



A N R O I N N | **DEPARTMENT OF**
OIDEACHAIS | **EDUCATION**
AGUS SCILEANNA | **AND SKILLS**

Circular 0068/2010

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCHOOL BUILDING UNIT

To: The Management Authorities of National Schools

Grant Scheme for Playground and PE Equipment in Primary Schools

A Playground and PE Equipment Renewal Grant is being provided to primary schools to meet requirements arising in respect of playground and PE equipment. The grant is allocated on the basis of €1,000 per school and €10 per capita. The per capita calculation uses the Department's official record of enrolment figures as at 30 September 2009. The grant will be added to the allocation to issue under the Minor Works Grant 2010/2011 in November 2010.

The recent research paper from the Economic and Social Research Institute "Designing Primary Schools for the Future" placed a strong emphasis on a variety of playground and sports equipment to cater for the needs of different pupil groups. The paper also noted that pupils acquire social, cognitive and physical skills through play as well as an opportunity to take a break from school work.

Most adults have become increasingly concerned about issues affecting health and well-being and are more aware than ever of the value and pleasure of physical exercise and sport. Physical exercise and sport are essential elements of a balanced lifestyle and develop character, teamwork and leadership. The positive attitudes to physical well-being nurtured in formal schooling can continue to flourish through regular participation all during life. One of the key purposes of this grant is to further aid the educational arena in which physical education and sport can thrive.

Each school will be aware of its own specific requirement regarding playground and PE equipment and this grant is issued to facilitate schools to address such requirements. The Appendix provides some guidance on PE equipment appropriate to primary schools. As schools should continue to be vigilant in particular in respect of any health and safety issues in relation to goalposts in schools, a copy of the National Standards Authority of Ireland instrument “Playing Field Equipment – Goals” is included with this circular and should be retained by schools for consultation and appropriate action as circumstances dictate.

The purchase of playground and PE equipment within the shortest timeframe will allow the current cohort of pupils to have access to new playground and PE equipment for the maximum period prior to completing their first level education. Schools must adhere to the tender procedures and record maintenance as set out in Appendix B of Circular Letter 0141/2006 “Grant Scheme for Minor Works to National School Properties”. Schools should ensure that the equipment purchased is suitable for their pupils’ use and suppliers should certify, where appropriate, that it meets the relevant Irish, European or British standard.

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PRIMARY SCHOOL PE EQUIPMENT LIST

This equipment list is for indoor or outdoor use, where appropriate. It is not envisaged that any school will require all these items and each school should prioritise its needs from and within the various “strands”.

Athletics Mats for high, long jump and target; high jump poles and cones; skipping ropes, stopwatch, tape and whistle; batons, shot and quoit; discus and javelin (foam), batons; bases, poles and cones (hurdles etc.); agility ladder.
Dance/movement CD player and variety of music; materials to stimulate movement and spatial awareness.
Games Badminton/basketball/bowling/cricket/football/hurling/soccer/camogie/rounders /table-tennis/ tennis/unihoc/volley ball equipment.
Gymnastics Climbing unit consisting of trestles, horizontal poles and ladder; bar box; gymnastic mats (1800x1200x50 mm); balancing benches; wedges to aid rolling; mat trolley; ribbons/scarves for gymnastics/games.
Outdoor and Adventure Activities School map; controls and cards; orienteering punches; markers and cones; compasses.

Note: Schools should ensure that equipment purchased is suitable for their pupils' use and suppliers certify, where relevant, that it meets the Irish, European or British Standard.