



Coiste Gairmoideachais Chontae Dhún na nGall County Donegal Vocational Education Committee

A N N U A L R E P O R T 2 0 1 2



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1.1 Vision & Mission Statement

The Vision for Co Donegal VEC

Our Vision

'Excellence in a quality, learner-centred education service'

Our Mission Statement

'To promote, offer and support accessible and inclusive learning which enables students to empower themselves to reach their full potential'

Members of the Co Donegal Vocational Education Committee 2012

Clr Barry O'Neill Chairperson

Clr Martin Farren
Clr David Alcorn
Clr Michelle Bradley
Mr Peter Cutcliffe
Clr Brendan Byrne
Clr Dessie Larkin
Mr Francis Mc Daid
Clr Ian Mc Garvey
Clr Elizabeth Mc Intyre
Clr Pdraig O' Dochartaigh
Clr Patrick McGowan

Clr Joe Doherty Vice-Chairperson

Ms Sinead Gillespie
Clr Jimmy Kavanagh
Clr Jim Lynch
Mr Oliver Mc Devitt
Clr Philip Mc Glynn
Ms Bernie Mulhern
Mr Alan Thompson
Clr Jack Murray
Ms Mary Ellen Orpen
Ms Marietta Heraghty

1.1 Introduction from Chief Executive Officer Co Donegal VEC

At the outset, we remember our Colleague and Former CEO, MaryAnn Kane is early and untimely death in August 2012. We remember her fondly for her role in Co Donegal VEC as teacher, Principal, Education Officer and finally, as CEO from 2009 until her sad passing in August 2012.

We take this opportunity in the 2012 Report to pay tribute to Cllr Barry O'Neill, Chairperson, and the dedicated team in the Administrative Offices, the schools, colleges and centres who supported MaryAnn Kane as CEO and myself as incoming CEO from September 2012. We also pay tribute to Ms Anne McHugh for her essential role as Acting CEO during that period.



On a personal level, MaryAnn was a great colleague and will not alone be missed by the staff in the organisation here at Ard O'Donnell, but in the Schools, Colleges and Centres and by the wider community in which she participated in many committees and working groups, both at regional and national level and as a member of the Association of Chief Executives Officers and Education Officers. May she rest in peace.

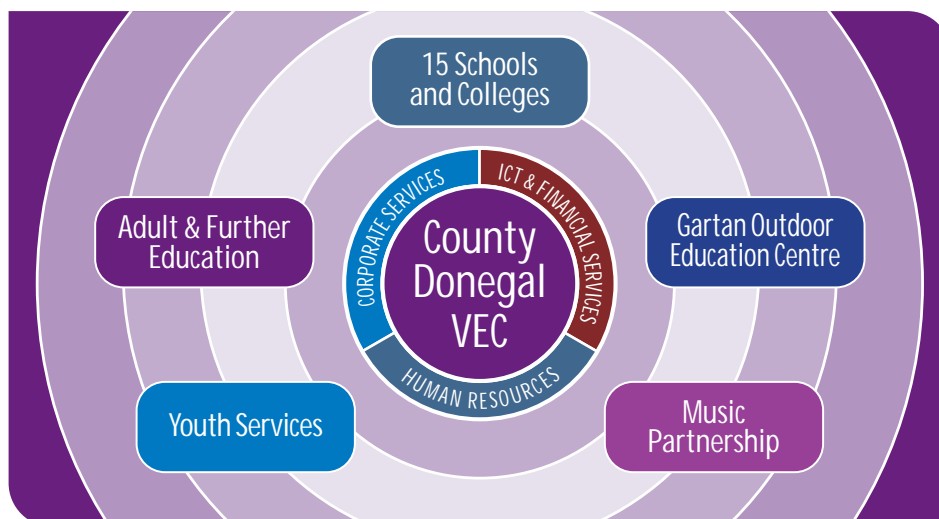
We also convey our appreciation to staff, students, learners, members of the committee, boards of Management and the wider community for their contribution and participation in the delivery of services for the continued success of the organisation highlighted in this seventh annual report.

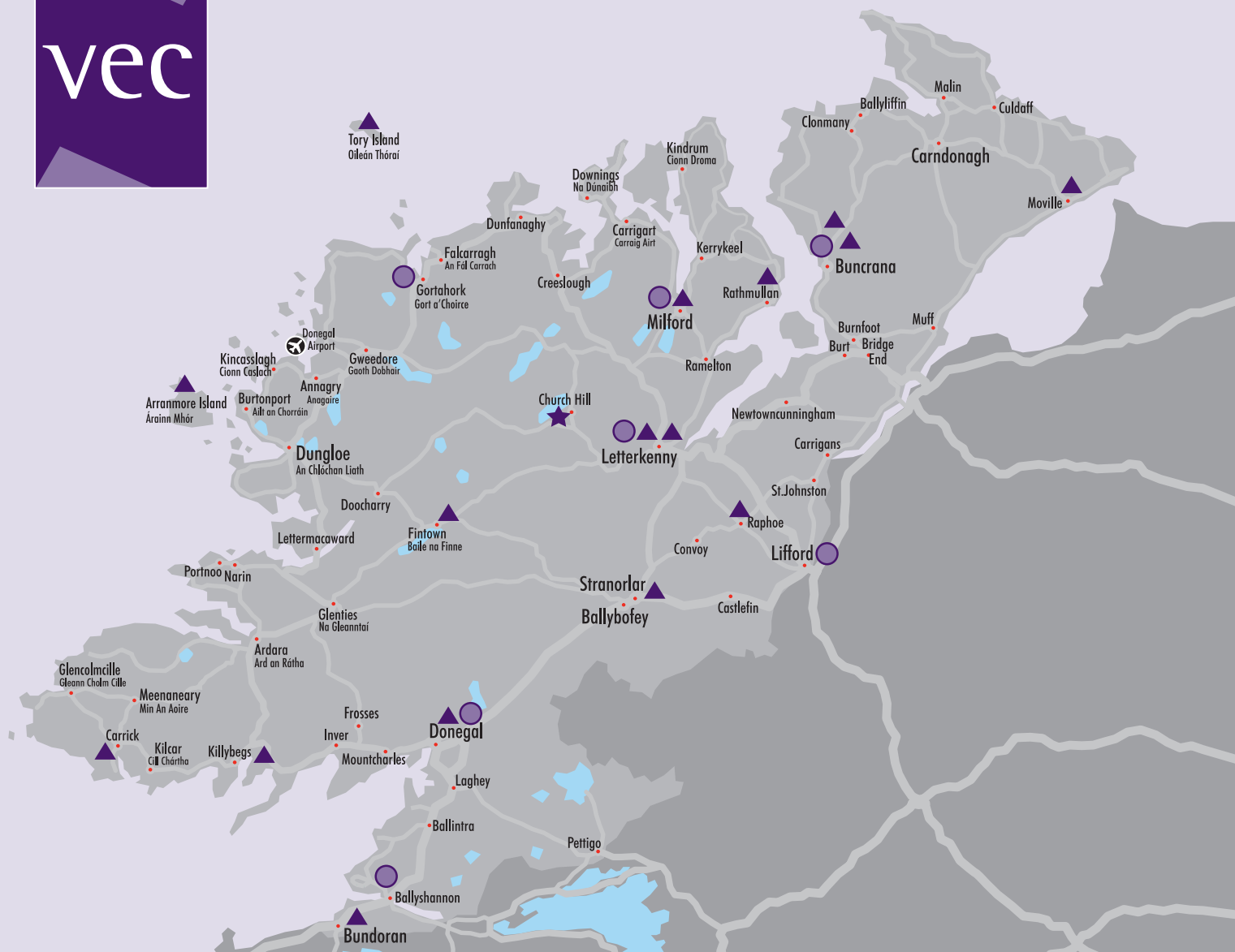
Mr Shaun Purcell

Chief Executive Officer

1.2 Overview of VEC Service Provision

- Fifteen Schools and Colleges, five of which are Gaelcholáistí and two island schools in Arranmore and Tory Island.
- Seven dedicated whole-time Adult Education and Training Centres including one in the Gaeltacht area, in Buncrana, Donegal Town, Gortahork, Letterkenny, Ballyshannon and Milford, delivering Youthreach, BTEI, VTOS, Community Education, Adult Literacy and Adult Guidance Programmes with childcare support facilities located in four adjoining Crèches;
- Gartan Outdoor Education Centre – 87 acre site providing outdoor education to the County.
- Music Education Partnership – provision of music and vocal tuition to all ages through the Schools and Colleges and throughout the County.
- The provision of a Drugs and Alcohol Diploma Course in partnership with the University of Limerick to Counties Donegal, Leitrim and Sligo through its Co-ordinator based in Co Donegal VEC.
- Requirements under the Department of Children and Youth Affairs including School Completion Programme, National Education Welfare Board and the Home School Liaison Programme.
- Obligations and responsibilities for the provision of the Youth Services Programme throughout the County under the Youthwork Act via its Youth Officer.
- Working in Partnership with Donegal Sports Partnership and with the Children Services Committee in the development of strategies for the County.





△ VEC Second Level Schools in County Donegal

Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town
 Carrick Vocational School, Carrick
 Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn
 Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Buncrana
 Coláiste Phobail Scoil Colmcille, Oileán Thóraf
 Crana College, Bun Chrannta
 Deelee College, Raphoe
 Errigal College, Letterkenny
 Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
 Gairmscoil Chu Uladh, Beál an Átha Móir
 Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Árainn Mhór
 Magh Éne College, Bundoran
 Moville Community College, Moville
 Mulroy College, Milford
 St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

○ Adult Education & Training Centres

Ballyshannon
 Buncrana
 Donegal Town
 Glengad
 Lifford Youthreach
 Gort a' Chóirce
 Letterkenny
 Milford

☆ Outdoor Education

Gartan Outdoor Education Centre,
 Church Hill, Letterkenny

2.1 Planning and Developing Service Provision

- The Education Plan arises from the provisions of Sections 9 and 30 of the VEC (Amendment) Act, 2001 whereby the Chief Executive Officer is charged with drafting a five Year Plan for the organisation directed by the Strategy Development Team.

The Plan sets out the following:-

- The **Objectives** of the VEC
- The **Priorities** of the VEC
- The **Measures to be adopted** to achieve the identified objectives

The Strategy Development Team which is represented by Senior Management across the service, submits an annual service plan based on the objectives contained in the Education Plan to the Minister for Education and Skills.

Following the end of the duration of the 2010 plan, the Strategy Development Team compiled and submitted the 2011-2015 Plan for the next five years.

The 2011-2015 consultation process identified the need for the organisation's second plan to be concise, relevant and focused, taking into account the current political, economic, social, cultural and technological climate and identified twenty one key priorities under four key themes.

Key Themes

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Accountability
3. Information Technology
4. Working in Partnership

2.2 Adult Education Participation Figures 1998-2012

Figure 2.1 Total Number of Learners in 2012 by Sector

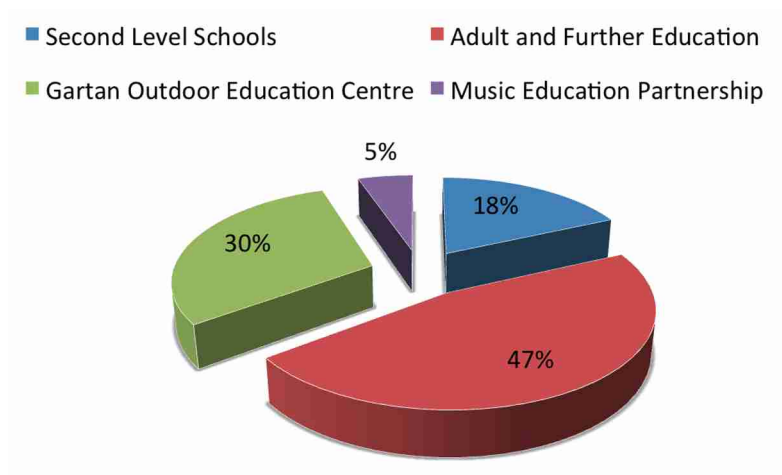
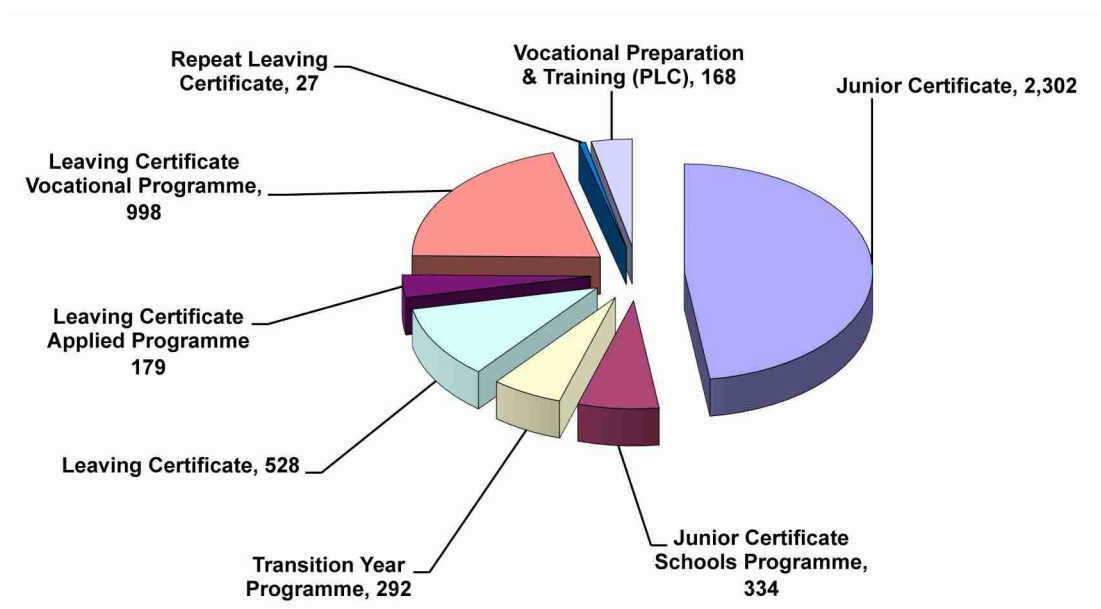


Figure 2.2 Student Enrolment in Second Level Schools and Colleges 2012



2.2 Adult Education Participation Figures 1998-2012

Figure 2.3 Co Donegal VEC Adult Education Learner Enrolment Numbers 2012

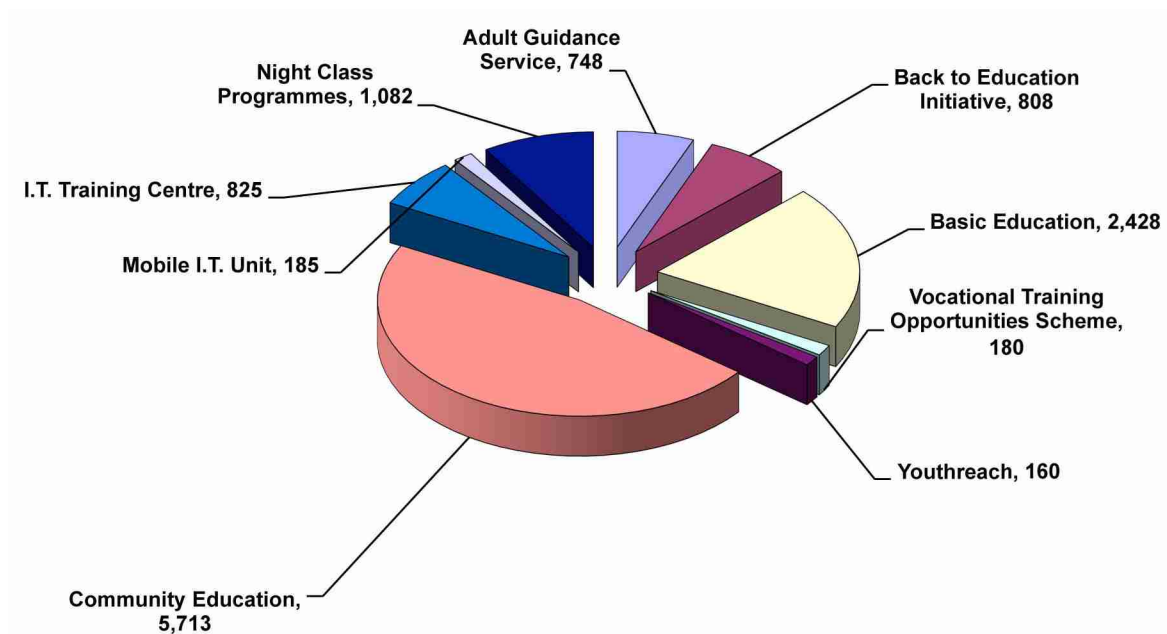
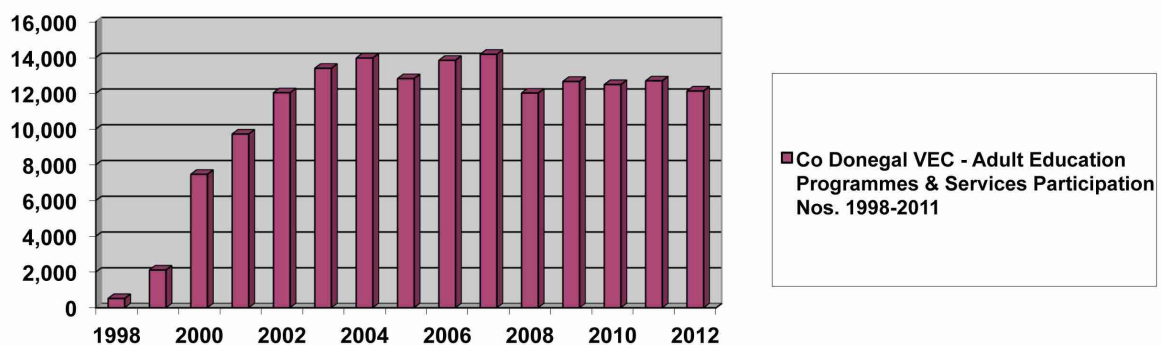


Figure 2.4 Co Donegal VEC Adult Education Services - Participation Numbers 1998 - 2012



Key Theme 1 - Teaching and Learning

PRIORITY 1

Offer educational programmes and support services that meet the rapidly changing needs of individuals, society and the economy

- Magh Éne College and Coláiste Phobail Colmcille introduced Chinese Studies
- Finn Valley offers the Daybreak Programme – a targeted intervention for those struggling in mainstream.
- The Adult Education Sector is applying the Vocational Dreaming guidance approach to support adults in decision making
- FETAC Level 6 in Early Childhood Care was introduced in St Catherine's Vocational School
- Donegal Music Initiative saw the roll out of three Peace III projects – an International Instrumental Ensemble, Multi Media Schools and a Junior Orchestra

Programmes and Support Services

- In Adult Guidance the Vocational Dreaming guidance approach has been applied to support adults with decision making in a challenging environment.
- BTEI offered provision to 808 students in 2012 across all our Adult Education Centres, including our new Finn Valley Centre in Stranorlar and multiple community locations across the county as we continue to bring education directly to the community.
- Community Education offered courses in Digital Media Usage, Gardening, Cooking on a Budget, Men's Cookery and Genealogy.
- Youthreach continued to provide programmes to meet the needs of early school leavers in 2012 mainly through FETAC Level 2 Essential Skills, Level 3 and 4 Certificates in General Learning and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA, Letterkenny only). Other examples included provision of specifically focuses career days for Youthreach learners to address the difficult employment/further education market meeting young people when they move on from Youthreach.
- The Basic Education Service offered Basic Skills integrated through a Cultural Heritage and Tourism Awareness Programme. There was an increase in sectional rehearsals for the Youth Orchestra during 2012.
- A Donegal Junior Choir was established as an accessible and affordable way of starting a music education. The roll-out of three new PEACE III funded projects took place. These included an Intergenerational Instrumental Ensemble, a Multi-Media Schools Project and a Junior Orchestra. The funding support allows the Music Partnership to offer an accessible workshop programme free of charge. The workshop programme is in partnership with the Regional Cultural Centre.

The following services were provided by the Psychological Service to schools:

- Provision of social skills training programmes to young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- provision of study skills programmes for Junior and Leaving Certificate students
- provision of FRIENDS programme (a programme to increase emotional literacy, resilience and problem solving abilities with groups of young people)
- Provision of Get Up, Stand Up programme (a programme targeting 1st year girls with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties)
- Provision of staff in-service training on the Continuum of Support model of service for schools developed by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Provision of in-service training on evidence-based literacy and numeracy interventions to primary and post-primary teachers in collaboration with NEPS
- Provision of input to parents on how best to support young people with study and examinations
- Provision of in-service training to new teachers in Donegal VEC on the Continuum of Support model and Special Education Needs (SEN) in the classroom
- provision of in-service training to Special Needs Assistants on ASD, self-care and behaviour management
- Facilitation of ASD consultation groups for teachers of pupils with ASD
- Facilitation and support for the development and review of care teams in schools based on new student support team guidelines from DES
- Provision of in-service training on the new Mental Health Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools

Formal professional development and informal support was offered directly to teaching staff in the six Youthreach Centres, seven of the post-primary schools and individual adult education programmes. Examples of the support include:

1. Developing procedures for formal assessment.
2. Providing training in literacy and numeracy test batteries.
3. Developing whole-school approaches to discipline and classroom management.
4. Consulting on the preparation, development and review of Individualised Education Plans.
5. Developing strategies for dealing with young people who have specific learning difficulties.
6. Consulting and advising on entitlements for applications for accommodations for the state examinations.
7. Facilitating integration of students with SEN.
8. Interpretation of cognitive functioning and language assessment profiles.
9. Reviewing Critical Incident Plans.
10. Supporting school staff and pupils in the aftermath of critical incidents.

The presenting problems of young people referred for assessment were diverse in nature but can broadly be categorised under SEN or Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Referrals were increasingly concerned with mental health issues. Support for students and learners in many cases required extended networking with health and other services. Other work involved supporting students and young people with SEN to transition to new educational programmes after post-primary school.

Assessment work undertaken with pupils aimed to support parents both formally and informally by providing professional pre-assessment briefings and post-assessments feedback together with recommendations regarding the needs of the referred young people. Planning and review meetings were also held throughout the year with parents to chart the progress of students with SEN. Collaborative meetings were also held between school/centre management and parents to plan post-school/Youthreach transitions to work or further study for young people with SEN.

Maintain and enhance quality standards across all education programmes and schools/colleges/centres. On-going attendance at Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses contributed to maintaining and enhancing the standards within the service. CPD courses included:

- Developing a programme on Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) for pupils with ASD
- Developing strategies for teaching numeracy to pupils with SEN
- Developing consultation models for problem-solving

In the schools the following programmes and support services were implemented:

- St Catherin's offered a FETAC Level 6 course in Early Childhood Care and Education along with a Sign Language programme for Transition Year.
- Mulroy College provides the full range of second level programmes with an increased uptake in Transition Year. Mixed Ability groupings were introduced to 1st and 2nd year and JCSP was integrated rather than existing as a stand-alone group.
- At Crana College, the first group of LCA and Agricultural Science students sat the Leaving Certificate (LC) in 2012. A Robotics programme was introduced to junior students in conjunction with LYIT. The Healthy Schools Initiative focused on Anti-Bullying initiatives and an Anti-Smoking campaign. Adult Education courses took place in Cookery and Dressmaking. Contacts were established with Donegal Youth Services and Daybreak and school trips went to Switzerland and Italy.
- Colaiste Pobail Cholmcille offered Chinese Studies for the first time for Transition Year.
- Finn Valley College offers access to Daybreak, a targeted intervention which supports young people struggling in mainstream education. The school runs a transfer and induction programme for incoming First Years. The school's library continues to undergo development with each library book being SMOG tested to ensure students can access books suitable to their reading age. All students receive standardised tests at Christmas- GRT in Literacy and WRAT4 in Numeracy.
- Magh Ene College, Errigal College, Finn Valley College, Abbey Vocational School and St Catherine's VS all participated in the PLC programme offering 11 courses at FETAC Level 5 and 6.

2.2 Student Support Services

Student Support Services

Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) is the new single national awarding Authority for all new Student Grant Applications for the 2012/2013 academic year, replacing the sixty-six local awarding authorities that existed previously.

The Student Support Services Section of Co Donegal VEC will continue to process renewal applications for students to whom they have already awarded grants until such time as those students have completed their current courses.

SUSI will be accepting all new student grant applications, including applications from existing students changing their courses or progressing to new courses (add-on courses or otherwise) in the 2012/2013 academic year. SUSI will offer funding to eligible students in approved full-time third level education in Ireland and also, in some cases, funding for Irish students studying overseas. SUSI will also be paying student grants to all new applications who are awarded grants in 2012/2013 subject to confirmation and verification of attendance.

They will offer support to all types of students, from school leavers to mature students returning to education.

Co Donegal VEC will continue to award and pay the existing cohort of students who are being funded under the following two schemes:

- (i) Vocational Education Committee Scholarship Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme (VEC)** covers students attending approved honours degree courses in third level Institutions, including Universities in Ireland, Northern Ireland and overseas.
- (ii) Third Level Trainee Maintenance Grant Scheme (TLT)** covers two year Higher Certificate and three-year Ordinary Degree courses, pursued in the Institutes of Technology.

The total number of grant forms received for the 2012/2013 academic year amounted to 1,138. These forms are categorised under various headings as shown below.

Student Support Services Section 2012/2013 Annual Report Statistics

Applications received	No of applications
Funding Awarded - Level 7 Courses	634
Funding Awarded - Level 8 or higher Courses	328
Funding Awarded - Level 6	6
Cancelled	129
Not Eligible	39
Sent to DCC	2
Total number of applications received	1,138

In total 1,138 grant applications have been received, of which 968 were successful in being awarded funding.

Figure 3.2.2 shows the number of grants awarded and the level of course under which each has been approved

Type of Grant	No of awards
Adjacent 100%	166
Adjacent 75%	2
Adjacent 50%	4
Adjacent 25%	5
Adjacent Special Rate	40
Non Adjacent 100%	196
Non Adjacent 75%	3
Non Adjacent 50%	8
Non Adjacent 25%	9
Non Adjacent Special Rate	183
Fees Only	252
Total number of awards made	868

PRIORITY 2

Integrate generic skill development within all education programmes

- Magh Éne College and St Catherine's Vocational School integrated Key Word Learning into Teaching and Learning. Both school are part of the Instructional Leadership Programme
- 100mg Broadband in many of the VEC schools
- Mulroy College saw the introduction of Team Teaching
- Coláiste na Carriage is part of the Action Learning Network
- A link teacher for literacy and numeracy was appointed, workshops were held for staff and 1st years were tested in Coláiste Ailigh.
- Finn Valley College as per National Strategy for Literacy and Numeracy continued to target improvements in this area in keeping with DEIS planning. ICT is taught to to all students using an accredited programme.
- Colaiste na Carraige along with three other schools is part of an Action Learning Network the focus of which is literacy.
- Tory carried out an initial audit on literacy as per the National Strategy.
- Crana increased the number of initiatives to improve literacy and numeracy: Literacy and Numeracy Week, In-service on 'MathsEyes', survey on good practice on literacy and numeracy in all departments, rollout of 100mb Broadband, introduction of project to cut back on paper costs 'Papercut'.
- At Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada renewed emphasis was placed on literacy, numeracy and ICT skills right across the curriculum.
- A series of initiatives was introduced at Mulroy College: Key Words, Learning Objectives, testing in first year, planning targets and criteria lists for all subject departments, concurrent testing and teaching and team teaching.
- The Transition Year students at St Catherine's Vocational School completed ECDL, a transferrable skill beneficial to students in the preparation of project briefs and portfolios for senior cycle. Key words was also introduced as a cross curricular project to help build student vocabulary bank.
- Generic skills are integrated across all BTEI courses and literacy awareness courses are provided for all tutors in Community Education.
- Youthreach continued to concentrate on integrating literacy and numeracy across all modules through the continued implementation and reviewing of its literacy plan and training for staff.
- The Learning for Living programme introduced 'Touch-Type-Spell' as an integrated component into a new computer book which was made available to all programmes.

PRIORITY 3

Capital Development Programme & Quality Standards across all Education Programmes, Schools, Colleges and Centres.

- All BTEI/Community Education staff participated in FETAC Quality Assurance Training. All Youthreach Centres completed Internal Centre Evaluation (ICE) in 2012 as part of the Youthreach Quality Framework, which produced an annual report for each centre. All centres engaged in the FETAC Quality Assurance system in terms of self-evaluation and implementation of new Level 3 and Level 4 awards. FETAC Self-Evaluation was carried out in all Basic Education centres. Core textbooks and standardised briefs and tasks were made available to all tutors/assessors.
- Colaiste Ailigh had a History Inspection in October 2012. Finn Valley College had a follow on Incidental Inspection in Gaeilge.
- Finn Valley College has initiated a number of themed self-evaluations focusing on Homework (Policy & Procedures), Pastoral Care (Structures & Procedures), and the school's Critical Incident Policy. All FETAC Programmes are externally monitored as part of Co Donegal VEC's QA. A number of DEIS plans were also reviewed during 2012.
- Colaiste na Carraige had an Incidental Inspection in May 2012 as did Crana College. In Crana four teachers from different departments were observed. The Science department of Crana College won a national award from the Irish Science Teachers Association. Mulroy College had a TG/DCG Subject Inspection plus an Incidental Inspection. St Catherine's also had an Incidental Inspection which focused on History, English and Gaeilge.

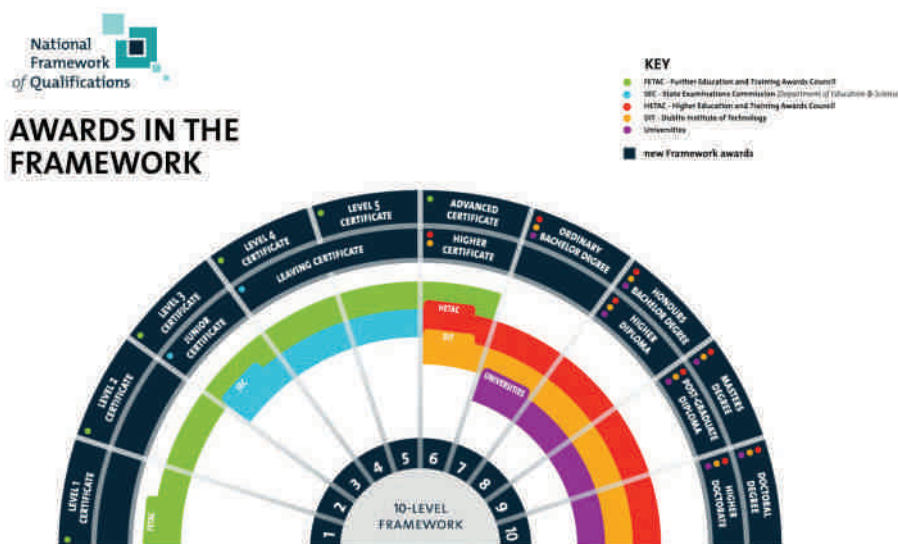


Figure.3.5 National Framework of Qualifications

To provide a quality environment which is conducive to learning and teaching.

As set out in the Education Plan 2011-2015, the Learning Environment is defined as including (but not limited to) intellectual, sporting, spiritual, social and cultural activities. In keeping with the objectives of the Plan as listed therein, the Committee continued in 2012 to improve the physical teaching and learning environment in all its schools, colleges and centres through a comprehensive Capital Development Programme.

3.1 Capital Development Programme**3.1.1 Finn Valley College, Stranorlar (formerly Stranorlar Vocational School)****New School of 3,452 m² – on Committee's 6.79 acre site at Drumboe Lower**

The new Finn Valley College Building was officially opened by Mr. Ruairí Quinn, T.D., Minister for Education and Skills on 18th May 2012. The Principal, staff, students, parents and the Board of Management of the School joined with the Acting CEO of Co Donegal VEC, Committee members and the wider Finn Valley Community to witness this magnificent occasion.

Sadly, this proved to be the last public event attended by Ms MaryAnn Kane, Acting CEO, prior to her untimely passing in August 2012.

New ASD Classroom (70m²)

This project proceeded through the planning permission, fire safety certification and disabled access certificate stages. Tenders were sought from building contractors in the final quarter of 2012. It is envisaged that this project will proceed to construction during the 2013 year.

3.1.2. Crana College Buncrana**Proposed Campus Development in Buncrana involving Crana College, Buncrana; Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha and possibly Coláiste Chineál Eoghain, Bhun Cranncha.****Review of Temporary Accommodation in Schools**

By letter dated 1st March 2012, The Department of Education and Skills enquired as to whether or not Crana College would be a suitable candidate for the above initiative which would involve providing additional permanent accommodation, by way of a stand-alone extension, on the existing School site subject to compliance with a number of criteria.

Crana College was deemed to be unsuitable for this initiative as the existing school site at Crana Road, Buncrana would not have the capacity to facilitate any possible construction works without causing serious disruption to the functionality of the school. In response to the Department, Co Donegal VEC outlined the constraints of the current 2.75 acre site and again requested the Department's support in its objective to acquire a site of adequate dimensions to cater for the proposed campus development.

Selection of suitable Site in Buncrana Area

A Deputation from Co. Donegal VEC met briefly with Ruairí Quinn, T.D., Minister for Education and Skills on the occasion of the Official Opening of the new Finn Valley College building on 18th May 2012. Following this meeting a further advertisement was published in the local press inviting expressions of interest from landowners in the Buncrana area.

The subsequent applications were discussed in detail with representatives of the Planning Section of Donegal Co. Council. Unfortunately, the sites in question were deemed unsuitable by the Co. Council from a Planning perspective.

Co Donegal VEC has however maintained continued contact with the relevant officials of Donegal Co. Council and Buncrana Town Council on the matter. A formal observation was furnished to the Central Planning Section of Donegal Co. Council regarding its review of the Buncrana and Environs Development Plan 2008-2014 in April 2012. It is hoped that the proposed Buncrana and Environs Development Plan 2014-2020 will reflect the need for a Campus Development in the town.

Donegal VEC will continue to liaise with all relevant parties involved in this process during 2013 in order to meet this objective

3.1.3 Moville Community College

Phase II of Permanent Accommodation – Area of Accommodation 2,775m²

The Department of Education and Skills, in 2011, increased the Band Rating of the project from 2.5 to 2.2, in accordance with its Amended Criteria for Prioritising Large Scale Projects (Primary and Post Primary)

The Committee made several submissions during the 2012 year regarding the provision of Phase II of Permanent Accommodation. In August 2012, the Department of Education and Skills approved of an all-in Devolved Grant totaling €100,000 to Donegal VEC to provide a 70m² base classroom and adjoining toilet/shower facilities to cater for students with Moderate General Learning Difficulties. A Consultant Architect was procured to design and oversee the construction of the new accommodation totaling 82m². It is envisaged that the project will proceed to planning permission and construction stage during 2013.

Notwithstanding the above welcomed investment, Donegal VEC are continuing to liaise with the Department of Education and Skills in respect of providing the balance of permanent accommodation at an early date due to:-

1. The current day to day operational difficulties posed by the current 'split campus' arrangement, and
2. The dilapidated condition of the prefabricated accommodation on site.

3.1.4 Deelee College, Raphoe

Provision of additional permanent accommodation

A Contract Notice seeking Design Team services was placed on the eTenders website in early 2012 and the Design Team was subsequently formally appointed in August 2012. The Design Team Stage 1 Submission was submitted to and considered by the Department of Education and Skills in early December 2012.

Approval was subsequently granted to Co Donegal VEC and the Design Team proceeded the project to Stage 2a (design development to a stage where the project is fully cost planned and can be prepared to lodge for statutory approvals).

It is envisaged that that project will proceed to Tender and Construction during 2013.

3.1.5 Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceanainn

Provision of New School of 3,854m² for 350 pupil place school under the methodology of the Public Private Partnership Provision (PPP)

By press release dated 12th November 2012, Ruairí Quinn, T.D., Minister for Education and Skills announced the commencement of construction of eight schools being delivered under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) Model. Coláiste Ailigh was included in this third bundle of PPP projects. The 'turning of the sod' took place on Friday 23rd November 2012. It is envisaged that the construction of the new school will last 48 weeks.

3.1.6 Coláiste na Carraige (formerly Carrick Vocational School)

Additional Accommodation

(1 x Learning Support Class, 2 x Pastoral Offices)

Tenders were sought from Building Contractors for the additional accommodation at the above school in the summer of 2012. Construction of the new extension is well advanced and it is expected that practical completion will be achieved in early 2013.

3.1.7 Errigal College, Letterkenny

Construction of new ASD Unit

Following a further submission to the Department of Education and Skills outlining an increase in the enrolment of students to the newly approved ASD Unit, the Department further increased their originally approved Devolved Grant to €660,000. This increased the overall area of the new ASD Unit to 552m². Tenders were sought from Building Contractors for the new ASD accommodation in the summer of 2012. Construction of the new extension is well advanced and it is expected that practical completion will be achieved in early 2013.

3.1.8 Gairm Scoil Chú Uladh, Beál an Átha Móir

Additional Accommodation

(2 x General Classrooms, 3 x Pastoral Offices, 1 x Principal's Office)

Tenders were sought from Building Contractors for the additional accommodation at the above school in the summer of 2012. Construction of the new extension is well advanced and it is expected that practical completion will be achieved in early 2013.

3.1.9 St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

Application for additional accommodation to cater for Students with ASD

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) formally sanctioned the establishment of a special class for ASD. Co Donegal VEC subsequently applied to the Department of Education and Skills for capital funding to construct the additional classroom accommodation by letter dated June 2012.

It is hoped that the Department of Education and Skills will grant the necessary funding to Co Donegal VEC to undertake this project in early 2013.

3.2 Summer Works Scheme 2012

As a result of cutbacks to the capital funding allocated to the Department of Education and Skills, the Summer Works Scheme was postponed for the 2012 year.

3.3 Emergency Works Grant – Projects Approved in 2012

The following applications were approved by the Department of Education and Skills under the Emergency Works Grant (EWG) during 2011:-

	School/Centre	Project	Budget Approved [¤] (including Fees and VAT)
1.	Errigal College, Letterkenny	Roof Repairs	57,594.00
2.	Errigal College, Letterkenny	H.E. Room (Waste Pipes) repairs	10,483.00
3.	Crana College, Letterkenny	Electrical Upgrade Works	50,350.00

PRIORITY 4

Promote positive relationships using a 'restorative practices' approach

A Restorative Practice (RP) organisation wide approach is embedded in the majority of Co Donegal VEC's schools and centres

All Youthreach staff were involved in Restorative Practices training towards the latter half of 2012 as part of Co Donegal VEC's PEACE III funded Restorative Practices project. Training was also provided for learners and the topic introduced to parents in all centres. The Music Education Partnership commenced three new PEACE III funded projects during the final quarter of 2012 and every effort has been made to encourage participants of all backgrounds, abilities and ages to come forward to participate. Equality of opportunity is also a central value in each of the projects.

In the schools Colaiste Ailigh adopted a revised Pastoral Care Policy in 2012 which has RP as an integral component. Finn Valley College used a RP approach when remodelling the Care Team. Two members of staff in Colaiste na Carraige have attended training and some elements of RP are included in the Code of Behaviour. Crana College continues to be involved in the PEACE III project with a focus on staff training and on building positive relationships. Staff, parents and pupils received RP training in Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada. Mulroy College trained all staff, the student council, the Board of Management and held two parent workshops as well as holding workshops for all 2nd and 3rd year students. St Catherine's Vocational School trained staff, the student council and mentors.

PRIORITY 5

Proactively promote the option of accreditation as part of programmes provided by Co Donegal VEC

- Coláiste Phobail Colmcille introduced FETAC Level 3 Computer Studies
- Two staff members from Magh Éne College undertook the Diploma in Instructional Leadership through NUI Galway
- Mulroy College had four staff members complete the Post Graduate Diploma in Restorative Practices with University of Ulster
- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada had TY courses externally accredited – First Aid, Sign Language and RNLI programmes
- Adult Education has all its courses accredited from Level 1-6

All BTEI courses were composed of a package of component modules and in many cases major awards were offered from Levels 3-6 and the Leaving Certificate. In the Community Education area participants are always encouraged to gain accreditation where applicable. Youthreach continued to provide a range of accredited learning in 2012 including FETAC Levels 2, 3 and 4, LCA (Letterkenny only), ECDL, First Aid, Food Hygiene etc.

Colaiste Ailigh ran some Transition Year modules which were accredited: Occupational First Aid, Safe Food, Ulster GAA Coaching and Video Analysis (in conjunction with Ulster Council) and ECDL. In Finn Valley College all students have their ICT tuition programme outcomes certified by the Commercial Examining Board of Ireland. Sign Language in Colaiste na Carraige.

At Colaiste Pobail Cholmcille students achieved Fáilte Ireland and Health & Safety Certificates. Students of Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada achieved certification from the RNLI upon completion of a programme. Four staff members of Mulroy College received a PG Certificate from the University of Ulster having completed a course in Restorative Practices. At St Catherine's VS Lifting & Handling and Occupational First Aid courses were provided as part of the FETAC Level 5 Nursing Studies programme. Transition Year students received accreditation in the following modules: ECDL, Sign Language, KEY programme and Law.

PRIORITY 6

Consolidate the provision of guidance services provided to students

- Adult Education carried out a review of VTOS and BTEI group work and one to one provision in order to integrate the guidance process into FETAC outcomes.
- All schools actively sought to maintain guidance provision at the highest level possible despite government cutbacks.
- Both Mulroy and Magh Éne Colleges reviewed and developed Critical Incidents Plans as part of the Whole School Guidance provision while Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada carried out a guidance review with a new guidance counsellor joining the staff.
- The Co Donegal VEC Adult Learner Guidance Service provides comprehensive ongoing and pre-exit guidance to adults on VEC adult education programmes and pre-entry guidance to those considering programmes of education and training delivered by external providers.
- Youthreach continued to provide guidance to learners in 2012 through provision of relevant FETAC modules and the Advocacy Service.
- Frontline guidance on the Learning for Living programme is offered by core staff.
- Despite the removal of the ex-quota status of Career Guidance by DES and the removal of the Guidance Enhancement Initiative, Finn Valley College enhanced the provision of Career Guidance to students offering both Careers advice and significant levels of counselling to students.
- Colaiste na Carraige is developing a Guidance Plan but the cutbacks in this area are having an impact.
- In Crana College regular Care Team meetings take place to establish a Care Team response to critical incidents. The Guidance Counsellors had input to the Anti-Bullying Policy. The demand for counselling continues to rise. At Mulroy College Career Guidance is available to all students as a timetabled class and one-to-one consultations are available from 3rd year. Individual consultations for all 3rd years with the Principal. Study skills workshops for 3rd and 6th year students were provided by 4 staff members. A Critical Incident Policy was developed as part of the Guidance Plan.

PRIORITY 7

Stimulate a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship in all Schools, Colleges and Centres

- Coláiste na Carriage, Magh Éne College and Errigal College took part in the AIB Build a Bank initiative.
- Mulroy College students commenced a mentoring programme with Pramerica staff members through their business programme.
- All schools / colleges ensure their students attend career seminars while also facilitating various third level college and university presentations.
- Coláiste Ailigh were awarded two TY 'Get up and go' awards at the Regional Trade Exhibition.
- Each school/college organises work experience placements throughout the academic year for Transition Year students.

Creativity and Entrepreneurship

Tutors on the Community Education Programme were offered an accredited Train the Trainer Course. Some Youthreach Centres began running the NFTE (Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship) programme during 2012. The Music Partnership is immersed in creativity as it offers after-school instrumental and voice tuition in twelve centres/schools across the county.

Comórtas BEO

BEO is an event organized by teens for teens. This event has been running in Donegal since 2009 and has hosted many of Ireland's top bands including More Than Conquerors, The Wonder Villains, Dirty 9's and Scubba Dice to name but a few. BEO also prides itself in its efforts to promote a "cúpla focail" and dealing with significant social issues.

In recent times BEO entered a national innovation competition which led to the launch of www.beoireland.com at a special event on December 16th in Letterkenny's Regional Cultural Centre.

This website is designed to help other schools to run their BEO event while at the same time giving interested parties a platform to showcase their efforts.

Following meetings with the Galway Education Centre and Donegal County Council BEO have decided to host a national competition. The competition on this occasion is targeting classes in secondary schools in Ireland.

The competition was launched publically on national radio and newspapers in early January 2012 with the winners being announced at a special BEO awards event on 11th May. Winners received €5,000 or €5,000 of computer equipment help schools with the organising of further BEO events.

Colaiste Ailigh was the winner of two awards at the Transition Year "Get Up and Go" Mini Company Regional Trade Exhibition 2103. Transition Year students undertake work experience one day per week in two separate locations for the duration of TY.

Finn Valley College created a float for the local St Patrick's Day Parade providing a bespoke piece of art themed around Balor. LCVP, LCA and PLC all involve work placements for students so that they can acquire the skills necessary for the world of work. The school community continues to raise funds for extra curricular activities using business incentive scheme systems. All students spend short but significant spans of time work shadowing. This process starts in second year. Ulster Bank help with interview skills with second year students while in fourth year local company SITA provide their experienced professionals through the Business in the Community Initiative to finely hone interview technique.

- Colaiste na Carraige has entered a number of competitions in this area most recently the AIB Build a Bank competition.
- Colaiste Pobail Cholmcille took part in creating a radio play which students wrote, performed, recorded and edited themselves.
- Crana College participated in the Build a Bank competition and the Business in the Community initiative with links with Inishowen Engineering.
- The Bank of Ireland and Credit Union spoke to Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada students.
- Mulroy College is also involved in the Business in the Community initiative and is partnered with Premerica. Six students started a two year mentoring project with the company. Local Olympian Brendan Boyce spoke to students.
- St Catherine's VS is a participant in the KEY and LET enterprise programmes along with the Think Big project. TY students produce and deliver programme on the local radio station. Local business people visit classrooms to present during LCVP and students visit local banks and businesses.

Key Theme - A Progressive and Accountable Organisation

PRIORITY 8

Adapt the Structures and Systems of the Organisation to enable it to carry out its new and enhanced functions

- A number of Schools and Colleges have installed e-portal to enhance the ability of the school to manage information relating to students. A number of key duties in schools and colleges have been reassigned to take account of a number of changes. During 2011, a further cohort of schools and colleges joined the part-time teacher online claim system.

PRIORITY 9

Review the legislative/governance requirements underpinning Co Donegal VEC and ensure the implementation of the outcomes of this process

- Co Donegal VEC is governed by relevant legislative requirements and through Committee meetings and related meetings of Sub-Committees (Boards of Management, Finance and Audit, Adult Education Board and Youth Sub-Committee). The organisation implements all necessary actions to ensure compliance with legislative and governance requirements laid down by the Department of Education and Skills
- The following Audits were carried out during 2012: Comptroller and Auditor General (CandAG) Audit of Accounts for 2011; The VSSU (Vocational Support Services Unit) Internal Audit of staff selections and utilisation, Youthreach programme and procedures for the procurement and payment of goods and services.

PRIORITY 9

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE – FINANCIAL REPORT

OVERVIEW

FINANCE STRATEGY

The objective of the Finance function is to support the Committee in the achievement, within budget, of objectives set out in the Service Plan. Finance support includes decision making support, corporate control of public money, transaction processing and Statutory Accountability.

STATUTORY ACCOUNTABILITY

Strict accountability requirements apply to the VEC. These requirements include the preparation of annual accounts in a format prescribed by the Department of Education and Skills and the audit of these accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Financial Control Systems based on detailed policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with these requirements and to ensure the effective achievement of objectives.

COMMENTS ON PERFORMANCE

The Finance Division managed and administered approximately ninety programme budgets of recurrent expenditure totalling €52.94 million and a similar number of capital projects, in association with the Committee's Estates Management Section, totaling €1.69 million, a total spend of €54.63 million. The continued pattern of decrease in approved budgets presented major challenges for budget holders in the delivery of services.

Co Donegal VEC employed a total of 1,348 staff in varying capacities making it one of the largest employers in the County.

Payments totalling €3.066 million were processed in favour of 332 students who attended recognised third level colleges in Ireland and the UK together with 161 students who attended Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses in second level schools throughout the County.

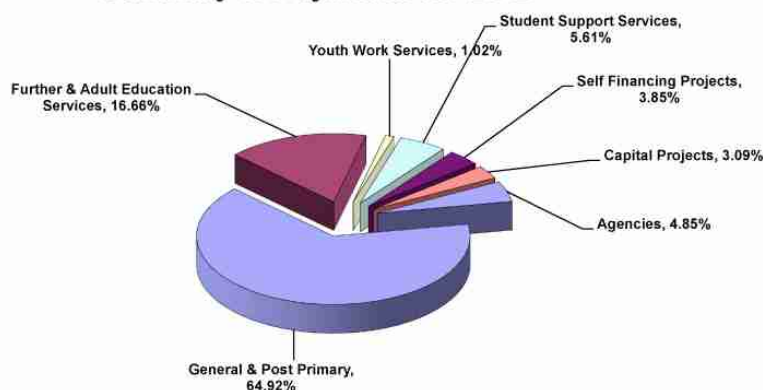
Payments totaling €2.169 million were processed in favour of trainees attending the various Programmes under the Further and Adult Education Services such as Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Youthreach (YR) together with a wide range of courses provided on a Contract Training basis on behalf of FÁS.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Audit of Accounts for 2012 is complete and the accounts have been formally certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The following Table sets out a Summary of Payments for the 2012 Year:

PROGRAMME	2012 EXPENDITURE	
	¤000	%
General and Post Primary (Running costs of 15 Second Level Schools and Colleges, Adult Education Night Class Programme and VEC Offices)	35,464	(64.92%)
Further and Adult Education Services (VTOS, Youthreach, STTC, Adult Literacy, Community Education, Adult Guidance, Childcare, LMESP etc.)	9,098	(16.66%)
Youth Work Services	557	(1.02%)
Student Support Services (VEC Scholarships/PLC Grants)	3,066	(5.61%)
Self-Financing Projects	2,102	(3.85%)
Agencies	2,650	(4.85%)
Capital Projects	1,689	(3.09%)
Total	54,626	100%

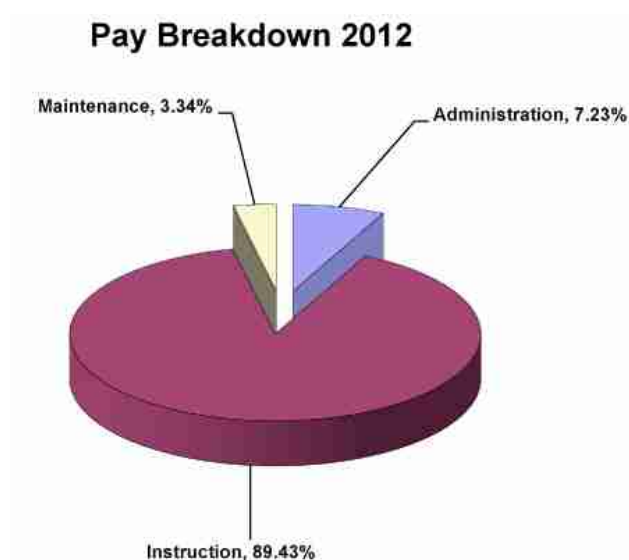
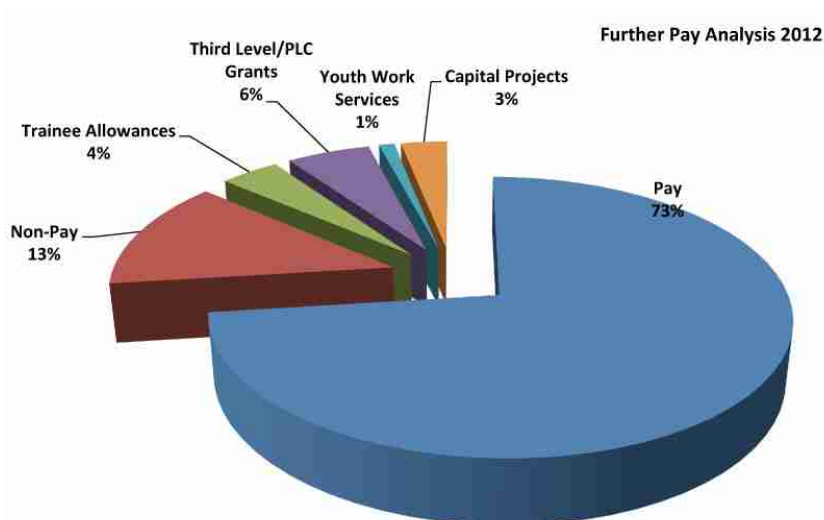
Summary of Payments for 2012



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Further analysis of 2012 Payments indicates the following:

Pay	≈39.90million	(73.03%)
Non-Pay	≈7.24million	(13.25%)
Trainee Allowances	≈2.17million	(3.97%)
Third Level/PLC Grants	≈3.07million	(5.62%)
Youth Work Services	≈0.56million	(1.03%)
Capital Projects	≈1.69million	(3.1%)
Total	≈54.63million	(100%)



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The VEC has adopted a Code of Best Practice for Governance. The Code adopted is consistent with the Code set out by the Department of Education and Skills in Circular Letter F11/05. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that the Principles of good Governance and Management are applied by the VEC.

In the Finance area, this process is assisted by the appointment of an Audit Committee, a Finance Sub-Committee and an effective System of Internal Financial Control.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee is composed of 7 Non-Executive Members of County Donegal VEC, all of whom are independent of management under the Chairmanship of Clr. Jimmy Kavanagh, who had been appointed to this position for the term of the Committee. The Audit Committee is responsible for monitoring the Executive in the carrying out of its functions and provides assurances to the Committee as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Control processes. It received reports from Management, External Audit provided by the Comptroller and Auditor General and Internal Audit provided by the Vocational Support Services Unit (VSSU) which includes a review of the Policies and Procedures governing the Finance and other functions. The Committee receives Minutes of Meetings of the Audit Committee and has regard to its Annual Report in adopting a Statement of Internal Financial Control (SIFC) and approving the Annual Accounts.

FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Finance Sub-Committee is composed of eight members including the CEO in an Ex-Officio capacity. It has responsibility for reviewing the income/expenditure of the VEC, major contracts awarded by the VEC and the financial aspects of the Education and Service Plans respectively. Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee meetings are received by the Committee for consideration and to assist in providing assurance that the Education and Service Plans are being achieved.

INTERNAL CONTROL

The Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated. The Committee carries out an Annual Review of Internal Controls at which it receives and has regard to a Report from the Audit Committee. The system of internal financial control is based on detailed Administrative Procedures which are in place, segregation of duties, specific authorisations and regular review by Management and the Committee of reports outlining actual and budgeted results for the various programmes.

9.10 Superannuation and Retirement Benefits

Table 4.4 is a descriptor of the operational details of the Pensions Section for 2012:

Scheme Name: Local Government (Superannuation)(Consolidation)Scheme, 1998.

Tasks Completed	Detail
No. of Retirees in 2012	10 Retirees
Total No. of Retirees	196 (inclusive of above)
No. of new enquires in current year	183
No. of enquires processed	157
No. enquiries in progress up to 31/12/2012	359
Circular Letters/ Collective Agreements which impacted on the Pension (Pen) Scheme in 2012	Implementation of 'Grace Period' to end Feb 2012

PRIORITY 10

Identify specific competencies and expertise of staff members and match these to key organisational skills

- Many schools/colleges carried out an annual post of responsibility review
- Coláiste na Carriage carried out a review of its In School Management due to no longer having an Exams Secretary and the additional work resulting from the introduction of the PTT and FIDO systems
- In the Co Donegal Music Partnership the Coordinator of the part-time PEACE Projects undertook the role of social media marketing
- In Crana College individual staff members commenced various courses of further studies including – MA in Education, Special Needs, Restorative Practices, Education Management, IT, Drama
- In both Magh Éne College and Coláiste Phobail Colmcille specialised staff members mentored others in IT

In the Community Education area centre staff all completed an audit on their specific competencies.

At Finn Valley College the Care Team was reconstituted and remodelled to reflect best practice in the area of Pastoral Care. Staff with a specialist expertise in the area of ASD were identified and received in-service to support the development of the school's ASD Unit. New members of staff were added to the core Learning Support teaching team.

A review of the PoRs has taken place in a number of schools. This review is due in part to the moratorium on the filling of PoRs.

In Colaiste Pobail Cholmcille teachers mentored other members of staff in relation to ICT skills. Staff who have extra qualifications at Masters and Doctoral level are given the opportunity to apply and utilise their specialised training, skills and competencies.

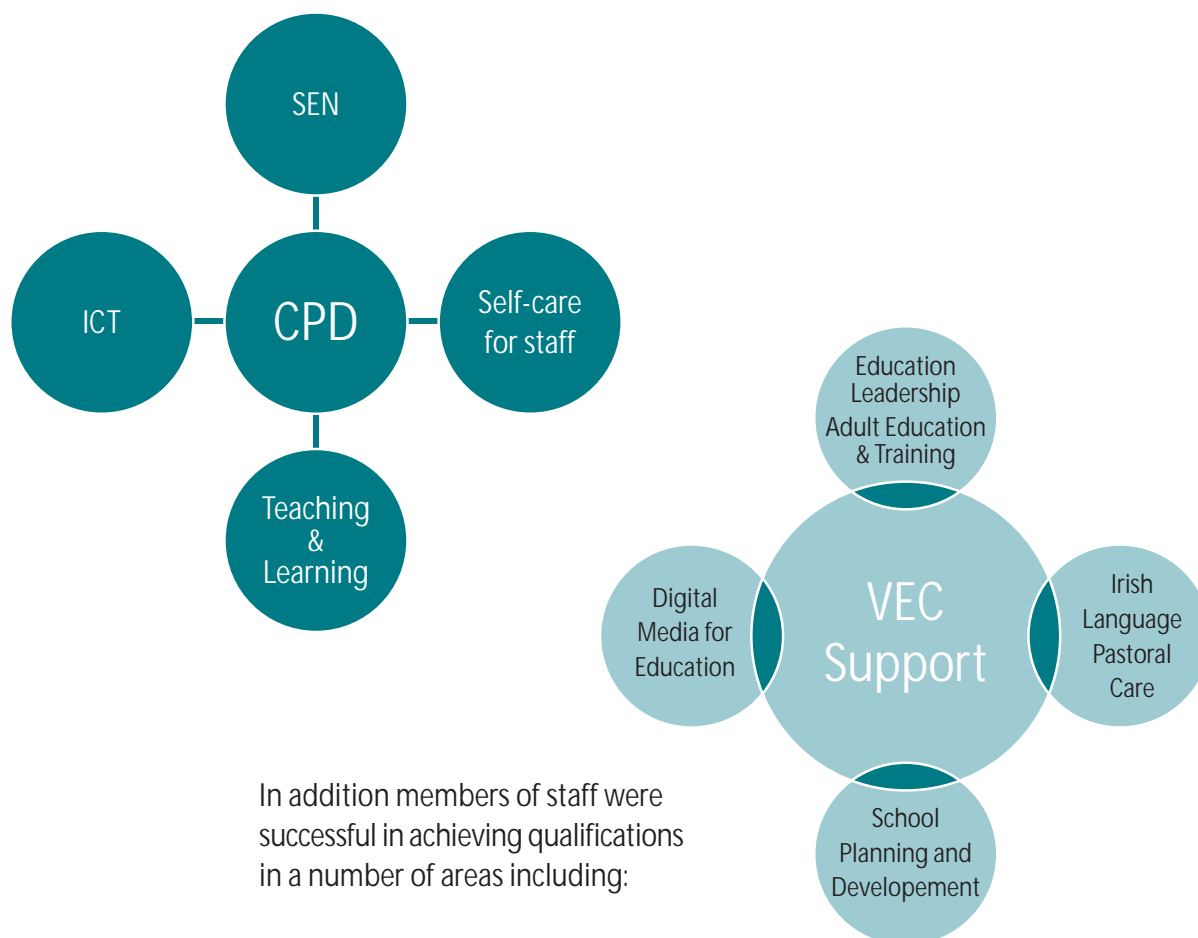
PRIORITY 11

Provide a range of staff learning opportunities to support staff and build organisational capacity to enhance the quality of educational provision

All schools and centres engaged in a variety of personal and professional development including

- The graph below summarises in general, the types of support which were given to staff during 2012.
- Examples of Teaching and Learning Continuing Professional Development (CPD) include:

Train the Trainer FETAC Level 6 (VTOS)	Nationally Mandated In service
Child Protection (Music Partnership)	ASD provision
Instructional Leadership	Mental Health and Stress
FETAC Level 3 Training	FETAC Assessment
Student Motivation	Anti-Bullying
Mixed Ability Teaching	Stress Management
Inclusivity / LGBT	Literacy and Numeracy
School Self Evaluation	Anti-Racism
LCA Training	Integrating Literacy
E learning	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (A.S.I.S.T.)
Classroom Management	Occupational First Aid
Equality Awareness	NLP training (Learning for Living)
Health and Safety Training	Conducting Skills (Music Partnership)
NFET Training (Entrepreneurship)	Sexual Health Training
Girls Active Training (HSE)	Restorative Practices
Selection Board Training	Sales Pulse Training
Substance Use	Student/Learner Council Training



Adult Guidance staff engaged in Vocational Dreaming Training and CPD through the National Centre for Guidance in Education. Teachers in second level schools attended in-service organised by DES in relation to changes in curricula e.g. Project Maths and members of staff were facilitated as instructors in the delivery of in service courses to other teachers. Staff regularly availed of CPD in the area of SEN. Staff are encouraged to become members of their subject associations. In Colaiste Pobail Cholmcille teachers undertook a computer upskilling course as well as an SPHE training day regarding LGBT and Bullying and literacy, Instructional Leadership, NEPS delivered in-service, ongoing ICT training, e.g. Eportal and NBSS supported work on Promoting Positive Behaviour. Restorative Practices, Stress Management, Mixed Ability Teaching were covered in GSMD and Mulroy College in addition to developing subject plans and sharing resources. SNAs received specific training relevant to their needs in a number of schools.

BTEI staff undertook a large project to develop common resources to support the new FETAC Common Awards and this has thus far resulted in a bank of resources being available to all teachers. Networking of themed teachers was encouraged and facilitated. Youthreach staff participated in a wide range of staff development opportunities in 2012 including FETAC, SPHE, alcohol and drugs, mental health, Girls Active, child protection, Health & Safety, NFTE (entrepreneurship) and literacy.

PRIORITY 12

Become an equality competent organisation

BTEI staff participated in LGBT training during 2012. All Community Education tutors participated in Global Development Education Training and the Basic Education staff availed of anti-racism training. Subject sampling prior to choosing for first years takes place in a majority of second level schools. All subjects are available to both genders. Mixed ability/differentiation with regard to teaching and assessment is promoted in all schools in order to promote inclusion for all students. SNA staff help to further embed inclusion in our schools. Alternative programmes of study at junior and senior cycle are available in all eight DEIS schools. ASD units have been provided at Finn Valley College, Crana College, Errigal College and St Catherine's VS while a ModGLD classroom has been provided at Merville Community College.

- Students in both Magh Éne College and Coláiste Ailigh are given the opportunity to sample subjects in First Year prior to making a final decision thus enabling them to make a more informed choice
- Gender free subject choice in schools and centres
- Mulroy College as part of its two year plan introduced mixed ability teaching in First and Second year - to be rolled out to all groups in 2013

PRIORITY 13

Implement strategies to limit the negative aspects of conflict

- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada implemented Restorative Practice approach and incorporated it into the schools Code of Behaviour
- Crana set up regular Care Team meetings and the Anti- Bullying policy was drawn up
- Coláiste na Carriage and Magh Éne College had staff members trained in conflict resolution
- Donegal Youth Service delivered workshops in many of the county's schools and centres

Focus on Restorative Practice

- In 2011, Co Donegal VEC was awarded €100,000 from the Peace III programme to run a two year project to further embed restorative practice in post-primary schools, Youthreach centres and youth work organizations across the county. Co Donegal has been involved in such practice for many years and Peace III has provided the county with a great opportunity to work towards Donegal as a Restorative County for young people and consolidate this practice.
- The project has three elements to it— training, research and organisational activity. All five Youthreach centres, along with fourteen post-primary schools (including the VEC's own Crana College; Errigal College; Finn Valley College; St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs; Magh Ene College, Bundoran; Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Arranmore Island; Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir and Mulroy College), Donegal Youth Service and Foróige embarked on the project to embed restorative practice into their centres over the next two years.
- One hundred staff from across the participating organisations undertook training, provided by the University of Ulster's Restorative Practice Team in November 2011, to enable them to further the use of Restorative Practice methods in their work. The research element, which is also being carried out by the University of Ulster's Restorative Practice Team is seeking to ascertain where Schools, Colleges and Centres and youth services are in terms of the use of Restorative Practice as a means of resolving conflict situations and restoring relationships, and to develop a method of measuring and evaluating progress throughout the lifetime of the project.
- Areas covered by the research include, for example, levels of exclusion, attendance and absences, incidences of bullying, racism, disruptive behaviour, drug use, verbal/physical abuse. In 2012 a modest amount of funding was made available to be used as necessary to embed practice into locations amongst staff and young people. The project will come to an end through a closing conference which will share learning from the project in May 2013.



Youthreach began looking at the use of restorative practices in more detail in 2012 and all centres were involved in Co Donegal VEC's Peace III funded Restorative Practices Project. Six staff from three centres are undertaking a Postgraduate Certificate in Restorative Practice through the University of Ulster.

Donegal Youth Service and the O Moore Anti Bullying Centre at TCD provided inputs on bullying to staff, students and parents of Colaiste Ailigh. SPHE is utilised to limit conflict in many schools as are the good offices of members of Care Teams. A number of staff are trained in Conflict Resolution and Conflict Coaching.

Seven schools continue to be involved in the Peace III Restorative Practices project. Members of the school communities including parents are currently receiving training in RP. Crana College, Mulroy College and GSMD reviewed a number of policies to incorporate the addressing of conflict.

PRIORITY 14

Actively promote the provision of services through Irish

- As befits a VEC serving a large Gaeltacht area, the Committee continued to improve its Irish language capacity and capability in 2012.
- One-third of Co Donegal VEC's second level schools, colleges and centres deliver a service through the medium of Irish. Services are available bilingually in its other locations and throughout the Adult Education Service.
- A range of programmes, courses and events were provided through the Irish language at Gartan Outdoor Education Centre during 2012.
- The Irish Language is promoted as a means of communication with the public and as a means of providing information to the public.
- The Committee's publications, both online and in print are produced in both Irish and in English, such as Application Forms, its Annual Reports, Strategic Plan, Course Prospectus and Programme Brochures.
- As the first points of contact with the public, staff providing receptionist and switchboard services within each School, College, Centre and at the Administrative Offices offer basic greeting and answering services in Irish.
- The Committee's corporate website is fully bilingual.
- Co. Donegal VEC is committed to continued professional development for staff wishing to improve their Irish language skills.
- The Music Education Partnership provided instrumental tuition through Irish on Tory Island and Arranmore Island as part of the PEACE III Projects.
- The Committee's second Irish Language Scheme 2009–2012 is available at the Committee's corporate website, www.donegalvec.ie
- Colaiste Ailigh in its role as the only provider in Donegal of education solely through the medium of Irish outside of the Gaeltacht was the winner of the secondary school prize for the creation of a club for young people – Ailigh G!
- In Coláiste na Carriage, the Principal, Deputy Principal and Administrator have undertaken courses in Irish with a positive attitude towards Irish found throughout the school.
- DMI developed and produced a Primary School Education Worksheet in both Irish and English to be used in conjunction with the live broadcast of the Happy Prince on RTE Junior Radio
- BTEI courses have guidance provision through Irish.
- Seachtain na Gaeilge is actively promoted in all schools.
- Coláiste Phobail Colmcille has Irish parent participation programmes aimed at challenging the teachers regarding the Tory dialect. Promotion of Irish language and culture is part of a post holders duty also on the island school while the school also came first in the Donegal Gaeltacht as well as five other national prizes for creative writing.

PRIORITY 15

Develop organisational conflict management systems which take account of alternative methods of conflict resolution

- Co Donegal VEC has for many years advocated alternative methods of conflict resolution. The principles of Mediation and Restorative Practices are applied where conflict arises across the organisation, for both Staff and Students.
- Key members of staff are qualified Mediators. The Committee has an internal panel of Conflict Resolution Facilitators as well as an external network of professional and practising Mediators and Counsellors.
- (This area is also addressed at Priority 13)

PRIORITY 16

Redefine organisational structures and priorities and promote flexibility in relation to job roles to meet the changing needs

The Human Resources Division of Co Donegal VEC provides support through four distinct work areas namely:-

- Resource and Leave Administration
- Recruitment and Selection
- General HR Operations
- Superannuation/Pensions.

Protective legislation, namely Protection of Employees (Part-time Workers) 2001 and (Fixed Term Workers) 2003 Acts and the resultant collective agreements continued to have significant impact on the operations of Human Resources staff throughout 2012.

Positions	Number of Posts
Teachers (PRPT)	14
Principal	1
Deputy Principal	1
Home School Community Liaison Teacher	1
Positive Behaviour Liaison Teacher	1
Caretaker	1
Special Needs Assistants	10

In addition to the foregoing, resources are also utilised for the filling of Casual and Non Casual posts that arise in the Committee's Schools/Colleges/Centres. Thirty five such posts were filled through Recruitment and Selection procedures in 2012.

Teaching Staff

Defining the number of teachers for second level schools involves a process which commences in October each year, when indicative teacher allocations based on the second level enrolment numbers for the previous school year are forwarded to each second level School/College. Additional teacher allocations are granted by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) as follows:

- The appeal process to the DES Initial Allocation as a result of detailed submissions from each school/college in relation to critical curricular shortfalls, this process is ongoing from February - June.
- Application for resources relating to special needs, Traveller pupils and non-national pupils.
- Additional applications relating to compensatory hours for Programme Co-ordinator Post and Directors of Adult Education, curricular concessions and PLC Programmes.
- Allocations arising from programmes such as School Completion Programme (SCP) and DEIS.

Co. Donegal VEC's final Teacher Allocation for September 2011 (the school year 2011/2012) was 391.11 whole-time equivalents.

Administrative Staff

Administrative Staff are allocated by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) on the basis of:

- the agreed formulae contained in the Rochford Report and subsequent agreement on administrative staffing levels in VECs, and
- on a programmatic basis.

Quarterly Reports are made to Department of Education and Skills on its approved level of operation in this regard.

Seventy one administrative staff were employed at the Committee's head office, centres, colleges and schools during 2012. The level of administrative staff corresponds to 7.23% of overall pay budget.

Support Staff

Support Staff are allocated on the basis of number and size of schools/centres and the quality/capacity of accommodation utilised in each case. A total of fifty support staff were employed at Committees head office, centres, colleges and schools during 2012. The level of support staff corresponds to 3.34% of overall pay budget.

Work Life Balance and Staff Leave Entitlements

Co Donegal VEC recognises the personal needs and obligations of staff and where possible within relevant guidelines, facilitates various leave entitlements to meet such needs. Figure x.x highlights the applications for leave entitlements that were processed for staff during 2012.

Maternity Leave	32
Parental Leave	13
Secondments	3
Carer's Leave	1
Job-Sharing	24
Work-Share	8
Career Break	5

Maintenance of all other staff records include staff absence due to illness, annual leave, compassionate leave, force majeure leave, unpaid leave and the update of personal files in accordance with audit/organisational requirements.

PRIORITY 17

Develop and implement an integrated ICT strategy for Co Donegal VEC

- As part of the ICT Strategy, a Website Working Group was formed in 2011. The purpose of the group was to review the website and implement solutions to make the website more accessible and relevant to all key stakeholders associated with Co Donegal VEC. The group continued to meet during 2012.
- A new website was further developed incorporating views and feedback following a pilot version.
- Greater emphasis was placed on the appearance of the website and the structure and user-friendliness of the menus.
- A staff member was assigned responsibility for the website, which involved liaising with all the Schools, Colleges and Centres to ensure up to date news items were posted on a daily basis.
- The website has been developed to ensure compliance bilingually with the VEC's Scéim commitments under the Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla.
- A special section on the website for a staff intranet has proven beneficial with staff members. Schools, Colleges and Centres continue to upgrade their ICT infrastructure and further embed ICT into teaching and learning in line with available resources.

PRIORITY 18

Use new and emerging technologies to support developments in teaching and learning, management of information and communication and collaboration

- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada has introduced Coderdojo training for students
- St Catherine's Vocational School provided ipads for school management to explore their potential
- Magh Éne College provided ipads for teachers with CPD support to integrate ICT further into Teaching and Learning
- Coláiste na Carriage, Mulroy, Crana and Magh Éne Colleges engaged an ICT Technician for school wide ICT support
- Coláiste Phobail Cholmcille s' First Year students used ipads for their books and research while Transition Years participated in a blogging project with five other Gaeltacht schools. Cloud was also introduced to teachers
- Magh Éne College's Transition Year introduced the use of e-portfolios which will be rolled out to incoming First Years
- BTEI also saw the introduction of ipads into the classroom with IT equipment being updated in a number of centres
- The Donegal Music Education Partnership saw the roll out of a pilot on line booking and data management system

PRIORITY 19

Develop and implement a progressive public relations strategy for Co Donegal VEC

- One of the objectives under the five year Education Plan for Co Donegal VEC was to develop a clear public relations strategy in 2012 through a Profile and Branding Working Group.
- In 2011 Schools, Colleges and Services continued with their own individual public relations promotion to develop and promote their profile via:-
 - Regular Articles in the local media
 - Adult Education Annual Learner Fair
 - School, College and Centre websites and via the Co Donegal VEC home Website
 - Individual School, College magazines and Youthreach newsletters to inform local communities of events and activities
 - Open evenings for prospective parents and students
 - School and College musicals and concerts and were used throughout each of the second level providers

PRIORITY 20

Build on relationships with relevant partners including community, voluntary, statutory, cross border and business organisations to work towards shared goals

- The Adult Education Centres developed cross border history links connecting Co Donegal VEC and North West Regional College, Derry
- The Music Education Partnership developed links with An Grianán Theatre, Donegal Co Councils Public Art Programme, RTE Junior Radio and Baborra International Childrens Festival through the Happy Prince project
- Magh Éne College further developed its links with its Chinese partner school in Guiyang. Twenty two students made a second trip for some to China with plans afoot for a return visit from CC English School
- Magh Éne College worked with Streetwise Performance Arts, Belfast in training another set of TY students in the skill of stilt walking which saw them take part in local carnivals and parades in partnership with St Patricks Day Committee and Co Donegal Arts Council
- Schools and centres continue to work with the HSE, NEPS, SESS, NCSE etc
- Coláiste Ailigh works in partnership with Letterkenny Rugby Club, Letterkenny IT and along with Magh Éne College – Ulster Schools Swimming
- BTEI has a joint new initiative in collaboration with LYIT – an access programme (A2A)
- VTOS and BTEI continue in partnership with DSP in relation to referrals to DALGS
- Magh Éne work with Donegal Youth Council in delivering anti-bullying workshops to students and parents
- Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada continues links with Comharchumann Árainn Mhóir, Comharchumann Forbatha agus Fostaíochta and the RNLI
- Magh Éne, Mulroy, Coláiste na Carraige and Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada and St Catherine's work with the cross border KEY programme

The service continues to work closely with many other services and has endeavoured to build close working relationships to facilitate working on shared goals. Examples of same include the following:

- Regular meetings are held with colleagues in the National Educational Psychological Service to plan and review programmes and interventions.
- The service has built good working relationships with Clinical Psychology services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health service, Jigsaw service for young people and the HSE suicide prevention office.
- The service has built good working relationships with the Training and Occupational Support Service, Disability Support services and programme providers for young adults with SEN like the National Learning Network.
- The service also works with the NEWB to facilitate, where necessary, the transition of vulnerable young people from schools into other educational placements and to support these transitions.
- Provide improved structures for the development, integration and support of Youth Services across the county
- The service has been actively involved in the collaborative planning of the new Jigsaw Mental Health services for County Donegal and remains involved in the Clinical Governance Group that meets once a month to review the provision of clinical services to young people attending the service
- The service is involved in the development of a new suicide prevention plan for the county.
- Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies

The University of Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies has been taught for the last four years in the North West Region and five years in the University of Limerick campus and Cherry Orchard in Dublin. The programme is managed by a partnership Board which involves the University of Limerick, Co Donegal VEC, North West Regional Drugs Task Force, Health Services Executive West (Donegal) and the Alcohol Forum Ltd.

The Diploma is taught over one academic year. It is designed to provide personal and professional growth and development of skills for a range of individuals who are actively engaged in responding to drug and alcohol issues across the spectrum from prevention to treatment and rehabilitation. The graduates of the Diploma come from a range of sectors such as psychiatry, medicine, social work, education, community and voluntary, health and justice.

Graduations took place in August in the University of Limerick where all students of the course successfully graduated with a university qualification.



University of Limerick Diploma in Drug & Alcohol Studies

The University of Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol Studies has been taught for a number of years last in the North West Region, the University of Limerick campus and Cherry Orchard in Dublin. To date there have been 65 successful graduates of the programme. The programme is managed by a partnership Board which involves the University of Limerick, Co Donegal VEC, North West Regional Drugs Task Force, Health Services Executive West (Donegal) and the Alcohol Forum Ltd.

The University of Limerick Diploma in Drug and Alcohol studies is taught over one academic year. It is designed to provide personal and professional growth and development of skills for a range of individuals who are actively engaged in responding to drug and alcohol issues across the spectrum from prevention to treatment and rehabilitation. The Graduates of the Diploma come from a range of sectors such as psychiatry, medicine, social work, education, community and voluntary, health and justice.

Graduations took place in August in the University of Limerick where all students of the course successfully graduated with a university qualification.

1. Education Psychological Services

- The service continues to work closely with many other services and has endeavoured to build on close working ties to facilitate working on shared goals. Regular meetings are held with the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) for planning and review of work in VEC Schools and Colleges in conjunction with VEC management. NEPs have also contributed to the SEN (Special Educational Needs) Network for VEC schools.
- The service has also built up a good working relationship with the Health Services Executive CAMHS service, particularly in relation to vulnerable young people involved in Youthreach centres.
- The service also works closely with the NEWB to facilitate, where necessary, the transition of vulnerable young people from schools into Youthreach Centres and to support these transitions.

PRIORITY 21

Provide improved structures for the development, integration and support of Youth Services across the County

Youth Officer - 2012

National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Youth Work

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) is a support and development tool for the Youth Work sector providing a structured framework through which to consider and enhance Youth Work in Co Donegal. The essential aim of the NQSF is to review and assess youth work and to assist continuous development, and is a mechanism through which the youth sector can “better demonstrate its effectiveness and improve practice”. In an effort to establish quality youth work it is important to work from an evidence based approach using evidence informed programmes to meet the needs of young people. Two youth organisations have completed Year 2 of the process; Foróige DECK Youth Development Project and Youth Work Ireland: Donegal Youth Service. Involve, the Youth Organisation for Young Travellers based in Donegal Travellers Project has completed Year 1. Progress Reports were completed and provided to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).

Peace and Reconciliation Programme (P and R)

Peace and Reconciliation Programme (P and R) with Youth Organisations in Co Donegal through Donegal County Council / Donegal CDB / Donegal Peace Partnership. Intercultural, Diversity, Citizenship and Equality Training Programme organised for Youth organisations in Co Donegal. The Youth Officer is a member of Restorative Practices Working Group for Schools, Youthreach Centres and Youth Organisations in Co Donegal. These projects are supported by the Peace III Programme, managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by Donegal County Council.

Co Donegal Children Services Committee

The Children's Services Committee is responsible for improving the lives of children and families at local and community level through integrated planning, working and service delivery. The Youth Officer is a member of Co Donegal Youth Mental Health Youth Participation Sub- Group Jigsaw Donegal Project, Centre for Youth Mental Health for young people and also a member of the Safe and Secure and the Education and Learning sub-groups.

Local Youth Club Grant Scheme (LYCGS)

€42,480 was administered in small grants to 72 youth clubs/groups across the county under the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme for recreational and educational activities; running costs, administration, leader training, purchasing equipment and special informal educational and training programmes. The Local Youth Club Grant Scheme is in recognition of the diverse range of voluntary youth clubs/groups in existence and is broken into two categories Youth Work Club Grant and Youth Activity Club Grant. Practical benefits of the LYCGS for clubs/groups are that volunteer-led provision is a crucially important element of service provision; a thematically broad area of provision of activities and association that meets the diverse needs and ambitions of young people; and is a highly cost-effective and wide-reaching infrastructure – predicated on volunteerism.

Special Projects For Youth

Annual Reports and Renewal Funding Applications were sent to DCYA including:

- Daybreak Programme
- Letterkenny Youth Information Centre
- Donegal Town Youth Information Centre and Youth Project
- Foróige Regional Youth Development Scheme

Comhairle na nÓg Dhún na nGall/Donegal Youth Council

The Youth Officer is a member of the Steering Group of Comhairle na nÓg. The Youth Officer is also a member of the sub- group that successfully oversaw the transition to a new election process. The process was part of a nine month long project that aimed to create more opportunities for young people in Co Donegal to have their voice and opinions heard by Donegal Youth Council and to get involved in the decisions that affect them across the county.

Youth Drugs/Alcohol Education and Prevention Project

Youth Drugs and Alcohol Service

Funding was provided to develop and support a community wide approach to drugs education and ensuring (i) the involvement of young people in the design and delivery of drugs education programmes and (ii) the involvement of parents. This Programme is funded in conjunction with the North West Regional Drugs Task Force and is implemented by the Foróige Youth Organisation.

7 Highlights



1

Abbey Vocational School



Cast of Abbey Vocational School's Rock Musical 2012.

Successful Abbey Vocational School U-14 Team who won County Championship.



2

Coláiste Ailigh



Turning of first sod for new school building for Coláiste Ailigh.

Coláiste Ailigh support for Trocaire.



3

Coláiste na Carraige



Coláiste na Carraige Senior Football Champions 2012.

Coláiste na Carraige receive Science Olympiad Awards.



4

Coláiste Cineál Eoghain



Coláiste Chineál Eoghain's Christmas Show 2012.

Coláiste Chineál Eoghain attend National F1 Championships.



5

Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille



Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille girls triumph at Tory Feis.

Tomás Vance Flanagan – Coláiste Pobail Cholmcille wins Poetry Competition.



7 Highlights



6

Crana College



Crana College School Choir supporting Simon Community.

Crana College School receives Science Award.



7

Deele College



Deele College win School Drama Title.

Deele College Students at Young Scientist Exhibition 2012.



8

Errigal College



Student Niall Foody from Errigal College lands Entrepreneurship Award.

Errigal College enjoy School trip to China 2012.



9

Finn Valley College



Finn Valley College Boland and Binchy Groups.

Finn Valley College enjoy school visit to Salou.



10

Gairmscoil Chú Uladh



Gairmscoil Chú Uladh students perform at All Ireland Schools Talent Competition.

Gairmscoil Chú Uladh have a most welcome visit from Sam Maguire.



7 Highlights



11

Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada



Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada are winners of Clár Raidió Gael Linn Competition.

Official opening of new classrooms.



12

Magh Éne College



Magh Éne College entry for Junk Kouture Competition.

Magh Éne College student group at Young Scientist Exhibition.



13

Moville Community College



Moville Community College entry to Junk Kouture Competition.

Moville Community College have a young Boxing Champion.



14

Mulroy College



Mulroy College student Laura Mc Fadden takes part in the Big Bake Off.

Mentoring Programme with Pramerica and Mulroy College students.



15

St. Catherine's Vocational School



St. Catherine's Vocational School students attend Young Scientists 2012.

St. Catherine's Vocational School have a surprise visit from former pupil Seamie Coleman.



7 Highlights



16

Adult Education



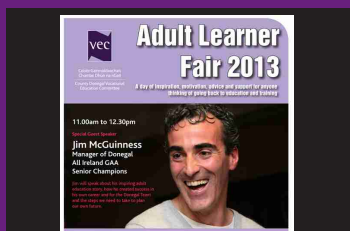
Finn Valley Centre for Education.

Volunteering and Women in Public Life –
Workshop Mevagh Resource Centre.



17

Adult Learner Guidance



Jim McGuinness as Guest Speaker at Annual
Learner Fair.

Students help out at Annual Learner Fair.



18

Back to Education (BTEI)



Ard Scoil Lions Club.

Magheraroarty Community Care Group
complete Manual Handling Training.



19

Community Education



At the Community Education Seminar 2013. – Cróna
Gallagher (Adult Education Officer, Co Donegal VEC), Arno
Bulolas, Baroness May Blood, MBE, Méabh Mhic Gairbheith
(Community Education Facilitator) and Gerard Holmes

Group from Dore Community Centre, Gweedore in
attendance at Seminar.



20

Diploma in Drugs & Alcohol Awareness



Awards Presentations at University of
Limerick 2012.

Brochure Cover on Course Information
2012.



7 Highlights



21

Gartan Outdoor Education Centre



Gartan OEC host European Youth Tour with 160 cyclists all under 16 participating.

22

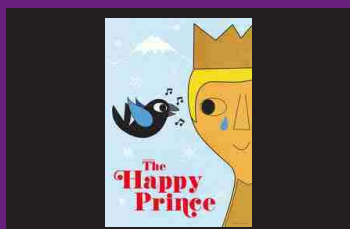
Information Technology



ITTC support Relay for Life.

24

Music Education



Poster ad for concert – The Happy Prince.

DMEP received Award 2012.



EU Concert.



EU Concert.



25

Partnership



Donegal Road Safety Working Group at the Road Safety Roadshow 2012.

7 Highlights



26

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)



VTOS Class in Milford AETC – preparing for sponsored walk.

27

Youthreach



Youthreach make history – Sarah Jane and Claire elected to Donegal Youth Council.

Buncrana Youthreach reunion.



8 Appendices



Appendices

8 Appendices



8.1 Appendix I

8.1.1. Members of Co Donegal VEC Audit Committee

Chairperson - Clr Jimmy Kavanagh
Mr Peter Cutliffe / Ms Mary Ellen Orphen
Clr Martin Farren
Clr Dessie Larkin
Mr Francis McDaid
Clr Philip McGlynn
Clr Elizabeth McIntyre

8.1.2. Members of Co Donegal VEC Finance Sub-Committee

Chairperson Clr Pádraig O'Dochartaigh
Clr David Alcorn
Clr Michelle Bradley
Clr Joe Doherty/Clr Michael Grant
Clr Ian McGarvey
Ms Bernie Mulhern
Mr Alan Thompson
Mr Shaun Purcell, Chief Executive

8.1.3. Adult Education Board

Mr Chris Darby	Association of Principals of Secondary Schools
Ms Aideen Doherty	County Development Board (Community and Enterprise Unit)
Mr Anthony Doogan	Association of Principals of Vocational Schools/Colleges
Ms Sinead Gillespie	Co Donegal VEC Committee representative
Ms Marrietta Herraghty	Co Donegal VEC Committee representative
Mr Art Mc Grath	Teagasc
Mr Patsy Mc Vicar	Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools (ACCS)
Ms Kate Morgan	Ballymote FRC
Ms Martina Needham	Co. Donegal VEC
Mr Alan O'Baoid	Údarás na Gaeltachta
Ms Mary O'Malley	FÁS
Ms Anita O'Rourke	SIPTU
Mr John O'Connell	Irish Business & Employers Confederation (IBEC)
Mr Charles Sweeney	Donegal County Council
Ms Anne Marie Ward	Health Services Executive (West)
Mr Shaun Purcell	Co. Donegal VEC
Ms Cróna Gallagher	Co Donegal VEC
Dr Martin Gormley	Co. Donegal VEC

8.2 Appendix II - Schools/Colleges/Centres

Schools & Colleges

Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town
Coláiste Ailigh, Leitir Ceannain (Gaelscoil)
Coláiste Chineál Eoghain (Gaelscoil)
Coláiste na Carraige (formerly Carrick Vocational School)
Coláiste Phobail Scoil Colmcille, Oileán Thóraig (Gaelscoil & Island School)
Crana College, Buncrana
Deele College, Raphoe
Errigal College, Letterkenny
Finn Valley College, Stranorlar
Gairmscoil Chú Uladh, Béal an Átha Móir (Gaelscoil)
Gairmscoil Mhic Diarmada, Arranmore Island (Island School)
Magh Éne College, Bundoran
Moville Community College
Mulroy College, Milford
St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs

Adult Education & Training Centres/ Youthreach

Adult Education & Training Centre - Donegal Town (Ard Scoil na gCeithre Máistir)
Adult Education & Training Centre - Donegal Town (Drumcliff)
Adult Education & Training Centre – Letterkenny
Adult Education & Training Centre -Milford
Adult Education & Training Centre/Youthreach - Ballyshannon
Adult Education & Training Centre/Youthreach – Buncrana
Adult Education & Training Centre/Youthreach - Gort a'Choice
Centre for Education - Youthreach - Letterkenny
Youthreach Centre – Glengad
Youthreach Centre - Lifford

8.3 Appendix III – Abbreviations & Key Reference

Parent	refers to Parent or Guardian
Student	refers to Student/Trainee/Learner
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASIST	Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CDB	County Development Board
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
BTEI	Back To Education Initiative
DALGS	Donegal Adult Learner Guidance Service
DES	Department of Education & Science
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools
DSP	Department of Social Protection
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence
EO	Education Officer
FETAC	Further Education & Training Awards Council
GCCC	Government Construction Contracts Committee
HACAP	Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, Inc.
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICE	Internal Centre Education
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IVEA	Irish Vocational Education Association
JCSP	Junior Certificate Schools Programme
LCA	Leaving Certificate Applied
LCVP	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
LET	Leárgas Programme
LDS	Leadership Development for Schools
LGBT	The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transge < http://www.gaycenter.org/ > nder
LMESP	Local Music Education Service Partnership
LYIT	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
NBSS	National Behavioural Support Services
NCGE	National Centre for Guidance in Education
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NEPS	National Education Psychological Service
NEWB	National Education Welfare Board
NFTE	National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship
NUI	National University of Ireland
QA	Quality Assurance
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RSE	Relationship and Sexuality Education
SEN	Special Education Needs
SESS	Special Education Support Service
SDPI	School Development Planning Initiative
SLSS	Second Level Support Service
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
STTC	Senior Traveller Training Centre
TLT	Third Level Trainee Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme
TUI	Teachers Union of Ireland
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VTOS	Voluntary Training Opportunity Scheme
WSE	Whole School Evaluation



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
*Donegal Education and
Training Board*

Administrative Offices

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Co. Donegal

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The Annual Report 2012 was compiled by:
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