

**EDUCATION (FORMER RESIDENTS OF CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS FOR
CHILDREN) FINANCE BOARD**

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

1. Introduction

Section 32 (1) of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Amendment) Act 2005 provides that the Education (Former Residents of Certain Institutions for Children) Finance Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall not later than 31 March in each year prepare and publish in such form and manner as it considers appropriate, a report of its activities and proceedings during the preceding year.

2. Establishment of Board

The Minister for Education and Science, as provided for in Section 23 of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Amendment) Act 2005, signed an order establishing the Education (Former Residents of Certain Institutions for Children) Finance Board on a statutory basis with effect from 17 February 2006.

The composition of the Board comprises a Chairperson and eight ordinary members all of whom are appointed by the Minister for Education and Science. The members are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds with a particular provision that four of the members shall be persons who are each former residents of one or more of the Institutions.

The following were members of the Board during the period covered by this report:

- Richard Langford, Chairperson
- Patrick Walsh, Deputy Chairperson (until 19.02.2008)
- Brian Mooney Deputy Chairperson (from 19.02.2008)
- Inez Bailey
- John Brennan
- Christine Buckley
- Chris Heaphy (from 05.11.2008)
- Jacqui Kavanagh (until 27.08.2008)
- Michael O'Brien
- Jacinta Stewart

The Board held ten meetings during 2007. In addition sub groups of Board members met between Board meetings on a further twelve occasions to deal with the approval of grant applications so that the payment of such grants could be expedited.

Reports of all meetings of the Board from the date of establishment have been made available on the Board's website www.educationfinanceboard.com so that key stakeholders and other interested parties can be regularly updated on the Board's activities.

3. Functions of Board

The principal functions of the Board laid down in the 2005 Act are

- To pay grants to former residents in institutions and their relatives to assist the former residents or relatives to avail of such educational services as the Board may determine.
- To determine and publish the criteria by reference to which it will make decisions on applications to the Board for the payment of such grants.
- To make available to former residents and their relatives information in relation to the educational services in respect of which such grants are payable.

4. Criteria for Payment of Grants

Prior to the establishment of the Board grants were paid to eligible applicants under an administrative scheme operated under the aegis of the Minister for Education and Science. The criteria by reference to which decisions were made on applications for the payment of such grants were determined by an ad hoc committee set up to operate the administrative scheme. The total draw down from the fund under the administrative scheme amounted to €2484992.

As it did not wish to disrupt the momentum generated under the administrative scheme the Board on its establishment decided, pending the determination of revised criteria, to continue on an interim basis with the criteria used by its predecessor ad hoc committee subject to one minor amendment which it made to have regard to the detail of the legislation.

Detailed consideration was then given to reviewing the previous and interim criteria with a view to determining revised criteria which would build on experience to date of the ad hoc committee and of the Board itself. Arising from this review the Board determined revised criteria which it has published for implementation in the case of grant applications received on or after 17 November 2006. Arrangements are in place for the criteria to be subject to review from time to time. The criteria in operation at 31 December 2008 are detailed in the attached Appendix A.

It is intended that the review of criteria from time to time will continue during 2009 to reflect emerging patterns in grant applications and expenditure.

5. Finance

The funds available to meet the expenditure of the Board in the performance of its functions are identified in Section 26 of the 2005 Act. These funds arise from the contribution of €12700000 from the Religious Congregations under the terms of the Deed of 05 June 2002 augmented by interest earned on unspent amounts from which must be subtracted any amounts paid by the Minister for Education and Science before the passing of the 2005 Act as grants to former residents in Institutions and to the relatives of such persons to assist those former residents or their relatives to avail of education services.

Section 26 (2) provides that the National Treasury Management Agency shall establish an investment account into which the amount paid to it under Section 26(1) shall be deposited. The history of that account to 31 December 2008 is detailed in the attached Appendix B and shows a balance of €6,855,421 at that date.

Having taken account of expenditure to 31 December 2008 the total funds available to the Board at that date was € 7,349,725 made up as follows:

Investment Account Balance	6,855,421
Funds held by City of Dublin VEC at 31 December 2008	560,595
Unspent Balance from ad hoc scheme drawdown	<u>13,010</u>
	7,429,026
Less accrued liabilities at 31 December, 2008	79,301
	<u>7,349,725</u>

6. Accounts and Audits

Section 31 of the 2005 Act provides for the submission of accounts kept in pursuance of this section to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit not later than 3 months after the end of the accounting period to which they relate.

The accounts for the periods from the establishment of the Board on 17 February 2006 to 31 December 2006 and from 01 January 2007 to 31 December 2007 have been audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General and these have been presented by the Board to the Minister. These accounts have been published by the Board and are available on the Board's website.

The accounts for the year ending 31 December 2008 have been prepared and submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit. Immediately after the audit, a copy of such accounts as the Minister directs, together with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General shall be

presented by the Board to the Minister following which they will be published and made available on the Board's website.

7. Grant Approvals

During 2008 the Board approved grants in respect of 1526 applications. The corresponding figures for 2006 and 2007 were 892 and 1200 applications respectively. The overall value of the 1526 approved grants amounted to €1,637,717.

The distribution of the 1526 approved applications is as follows

	2008		2007		2006	
Former Residents	371 (24.3%)	311	(25.9%)	236	(26.5%)	
Children	880 (57.7%)	761	(63.4%)	598	(67.0%)	
Spouses	61 (4.0%)	48	(4.0%)	56	(6.3%)	
Grandchild	203 (13.3%)	76	(6.3%)	01	(0.01%)	
Stepchild	11 (0.7%)	04	(0.3%)	00	(0.0%)	
Group	00 (0.0%)	00	(0.0%)	01	(0.0%)	

The current locations of the 1526 approved applications are as follows

Ireland	1168 (76.5%)	804	(67.0%)	646	(72.4%)
UK	304 (19.9%)	349	(29.1%)	202	(22.7%)
Other	54 (3.6%)	47	(3.9%)	44	(4.9%)

2008 Other (USA 19; Australia 17; Sweden 8; Spain 4; Germany 2; Jersey 1; Austria 1; Netherlands 1; France 1)

2007 Other (USA 20; Australia 16; Sweden 6; Germany 3; Spain 1; Canada 1)

2006 Other (USA 21; Australia 14; Sweden 3; France 3; Spain 1; Canada 1; Portugal 1)

Grants were not awarded in the case of 74 applications which did not satisfy the criteria determined by the Board. 14 (18.9%) of these were from former residents and 60 (81.1%) were from relatives.

The 1526 grants approved during 2008 represent a 27% increase on the 2007 outcome and a 71% increase on the 892 grants which were approved in 2006 in respect of applications received and processed between October 2005 and December 2006. This further most welcome increase in the number of applications approved during 2008 arose from an enhanced publicity campaign by the Board assisted in no small measure by the efforts of the different support groups for former residents and by the outreach services in the UK. The Board hopes that this assistance which is greatly appreciated and valued will continue in the future.

8. Staffing

The initial core staffing consisted of a Secretary/ Manager and an administrative assistant with other staffing being appointed as required on a temporary basis to deal with the processing of applications as they arise.

As the only funds available to the Board towards expenditure in the performance of its functions are those in the investment account established under the provisions of Section 26 (3) of the 2005 Act, the Board has been particularly concerned to utilise those funds to the maximum extent possible in paying grants to former residents and their relatives. While the Board has been careful to minimise expenditure for other purposes, it has kept the staffing numbers under review and has appointed an additional administrative assistant in February 2008 with a view to ensuring that staff levels are sufficient to sustain an appropriate level of services to its growing client base. This has served to diminish significantly any backlog in the processing of applications and to the provision of a more efficient response to any increase in the number of grant applications received.

The City of Dublin VEC continues to provide a payments service and the Board is grateful to the Chairperson, members and CEO of the VEC for this assistance. The Board also greatly appreciates the assistance received during its establishment and as requested thereafter from the staffs of the Residential Institutions Redress and Legal Services Units of the Department of Education and Science and from the Department's Professional Accountant.

9. Contact Details

The Board's offices are located at

3rd Floor Frederick Court, 24/27 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1.

The contact arrangements are:

Telephones	00353 (1)8745708	Lo Call (Ireland) 1890 742742
Fax	00353 (1)8745709	
e-mail	info@educationfinanceboard.com	
Website	www.educationfinanceboard.com	

While the Lo Call facility is available only to callers within Ireland, staff will call back clients telephoning from outside Ireland.

Appendix A

Education (Former Residents of Certain Institutions for Children) Finance Board

Criteria for Awarding Grants

2008

Criteria for Awarding Grants by the Education Finance Board

September 2008

The Education (Former Residents of Certain Institutions for Children) Finance Board

Under the terms of the Indemnity Agreement between the Irish State and 18 religious congregations, dated the 5th June 2002, a fund of €12.7 million is to be used for former residents and their relatives to facilitate them in accessing education programmes.

On 17th February 2006, Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin TD, established a statutory body, the Education Finance Board/An Bord Airgeadais Oideachais, under the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse (Amendment) Act 2005, to administer the fund. The Education Finance Board has replaced the Ad Hoc Committee that managed the fund until the legislation was in place.

The functions of the Board are as follows:

- to determine and publish the criteria for the payment of such grants.
- to pay grants to former residents of institutions and their relatives to assist them in the availing of educational services.
- to provide information in relation to educational services for which grants are payable.

This booklet sets out the Board's criteria for awarding grants. The criteria may be revised from time to time and will be reviewed by the Board not later than September 2009.

The Board's full-time staff will handle applications for grants from former residents and their relatives. The Board welcomes all queries and applications. Should you have any queries or should you wish to make a grant application, please use the contact information in this booklet to speak to a member of staff.

Criteria under which applications for funding are approved by the Board

1. Introduction

The Board intends that the grants to be paid from funds available under Section 26 of the 2005 Act will help applicants use the educational services decided by the Board. The Board will have particular regard to the needs of former residents as well as those of any of their relatives with identifiable gaps in their education which arose as a result of residence in one of the specified institutions.

2. Who may apply for grants

The grants are open to all former residents of the institutions listed in the Residential Institutions Redress Act, 2002 whose residency commenced prior to 11th May 1999 and to their spouse, their sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, stepsons and stepdaughters (relatives).

3. Proof of residency

The relevant laws do not define the term ‘resident’, but it normally means living and sleeping in a place for some time. In general, the Board will consider whether the institution in question may be regarded as the applicant’s home at the time.

Anyone who applies must supply satisfactory written and other appropriate evidence of identity and confirmation of residence in an institution. Relatives must also provide written evidence of their relationship to a former resident. The application form outlines the evidence required.

4. Approved courses and programmes

The Board offers funding to eligible people for a range of approved courses.

Post-school, undergraduate and post-graduate courses

Approved courses should:

- last at least one academic year, and
- ideally, be provided by a publicly-funded institution.

If a suitable course is not available in a publicly-funded institution, the Board may consider applications for suitable courses offered by private bodies.

Approved courses must lead to qualifications that are recognised by a state-approved framework, whether in Ireland or another country.

In Ireland, the qualification must be placed at level 3 or higher in the National Framework of Qualifications.

An arrangement exists to align qualifications in Ireland and the UK. This will inform decisions on appropriate recognition for qualifications from UK courses.

The Board will consider courses not covered by this arrangement individually, to decide if an appropriate recognition for the qualifications can be made.

Approval for other courses may include the following:

Personal development and lifestyle courses

Courses must be provided by a recognised provider or an accredited trainer of the nationally-recognised body.

Driving Lessons (up to 10 hours) To apply for funding for up to 10 hours’ driving lessons, all applicants must include a legally verified copy of a valid provisional driving licence or the original of a valid provisional driving licence with their application form. A former resident who completes the initial 10 hours may be approved for up to another 10 hours if they provide a letter of recommendation from their driving instructor saying how many hours’ tuition they would need to pass the driving test.

Literacy, Numeracy and One-to-One Tuition

The Board will consider these courses according to each applicant’s needs and will need regular reports from the tutor to decide if further one-to-one tuition is needed.

Primary, post-primary school support programmes

Extra tuition (normally one hour a week for each child) This covers extra tuition for school going students by qualified teachers if the school endorses it. The applicant must provide appro-

priate documents, i.e. a copy of the relevant teacher's qualifications; the teacher's PPS Number (RSI or National Insurance number in the UK) and the cost for each session.

After-school activities These might include activities such as music lessons, swimming and so on.

Course Costs These must be formal education programmes. Examples include Gaeltacht trips or other summer language courses. The Board may also consider Transition Year participation costs under this heading.

5.Grants

Grants to former residents and / or their relatives may be paid under two headings as outlined below:

Tuition fees and related charges

These grants are a contribution towards the cost of tuition fees and / or related student service charges such as registration, examination or professional association fees.

Education assistance

These grants help applicants to continue with their participation in approved post-school, undergraduate and post-graduate courses.

Points to note:

☐Payment of all grants is subject to the availability of funds to the Board

☐The Board can only pay grants to applicants that meet all the criteria of the grant scheme.

☐The Board will only support a single course at a particular level. For example, if you receive a grant towards the fees or related charges of a primary degree, you cannot later apply for funding for a second primary degree.

☐The Board will only pay grants for the current year of study. Applications relating to courses or course modules that have been completed in a previous academic year will not be eligible for grants or assistance.

☐There are limits on the overall amounts the Board may pay to a former resident and /or their relatives. They are as follows:

- **A total of €15,000 to a former resident.**
- **A total of €15,000 to all relatives of a former resident.**
- **€5,000 to an individual relative of former residents.**

These amounts cover grants towards fees, related student charges and educational assistance and include any grants already made to the same applicant(s) under the Education Finance Board's Interim Criteria.

6. Schedule of grants towards tuition fees, related charges and educational assistance

The maximum amounts a former resident and / or their relatives may get for suitable courses under this scheme are outlined below. These amounts are subject to the overall limits detailed under Points to Note on page 3. The maximum amounts relate to the 'nett charge' for a course. This charge is the amount an applicant must personally pay for the course after receiving other grants. It is not the full cost of the course.

Fees for approved post-school and undergraduate courses

Former residents

A maximum of €6,000 a year towards the nett charge.

Relatives

- A maximum of €1500 a year where the nett charge is €3,000 or less each year.
- Half the nett charge, up to a maximum of €2,000 a year, where the nett charge is more than €3,000 a year.

Distance Education

The Board will consider each application related to distance education individually

Fees for approved post-graduate courses

Former residents

A maximum of €6,000 towards the nett charge for the normal length of the course

Relatives

- A maximum of €1,500 a year where the nett charge is €3,000 or less each year
- Half the nett charge, up to a maximum of €2,500 in each year, where the nett charge is more than €3,000 for each year of the course
- Overall maximum €5000 for the length of the course

Distance Education

The Board will consider each application related to distance education individually

Educational assistance

Full-time study: two payments of €800 a year (total €1,600)

Part-time study: two payments of €300 a year (total €600)

The Board will consider each application related to distance education individually

Applicants must provide written evidence that they are still taking part in the course to receive their second payment of the year.

Grants for other approved courses

Personal development and lifestyle courses A maximum of €1,000 for each applicant each year
Assistance up to €200 towards additional certified expenditure in respect of course materials and other course-related costs may be available.

Driving lessons

Car – a maximum of €40 per lesson plus test fee

Truck or minibus – a maximum of €750 plus test fee

Coach – a maximum of €1000 plus test fee

Driving instructor – a maximum of €1,500 in Ireland and an appropriate contribution for a similar course overseas.

Extra tuition, after-school programmes and summer courses

The Board has set aside a suggested budget of €75,000 for 2008/2009.

Extra tuition and after-school programmes – a maximum of €30 an hour and €900 a year.

Course costs – a maximum of €900 a year.

7. Special cases

If the Board believes that special circumstances apply, especially to a former resident, the Board has discretion to change the Criteria.

8. Reviewing decisions

If an applicant is not satisfied with a decision relating to their application, they may ask the Board to review it. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the Board's review, they may refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

9. Effective date

These rules take effect from the 1st September 2008, and replace all other criteria.

If funding has been approved for courses lasting a number of years under the Pre-establishment Administrative Scheme Criteria or under the Interim Criteria, the Board may decide to change the maximum grant levels detailed in Sections 5 and 6 to take into account what the Board regards as an applicant's reasonable expectations.

These Criteria are subject to review and may be changed without notice.

Contact information

Education Finance Board Floor 3 Frederick Court 24/27 North Frederick Street Dublin 1

Within Ireland **Telephone:** 1890 742 742 **Fax:** 01 8745709

Outside Ireland **Telephone:** 00353 1 8745708 **Fax:** 00353 1 8745709

Email info@educationfinanceboard.com

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Appendix B

Education (Former Residents of Certain Institutions for Children) Finance Board

National Treasury Management Agency Investment Account

National Treasury Management Agency Investment Account

Section 26 of the Commission to Enquire into Child Abuse (Amendment) Act 2005 provides for the payment of a specified amount into an investment account managed by the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA). Amounts were transferred by the Minister for Finance prior to the establishment of the board. The balance available at 31 December 2008 arose as follows.

	€
Contribution of Religious Congregations under the terms of the Deed of 5 June 2002	12,700,000
Accrued interest (second relevant amount)	240,000
Amount arisen by accretion (third relevant amount)	510,000
	13,450,000
Expenditure incurred under an ad hoc scheme which operated from 2003 prior to the establishment of the Board on 17 February 2006	(2,484,992)
Transfer to NTMA to establish investment account	10,965,008
Interest on amounts transferred up to establishment date	126,055
Fund opening balance at 17 February 2006	11,091,063
Total expenditure for the year 2006	(1,450,614)
Interest on amounts up to 31 December 2006	266,320
Fund opening balance at 1 January 2007	9,906,769
Total expenditure for the year 2007	(1,384,082)
Interest on amounts up to 31 December 2007	360,942
Fund opening balance at 1 January 2008	8,883,629
Total expenditure for the year 2008	(1,844,010)
Interest on amounts up to 31 December 2008	310,106
Fund balance at 31 December 2008	7,349,725

