

News Bulletin

School Development Planning Initiative

April 2004

www.sdpi.ie

SDPI Programme for 2004

As the School Development Planning Initiative prepares to enter its sixth year, we are pleased to announce the main features of the support programme for 2004.

New Features

The SDPI programme for 2004 will include a number of new components:

SDP Grants: All schools received a Start-up Grant for school development planning in the period 1999–2002. This year, for the first time, schools will be able to apply to the SDPI Office for a further grant towards costs incurred in advancing the SDP process. There will be two categories of grant:

- ◆ **Facilitation Fees Grant**, which will be available only to schools that engage an external facilitator for SDP *to whom fees and expenses are payable*. This grant will enable a school to recoup payments made to an external facilitator, in accordance with ICDU rates of fees and expenses, to a maximum of €700, subject to available resources.
- ◆ **Incidental Costs Grant**, for which all schools are eligible to apply. This small grant can be claimed as a contribution to staff training costs, or incidental costs of school SDP meetings (such as venue hire), or the cost of SDP resource materials (such as books, periodicals, handouts). The amount payable to each school that applies for this grant will be determined in part by the total number of applications submitted. It is envisaged, however, that grant payments in this category will be in the range €250–€500, subject to available resources.

From May 2004, grant application forms will be available **on request** from the SDPI Office and from Regional Coordinators. They will also be on the SDPI website – www.sdpi.ie.

Cluster-based Support Groups: Following requests from schools, SDPI is piloting cluster-based support groups in a number of areas in 2004. These support groups will enable teachers with a particular interest in school development planning, such as designated school SDP coordinators, to develop skills and explore approaches and materials relevant to the planning process in their schools, with the assistance of an SDPI Regional Coordinator. The programme for each cluster will be determined by the needs of the participants. It is envisaged that each group will meet twice or three times a year.

If you are interested in participating in a cluster-based support group for SDP, please contact your Regional Coordinator or the SDPI Office.

Board of Management Seminars: Recognising the level of responsibility for school planning that is accorded to boards of

management in the Education Act, SDPI plans to collaborate with a number of agencies in the provision of seminars for board members. SDPI will cooperate with Drumcondra Education Centre in initiating a pilot programme for boards in Dublin north city and county in the autumn. In addition, Regional Coordinators will endeavour to provide briefings for individual boards of management on request, subject to the availability of personnel.

A leaflet on school development planning for boards of management will be published in the autumn.

Ábhar Acmhainne i nGaeilge: Cuirfear an leagan Gaeilge den *Tuarascáil Náisiúnta Dul Chun Cinn* i gcló go luath. Déanfar leathnú ar an réimse ábhar acmhainne a bheidh ar fáil i nGaeilge. Táthar ag súil go mbeidh leagan Gaeilge den suíomh idirlín ar fáil roimh dheireadh na scoilbhliana seo chugainn.

European Project: SDPI has been asked to participate in a European project entitled *A Study of the Development of Non-Curricular School Policies in a School Development Planning Context*. The first working meeting of project participants will take place in June at an international conference hosted by Ireland as part of the EU presidency.

Continuing Features

Services to Individual Schools: SDPI Regional Coordinators will continue to provide information, advice and guidance on SDP to schools on an individual basis.

Regional Seminars: Following the success of the programmes held in 2002 and 2003, a further series of Regional Seminars will be offered in the autumn. Invitations will be sent to schools, and details will be published on the SDPI website.

NUI Galway Diploma in School Planning: The 2003/04 Diploma course will conclude with a national summer school, which will take place in Galway, 21–25 June. The NUI Galway summer school is open only to participants who are registered for the Diploma with the University for the 2003/04 academic year.

For further information on the Diploma, see **page 3**.

SDP Summer School 2004: SDPI will also offer a summer school that is open to all post-primary teachers. This summer school will take place in Dublin City University, 24–25 August. Turn to **page 2** for further details.

SDPI Website – www.sdpi.ie: The website will continue to be developed as a means of making information and resource materials readily available to schools. See **page 2**.

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Congratulations, Mary!



Mary Forde
SDPI Regional Coordinator
2000–2004

We congratulate our friend and colleague, Mary Forde, on her appointment as Principal of Presentation College, Athenry.

Mary has worked with the School Development Planning Initiative ever since it was set up in 1999. She served first as a part-time facilitator, before joining the full-time team as Regional Coordinator for the West in August 2000.

Mary has played a key role in the development of SDPI, providing advisory and facilitation services to schools throughout her region and beyond, giving inservice seminars for representatives of hundreds of schools, and preparing resource

materials on a range of planning issues, most notably on learning and teaching and staff development. Ba í Máire a spreag agus a d'eagraigh na seimineáir a chuir an Tionscnamh ar fáil do na scoileanna Gaeltachta agus Gaeilge. One of her major achievements has been the establishment on a pilot basis of the Higher Diploma in Professional Education Studies (School Planning) in association with NUI Galway.

We are happy that Mary is willing to continue her association with SDPI, acting henceforth as adviser to the coordination team. We wish her success and fulfilment in her new role as school principal.

SDPI Summer School 2004

Summer schools are a hallowed part of SDPI tradition. Participants have found them an enjoyable means of developing skills, sharing information and experiences, and exploring good practice in relation to school planning.



When?

The 8th SDPI Summer School will take place in **Dublin City University, 24–25 August 2004**. Accommodation and meals will be provided for participants on campus, and travel expenses will be paid in accordance with rates approved by the In-Career Development Unit.

The formal Summer School programme will focus on major issues in school planning, including curricular matters, SDP coordination, school self-evaluation, interculturalism and inclusion. Participants will be offered a choice of workshops. There will also be plenty of opportunity for informal discussion and networking.

Who?

Who may attend the SDPI Summer School? Any teacher with a particular interest in school planning! Participants in previous summer schools have included principals, deputy-principals, school SDP coordinators, teachers on planning committees, Education Centre directors, support service personnel, part-time SDP facilitators ... In the allocation of places this year, preference will be given to those who are currently leading or coordinating the SDP process in their own schools and to active SDP facilitators. Early application is advisable.

How to apply:

Complete the enclosed application form (which can also be downloaded from the website – www.sdpi.ie) and return it to the SDPI Office as soon as possible, but no later than **14 May 2004**. Contact details for the SDPI Office are listed on page 4 of this Newsletter. If you have any queries, Jacqueline or Patricia will be happy to assist you.

Waiting list:

If the number of applications for the summer school exceeds the number of available places, a waiting list will be maintained from which any vacancies that arise will be filled. Disappointed applicants can also choose to go on a standby list in case there are any last-minute cancellations in August.

What participants have said about previous SDPI summer schools:

•
"The summer school gave me an excellent overview of the processes involved in school development planning."

•
"I found the summer school extremely challenging and enjoyable, and each workshop was very helpful!"

•
"Excellent facilitators, useful handouts, varied approaches ..."

•
"Well-structured and organised."

•
"Opportunity to learn from others in a group setting."

•
"A wonderful few days – enriching and educational."

•
"The practical nature of the course was very helpful."

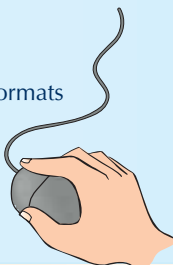
•
"Very focused, very practical, very clear, very good momentum."

•
"Excellent materials..."

SDPI Website News

You can access information and resource materials through our website—www.sdpi.ie:

- ◆ Details of SDPI services and programmes
- ◆ Contact information for SDPI Team
- ◆ SDPI publications in HTML and downloadable formats
- ◆ Workshop materials on key aspects of planning
- ◆ Links to other useful web resources



Recent additions to the SDPI Website:

- ◆ Seminar materials on Learning and Teaching, Action Planning, Policy Formulation, and School Self-Evaluation
- ◆ *School Development Planning Initiative National Progress Report*

Coming in September:

- ◆ School Guidance Planning—supplementary materials to assist guidance planning in accordance with recent guidelines from the Department of Education and Science and from NCGE
- ◆ Ábhar acmhainne breise i nGaeilge

NUI Galway Diploma in School Planning

Since 2002, the SDPI Team has been engaged in piloting a Higher Diploma in Professional Education Studies (School Planning), which was initiated by NUI Galway in partnership with the Department of Education and Science. The diploma was proposed by NUI Galway as a means of contributing to the ongoing support and empowerment of schools in the planning process. It was designed to provide accreditation for training conducted by the SDPI Team over the course of an academic year. It was envisaged that, for some participants, it could also offer pathways to higher post-graduate degrees.

The Course

The aim of the diploma programme is to build capacity for effective planning by enabling participants to develop the relevant skills and capabilities within a sound theoretical context. The course consists of three taught modules and a practical experience component. The taught modules are:

1. **The Context of School Planning**
 - i. The National and International Context of Policy Development
 - ii. Local Issues in Policy Development
2. **The Planning Process**
 - i. Models of and Approaches to the Planning Process
 - ii. Individuals and the Change Process
3. **Facilitation Skills**
 - i. Facilitation
 - ii. Presentation Skills
 - iii. Group Dynamic Skills

Participants are assessed on three types of assignment: essay, case-study, and portfolio.

Where and When

The diploma course is delivered through a combination of regionally-based outreach sessions and central summer school sessions. Most outreach sessions take place at weekends (Friday evening/Saturday) between October and April – generally, one per month. The course culminates with a week-long summer school in late June. The locations for



outreach sessions are selected in accordance with the pattern of applications. A regional centre can be established only where there are sufficient applicants from the area to make it viable and where personnel are available to deliver the course. To date, there have been regional centres in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Ennis, Sligo, Kilkenny and Portlaoise (not all in the same year!) Other venues may be considered if numbers warrant. The concluding summer school takes place in NUI, Galway.

Reduced Fees

In 2002, the full fee for an equivalent diploma in NUI Galway was €2,800. In the first and second years of the pilot phase, the tuition element of the fee for this diploma was met by the Department of Education and Science. Participants were required to pay only the NUI Galway student registration fee, to cover items such as library services and examination and certification fees. 2004/05 will be the final year of the pilot phase. Accordingly, this is likely to be the last year in which the Department will pay the tuition fees. The student registration fee for the Higher Diploma in Professional Education Studies (School Planning) in 2004/05 will be €580.

Benefits

The Diploma course offers an opportunity for:

- ◆ Development of skills relevant to school planning
- ◆ Collaborative learning through dialogue with fellow professionals from a diversity of backgrounds
- ◆ Reflective practice
- ◆ Exploration of the “bigger picture” regarding education policy
- ◆ Updating re current developments
- ◆ Enjoyable networking

Apply for 2004/5

If you are interested in doing the diploma course, please contact the SDPI Office for further information and an application form. Registration for 2004/5 must be completed by **10 September, 2004**.

First Class Conferring

The first conferring ceremony for the Higher Diploma in Professional Education Studies (School Planning) took place in NUI, Galway last October. We congratulate the pioneering Class of 2003, who are pictured above in their academic regalia.

Useful Resources

Did you know? ...

61% of schools profiled by SDPI identified behaviour management as a planning priority.

Useful resources on this issue include:

- ◆ *Achieving Positive Behaviour – A Practical Guide*, by Patricia Dwyer (Marino Institute of Education, 2003)
- ◆ *Positive Discipline – An Irish Educational Appraisal and Practical Guide*, by Joe O’Hara, Stephen J. Byrne and Gerry McNamara (Dublin City University, 2000)

- ◆ *Bullying: Don’t Suffer in Silence – An Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools*, coordinated by Profession Peter Smith, Goldsmiths College, University of London, available on the web at www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/pack/02.pdf
- ◆ *Positive Behaviour*, Profexcel online course – www.profexcel.net/positivebehaviour.html
- ◆ Website of Anti-Bullying Centre, TCD – www.abc.tcd.ie
- ◆ *The Cool School Programme*, anti-bullying programme developed by North-Eastern Health Board, available at www.nehb.ie/nehb/publications/reports/bullying.pdf

Did you know? ...

51% of schools profiled identified learning support as a planning priority.

Useful resources include:

- ◆ Website of Irish Learning Support Association – www.ilsa.ie
- ◆ Website of Special Education Support Service – www.sess.ie
- ◆ *The Learning Support Teacher – A Practical Handbook*, by Thérèse McPhillips (Blackrock Education Centre, 2003). Deals with learning support in primary schools, but offers much useful information relevant to second level.

SDPI National Office



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SDPI Regional Coordinators

West Galway, Mayo and part of Clare

There is a vacancy in this area created by Mary Forde's taking up her new position. For the present, please contact the **SDPI Office**, and Jacqueline or Patricia will put you in touch with a member of SDPI Team



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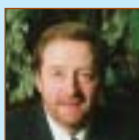


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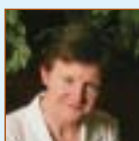


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