by a PCSP trainer; Day 2 was a school-based day and Day 3 was again facilitated. This model gave teachers an opportunity to experience within their own school context some of the ideas explored on Day 1. Outcomes were shared on Day 2 and staff needs were identified and communicated to the trainer for Day 3.

## Gaeilge

Fourteen Gaeilge trainers began the facilitation of a one-day seminar on Curaclam na Gaeilge for English-medium schools in October 2000. This seminar concentrated on the communicative approach to teaching Irish. Teachers were enthusiastic in their engagement with the most modern and effective language teaching strategies in the interactive exercises which they undertook. They also expressed interest in addressing issues around their competence and confidence with regard to spoken Irish.

## Developmental Project in Science

A Developmental Project in Science commenced in the autumn term of the year 2000. This was agreed and supported by all the partners in education. An invitation to participate was issued to all primary schools. Over 850 schools applied and 207 schools were selected on the basis

of set criteria. The purpose of the project was to prepare for the introduction of Science in primary schools by enabling participating schools to experience methodologies, develop strategies, explore a range of materials and build capacity for teaching Science. Nine trainers were engaged in the project. Their work included holding introductory and planning meetings, conducting workshops and visiting schools to support teachers during the project.

## The Inspectorate and PCSP

During the year 2000, members of the Inspectorate were closely involved in the work of the PCSP particularly in their contribution to the design teams set up for the Introductory Seminars, English, Gaeilge, Visual Arts and Science. Design teams are subject specific and represent the Department, NCCA and the PCSP. Each design team discusses and makes plans for the training of trainers, contributes to the trainers' training in many instances and designs and oversees the content and methodologies of the in-service provision in the particular subject. Inspectors on the design teams brought their experience as members of NCCA committees, which provided valuable insight into the rationale and background to the changes in emphasis and new methodologies in the curriculum.

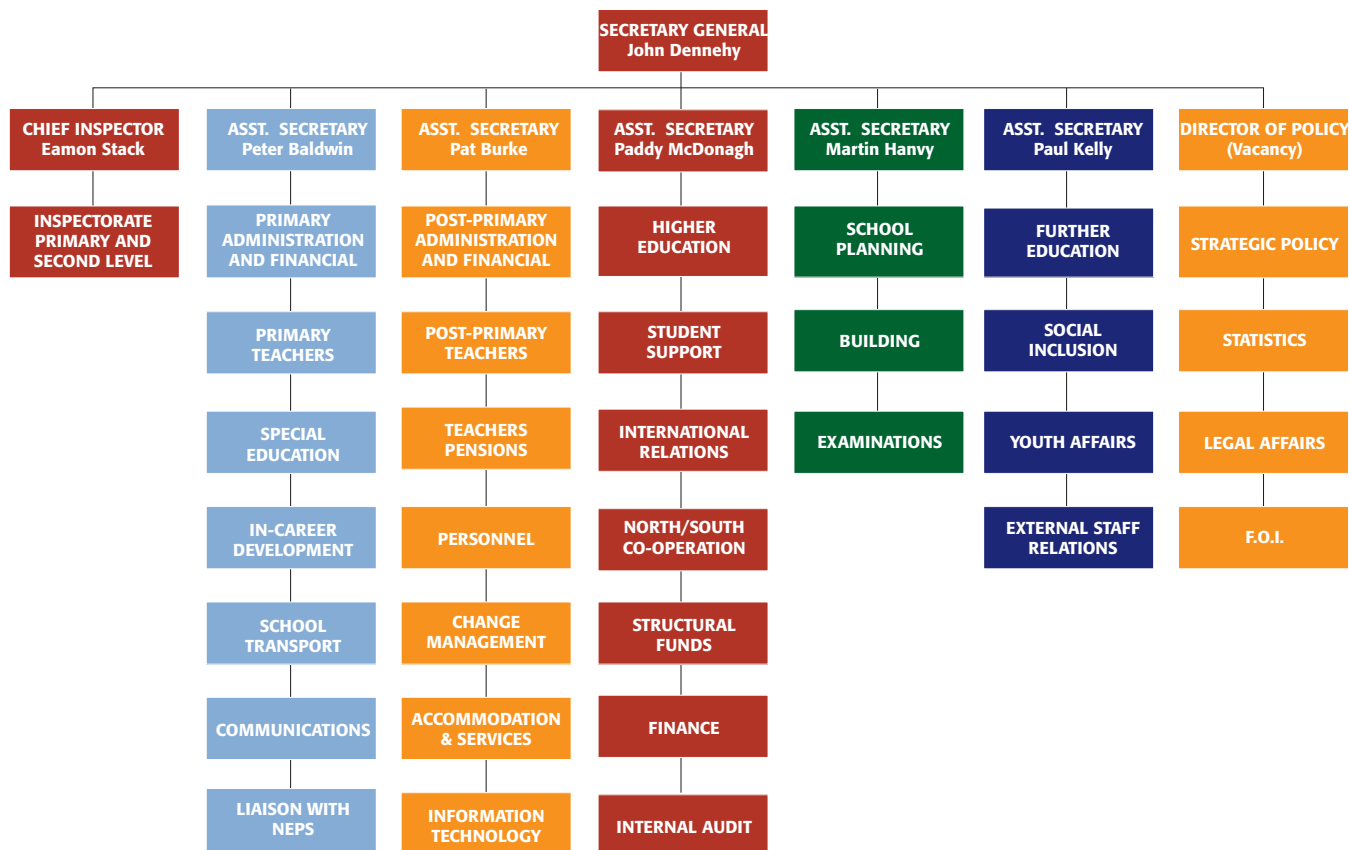
Members of the Inspectorate were also involved in the evaluation of the PCSP during the Easter term, 2000. They attended the 2-Day English Seminar after which the trainer was interviewed and a questionnaire was completed. This was followed by school-based interviews with some Principals and teachers. This work was carried out under the auspices of the Evaluation Support and Research Unit (ESRU) of the Inspectorate.

## The Education Centre Network and PCSP

The Education Centre network has been central to the process of delivering the PCSP seminars. In-depth consultation was undertaken between the Education Centre Directors, the ICDCU and the PCSP. In addition to their input to overall policy and planning through the national structures, the Education Centres have made the necessary local arrangements to facilitate the operation of the PCSP: clustering schools, booking venues; arranging refreshments, contacting schools and matching PCSP Trainers to seminars.

# Appendices

## Department of Education and Science Organisation of Functions



**Note: The above shows the interim organisation of functions pending development of the Department's programme of change and structural reform.**

## Publications 2000

The Department publishes a wide range of information leaflets and policy documents. A detailed listing of the publications is available free of charge from the Communications Unit at 01 8892388. It is the policy of the Department where possible to publish documents on the web site and this can be accessed at [Http://www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

The following is a list of the most frequently requested documents published in 2000. Documents are available from the Communications Unit in the Department and / or from the Government Publications Sales Office, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2 Tel: 01 6476000.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Source</b>
<b>Strategy Statement</b>	Strategy of Department on implementation of the Public Service Management Act 1997	Communications Unit
<b>Brief Description of the Education System</b>	Overview of the Education System in Ireland	Communications Unit
<b>Customer Service Statement</b>	Details of Department's services	Communications Unit
<b>Directory of Contact Numbers 2001</b>	Listing of Sections in Department and in education Sector with contact details	Communications Unit
<b>Guide to Information</b>	List of publications from Department and bodies under aegis of Department	Communications Unit
<b>Annual Statistical Report 1998/1999</b>	Detailed Statistical data	Government Publications Sales Office
<b>Annual Report 1999</b>	Overview of the Department its activities and major developments in 1999.	Communications Unit
<b>List of National Schools</b>	List of schools with contact details	Government Publications Sales Office
<b>Primary School Curriculum Your Child's Learning-Guidelines for Parents</b>	Guidelines for Parents	Communications Unit
<b>Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools</b>	Rules and programmes and syllabuses for a range of subjects	Government Publications Sales Office
<b>Revised Syllabuses for the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Examinations</b>	Revised syllabus are published individually by subject	Government Publications Sales Office
<b>Third Level Student Support 2000/2001</b>	Details of criteria applicable	Student Support Unit and the Communications Unit



## Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

### **Advisory Council for English Language Schools Ltd.,**

44 Leeson Place,  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 6767374

### **Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies**

10 Burlington Road,  
Dublin 4.  
Tel: (01) 6140100

### **Higher Education Authority**

Third Floor, Marine House,  
Clanwilliam Court,  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 6612748

### **Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann**

31 Plás Mhic Liam,  
Baile Átha Cliath 2.  
Tel: (01) 6765489

### **International Education Board Ireland**

IPC House,  
35/39 Shelbourne Road  
Dublin 4.  
Tel: (01) 6144836

### **National Centre for Technology in Education**

Dublin City University  
Larkfield Apts.,  
House 3,  
Glasnevin,  
Dublin 9  
Tel: (01)7008200

### **Royal Irish Academy of Music**

36/38 Westland Row,  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 6764412

### **Royal Irish Academy**

19 Dawson Street,  
Dublin 2  
Tel: (01) 6762570/6764222/6762570

### **National Council for Curriculum and Assessment**

24 Merrion Square ,  
Dublin 2  
Tel: (01) 6617178

### **Higher Education and Training Awards Council**

26 Mountjoy Square  
Dublin 1  
Tel: (01) 8556526

### **Further Education & Training Awards Council**

Marino Institute of Education  
Griffith Avenue  
Dublin 9  
Tel: (01) 8531910

### **National Centre for Guidance in Education**

1st Floor, 42/43 Prussia Street,  
Dublin 7  
Tel: (01) 8690715

### **The National Educational Psychological Service**

Frederick Court  
24/27 North Frederick Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: (01) 8892700

### **Commission on School Accommodation Needs**

Floor 1, Block 4, Irish Life Centre  
Talbot Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: (01) 8787747

### **The President's Award - Gaisce**

The State Apartments  
Dublin Castle  
Dublin 2.  
Tel: (01) 4758746

### **Leargas - The Exchange Bureau**

Avoca House,  
189 / 193 Parnell Street,  
Dublin 1.  
Tel: (01) 8731411

### **National Qualifications Authority of Ireland**

4th Floor  
6 – 9 Trinity Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: (01) 6127080

## Contacts

### **Directory of Contact Numbers**

A detailed Directory of Contact Numbers in the Department, including numbers for bodies under the aegis of the Department and in the wider education sector is available free of charge from the Communications Unit Tel: (01) 8892388.

### **Direct Dial Inward(D.D.I.)**

A Direct Dial Inward (D.D.I.) service is installed in the Department's Dublin, Athlone and Tullamore offices. This service by-passes the telephone operator and goes directly to the desk of an individual or section.

### **Eircom Telephone Directories**

The Green Pages section of the current Eircom Telephone Directories includes a comprehensive list of the Department's Offices and Sections and the services being provided.

### **Website**

The Department's Website may be accessed at  
[Http://www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

## Offices of the Department

### Department of Education and Science

Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1

**Tel: (01) 8734700**

### Department of Education and Science

Hawkins House  
Hawkins Street  
Dublin 2

**Tel: (01) 8734700**

### Department of Education and Science

Irish Life Building  
Block 1,  
Abbey Street,  
Dublin 1

**Tel : (01) 8734700**

### Department of Education and Science

Irish Life Building  
Block 4  
Talbot Street  
Dublin 1

**Tel: (01) 8734700**

### Department of Education and Science

Irish Life Building  
Block 6/7  
Abbey Street,  
Dublin 1

**Tel: (01)8734700**

### Department of Education and Science

Cornamaddy  
Athlone  
Co. Westmeath

**Tel: (0902) 74621**

### Department of Education and Science

Portlaoise Road  
Tullamore  
Co. Offaly

**Tel:(0506) 21363**

## Units/Sections

Offices of the Minister, (Dr. Michael Woods T.D.)  
Minister for Science and Technology, (Mr. Noel Treacy, T.D.)  
Secretary General, Assistant Secretaries  
Chief Inspector and Inspectors  
Strategic Policy Directorate  
Structural Funds  
Communications  
Corporate Services  
Freedom of Information  
Higher Education (Universities)  
Higher Education (Colleges)  
International Affairs  
North/South Co-operation  
Social Inclusion

Minister of State for Adult Education,  
Youth Affairs and School Transport, (Mr. Willie O'Dea, T.D.)  
In-Career Development  
Inspectorate  
Post Primary Administration  
Youth Affairs

External Staff Relations  
Finance Unit  
IT Systems

Further Education  
Internal Audit

Statistics

Examinations  
Post Primary  
Primary  
Registration Council Secretariat  
Special Education  
Teachers' Pensions

Inspectorate  
Planning & Building  
Post Primary Administration  
School Transport  
Student Support (Third Level/Post Leaving Cert)

## Main Offices of the Inspectorate

### Office of the Inspectorate

Irish Life Buildings  
1A South Mall  
Cork  
Tel: (021) 4906011

### Office of the Inspectorate

Model School  
O'Connell Avenue  
Limerick  
Tel: (061) 315966

### Office of the Inspectorate

Floor 3,  
Ross House  
Merchants Road  
Galway  
Tel: (091) 568922

### Office of the Inspectorate

Kempton Promenade  
Bridge Street  
Sligo  
Tel: (071) 43218