





# VISION

The NCCA will play a key role in providing an education system of the highest quality for learners to enable them to realise their full potential and to equip them for successful participation in, and contribution to, economic and civil society, and in so doing promoting the growth of a learning society.

# MISSION

The role of the NCCA is to lead developments in curriculum and assessment and to support the implementation of changes resulting from this work. The NCCA works in a spirit of consensus and partnership. It seeks to promote an innovative and creative environment for all learners in schools and other educational settings.



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# FOREWORD AND INTRODUCTION



# FOREWORD

This report of the work of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is the first account of progress on the high-level objectives set out in its Strategic Plan 2006-2008. In support of its statutory remit to provide advice to the Minister for Education and Science, the Council has engaged in a wide range of work, with a wide range of stakeholders. In so doing, it has done more than simply produce advice on change and development; it has built capacity in schools, and other educational settings through involving principals, teachers, students, and parents in the generation of policy advice. Such involvement ranges from consultation on draft documents and discussion papers to the more sophisticated engagement associated with school-based work, whereby teachers and students try out new approaches and consider their implications for the system as a whole.

This report attempts to capture the impact of this engaged approach to the development of policy advice by including some of the feedback from those involved, through their voices and in their words. For an agency such as the NCCA, working towards the longer term development of the education system, it is important to record and report on the more immediate impact of its work, as well as on the more medium and longer term work presented in the tables under each high-level objective.

The voices and words point to the complexity of the process of educational change, the tensions between excitement about what might be and frustration about what is, and the shared mission of making the system better for those who work and learn within it.

This combination of complexity, excitement, and shared mission could usefully apply to the deliberations of the Council over the course of 2006. I want to pay tribute to the Council members who, working on a voluntary basis, engage with genuine enthusiasm and a great deal of expertise with the ongoing work. Many of the members are also members of sub-committees and working groups – further evidence of their commitment and support. I want to acknowledge especially the Deputy Chairpersons, Catherine Byrne and Ellis Humphreys, for their advice and support in the course of 2006.

I wish to thank all the staff of the NCCA, particularly the executive team of Anne Looney, John Hammond and Sarah Fitzpatrick, for the leadership, vision and dedication which they bring to all aspects of the work of the organisation.



Prof. Tom Collins  
*Chairperson*



# INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the 2006 Annual Report of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. In addition to reporting on the Council's work on those strategies that featured in its work programme in 2006, the report also presents some feedback and comment from those who engage with and lead change processes in schools and in other educational settings. Given the range of the Council's work, some projects generate this type of feedback and comment, while others are less likely to do so, or may not have done so in 2006, because of the particular stage of the work. What is presented is a selection that shows the broad range of stakeholders with whom the Council works. This is also highlighted on pages 44-46, which presents an overview of the presentations made by the executive, or about NCCA work, across Ireland and in international settings. The feedback and comments show the kinds of impact the work of the Council can have on those stakeholders and, most significantly, the challenge of change in education.

That challenge presents itself on a number of levels. Firstly, as signalled in the NCCA Strategic Plan 2006-2008, the changing faces, voices, expectations, and motivations of learners of all ages challenge a system to move beyond a one-size fits all model to a system of greater flexibility and diversity. This is easy rhetoric; it is not easy to deliver. It takes energy and commitment from practitioners and from policy-makers. The day-to-day wear and tear of working in such a dynamic and demanding environment cannot be underestimated.

The second change challenge is the one faced by those who, as they live and work through the first set of changes, must also lead change in classrooms, schools, and other educational settings. If the first challenge is to respond to change; the second is to lead it. This level of change requires not just energy and commitment but the imagination to see new solutions and new possibilities. Day-to-day attrition is the enemy of imagination. So, in working with teachers, principals, learners, and parents we made every effort to lighten that load, to give time, to provide high-quality materials and resources, to be available to deal with queries and anxieties, and to respect practitioner wisdom and insight. We learned much from those who worked with us, not just about the projects and developmental work in which we were engaged, but about how to engage better and how best to build that change capacity for teachers and schools.

*Changing how we change* may sound glib, but it is a real challenge within Irish education. Working with schools and other educational settings has been a relatively recent feature of NCCA; that has been a change for us. It has not been without its own challenges, especially for the executive staff who led the work and the many committees who oversee all the developmental work of the Council. A list of the committees and groups which met in 2006 is included in Appendix 4. I want to thank them, and the staff of the Council, for their continued work and commitment.



Dr. Anne Looney  
Chief Executive

# THE ORGANISATION

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

The NCCA is a statutory Council and its brief is to advise the Minister for Education and Science on matters relating to curriculum and assessment for early childhood education and for primary and post-primary schools.

## VISION

The Council's Strategic Plan 2006-2008 sets out its statement of vision:

*The NCCA will play a key role on providing an education system of the highest quality for learners to enable them to realise their full potential and to equip them for successful participation in the, and contribution to, economic and civil society, and in so doing promote the growth of a learning society.*

## MISSION

The Council's approach to its work is summarised in its mission:

*The role of the NCCA is to lead developments in curriculum and assessment and to support the implementation of changes resulting from this work. The NCCA works in a spirit of consensus and partnership. It seeks to promote an innovative and creative environment for all learners in schools and other educational settings.*

## COMPOSITION

The Council is a representative structure, the membership of which is determined by the Minister for Education and Science. The twenty-five members come from organisations representing teachers, school managers, parents, employers, trade unions, and interests in education. Other members include representatives of the Department of Education and Science (DES), the State Examinations Commission (SEC), and a nominee of the Minister. The membership of the current Council, which was appointed for a three year term to 31 March, 2009 is as follows:

Dr. Tom Collins	<i>Chairperson</i>
Ms. Catherine Byrne	<i>Deputy Chairperson</i>
Ms. Ellis Humphreys	<i>Deputy Chairperson</i>
Ms. Antoinette Buggle	<i>National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education</i>
Mr. Oliver Donohoe	<i>Irish Congress of Trade Unions</i>
Mr. Aidan Farrell	<i>State Examinations Commission</i>
Mr. Michael Freeley	<i>Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland</i>
Mr. Declan Kelleher	<i>Irish National Teachers' Organisation</i>
Ms. Marion Lyon	<i>National Parents Council Post-Primary</i>
Mr. John MacGabhann	<i>Teachers' Union of Ireland</i>
Ms. Doreen McMorris	<i>Department of Education and Science</i>
Dr. Kenneth Milne	<i>Church of Ireland Board of Education</i>
Ms. Mary Mullarkey	<i>Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools</i>
Mr. Paddy Murchan	<i>Catholic Primary Schools Managers Association</i>
Ms. Maria Murphy	<i>National Parents Council Primary</i>
Ms. Sheila Nunan	<i>Irish National Teachers' Organisation</i>
Dr. Barney O'Reilly	<i>Irish Vocational Education Association</i>
Tomás Ó Ruairc, Uas.	<i>Foras na Gaeilge</i>
Ms. Sheila Parsons	<i>Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland</i>
Ms. Pat Quinn	<i>Minister's Nominee</i>
Ms. Bernie Ruane	<i>Teachers' Union of Ireland</i>
Mr. Heino Schonfeld	<i>The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education</i>
Mr. Frank Turpin	<i>Irish Business and Employers Confederation</i>
Mr. Paul Tyrrell	<i>Joint Managerial Body</i>
Dr. Eugene Wall	<i>Irish Federation of University Teachers.</i>
<i>The term of office of the following members ended on 31 March 2006:</i>	
Dr. Catherine O'Brien	<i>Chairperson</i>
Mr. Tom Gilmore	<i>Deputy Chairperson</i>
Mr. Ferdia Kelly	<i>Deputy Chairperson</i>
Sr. Catherine Prendergast	<i>Minister's Nominee</i>
Mr. John White	<i>Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland</i>
Mr. Sean Daly	<i>Teachers' Union of Ireland</i>
Ms. Fionnuala Kilfeather	<i>National Parents Council Primary</i>
Seosamh MacDonncha, Uas.	<i>Foras na Gaeilge.</i>



## STAFF

The NCCA has a full-time executive staff led by the Chief Executive, Dr. Anne Looney, and the Deputy Chief Executives, John Hammond and Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick. As well as the full-time staff members there is a team of part-time Education Officers, who have particular expertise and who are appointed on a secondment or commission basis to the NCCA.

Details of the full and part-time staff are provided in Appendix 2.

## FINANCE

The NCCA is funded by the Exchequer through the Department of Education and Science (DES). Its allocation for the financial year 2006 was €4.4m.

The funds allocated to the NCCA cover:

- staff salaries
- costs related to the secondment and commissioning of specialist staff to support the work of the Council
- professional development
- publications, including proofing, design, photography, printing, and translation
- research
- costs of the meetings of Council and its sub-committees, including hire of conference facilities and travel and subsistence costs
- administration costs, such as office maintenance and equipment, stationery, postage, telephone, rent, lighting, and heating
- costs related to NCCA conferences and events
- ICT maintenance and development

- international interaction, including membership fees of international organisations such as CIDREE (Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe) and AEA (Association for Educational Assessment, Europe)
- advertising.

The DES directly funded Education Officer posts for ICT (2) and Modern Languages, Primary (1). The DES also transferred €68,288 to the Council to cover the salaries and operational costs of two Project Officers redeployed to NCCA from the former Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ). A research grant of €106,000 was received from the Gender and Equality Unit, DES.

### Additional Grants and Fees Received

A grant of €48,000 was made available by Foras na Gaeilge to fund the appointment of an Education Officer for Gaeilge.

The Council received €20,000 from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in relation to a proposal to build local capacity to support intercultural education in primary schools.

A grant of €15,000 was made available from the Health and Safety Authority for a study on teaching and learning in health and safety in the curriculum.

A grant of €2,620 was received from CIDREE (Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe) in respect of a study on including the student voice in curriculum development and review, and a grant of €2,470 was received from AEA Europe (Association of Educational Assessment - Europe) for the organisation by NCCA of its annual conference.

A detailed financial statement is provided in Appendix 3.

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-circular and rectangular shapes in shades of yellow, olive green, and a vibrant blue. The shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text is positioned in the upper right quadrant, overlaid on the yellow and olive green areas.

# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES

# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 1

To develop, monitor and review curriculum and assessment to improve the educational experiences of learners of all abilities including learners with special needs, exceptionally able learners, learners who experience socio-economic disadvantage, and learners whose first language is neither English nor Irish, and provide for their educational needs in the 21st century

## Strategy 1.1 Develop a framework to support Early Childhood Education.

### Completed in 2006

Two background papers for the Framework for Early Learning were developed:

- Children's early learning and development
- Perspectives on the relationship between education and care in early childhood.

Together with two more papers to be developed in 2007, these set out the theory that underpins the Framework.

A portraiture study involving twelve children in eleven early childhood settings was completed. The study described individual children's reflections on their time in their settings. The NCCA is using the study to represent the voices and experiences of children in the development of the Framework.

*Ideally, the Framework will influence what we teach in junior and senior infants. It would be great to know more about what they learn in pre-school, and if there was more continuity.*

**Junior infant teacher, Cork**

*I think it will help raise the status of the important job we do and help professionalise the early years sector. It will help parents understand the job we do and what we are trying to achieve with their children*

**Pre-school practitioner, Donegal**

*We use the Early Start curriculum as our main source, but we change what we are doing to meet the child's needs, we take the parents' input into account, we see what works well and what doesn't. I could see that the Framework will bring a lot to it – we could draw on the two of them.*

**Early Start teacher, Cork**

*I think it will be a good reference for us, It's always good to read over and make sure we are doing what we should be doing, so it will be a kind of a reminder, so it would be quite useful.*

**Childminder, Cork**



**Strategy 1.2** Continue a rolling review of the Primary School Curriculum to identify and meet the needs of teachers and children using the Primary School Curriculum.

**Completed in 2006**

A proposal for Primary Curriculum Review (PCR), Phase 2 – Gaeilge, Science and Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), was completed in June 2006.

A Review and Reflection Template for Teachers was developed and disseminated to all primary schools, and two additional school templates were developed and published online to facilitate the day allocated to in-school review and planning during the 2006-2007 school year.

A sample of 200 schools was identified for participation in PCR 2.

*The templates are very good for guiding the staff's review and reflection of the subjects.*

**Principal, case study school**

*We started on the NCCA booklet ... and I found that very useful, so I actually sat down with each of the standard groups and went through it with them.*

**Principal, case study school**

## **Strategy 1.3** Initiate and develop projects which are aligned with the Primary School Curriculum and informed by the findings of the Primary Curriculum Review.

### **Completed in 2006**

Parents reported that their engagement with their children's learning in the home was limited by the lack of information available to them from schools. In response, the NCCA published a DVD for parents entitled *The What, Why and How of Children's Learning in Primary School* in March 2006.

Teachers reported needing much greater exemplification of methods of teaching and learning with the Primary School Curriculum. In response, the NCCA completed a tender process for a website for *Assessment, Curriculum, Teaching Innovation On the Net* (ACTION). Work began towards the end of 2006.

Teachers requested more detailed advice on using assessment to support teaching and learning. In response, the NCCA developed an outline of *Guidelines for Teachers on Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum*. The NCCA also developed draft Report Card Templates (RCTs) for primary schools and designed a school-based developmental initiative (SBDI) to provide feedback on the RCTs during the 2006/2007 school year. (See 2.3)

Further work was completed to support Irish-medium schools in developing school policy and practice for introducing English and Irish at the beginning of primary school, including a the publication of a consultation document. This consultation paper was published and disseminated to all Irish-medium primary schools and was accompanied by a questionnaire. All members of the community including parents, teachers and children were invited to participate.

A seminar was organised in conjunction with An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) whereby the outcomes from the consultation process were discussed and proposals for the way forward were considered.

*Through the children's stories, the DVD shows how parents can support their child's learning at home in preparation for primary school, during primary school, and in preparation for post-primary school.*

**Newsbrief, NPC, Issue 52, Spring 2006**

*Minister Hanafin said 'watching this DVD makes me proud of Irish children. It makes me especially proud of our schools, teachers and families who care so much about the education of their children. This will also be a useful resource for the many international families who now live here and contribute so much to our economic, social and cultural life'.*

**Website of Mary Hanafin, TD, Minister for Education and Science, March, 2006**

*Gaelscoileanna Teoranta supported this work publishing a guide for parents on their website to facilitate them in engaging with the consultation process*

**[http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie/pdf/Guide\\_for\\_Parents.pdf](http://www.gaelscoileanna.ie/pdf/Guide_for_Parents.pdf)**

*Gaelport.com, the online publication of Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge, informed its readers of the consultation announcing: **The views of children as young as 10 are being sought in a major review of language and literacy in all-Irish primary schools.***



**Strategy 1.4** Ensure direction and coherence in specific junior cycle developments by positioning these developments in the wider educational context.

**Completed in 2006**

The junior cycle review committee discussed a draft of a paper on the Future Direction of Junior Cycle Education.

**Strategy 1.5** Complete a programme of curriculum and assessment development arising from the review of senior cycle education.

**Completed in 2006**

See 2.6, 4.4, 3.3.

**Strategy 1.6** Undertake the actions recommended in major reviews of the curriculum areas of Guidance, Mathematics, the Classical Subjects, and Languages (Irish, English and modern languages), aligned with the reviews of junior and senior cycle.

### Completed in 2006

Proposals for the Development of Mathematics in Post-primary Education, arising from the review of mathematics, were completed and issued to the Minister for Education and Science. The proposals set out a blueprint for reform of how mathematics is taught in our schools.

A discussion paper, *Curriculum Provision for Irish in Post-primary Education*, was completed and issued to the Minister for Education and Science. The paper set out a range of issues related to curriculum and assessment provision for discussion, including a renewed emphasis on measures designed to ensure that learners would speak the language with greater confidence and competence.

A *Draft Curriculum Framework for Guidance in Post-primary Education* was completed and a consultation process on its purpose and contents took place.

A review of curriculum provision for the Classical Subjects was completed, and recommendations for significant revision and restructuring of the classics syllabuses at junior and senior cycle were agreed.

*I strongly agree with the proposal that assessment would reflect renewed emphasis on problem solving and on the demonstration of skills in unfamiliar contexts. The professional development model proposed for teachers of Mathematics is innovative and ... offers significant potential to effect real change in teaching methodologies in our classrooms.*

**From the response of the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin TD to the proposals**

*... my overriding concern is to take urgent action to ensure that a greater emphasis is placed on oral competence in the language. I believe that this is the best way to improve teaching and learning of Irish and to ensure its continuance as a living community language.*

**From the response of the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin TD to the discussion paper**

*The management, coordination and delivery of the curriculum set out in the framework are very important features of progressive educational development...It has the potential to be the icing on the cake in the present secondary system.*

**Guidance Counsellor in response to the consultations**



## Strategy 1.7 Review the position of the Leaving Certificate Applied and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme in light of the broader senior cycle developments.

### Completed in 2006

Research was commissioned on participation in and progression from the Leaving Certificate Applied. The research is being conducted by the ESRI, and will focus on the situation of the programme in the schools involved, quality of participation by learners, and their experience of employment and further education and training on completion of the programme.

*... relatively little is known about the profile of students taking the programme and their experiences after leaving school. This study will provide a comprehensive picture of participation ... and progression.*

**From ESRI research proposal**

## Strategy 1.9 Complete an ICT Framework for the period of compulsory education.

### Completed in 2006

The ICT Framework was completed for the school-based developmental initiative (SBDI) during the 2006/2007 school year.

*I like the structure of the Framework in terms of the four inter-related areas. It is very coherent. I like the focus of each of the areas.*

**Post-primary teacher, SBDI**

*I think this framework is very well conceived and developed. It does not only reflect some of the best thinking in this area internationally, but also contains many innovative ideas that can lead international trends. First, it is theoretically sound ... Second, it is developmentally appropriate ... Third, it is up-to-date and expandable ... Fourth, it is operable ... Finally, it is pedagogically possible.*

**Yong Zhao, Distinguished University Professor, Michigan State University, USA**

*I really found it useful planning with another teacher. We had different lessons but we had the same planning base.*

**Primary school teacher, SBDI**

*I found the Framework helpful as a guide to keep 'on track' regarding the objectives to be achieved.*

**Primary school teacher, SBDI**

# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 2

To continue to work towards the development of assessment strategies that draw on national and international research and take account of individual learning needs, and thereby assist in planning educational experiences for all learners

## Strategy 2.1 Progress the development of assessment in the Primary School Curriculum.

### Completed in 2006

A background paper on *Reporting Children's Progress in Primary Schools* was published. It provided an overview of trends and developments of international reporting policies and practices.

## Strategy 2.2 Support assessment practice in early childhood settings.

### Completed in 2006

A portraiture study involving twelve children in eleven early childhood settings was completed. It described how assessment practice supported the children's learning and development.

*Maybe eventually every child would have a portfolio of information on the child's development, going all the way back to the early developmental checks ... It would be a great help if we got more information on what the children were learning in pre-school.*  
**Principal, Cork, talking about the assessment guidelines in the Framework for Early Learning**

## **Strategy 2.3** Develop national report card templates for primary schools to support reporting to parents on their children's progress.

### **Completed in 2006**

Draft report card templates were published in hard copy and on line.

A developmental initiative with fourteen primary schools was organised for the school year 2006-2007.

Working with the INTO, a plan was agreed to add thirteen additional schools using the templates and providing feedback.

*It has really changed the way I view Parent/Teacher evenings. I always thought I had to do all the talking. I never considered that parents might have information that they may wish to share with me. Rather than talking at parents, this time I hope to do more communicating.*

**Teacher, Dublin**

*I felt very prepared, having thought about the aspects in specific categories outlined on the template*

**Teacher, Cork**

*I have always felt that a parent needs something tangible when leaving a P/T meeting.*

**Teacher, Cork**

*What I liked about the Report Card was that it was personal and was particular to my child.*

**Parent, Cork DEIS school**

*I liked the area that focused on ways I could help, like shared reading and asking more questions.*

**Parent, Cork**



## Strategy 2.4 Disseminate the outcomes of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) Initiative as part of the review of junior cycle.

### Completed in 2006

The NCCA worked with thirty-seven teachers across fourteen subjects to develop web-based exemplars of student work and teacher feedback in support of teacher judgement.

*I really enjoyed the training seminar. Felt inspired by the enthusiasm for the project and am delighted to be involved.*

**Teacher, AfL Editorial Group**

*I feel that the whole initiative is extremely worthwhile and relevant and that all students and teachers would benefit from this approach. Having shared this opinion with my vice-principal following our training days I was asked to share the insights I had gained with the whole school staff.*

**Teacher, AfL Editorial Group**

*The group found that the idea of Assessment for Learning does encourage independent learning and that students did have to investigate their mistakes more thoroughly. They also found that correcting everything through the target language was useful and helped develop vocabulary.*

**Teacher, AfL Editorial Group**

*The consensus amongst my Junior Cert. students is that the new approach to assessing their work is both helpful and worthwhile to them. The feedback would suggest that their role in assessing themselves with my guidance and the comments made re their work is proving both helpful and, most importantly, encouraging. I feel this approach to assessing our students is the right one and hope to share these thoughts with as many of my colleagues as I can.*

**Teacher, AfL Editorial Group**

## Strategy 2.5 Develop assessment tools to support the ICT Framework.

### Completed in 2006

A range of teacher-designed assessment tools was generated by teachers, as components of sample lessons to support the ICT Framework.

*I found it useful to assess my own work.  
I think I was a bit hard on myself.  
The checklists were easy to use.*  
**Second year English student, Cork**

*I had never heard of or seen an assessment rubric before. When it was suggested to me that it may be a good way of me assessing or the students self-assessing their own Geography multimedia project I thought I'd give one a go. I found it a most useful assessment tool, though time consuming to develop. The students loved it, they knew from the onset what was expected of them.*

**Geography teacher, Cork**

*It would be great if there were electronic rubric generators available for the ICT Framework and other areas of the curriculum, like there are in the US.*

**Science teacher, Cork**

*Two of my students kept separate logs/diaries on the progress of an SPHE project using ICT. We compared the observations when the project was finished.*

**Fifth class teacher, Navan**

## Strategy 2.6 Progress the proposals to widen the range of assessment approaches and methods used in senior cycle education as part of senior cycle developments.

### Completed in 2006

A survey was completed on recent international developments in question types and second assessment components to inform the preparation of an assessment handbook for education officers and committees.



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 3

To support and improve change and development in curriculum and assessment in schools and other educational settings, and to take a leading role on advising on the professional development needs of teachers

**Strategy 3.1** Liaise closely with the support services working with primary and post-primary schools and teachers, with agencies in the early childhood sector, and with providers of pre-service and professional development for the education sector.

### Completed in 2006

In support of their work with teachers on integration, members of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) and School Development Planning Support (SDPS) were invited to a day long workshop with the NCCA focused on this theme. Dr. Paul Conway, University College Cork facilitated the event.

*This seminar provided members of the PCSP Co-ordinator Team with the essential theoretical underpinnings pertaining to Integration. This was extremely beneficial to the PCSP as we began to plan a programme of training for Trainers who would be responsible for delivering a day of national in-service training for all primary teachers. It exposed the team to the models and approaches of integration in a setting that enabled lively and candid discussion on this important dimension of teaching and learning.*

**Marie McLoughlin, National Co-ordinator, PCSP**



### **Strategy 3.2** Continue with the recently established practice of engaging directly with schools and other educational settings in the process of curriculum and assessment review and development.

#### **Completed in 2006**

A school based developmental initiative with a total of twelve schools commenced in November. The purpose of the initiative was to evaluate the ICT Framework in primary and post-primary schools.

A workshop/training seminar on the ICT Framework was facilitated for participant teachers in November, and ICT resources and planning and lesson templates were provided for participant teachers.

A range of draft *Report Card Templates* was introduced to fourteen primary schools in the School-based Developmental Initiative on Reporting to Parents.

In the Key Skills project twenty teachers from the School Network worked on embedding key skills within their teaching in English, Gaeilge, French, Spanish, mathematics, and biology. They sent feedback on their reflections and their students' reflections on teaching and learning to the NCCA and this informed the on-going syllabus development in senior cycle.

*Since last September, some 80 teachers from 16 schools all around the country have been actively involved in what is called the School Network. Their freely-given time and work is an important input into the shape of the new senior cycle.*

**Irish Times, March 2007**

*Being involved in this project encouraged me to reflect on my teaching. It made me think about what I was doing and it encouraged me to vary my teaching methods. Being involved at this stage of curriculum development is a big change for me. I am used to getting change from on high and not being involved in the change.*

**Teacher from the School Network**

*We look forward to working with NCCA on this initiative in the hope of progressing the integration of ICT as a real teaching and learning tool in Irish primary classrooms.*

**Principal's letter**

*The teachers are delighted to participate in this project. I have another one who is asking to be part of it!*

**Note from a meeting with a principal**

*We have had the children contribute to their reports this year for the first time.*

**Principal, Boys' School, Co. Galway**

*What I found most useful about [my daughter's] report card was it told us the positive points we could congratulate her on and be reassured about, and also pointed out areas where we can help her.*

**Parent, Cork City DEIS school**

*The initiative is a very valuable one for the staff as it really raised a lot of discussion and reflection on reporting and on the use of the different templates and their components. This is the first time we have issued written reports to parents at the mid-year meeting.*

**Principal, Cork City DEIS school**

*The thing I like most about all this is listening to ideas of other students and discovering new ways to learn.*

**Student talking about the key skills: quoted in the Irish Times, March 2007**

### **Strategy 3.3 Liaise with the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Science and the State examinations commission as important sources of information for curriculum and assessment review and development.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

The NCCA liaised with members of the Inspectorate represented on Council and its enabling structures on all planned work for 2006, including work with schools.

### **Strategy 3.3 Contribute to the management and work of relevant support services.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

NCCA worked with the following support services in 2006:

##### **Primary**

- Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) design teams
- Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative (MLPSI), Consultative Group and Project Management Group
- An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG)

##### **Post-primary**

- Second-level Support Service
- Steering Committees for Biology, Home Economics, and Mathematics
- Junior Cycle Physical Education Support Service
- Junior Certificate Science Support Service
- Leaving Certificate Technology Subjects Support Service
- History/Geography Steering Committee
- Religious Education Support Service
- Social Personal and Health Education Support Service
- Development Education Advisory Committee

Leadership Development for Schools (LDS)

National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)



**Strategy 3.5** Develop and publish guidelines, including web-based guidelines, in support of the implementation of curriculum and assessment change.

**Completed in 2006**

A new website, Curriculum Online [www.curriculumonline.ie](http://www.curriculumonline.ie) went live in September 2006. The site houses an electronic version of the Primary School Curriculum as well as syllabuses and guidelines at junior and senior cycle. It is readily searchable to support teacher and school planning, and to provide information to the general public.

The NCCA published *English as an Additional Language in Irish-Primary Schools* online in June 2006. This document had been redrafted following feedback from teachers who used it in the classroom, teachers who attended a workshop organised by INTO and teachers attending workshops associated with the DICE project.

*NCCA commentary on ESRI research into the experiences of second year students* (May 2006), *Social and political education in senior cycle: a position paper* (September 2006), *Draft curriculum framework for guidance in post-primary education* (November 2006) were all published.

# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 4

To continue to provide for the education of all learners to enhance quality of access and participation, and attainment of outcomes for all

**Strategy 4.1** Develop curriculum, assessment and certification to meet the needs of students with special educational needs.

**Completed in 2006**

A background paper and literature review on *Gifted and Talented Children in (and out of) the Classroom* was completed.

Planning was completed for development of a SEN Curriculum Framework for junior cycle.

*We would like to express our thanks and appreciation on behalf of exceptionally able children in Ireland and their parents for taking the task of writing up these guidelines.*

**Chairperson, Irish Association of Gifted Children, December 2006**

**Strategy 4.2** Support primary and post-primary schools in addressing the needs of students with special educational needs.

**Completed in 2006**

Guidelines for teachers of students with mild, moderate, and severe and profound general learning disabilities (primary and post-primary) were completed and prepared for publication.

**Strategy 4.3** Provide materials for parents of primary school children which provide information about the curriculum, and demonstrate how parents can support the work of the school in implementing the Primary School Curriculum.

### Completed in 2006

The NCCA published a DVD for parents, *The What, Why and How of Children's Learning in Primary School*, in March 2006, for dissemination to every primary school family in the country via their child's school. (See HLO 1.3.)

*The highlight of the year must be the launch of a DVD for parents 'The What, Why and How of Children's Learning in Primary School' ... In developing the DVD NCCA consulted and collaborated with NPC and a broad spectrum of parents from different backgrounds about their needs in supporting their child's learning in school. The result is a user-friendly attractive and interactive DVD, which in keeping with a new multicultural society is in English, Irish, French, Polish and Lithuanian ... In international terms, both the method of development and the production of such a DVD are of significance.*

**NPC, Annual Report 2006**



**Strategy 4.4** Contribute to improved access to, participation in, and outcomes of post-primary education through work on curriculum and assessment for students who disengage from the educational system, and who experience educational disadvantage.

### Completed in 2006

Eight post-primary schools working in disadvantaged areas have begun the process of developing flexible programmes of study for their students in senior cycle. The information gathering phase of the work was completed, and the planning and developmental work was initiated.

*All team members agree that the proposed changes to senior cycle are much needed and welcome.*

**Frances McNicholas, teacher, Deansrath Community College, Clondalkin**

*We've found a huge challenge in meeting the needs of all the different students that make up senior cycle.*

**Triona Glacken, Principal, St. Paul's Secondary School, Greenhills, Dublin**

*I know that a 'one size fits all' approach does not suit all students. We need to begin with their needs and give students more choice and ownership of their learning.*

**Ciaran Cooke, Principal, North Presentation Secondary School, Cork**

*A variety of natural talents not recognised by the traditional Leaving Certificate should be accredited by the introduction of new more flexible teaching and assessment methods, thereby making the whole system more inclusive for all the students.*

**Séan McCarthy, Principal, Listowel Community College**

*I think this project is great because it is giving students a chance to have a voice and putting them back at the centre of the learning experience. The partnership between the NCCA and the school has been very valuable because we are getting a chance to share ideas and we are shaping the future together*

**Natalie O'Neill, Athy Community School, Athy, Co.Kildare**

### **Strategy 4.5 Promote and support the embedding of intercultural education in the curriculum for primary and post-primary schools.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

NCCA and Limerick Education Centre provided training for over forty facilitators from the twenty-one fulltime Education Centres on *Intercultural Education in the Primary School*. The facilitators worked with the education centre network to provide regional training and information sessions for schools.

NCCA supported a website set up by Limerick Education Centre to provide materials for facilitators engaged in this initiative.

### **Strategy 4.6 Support the needs of teachers and schools working with students for whom English is an additional language.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

Examples of good practice in EAL were collected from of schools to illustrate the guidelines for teachers. The guidelines were published on line.

*Well I just thought it was a great experience putting the whole project into action .... brilliant, glad we did it.*

**Class teacher, St. Joseph's NS, Dundalk**

*The NCCA has also developed draft guidelines for English as an additional language in Irish primary schools. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist teachers to enable children whose first language is neither English or Irish, at all levels within the school to access other curricular areas in an age appropriate way.*

**Language Links, Issue No. 14, January 2006**

### **Strategy 4.8 Contribute to improved access, transfer and progression for all learners in gaining school-based qualifications.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

In collaboration with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI), a plan was agreed and work commenced on a joint paper reviewing policy on the inclusion of school awards on the National Framework of Qualifications.



# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 5

To engage in, commission and review relevant research so that the NCCA's work is informed by best practice in relation to curriculum, assessment and learning, and by emerging understandings and experiences of educational change

## **Strategy 5.1** Commission research to support prioritised strategies and actions, and integrate the findings of such research into the work of curriculum review and development.

### **Completed in 2006**

The research report *International Trends in Post-Primary Mathematics Education* by Paul Conway and Barry Sloane was published. This report complemented the NCCA discussion paper on mathematics in post-primary education.

A review of national and international literature on language and literacy in bilingual settings was commissioned to inform work on language and literacy in Irish-medium primary schools. The review *Language and Literacy in Irish-medium Primary Schools: Review of Literature* was published on the NCCA website in Irish and in English.

NCCA commissioned the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) to carry out research into the experiences of second year post-primary students. This is part of a longitudinal study of curriculum provision and student experiences in junior cycle.

A background paper *Senior Cycle Social and Political Education* was published in September 2006 and circulated to organisations for their consideration and responses.

*These reports provided the basis for preparation of the NCCA proposals for the development of post-primary mathematics education, which were sent to the DES.*

*Both reports were referenced in a Science and Mathematics Education Conference (SMEC) held at St. Patrick's College, Dublin City University, in September.*

*A paper arising from the ESRI research was presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting in San Francisco in April.*

*The background paper on Social and Political Education at Senior Cycle is to be welcomed as an important tool to help education stakeholders build a consensus on the nature of this subject. It provides a very useful outline of the background for a curricular intervention that is much needed at the higher level of the secondary school.*

**Amnesty International, Irish Section**



## **Strategy 5.2 Participate in national and international research initiatives to inform ongoing curriculum review and development.**

### **Completed in 2006**

NCCA contributed to the INCA (International Review of Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks Internet Archive) thematic study on active citizenship. The research, involving 14 countries, including Ireland, culminated in an international seminar in Oxford in March 2006.

## **Strategy 5.3 Ensure that research reports and other relevant resource materials are available and accessible.**

### **Completed in 2006**

Specific research needs were identified by project teams and resources ordered/supplied accordingly. All staff were provided with access details. Subscriptions were purchased for the British Library's journals database, Source OECD, and the Index to Theses.

New staff members were instructed in library, internet and database research methods and supplied with an 'Information Services' booklet.

Updates on newly published research were despatched to relevant members of staff on a daily basis.

*Four hundred and seventy-one new acquisitions were catalogued during 2006 and one hundred and forty-seven books/reports were borrowed by staff members.*

*Two hundred and sixty-five journal articles were downloaded.*

*Eighty-seven subject search requests were received.*

*One hundred and twenty-nine subject folders were set up and populated with electronic reports/articles.*

# HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVE 6

To develop structures and processes to improve NCCA's corporate capacity, effectiveness and communications, and to strengthen relationships between the NCCA and its stakeholders

**Strategy 6.1 Continue to promote a culture of continuing professional learning and development across the organisation.**

**Completed in 2006**

An induction programme was provided for all new staff.

Staff completed a research report in communicating through Irish, time management, finance management, web content management, 'train the trainer', and ICT applications.

A number of staff took part in undergraduate and postgraduate studies in public relations, language, and special educational needs.

**Strategy 6.2 Implement workplace policies and value the contributions of all staff to the running and development of the organisation.**

**Completed in 2006**

A staff manual containing all NCCA workplace policies was completed following a consultation process involving all full-time staff members. A workshop on the policies took place in January. Design work on the manual was completed in advance of printing in 2007.

**Strategy 6.3 Continue to improve the quality of NCCA enabling committee structures and its consultation processes.**

**Completed in 2006**

Briefing seminars were organised for the nineteen new Boards of Studies and Committees convened for the development of senior cycle subjects and short courses.

### **Strategy 6.4 Further develop the NCCA IT environment in line with emerging technologies.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

Web access to NCCA email was provided for all staff. Spam filtering software was installed on the server.

A web-based document management hub was established for sharing and working on documents related to senior cycle developments. The cycle of desktop and laptop computer replacement continued. An interactive whiteboard was purchased.

### **Strategy 6.5 Maximise the use of financial and human resources to meet legislative requirements in relation to corporate governance.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

A plan of work was formulated for each unit of the strategic plan and key milestones were set. Performance against these milestones were measured and reviewed on a six weekly basis.

NCCA staff members continued to work on a flexible basis on cross-sectoral teams, and accommodated atypical working hours and arrangements to the benefit of the organisation.

The code of practice for the governance of the NCCA was reviewed and approved by Council.

All Council members signed declarations of interest and all full-time employees signed the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour.

Competitive tendering continued to be the normal procedure in NCCA procurement processes.

The Internal Audit Committee met on three occasions and the internal audit function was outsourced following a competitive tender.

The Strategic Plan 2006-08 was approved and published.

All tax laws were complied with.

*The Comptroller and Auditor General completed an audit of the NCCA Financial Statements for 2005 and commented favourably on the running of the accounts section in NCCA.*

*All the legislative requirements in relation to corporate governance have been met.*

*NCCA staff members met the requirements of the Sustaining Progress and Towards 2016 agreements.*



### **Strategy 6.6 Prepare for decentralisation to Portarlinton.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

Consultation with the OPW and other agencies on site location in Portarlinton continued. The NCCA Decentralisation Implementation Plan was updated, including revised accommodation requirements. A database of NCCA assets was completed.

### **Strategy 6.7 Plan for and report annually on NCCA progress.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2005 were published in Irish and English.

### **Strategy 6.8 Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy.**

#### **Completed in 2006**

Consultations took place with other statutory agencies on the development and support of their communications strategy.

**Strategy 6.9** Develop info@ncca to inform primary and post-primary teachers and early childhood practitioners of the ongoing work of the NCCA, and to support teachers in curriculum implementation.

### Completed in 2006

Research was conducted in schools and the content of info@ncca was adjusted based on the feedback from teachers.

A more consistent focus on practice in the classroom in terms of curriculum implementation was developed.

A poster was developed for schools, to create awareness of info@ncca

The distribution database was revised to ensure a relationship to the numbers of teachers in each school.

*Feedback from teachers and others was positive and many schools requested extra copies in order to ensure each teacher received one. Two hundred and forty people registered to receive the electronic version of info@ncca. Several teachers sent in articles or examples of practice. Many requested further information on specific subjects.*

*... writing style is really accessible and relevant ... well done again on a really user-friendly, lively publication. In Touch (INTO) publication focuses ... on teachers' terms and conditions and so it is nice to have something focussed on teaching and learning.*  
**Primary school teacher, Dublin**

*Scoil Ursula, Strandhill Road, Sligo, would like to order 14 more copies of info@ncca if it is possible. The teachers have found your magazine so helpful in the past and would really need one each.*  
**School secretary**

*We are a 24 teacher school and have received 5 copies of your recent newsletter - could you please forward another 19 and send 24 in the future. Well done on an excellent publication.*  
**Una Feeley, Principal, Scoil Mhuire Convent Primary School, Roscommon**



# Working with other sectors of the education system

## High Level Objectives 3 & 6

In 2006, the executive provide presentations and workshops for colleges of education, universities, parents groups, the inspectorate and a range of support services and stakeholder groups on the work of the Council, and on issues and trends in curriculum and assessment for early childhood education and primary and post-primary school.

A number of international presentations were also made, notably on the Council's work in early childhood education and on the research being conducted by the ESRI.

The table opposite presents a sample of this work which directly supports HLO 3 and HLO 6, but also contributes to the mission of the Council to build consensus and partnership.

GROUP	THEME
Chemistry Education Conference, University of Limerick	LC chemistry and the senior cycle review
Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative induction seminar, Cork	Modern languages in the Primary School Curriculum
Primary school teachers/principals, INTO Summer school, Knocklyon	Workshop facilitating the contents of the <i>English as an Additional Language (EAL) in Irish Primary Schools: Guidelines for Teachers</i>
Mathematics teachers and lecturers, Cork	Review of Mathematics
Primary Curriculum Support Programme Drama Trainers	Assessment and Drama
Parents in Pavee Point, Dublin	The DVD for parents
Donegal and Sligo County Childcare Committees	The Framework for Early Learning
Students of St. Angela's College, Sligo	Curriculum development and senior cycle
Leaving Certificate Applied 10th Anniversary Conference	The next ten years: The paradox decade
School Development Planning Summer Schools, Galway and Dublin	Curriculum development and senior cycle
National Parents Council Annual Conference, Dundalk	The DVD for parents and intercultural education
ASTI Education Seminar, Cork	Senior cycle developments
Training group for Intercultural Education, Athlone	Intercultural Education guidelines for Primary Schools
Association of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools Conference, Killarney	Vision and values in education
Leadership Development for Schools, Athlone	Children, learning and schools: 21st century challenges
Day of Learning, Kerry Education Service, Cahirciveen	Curriculum development, and a workshop on issues in Gaelige
Association of Independent Junior Schools, Wexford	Children and learning: 21st century challenges
The Inspectorate – induction for new inspectors	The work of the NCCA
INTO/National Centre for Technology in Education trainers	The ICT Framework: A structured approach to ICT in curriculum
Irish Aid Annual Seminar on Development Education	Development education in senior cycle
Irish Primary Principals Network Conference	Guidelines for Intercultural Education in Primary Schools



International presentations of NCCA work included:

**SEMINAR/CONFERENCE**

**PAPER**

British Education Research Association Annual Conference, University of Warwick.	Principals' and teachers' views on the current and proposed post-primary physical education curriculum in Ireland.
Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe (CIDREE), Slough.	Assessment and Education for Citizenship in Ireland.
European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA), Reykjavik.	Listening for children's stories: Children as partners in the Framework for Early Learning.
Active Citizenship conference, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, London.	Developing practice: learning through participation and active citizenship education.

Researchers working on NCCA projects also presented to international audiences:

**SEMINAR/CONFERENCE AND RESEARCHERS**

**PAPER**

American Educational Research Association Conference, San Diego. Emer Smyth and Alison Dunne, ESRI.	School engagement and drift among middle level students in Ireland.
Victoria Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Melbourne. Paul Conway, UCC.	International trends in post-primary mathematics education: from 'new' to realistic.
Department of Educational Studies, Oxford University, Oxford. Paul Conway, UCC.	International trends in post-primary mathematics education.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### Functions of the Council

The detailed functions of the statutory Council under the terms of the Education Act, 1998, can be summarised as follows:

- To periodically **review the curriculum**, or any part of the curriculum, for schools and the syllabuses taught and to advise the Minister
- To advise the Minister on appropriate **methods for the assessment of the effectiveness of the education provided in schools**, with particular regard to mechanisms whereby students who have problems achieving their potential may be identified as early as practicable and assisted
- To advise the Minister on strategies which will **assist students to make a successful transition from primary school to post-primary school**
- To periodically advise the Minister on the **standards of knowledge and skills which students at various age-levels should attain and on the mechanisms for assessing the achievement of such standards**, having regard to national and international standards and good practice in relation to such assessment
- To periodically **review the in-service training needs of teachers**, including needs arising from the introduction of new curricula, subjects or syllabuses in schools, and to advise the Minister in relation to those needs
- To advise the Minister on the requirements, as regards curriculum and syllabuses, of **students with a disability or other special educational needs**
- To advise the Minister on strategies which have as their objective the enhancement of the effectiveness in the teaching and **use of the Irish language in schools**
- To maintain, manage, administer and invest all the money and **assets of the Council**
- To **promote research and development** in education and to conduct or commission such research and development where appropriate to its objects and functions
- To **promote equality of access** to education generally and to instruction in any particular subjects between male and female students
- To **accept gifts of money, land** or other property upon such trusts and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the donors
- To do all such acts and things as may be necessary to **further the objects of the Council**, including such functions in relation to review and reform of the curriculum in schools and the assessment of the outcomes of the education provided in schools as the Minister shall from time to time direct.

## APPENDIX 2

### NCCA Staff

The full-time staff in 2006 was as follows:

#### Chief Executive

- Dr. Anne Looney

#### Deputy Chief Executives

- Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick
- John Hammond

#### Directors, Curriculum and Assessment

- Arlene Forster
- Peter Johnson
- Bill Lynch
- Margaret O'Donnell (to 31 August)
- Majella O'Shea
- Hilary Roche

#### Administration

- Paul Brady, Assistant Principal
- Tom Fagan, Higher Executive Officer (to 8 October)
- Brian Holland (from 2 October)
- Jackie O'Brien, Executive Officer
- Edward Canavan, Clerical Officer (to 13 August)
- Patricia Cassidy (from 8 August)
- Arlene Foy, Clerical Officer
- Jason Keogh, Clerical Officer
- Morgan Lockhart, Clerical Officer
- John Connors, Services Officer
- Maureen Whyte, Services Officer
- Christine Ryan, Resources Co-ordinator

#### Education Officers

- Cathal de Paor (to 24 March)
- Majella Dempsey (from 8 May)
- Susan Dennison (from 8 November)
- John Halbert
- Katrina Keogh (from 27 March)
- Margaret Maxwell (to 31 August)
- Anne Moloney
- Dr. Pat Naughton
- Eibhlín Ní Scannláin
- Róisín Ní Shéaghdha (from 25 September)
- Pierce Nolan (From 3 April)
- Emer O'Connor (to 31 August)
- Mary O'Leary
- Hal O'Neill
- Eilís O'Sullivan (from 1 September)
- Anna Walsh (from 19 June)

#### Project Officers

- Ursula Zimmermann, Japanese (to 30 April)
- Patricia Leavey, Publications (to 27 October)



### **NCCA Staff (continued)**

The following Education Officers were retained by the NCCA on a part-time or occasional basis:

#### **Early Childhood Education**

- Dr. Mary Daly
- Dr. Rosaleen Murphy
- Avril Sweeney

#### **Primary Education**

- Karin Bacon, Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE): Geography
- Gwendoline Baker, Inclusion
- Paul Brennan, Arts Education: Drama
- Lorraine Harbison, Assessment
- Frances Murphy, Physical Education
- Regina Murphy, Arts Education: Music
- Geraldine O'Connor, Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE): History
- Valerie O'Dowd, Mathematics

#### **Post-Primary Education**

- Colette Brophy, Home Economics
- Vivian Cassells, Guidance
- Susan Dennison, Junior Certificate School Programme
- Cahil Doherty, Technical Graphics/ Technical Drawing
- John Dredge, History
- Brian Farley, Classical Subjects
- Ger Halbert, Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
- Michael Halton, Physics/ Chemistry (combined)
- Annette Honan, Religious Education and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) Interculturalism
- Paddy Keays, Technology
- Brid Kennedy, Special Educational Needs

- John Lucey, Biology
- Pat Lynch, Engineering
- John McCarthy, Modern Languages
- Frank Mc Gourty, Agricultural Science
- Celine McGuinness, Business
- Sr. Enda Mc Mullen, Art
- John Mulcahy, Geography
- Tom Nelson, Leaving Certificate Applied
- Diarmaid Ó Murchú, Gaeilge
- Noel O' Neill, Construction Studies/ Architectural Technology
- Peter Tiernan, Mathematics
- Roland Tormey, Social and Political Education
- Pat Younger, Economics

## APPENDIX 3

### List of Committee Meetings 2006

COMMITTEE NAME	TOTAL
<b>Early Childhood and Primary</b>	
Early Childhood Committee	5
Early Childhood and Primary Committee	5
Language Committee	6
Working Group on Assessment	5
<b>Junior Cycle</b>	
Junior Cycle Review Committee	5
Junior Cycle Art	1
Junior Cycle CSPE	2
Junior Cycle Gaeilge	2
Junior Cycle Geography	1
Junior Cycle Home Economics	1
Junior Cycle History	2
Junior Cycle Maths	1
Junior Cycle Science	1
Junior Cycle Jewish Studies	1
<b>CROSS SECTOR</b>	
ICT Steering Committee	4
Special Education Steering Committee	1
Detention High Support Committee	2
Short Course Committee	2
Transition Unit Committee	2

COMMITTEE NAME	TOTAL
<b>Senior Cycle</b>	
Senior Cycle Review Committee	6
Senior Cycle Agricultural Science	1
Senior Cycle Art	3
Senior Cycle Biology	1
Senior Cycle Chemistry	1
Senior Cycle Construction Studies	2
Senior Cycle Guidance	3
Senior Cycle Engineering	2
Senior Cycle English	1
Senior Cycle French	1
Senior Cycle Gaeilge	3
Senior Cycle Geography	1
Senior Cycle German	1
Senior Cycle History	1
Senior Cycle Italian	1
Senior Cycle Maths	1
Senior Cycle Physical Education	2
Senior Cycle Physics	1
Senior Cycle Spanish	1
Senior Cycle SPHE	4
Senior Cycle Technical Drawing	3
Senior Cycle Technology	3
<b>BOARDS OF STUDIES</b>	
Board of Studies for Arts and Humanities	1
Board of Studies for Classics	5
Board of Studies for Languages	2
Board of Studies for Mathematics	2
Board of Studies for Science	2
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS IN 2006</b>	<b>104</b>



## APPENDIX 4

### Extracts from the Financial Statements of the NCCA for the year ended 31 December 2006

These statements are subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General

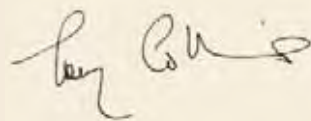
Bank: Bank of Ireland  
Lr. Baggot Street  
P.O. Box 3131  
Dublin 2

Accountants: Crowleys DFK  
16/17 College Green  
Dublin 2

Introduction: In accordance with my obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, I confirm that in respect of the financial year 2006:

- an internal audit committee is in place
- the procurement procedures as set out in the Code were complied with
- no asset disposals or access to assets by third parties have taken place
- the NCCA had no capital expenditure proposals
- Government policy on the pay of Chief Executives and all NCCA employees has been complied with
- no directors fees were paid to Council members
- the NCCA has complied with its obligations under tax laws.

On behalf of Council



**Dr. Tom Collins**  
*Chairperson*

Date: 7 September, 2007

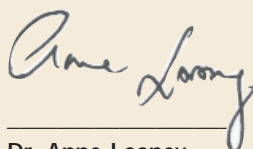
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006**

	Notes	2006 €	2005 €
<b>Income</b>			
Department of Education and Science grants and other income	1 & 1a	4,662,378	4,629,777
Transfer to/(from) capital account	6	13,922	(423)
		<u>4,676,300</u>	<u>4,629,354</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff Costs	2	2,515,129	2,204,271
Administration	7	1,953,500	1,704,538
		<u>4,468,629</u>	<u>3,908,809</u>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>207,671</b>	<b>720,545</b>
Accumulated Surplus at 31 December		842,935	122,390
		<u>1,050,606</u>	<u>842,935</u>

The Council had no gains or losses in the financial years other than those dealt with in the income and expenditure account.

Notes 1 to 12 form part of these Financial Statements.

On behalf of Council



**Dr. Anne Looney**  
Chief Executive



**Dr. Tom Collins**  
Chairperson

Date: 7 September, 2007

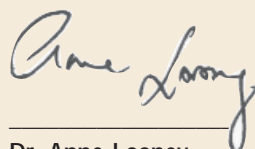


**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2006**

	Notes	2006 €	2005 €
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	3	93,335	109,257
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash at Bank		1,210,324	1,116,330
Debtors	4	39,979	40,284
		<u>1,250,303</u>	<u>1,156,614</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors & Accruals	5	<u>199,697</u>	<u>313,679</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>1,050,606</u>	<u>842,935</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u><b>1,145,941</b></u>	<u><b>952,192</b></u>
<b>Financed By:</b>			
Capital Account	6	95,335	109,257
Income and Expenditure Account		<u>1,050,606</u>	<u>842,935</u>
		<u><b>1,145,942</b></u>	<u><b>952,192</b></u>

Notes 1 to 12 form part of these Financial Statements.

On behalf of Council



**Dr. Anne Looney**  
Chief Executive



**Dr. Tom Collins**  
Chairperson

Date: 7 September, 2007

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006

	2006	2005
	€	€
<b>1 Income</b>		
<b>Department of Education and Science (DES) grants</b>	4,574,288	4,531,777
Included in the above is a research grant of €106,000 from the gender and Equality Unit, DES and €68,288.12 (€163,809 in 2005) in respect of staff redeployed from Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (ITÉ). The figure for 2005 includes a grant of €50,000 towards the cost of the appointment of Education Officers for Senior Cycle Science and Education for Children in Detention and High Support Care, a grant of €220,000 for the dissemination of guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities, and a grant from the North South Co-operation Unit of €18,968 in part funding of a joint conference with the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment, Northern Ireland.		
<b>1a Other Income</b>	88,090	98,000
Included in the above is a grant of €48,000 (€48,000 in 2005) from Foras na Gaeilge to fund the appointment of an Education Officer for Gaeilge and a grant of €20,000 (€50,000 in 2005) from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to build local capacity to support intercultural education in primary schools, a grant of €15,000 from the Health and Safety Authority for a study on teaching and learning in health and safety in the curriculum, a grant of €2,620 from CIDREE (Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe) in respect of a study on including the student voice in curriculum development and review and a grant of €2,470 from AEA Europe (Association of Educational Assessment - Europe) for the organisation by NCCA of its annual conference.		
<b>2 Staff Costs</b>		
The staff costs of the council comprises		
• Salaries and wages	2,147,869	1,930,495
• Travel and subsistence	260,733	216,407
• Recruitment advertising	35,898	6,191
• Staff development, health and safety expenses	70,629	51,178
	<b>2,515,129</b>	<b>2,204,271</b>

The average number of persons employed by the Council during the period was 37 (34 in 2005).



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006

	Office F&F €	Office Equip €	IT Equip €	Total €
<b>3 Fixed Assets</b>				
<b>Cost</b>				
1 January 2006	58,938	73,623	139,515	272,076
Additions	3,836	3,631	66,556	74,023
As at 31 December 2006	<b>62,774</b>	<b>77,254</b>	<b>206,071</b>	<b>346,099</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>				
Opening balance 1 January 2006	19,235	37,647	105,937	162,819
Charge for the period	6,277	15,451	66,217	87,945
As at 31 December 2006	<b>25,512</b>	<b>53,098</b>	<b>172,154</b>	<b>250,764</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
At 31 December 2006	<b>37,262</b>	<b>24,156</b>	<b>33,917</b>	<b>95,335</b>
At 31 December 2005	39,703	35,976	33,578	109,257
<b>4 Debtors and Prepayments</b>			<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>
			€	€
Prepayments			39,979	40,284
			<b>39,979</b>	<b>40,284</b>
<b>5 Creditors and Accruals</b>				
Trade creditors			83,664	34,976
Other creditors			39,412	1,820
Accruals			76,621	276,883
			<b>199,697</b>	<b>313,679</b>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006

	2006 €	2006 €	2005 €	2005 €
<b>6 Capital Account</b>				
Balance at 1 January 2006		109,257		108,834
Transfer (to)/from income and expenditure account				
Funds allocated to acquire fixed assets	74,023		65,057	
Amortisation in line with depreciation	(87,945)	(13,922)	(64,634)	423
Balance at 31 December 2006		95,335		109,257

<b>7 Expenditure</b>	2006 €	2005 €
<b>Administration Costs</b>		
Rent rates, security and storage	345,548	419,051
Office equipment and repairs and maintenance	57,954	70,264
Telephone, postage, stationery etc.	142,995	145,925
Room hire and catering	70,878	70,385
Accountancy	13,461	18,352
Audit	19,992	4,500
Bank charges	394	171
Information technology	72,663	81,230
General advertising	6,586	5,055
Reference books, documents and subscriptions	14,209	19,684
Light and heat	13,359	9,017
Cleaning	40,066	38,234
Conference expenses	13,959	14,012
Special projects including development of guidelines for schools on Intercultural education and the production of an information DVD for parents	373,015	254,576
Publications	469,378	277,048
Research fees	211,097	212,401
Depreciation	87,945	64,634
	<b>1,953,500</b>	<b>1,704,538</b>



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2006

### 8 Council Members Interests

The Council adopted procedures in accordance with guidelines issued by the Department of Finance in relation to the disclosure of interests by Council members and these procedures have been adhered to in the year. There are no transactions in the year in relation to the Board's activities in which Board members had any beneficial interest.

### 9 Operating Lease

The Office of Public Works holds a 25 year tenancy agreement from 13 August, 1998 in respect of the lease of NCCA office accommodation at 24 Merrion Square. The annual rent is €235,300 subject to a 5 year rent review.

The Office of Public Works also holds a tenancy agreement for 4 years and 9 months from 16 January, 2006 in respect of the lease of NCCA office accommodation at 24A Merrion Square (The Mews). The annual rent is €68,210.

### 10 Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments at 31 December 2006.

### 11 Contingent Liabilities

No contingent liabilities existed at 31 December 2006.

### 12 Approval of Financial Statements

The financial statements were approved by the Council on 7 September, 2007.





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