



Grants to primary schools for the purchase of resources and materials to support the implementation of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Arts curricula in the redeveloped primary curriculum

1. Introduction

€9.7m has been allocated for primary and special schools in the free education system to purchase physical resources supporting the new Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Arts curricula.

This investment is part of a long-term plan to give schools continued support, helping them create hands-on learning experiences and more inclusive, engaging environments for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

Grants are calculated as follows:

- **Fixed payment per school:** €500.00
- **Per-pupil payment:** €14.03
- **DEIS/SEN rate per pupil:** €16.13

This ensures schools receive appropriate funding based on their size and specific needs.

2. What the Funding Can Be Used For

This grant is strictly for resources and materials that support the STEM and Arts curricula implementation. **ICT equipment is not covered** because separate ICT grants address these needs.

Examples of resources and materials:

- **STEM:** Weighing scales, trundle wheel, counters, geoboards, place value cards, blocks and shapes and hands-on experiment tools.
- **Arts:** Paints, canvases, musical instruments, and drama props.

This focus ensures resources enhance practical learning experiences.

3. Procurement

Schools can choose the resources and suppliers that best meet their needs. When purchasing resources, schools must:



- Follow public procurement rules to ensure value for money. Obtain written quotes when appropriate and maintain full records for audits.
- Use established management board procedures for tendering, paying invoices, and keeping records.
- Seek support if needed:
 - Schools Procurement Unit: Free advice and updates for primary/post-primary schools (excluding ETB). 'Guidance for Schools on Good Procurement Practices' can be found [here](#)
 - Office of Government Procurement: Visit www.ogp.gov.ie or email support@ogp.gov.ie.
 - ETB schools: Contact your local ETB Administrative Office.
- It's recommended to obtain at least 3 quotes.

4. Requests for Tenders/Quotations

Each school has unique needs. When planning purchases:

- **Be specific:** Clearly outline what you need to avoid confusion or mistakes.
- **Green procurement:** Include Green Public Procurement (GPP) guidelines in every tender. Choose products with lower environmental impacts, like recycled materials or reduced packaging waste. For details, see the [GPP Guidance](#). Also, check out the Sustainable Procurement Tips for Schools in the [SPU newsletter](#).
- **Fair evaluation:** Ensure the process is clear, fair, and based on your request for quotation (RFQ) criteria. While price matters, also consider quality, delivery, and customer service.
- **Wrap up and keep records:** Be sure to meet deadlines and notify both successful and unsuccessful bidders. Keep all procurement documents for future reference.

5. Managing Your Resources

Every school is different, as is the resources and materials that you have. When planning how to spend your grant money, you should think about your own school needs and of your pupils needs. You should consider the following:

- **Assess your needs and priorities**
 - Look at what you already have and make a list of the resources your school needs.
 - Some companies may offer ready-made lists to your school. These may not fit your school unique needs.
- **Plan and budget your resources**
 - Prioritise what's most important for your school.



- Create a clear plan for purchasing and managing resources, keeping long-term needs in mind.
- **Make the most of the resources**
 - Share resources between classrooms, when possible, to maximise their value.
 - Reuse or repurpose items to save money and reduce waste, helping the environment too.

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