

**National Council for Curriculum and Assessment launches new teacher bulletin - [info@ncca](mailto:info@ncca), new website [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) and Annual Report 2004**

**Press Release**

Dr. Catherine O'Brien, Chairperson of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), today launched the first issue of a newsletter for teachers entitled *info@ncca*, a new website [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) and the organisation's Annual Report 2004 at Cork Education Support Centre, Western Road, Cork.

Speaking at the launch Dr O'Brien said that "a unique set of tools which are being placed at the disposal of all concerned with education at every level. She continued: "Both the website and the Info newsletter are a clear indication of the NCCA's commitment to teachers as the leaders and innovators in the education system. NCCA may put it on paper but teachers have to put it into practice. The recent publication of the first phase of the primary curriculum review showed that the path from the intended curriculum to the implemented one is complex. The bulletin and website are designed to help teachers navigate that path and to share with others the directions that help them find their way. Assessment is a critical part of the work of the NCCA and the two projects launched here today re-position assessment at the heart of the teaching process rather than at the end of it. The website will be developed to include assessment items for teacher use, examples of students' work for primary school and junior cycle - all of this is intended to help teachers develop their assessment skills so that they can better support students as learners."

The new publication - *info@ncca* - is designed to inform and communicate with teachers and has been sent to every school in the country. Uniquely, *info@ncca* speaks to both primary and post-primary teachers, bringing information on developments in post-primary schools to the attention of primary teachers and giving post-primary teachers an update on the implementation of the Primary School Curriculum. It will showcase some of the projects where teachers and students are trying out new and innovative approaches to assessment and learning.

The NCCA's new website is designed to allow students, parents and teachers to access information on subjects, curriculum areas and ongoing NCCA projects. It also heralds the development of a new Curriculum Online site, to be followed by Curriculum in Action where examples of student work, assessment tools for teachers and examples of good classroom practice can be shared.

This year's Annual Report highlights the NCCA's progress in meeting the High Level objectives as set out in its Strategic Plan 2003 - 2005 and is its third report since becoming a statutory body in July 2001.

Commenting on the NCCA's impending decentralisation Dr. O'Brien said: "As Chairperson of one of the statutory bodies earmarked for early moving under the decentralisation proposals - in our case to Portarlinton, I have expressed a number of concerns to the Department of Education and Science. These include the impact of a decentralised location on the NCCA's processes of consultation and consensus-building and the impact of such a location on the many hundreds of volunteers who participate in NCCA committees and working groups. As the NCCA moves closer to its moving date I trust that these concerns will be addressed. There is no doubt that decentralisation will put strains on the whole NCCA operation but I hope that those directing the decentralisation process will make every effort to minimise the problems that will arise for all partners in education while also ensuring that the very real concerns of staff in relation to their future careers are addressed so that the excellent work of the NCCA will not suffer in the future."

Ends.

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