



# **County Cavan Vocational Education Committee**

## **Education Plan – Adult Education Service**

## Profile of County Cavan Vocational Education Committee

### Introduction

County Cavan Vocational Education Committee is one of thirty three Vocational Education Committees operating within the State and has responsibility for delivering a range of services including second-level education, adult and further education and other support services to young people and adults within County Cavan. County Cavan Vocational Education Committee was established following the enactment of the Vocational Education Act, 1930. The Vocational Education Act 1930 is the foundation act for VEC organisation and services and is read in the light of amending acts as listed, particularly the 2001 Act. It empowers VEC's to provide Continuation Education, Technical Education and Higher Technical Education and to make provision for their progressive development. VECs are also empowered to make grants to students in accordance with schemes approved by the Minister for Education. These provisions are the bases of the establishment and maintenance of post-primary schools. They also establish the authority for the provision of further education and adult education services and for student supports by VECs. The Act also set out the basic guidelines for the operation of the committee in terms of the frequency and conduct of meetings. Some of these provisions have been amended by the 2001 Amendment Act. County Cavan VEC is comprised of nineteen members who represent local authority, education and wider community interests. The Chief Executive Officer is the organisation's executive head and he is supported by a senior management team.

### Modernisation and Change: Recent Legislation

Legislation which directly or indirectly impacts on the work of County Cavan VEC is listed below. This listing does not purport to be comprehensive. A wide range of legislative provision in the areas of public administration, contract law, employment law and other areas apply to the activities of vocational education committees. The legislation listed below contains those legislative provisions of most significance. The text of these acts, and others, may be acquired on the internet at [www.irishstatutebook.ie](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie) or from the Head Office of County Cavan VEC. The commentaries presented here do not purport to be legal interpretations and should not be represented as such.

#### The Principal Acts:

- Vocational Education Act 1930 and Vocational Education (Amendment) Acts, 1936, 1944, 1970 & 2001.

### **Related Education Acts:**

- Education Act, 1998
- Education (Welfare) Act, 2000
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Bill, 2003. (Currently before the Oireachtas)
- The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999
- Youth Work Act, 2001
- The Teaching Council Act, 2001

### **Acts with Direct Implications for VECs**

- Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act, 1993.
- Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995
- Standards in Public Office Act, 2001
- The Official Languages Act, 2003
- The Children Act, 2001
- The Ombudsman for Children Act, 2002
- Data Protection Acts, 1988 to 2003
- Freedom of Information Act, 1997, as amended 2003
- Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act, 2004

### **Relevant Employment Legislation - a Selection**

- The Organisation of Working time Act, 1997
- The Employment Equality Act, 1998(& Bill, 2004)
- The Equal Status Act, 2000
- The Protection of Employees (Part-time Work) Act, 2001
- The Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act, 2003

## **Adult Education**

### **Adult Education Officer: Ms Fiona Maloney**

County Cavan Vocational Education Committee provides a wide range of education and training, support services and special projects in addition to the support of Boards of Management of its schools, Cavan Institute and Youthreach. The Adult Education Service has a major responsibility in this area as the work of this sector is to identify and meet the needs of specific target groups such as homemakers, people seeking to return to work, unemployed persons and the education and training of members of the travelling community. The following programmes are offered at various locations throughout the county; Basic Education including Literacy, Community Education, Guidance, Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS), Post-Leaving Certificate Courses and Back to Education programmes

## Adult Literacy

Since 1987 over 15,000 people have participated in Adult Literacy Programmes delivered by County Cavan VEC. These programmes provide help on a private and confidential basis for those experiencing difficulty with reading, writing, spelling, numeracy, form-filling and letter writing. Tuition is offered on a one-to-one or small group basis and the service is free of charge. Other services provided include teaching English as a second language for refugees and migrant workers, basic computer classes and assistance with Driver Theory Test. Increased investment in recent years has allowed provision to be expanded to where we now have literacy classes available throughout the county. New forms of provision to meet particular client groups' needs have been developed such as workplace literacy, family literacy, traveller literacy, and high support literacy. Our literacy participants can progress to other courses to increase their job skills and life skills. These include FETAC Communications, Maths, Computers and Personal Effectiveness Skills.

## Youthreach

Youthreach is a two year programme of training and work experience course for early school leavers provided in an out of school setting. The aim of the programme is to develop the core skills required by young people to access second chance further education and employment. Youthreach bridges the gap between school and employment and paves the way for the young to become employed adults. It offers participants the opportunity to identify and pursue viable options within adult life, and provides them with the opportunities to acquire certification. The Youthreach Centres in Kingscourt, Cootehill and Cavan is offering programmes of second chance education for young people who have left school with few or no formal qualifications. Youthreach is full time and is open to those aged 15-20 who have left school early. Students can complete exams such as the junior cert and the following FETAC awarded courses:

Art/Design	Food and Nutrition
Career Information	Health Related Fitness
Caring For Children	Maths
Child Development	Personal Effectiveness
Computer Literacy	Preparation for Work
Craft Wood	Video Expression
Food and Cookery	Work Orientation

## **Adult Guidance and Counselling Support Service**

Cavan VEC has established the Adult Education Guidance Information Service (AEGIS) in 2005 as part of a countrywide initiative to promote and support adult education. It offers information, advice and guidance on training, education and careers for adults who are interested in returning to education. It has an Information Library open to the public with information on courses in Cavan and nationwide. AEGIS supports adults who may have left school early or did not have the opportunity to further their education. The target groups are; current and potential Vocational Training and Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) students, Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) students and adults interested in undertaking any Adult Education or Community Education courses.

## **Community Education Service**

The Community Education Service is funded by the Department of Education and Science. As proposed in the White paper on Adult Education 2000, a Community Education Facilitator (CEF) was appointed within County Cavan in 2002. The main responsibility of the CEF is to promote and develop Community Education activities within the entire County of Cavan. The purpose of this scheme is to assist community and voluntary groups to deliver a range of educational activities for disadvantaged adults within their community. Presently there are over 43 Community Education groups engaged in over 60 education programmes in 21 centres throughout County Cavan.

## **VTOS**

VTOS (Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme) aims to help the long-term unemployed get back into paid employment by providing education and training. The scheme was established in County Cavan VEC in 1989. Cavan VEC has an allocation of 40 places. As the population of Cavan grows, the number of VTOS eligible people will grow and our enrolment numbers will rise.

The background of the page features a faded, light-colored image of a classroom. In the foreground, a young girl with blonde hair, wearing a blue and white striped sweater, is seated at a desk and has her right hand raised. Behind her, other students are visible, some looking at books or papers. The overall scene is bright and airy, with a soft focus.

## Education Plan – Adult Education Section

### Priority 1: Development of Infrastructure

**Goal:** To develop the infrastructure to cater for new programmes, increased learner numbers and for greater integration of the Adult Education service.

#### Objectives/Actions

- To expand and upgrade facilities for all Programmes and Services
- Increase accessibility to all service users
- To ensure that premises currently in use satisfy all Health and Safety regulations and requirements
- To introduce a Management Information System into the service

## Priority 2: Organisational and Staff Issues

**Aim:** To develop appropriate structures, systems and supports for staff members.

### Objectives/Actions

- As part of the Sustaining Progress Partnership Process to review the current organisational structures and the roles and responsibilities of staff across all the sections.
- To review the effectiveness of existing policies, structures and procedures and implement measures arising from the outcomes and findings of objectives.
- To develop the Performance Management and Development System in line with National Guidelines.
- To develop a framework of policies, procedures and supports for professional development of all staff.
- Establish structures within the Section to enhance the exchange of information
- Develop Adult Education Service Tutor Handbook

### Priority 3: Quality Assurance

**Aim:** To promote and develop a comprehensive and integrated quality assurance programme for teaching, learning and management.

#### Objectives/Actions

- Establish a Quality Assurance Team to research, design and support the implementation of the FETAC Q.A. initiative in all centres of Adult Education offering FETAC Programmes.
- As part of the Sustaining Progress process to undertake an audit of service standards and performance measures in all sections and in all elements of sections including administration, tuition, management and other support elements.
- The effective implementation the NALA Quality Framework
- To effective implementation the Youthreach Quality Framework



## Priority 4: Support Services for learners

**Aim:** To provide an integrated learner support service to encourage participation in programmes and the quality of learners' experience while on programmes.

### Objectives/Actions

- Provide information, advice and guidance to all adult learners within the Adult Education service.
- The VEC will place an increased focus on the development of childcare facilities in conjunction with the community to enhance return to education opportunities for adults in the county.
- Develop a handbook of policies and procedures for all adult learners taking part in programmes
- Investigate the possibility of providing transport for adult learners from isolated rural areas
- Support all adult learners attending VTOS/BTEI courses

## Priority 5: Co-operation and Partnerships with Other Organisations

**Aim:** To develop and sustain co-operation and partnerships with other providers of Adult Education.

### Objectives/Actions

- To maintain strategic alliances and partnerships with bodies such as Cavan County Council, FAS, HSE, CDB, DSFA, Cavan Partnership, Teagasc, Leader, Co. Childcare Committee and to develop and establish alliances with other State and Semi-state Bodies, Voluntary and Community Organisations.
- To co-operate and collaborate with the Bodies mentioned above in the provision and development of programmes and services.
- To submit approved proposals to the DES for the expansion of new co-operative ventures between Co Cavan VEC Adult Education Service and other partners.

## Priority 6: Programme Development

**Aim 1: To expand the range of Adult Education Programmes which meet identified needs of learners and to extend awareness of the Adult Education Services offered by Co Cavan VEC Adult Education Service**

### Objectives/Actions

- Respond promptly to all enquiries.
- Develop a database of all learners.
- Consult with local communities.
- Draft and implement marketing plans.
- Examine and evaluate existing provision.
- Identify the educational needs of adult learners.
- Develop courses for the community and voluntary sector.
- Ensure that courses offer accreditation options.
- Ensure that courses offer progression pathways.
- Increase provision of self financing courses for businesses and the professions.
- Establish a publicity/communications team within the section to liaise with other Co Cavan VEC sections

